THE HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE INDEX 2009

Whose Crisis? Clarifying Donor's Priorities

DARA

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Clarifying Donor Priorities

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DARA – Development Assistance Research Associates – is an independent, international, non-profit organisation, which works to improve the quality and impact of development and humanitarian interventions. We do this through research, evaluations, promoting learning and knowledge sharing.

DARA aims to enhance global efforts to reduce human suffering and inequity and encourage prevention. Our focus is on the improvement of humanitarian action, the promotion of international stability and development, and the reduction of disaster risk.

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Foreword

Archbishop Desmond Tutu

Throughout my life I have tried to spread a message of hope and reconciliation, and urged people to do good wherever they are. It is a message shared by The Elders, a group of world leaders that I have the privilege to chair and who are committed to sharing our wisdom, leadership and integrity to tackle some of the world's most urgent problems.

It is difficult for many of us to imagine a world of peace and harmony when we are faced with the discouraging evidence of the hard cruelty of poverty, violence and crises faced by millions every day. Yet I am convinced that despite all the misery and despair in the world, human beings are moved by compassion and solidarity. Good will always prevail over injustice, fear and anguish.

That is why the work of countless humanitarians, committed to making the world a better place for those affected by crises, is so vital. Their work is not only about saving lives and alleviating suffering. It is also about promoting human dignity and restoring hope to people whose lives have been shattered by conflict, violence, disasters and crises. Through their commitments, humanitarian workers epitomise a truth intrinsic to the African saying Ubuntu: "My humanity is bound up in yours."

Governments have an important role to play in supporting the work of humanitarians, so that their efforts reach those who need help the most. That support takes many forms: from the generosity of their funding of humanitarian needs, to facilitating the work of humanitarian organisations and supporting a coordinated approach, to resolving the pressing challenges presented by humanitarian crises.

To their credit, many of the world's governments have expressed their commitment to a principled approach to maximise the quality and impact of their humanitarian assistance. The Good Humanitarian Donorship (GHD) initiative, now signed by 35 of the world's wealthiest countries, is an excellent demonstration that governments can set aside their individual interests in favour of those of humanity. The GHD declaration sets out a series of commitments for donor governments to contribute to improving the quality and effectiveness of their aid.

However, as is often the case, the lofty ideals contained in political declarations are not enough. Concerted actions must follow, and these efforts must be monitored vigilantly so that governments do not slip in their commitments. That is why the Humanitarian Response Index (HRI) is so important.

The HRI is an independent and objective annual assessment that monitors and ranks how well government donors are meeting their commitments to good practice in their humanitarian assistance policies and practices. Produced by DARA since 2007, the HRI annual report helps to put pressure on governments to ensure that aid is used effectively, so that people affected by crises can recover their lives, livelihoods and dignity – their humanity. This year's HRI asks the question, "Whose crisis?" and reminds us again that our focus and priority must always be directed towards preventing and alleviating human suffering.

I have long advocated that the governments of wealthy nations should exercise their power responsibly and that they should be held accountable for their actions. Nowhere is this more evident than when we are talking about meeting the needs of millions of people affected by conflicts and disasters each year. As the HRI makes clear, accountability is not just about how and where government taxpayers' money is spent. It is also about the moral responsibility governments – and civil society and individuals – all share to make sure our efforts to alleviate human suffering have a lasting impact.

I know many government donor agencies dislike the idea of being reviewed and ranked by an independent organisation such as DARA – no one likes to be held up for external scrutiny. But where would we be today if it were not for the efforts of committed individuals and civil society organisations crying out against injustices, raising awareness of the many challenges faced by humanity and calling for greater accountability of the most powerful? Can we simply turn a blind eye to the situations in Darfur, Palestine, Sri Lanka, Colombia or Haiti, or the daily devastation of AIDS, poverty, disasters and violence?

My own experience as an Elder, promoting peaceful resolution of conflicts and promoting reconciliation, shows that sometimes the outsider can shed light on the issues and help create a climate in which attention is re-focused on what matters. The HRI 2009 offers a similar perspective, based on comprehensive research that uncovers how governments are performing and highlighting critical issues that matter today.

First, the HRI 2009 draws attention to the need for governments to work more actively to ensure access to humanitarian assistance for populations in need. In too many crises, affected populations do not have access to the basic necessities to survive or the conditions for recovery of their livelihoods. This has certainly been the case in places that I myself have visited recently, such as Sudan, where needs are unmet due to the challenges and obstacles faced by humanitarian organisations – often created by the very governments charged with protecting their citizens. It is clear that governments can take a concerted, unified stance to advocate and pressure other governments that deny the existence of a crisis, or place barriers to limit or prevent access to humanitarian assistance.

A second important issue raised in the HRI 2009 report is the disturbing matter of protection of vulnerable populations. This may represent the ultimate injustice: people with their lives already shattered by violence, conflict and calamity are exposed to danger, and have their rights and dignity violated. In my visits to many different parts of the world in situations of crisis, I am always deeply moved by the strength, courage and resilience of people who, despite all the abuses and calamities faced, maintain their humanity. It is simply an unacceptable situation and the international community can and must do more to prevent such abuses and guarantee protection.

Finally, the HRI report reinforces the message of the importance of scaling up efforts for prevention, to reduce the risks faced by the world's poorest and most vulnerable. This is, of course, more than evident now in the area of disaster risk reduction, where an investment in building community preparedness, and strengthening capacity and resilience, pays enormous dividends. Much of the suffering of millions of people in Haiti or Myanmar or other countries facing natural disasters would certainly have been avoided if better prevention measures were in place.

But the HRI 2009 also underscores another issue that is of grave concern: the limited attention given to the prevention of conflicts and violence. This is a particular area to which I have dedicated much of my time and I am convinced that through promoting dialogue, reconciliation and conflict prevention we can avoid countless human suffering. However, it is also a clear responsibility of the international community, and of wealthy countries in particular, to advocate and work towards preventing conflicts before they break out – and, in the event of a conflict, to work tirelessly to minimise the consequences. Helping humanitarian organisations be prepared to respond to conflicts and disasters is also critically important and an area where governments can also do much more.

The HRI 2009 offers us a perspective on how well donor governments support humanitarian action around the world. I sincerely hope world leaders pay close attention to the HRI 2009 findings and renew their commitments to work together and constantly improve humanitarian assistance. I also hope for governments to work closely with civil society and humanitarian organisations to promote greater compassion, morality, caring and accountability in the way we respond to the plight of millions of people affected by crises.

Acknowledgements

Silvia Hidalgo, Director of DARA

The Humanitarian Response Index (HRI) is a shared endeavour involving the collaboration of numerous individuals and organisations. DARA is extremely grateful to all of them.

I would like to begin by expressing special gratitude to the people who were interviewed for the HRI 2009 in the field. Without their help, insight and knowledge, the HRI would not exist. Many of them went above and beyond 'the call of duty', providing support for our field teams and constant encouragement. We were also assisted in the field by organisations that took the time to provide logistical and administrative support. We cannot thank you all enough.

We thank the donor agencies of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development – Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) who provided us with their feedback and data. We look forward to engaging with them further in a joint effort to improve the quality and effectiveness of humanitarian aid.

Our Peer Review Committee, which works to ensure that the HRI achieves its objectives while continuing to improve, deserves a special mention. We would therefore like to recognise the contributions of Jock Baker, Christian Bugnion, David Roodman, James Darcy, Véronique de Geoffroy, Claude Hilfiker, Manuel Sánchez Montero, Eva Von Olerich and Ed Schenkenberg. I would also like to mention John Cosgrave for providing his input to the HRI's methodology.

DARA's Advisory Board helps us broaden our horizon and further policy issues. I would like to acknowledge José María Figueres, António Guterres, Diego Hidalgo, Larry Minear, Iqbal Riza, Mary Robinson and Pierre Schori. We are especially grateful to DARA's Board member José María Figueres for his leadership, relentless support and motivation. He is truly a driving force for the HRI.

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We are honoured that H.E. Archbishop Desmond Tutu has contributed to this year's HRI and thank him for his support and endorsement of the HRI. We would also like to thank Mr. Kofi Annan for his support for the HRI. We would like to express our gratitude to the Global Humanitarian Forum (GHF), the Clinton Global Initiative (CGI) and The Brookings Institution for recognising the importance of the HRI and furthering our dissemination efforts.

Finally, sincere thanks go to everyone who participated in the field missions and all of DARA. The HRI is very much a team effort and the entire organisation's staff contributes to its success. I thank you all for your commitment and enthusiasm. Short of listing all of DARA's staff, I would especially like to mention Philip Tamminga. Both he and Fernando Espada – who has participated in four HRI missions this year – have a profound understanding of the initiative and practically 'live' the HRI. Daniela Ruegenberg and Luis Sánchez together did remarkable work carrying out the quantitative analysis and constructing the indicators and rankings. Marybeth Redheffer, with support from Lauren Hefferon, drafted and edited endless texts, both with great professionalism and serenity.

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Introduction

Silvia Hidalgo, Director of DARA

In 2008, as the Humanitarian Response Index (HRI) moved into its third year, a global financial and economic crisis of unprecedented dimensions began to unfold. The urgency, immediacy and magnitude of the challenges posed by this crisis have threatened to crowd out efforts to address both ongoing and immediately pressing humanitarian causes. Wall Street's closing bells seemed to silence the cries of people in need – presenting the HRI with a new paradox related to both the meaning and concept of *crisis*.

The HRI 2009, which assesses worldwide donor response in 13 crisis-affected countries, gives rise to several questions: Whose crisis? Is the world able to deal with major global needs and threats? What are wealthy countries' priorities? And, more importantly, how can humanitarian efforts make sure that people are put first?

More than six billion human beings share our small and fragile world. Crises cause immense suffering, affecting more than a quarter of a billion people every year. The common goal must be to avoid human suffering and put affected populations at the forefront of our actions. As the world becomes increasingly interconnected, there is a growing expectation that responses must improve, both now and in the future.

Humanitarian needs are evolving and the context is acutely challenging. In 2008, there were more than 230 'natural' disasters worldwide, affecting more than 211 million people and causing more than US$180 billion in damages. An estimated 70 percent of all natural disasters are now climate-related. Last year also saw 28 major conflicts. Some 42 million people were forcibly displaced in 2008 as a result of conflicts and natural disasters, with massive new displacements in the Philippines, Sudan, Kenya, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Iraq, Pakistan, Somalia, Colombia and Sri Lanka. Last year was also the most perilous year on record for humanitarian workers, with more than 260 humanitarian aid workers killed, kidnapped or seriously injured. Attacks against aid workers increased four-fold in the past decade. Access is an increasing challenge and humanitarian responses are less and less capable of reaching those in need.

The need for vision

It would be careless to allow the global financial crisis and economic downturn to deflect policy attention undeservedly away from addressing and responding to priorities. Those who disproportionately suffer must be put first. Human suffering and its causes, existing emergencies and risk must be tackled. The challenge is to find common ground and to identify and pursue policies that prioritise people.

This principle is not proving easy to achieve in practice. In effect, the global economic slump is being associated with a focus on immediate short-term national issues and a fall in aid. In particular, as competing claims rise on shrinking budgetary resources, budget cuts tend to affect both longer-term policies and external assistance. The latter implies that many will suffer disproportionately in the current context, jeopardising the steps needed both to improve our collective response capacity and prepare for and prevent future crises.

With the necessary vision at national and international levels to avoid the trap of narrow and short-term thinking, we can focus on both ongoing emergencies and future needs posed by the rise in disasters. In particular, policies and programmes to address today's pressing problems can be designed and implemented with a long-term outlook.

The dilemmas of 'Whose crisis?' and 'Clarifying donor priorities' that are faced in this year's HRI, also resonate with Robert Chambers' *Whose Reality Counts?* where he argues that central issues in development have been ignored and many mistakes have arisen as a result of domination by those with power. The Tsunami Evaluation Coalition (TEC) report captured this same issue when assessing international performance in the tsunami response. Through assessing official donor funding in the context of the TEC, DARA came to understand the complete lack of guidance that donors showed throughout their response.

Areas for action

The HRI 2008 posed the question: "How does the world respond to humanitarian crises?" The response was: "We can do better." The reality today is that we *must* do better.

The HRI asks what can realistically be done. Resources are, of course, fundamental for appropriate humanitarian response. At a time when aid is arguably most needed, unmet humanitarian requirements are at their highest levels with a funding gap for United Nations appeals of US$4.8 billion. In September 2008, however, the United States Congress debated and eventually passed a bill that would authorise the US Treasury Department to spend up to US$700 billion to bail out financial companies and stem the financial crisis. How much are we prepared to invest to respond to current and future human crises? We cannot afford to turn our backs on human suffering.

The findings of the HRI this year underscore the following points:

1 Humanitarian access

Full and unimpeded access is a basic prerequisite to humanitarian action. This year, humanitarian access was a major challenge to the response in ten of the 13 crises covered. Issues of sovereignty and territorial integrity are repeatedly used to hinder humanitarian access, yet claims that humanitarian aid and humanitarian workers can threaten national sovereignty or challenge territorial integrity seem ludicrous.

With some exceptions, such as Ethiopia, the neutrality of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has allowed that organisation access in remote areas and more importantly, allowed it to raise concerns about protection of civilians with all parties in a particular context. In Somalia, the number of international staff working in the country fell to zero.

In many emergencies, local authorities and governments are caught up in internal conflicts, meaning humanitarian assistance is denied to people in dire need. Donors have a strong role to play in advocating and securing humanitarian access in appropriate ways. Our ability to respond to crises is being compromised and those most affected are the world's most vulnerable people.

2 Protection of civilians

Violence and the threat of violence continue unabated in many conflict areas and the inclusion of protection as a specific objective of humanitarian action in the *GHD Principles* was viewed as an important achievement. Protection covers a wide range of activities that are aimed at ensuring respect for the rights of all individuals. Protection measures include establishing a presence on the ground, negotiating humanitarian access, preventing breaches of humanitarian law and ending such breaches or limiting their effect when they occur.

In the crises covered this year, the ability to carry out protection measures was the determining factor qualifying the international community's response. Donors are still little inclined to fund protection efforts however, as these actions and forms of assistance are low profile. Even in the DRC, where *GHD Principles* have been piloted and major progress made with respect to needs-based funding, it was found that donors need to provide greater leadership on protection issues. In crises such as Sri Lanka, there is a great need for protection in areas where, although there is no fighting, there is no rule of law. Protection efforts are such a key part of humanitarian response that it is our collective ability to provide the right assistance and avoid further human suffering that is at stake when protection efforts are weak.

3 Prevention measures

There is still an unwillingness or inability on the part of humanitarian actors to engage in prevention, as opposed to response. The difficulty is demonstrating that preventive actions have an impact in terms of saving lives and avoiding human suffering. A serious change has to take place in the way the system frames its humanitarian action so that the key objectives of humanitarian action are acted upon.

Prevention is often associated with natural hazards, but it also has an important function in man-made conflicts. In the crises in Gaza and Sri Lanka this year, all those involved recognised that the catastrophic outcomes in loss of life were foreseeable, yet prevention measures were either inappropriate or absent altogether. Making risk reduction a mainstream component of development efforts and strengthening the links with climate change adaptation is a priority. A key continuing problem is that donor resources are often compartmentalised, complicating full and comprehensive responses.

Prevention and capacity building require resources and focus. HRI findings this year point to insufficient prevention efforts and limited capacity building, especially at the local level. Donors cannot afford not to take serious action in this time of increasing hazards. Efficiency and effectiveness of humanitarian response must be a constant goal of joint efforts.

The HRI objective

The HRI is an independent initiative that annually assesses and ranks donor commitments to improving the quality and effectiveness of humanitarian aid. It provides a platform for improving humanitarian action. The premise behind the HRI is that wealthy nations have responsibilities in providing humanitarian action and, as donors, a clear role to play in ensuring that humanitarian action and the humanitarian aid system become more effective. A large proportion of humanitarian assistance depends on the funding of traditional donors. Donor roles and aid are more a question of responsibility than of solidarity.

The HRI 2009 is set against a backdrop of challenges: increased need and threats coupled with decreased access and means. The HRI is a new initiative in the sector with a clear agenda and purpose to improve humanitarian action. It is based on a powerful idea designed to align humanitarian response to need. It focuses on both providing information and analysis on humanitarian aid across the globe annually and communicating the results to prompt positive change.

The HRI helps both question and dismantle some of the 'sacred cows' and deep-rooted myths and assumptions about the humanitarian sector in an effort to encourage greater transparency, accountability, change and improved performance. The bulk of humanitarian funding has been provided, and continues to be provided, by wealthy country governments in the form of Official Development Assistance (ODA). Humanitarian organisations have overwhelmingly relied on this form of funding and are only more recently engaged in trying to source private funding. There are increasing examples of humanitarian agencies rejecting governmental aid, feeling that it compromises their independence and neutrality. The reality for the bulk of agencies, however, is that their engagement in a given context, and the aid programmes they provide, overwhelmingly depend on donor government support.

The HRI process

It was against a backdrop of increasingly politicised aid and decreased humanitarian space that donors conceived the *Good Humanitarian Donorship (GHD)* initiative in Stockholm in 2003. There are many virtues in the commitments of *GHD*. The HRI, beyond measuring donor commitment to improving the quality and effectiveness of aid, is an important process that enables representatives of humanitarian agencies in the field to reflect on challenges, donor commitments, and whether policies and actions effectively improve humanitarian response and make a difference in peoples' lives.

The *GHD* initiative relies heavily on a functioning humanitarian system, the availability of comprehensive needs assessments, and strong UN leadership and coordination. While responses should be highly context-specific, and there is no expectation to define an exact blueprint for good donor practice, there is a real need to identify and address shortcomings and challenges in putting *GHD Principles* into practice. Furthermore, there needs to be a growing recognition of the crucial role that donors can and should play in helping the humanitarian system become more effective. Donor involvement can be key in ensuring that affected populations are placed at the centre of our focus and in promoting greater levels of quality and accountability. Despite the virtues of non-earmarked funds, donors that provide agencies with a blank cheque without seeking greater levels of accountability are not helping to improve the system and response.

It is a system of many parts with many actors, and the process is just as important as the product. More than 2,000 responses in 13 different crisis contexts have been gathered for this year's HRI. The cumulative experience and understanding of the state of humanitarian action that the HRI provides, from the vantage point of so many people in different crises, helps us appreciate circumstances, current realities, and ongoing and future challenges. Gaining perspective in this fashion is both an engaging and rewarding process.

Many heads of humanitarian agencies are unfamiliar with *GHD* and its principles and the HRI survey brings the principles to the field, putting them into context. It engages humanitarian staff and enables them to reflect on how the GHD can be further put into action. Often, information is further shared at the field level with different groups or associations of humanitarian organisations. In this sense, the HRI as a project becomes far larger than itself. In addition to aid agency interviews, the HRI has involved meetings with beneficiaries, visits to aid projects, and discussions with local authorities and donors.

A living tool

Often aid has been equated with the concept of gifting. The idea of a gift is always positive, something one can only welcome and be grateful for, with the gift never to be returned. Yet we know that aid can also be detrimental. Providing the right aid to the right people in the right way is a complex challenge. Sourcing new methods, concepts and ideas from other sectors and industries in an effort to provide better aid and improve humanitarian response should be a welcome strategy. At DARA, in envisaging the HRI we believe that we can help in this respect by developing a useful and necessary tool for the humanitarian system that is appropriate for the sector. It can use new benchmarks and promote different existing connections, namely agency information and views on their donors.

In developing the HRI, we have set the yardstick high and intend to keep it high. The HRI's Peer Review Committee is essential in this. Members help us focus on our objective and on what is appropriate, without discouraging bold ideas. They, together with the input of the thousands of people interviewed, have accompanied the birth of the HRI and helped shape its feasibility, vindication and fit within the sector.

The HRI has the potential to bring about change. It can be a living tool, providing useful comprehensive and context-specific information on responses and trends in order, ultimately, to improve humanitarian performance. It has the ability to stir humanitarian actors and inspire them to share their experiences and reflect on existing challenges and ways of improving humanitarian action.

Band Aid and piecemeal approaches are not appropriate for the challenges that we face. The key is to find the policy 'levers' that can influence large-scale processes and tackle the issues. Less than three years into the humanitarian reform process, we are rapidly seeing that the focus must be on basic issues but with real means to change. The way forward is probably not to standardise, but to expand and improve. We really must do better.

The HRI 2008 report is divided into four parts. Part 1 analyses the results of this year's findings, the overall rankings and the rankings by pillar. Several overarching conclusions are also drawn – the issues of access, protection and prevention are pinpointed as presenting problems in the response to humanitarian crises and donors need to address them urgently if humanitarian aid is to be as effective as possible.

Part 2 of the HRI comprises thematic chapters written by experts in the field. In Chapter 1, Frederick D. Barton and John Ratcliffe take a close look at the US as a donor and offer a fresh perspective on the criticism of US policy and practice, suggesting specific recommendations on how it can improve. Elizabeth Ferris, in Chapter 2, examines the role of national and local non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in humanitarian response and the need for international humanitarian actors to include them from the beginning and nourish a more meaningful relationship with them. Chapter 3, by Bekele Geleta, calls for a paradigm shift in the humanitarian system, which will require strengthening partnerships and investing in risk reduction and capacity building in order to face the myriad of crises facing the planet. Finally, in Chapter 4, Raymond C. Offenheiser proposes a new rights-based humanitarian framework which prioritises disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation.

Part 3 includes 11 crisis reports from the field missions to Afghanistan, China, Colombia, DRC, Ethiopia, Georgia, Haiti, Myanmar, the occupied Palestinian Territories, Somalia and Sri Lanka. These crisis reports examine how well the donors are living up to their commitments to the *GHD* in their response to these humanitarian crises. The authors provide recommendations on how donors can improve the quality and effectiveness of humanitarian assistance they provide.

Finally, Part 4 consists of 23 donor profiles for each of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development – Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) donors. Each donor profile describes the donor's strengths and weaknesses, both by pillar as well as for specific indicators.

1

Part 1

The Humanitarian Response Index 2009

The Humanitarian Response Index 2009

Donor Accountability in Humanitarian Action

Silvia Hidalgo and Philip Tamminga

As the world continues to grapple with one of the worst economic crises in history, disasters, conflicts and emergencies have carried on unabated. There were over 230 'natural' disasters and 28 major conflicts affecting more than a quarter of a billion people last year, all of which required international assistance. International efforts have failed to reduce the scale of internal displacement caused by conflict and the economic crisis is making the situation even worse, with its full effects still unknown.

An estimated US$10.4 billion was provided by the world's wealthiest countries for humanitarian assistance in 2008 (Development Initiatives 2009) – far less than that required to meet humanitarian needs and leaving serious funding gaps for many emergencies (OCHA 2009a). Making efficient and effective use of this already insufficient amount is critical for the survival of millions affected by crises. How can wealthy governments use their power and influence to help reshape the humanitarian system so it can respond to increased needs and demands today, as well as in an uncertain future? And how can donor agencies be more accountable for ensuring resources and funds are used as efficiently and effectively as possible to meet the needs of the millions of people affected by crises?

Recognition is growing that humanitarian challenges must be addressed comprehensively. Donor governments have endorsed principled approaches in their funding and support for humanitarian action. Greater effort is now needed to develop guidance and tools to improve the quality and effectiveness of humanitarian action. The Humanitarian Response Index (HRI) is an independent initiative that annually ranks and assesses donor commitments to improve the quality and effectiveness of their humanitarian action. It is built on the premise that donors, as both the main funders of humanitarian action and international governmental actors, have a powerful and influential role to play in promoting positive changes in the way the humanitarian sector provides assistance to those who need it most.

The HRI 2009 findings show that the world's most powerful and wealthy donor nations are still underperforming when it comes to providing humanitarian assistance in a principled and effective way that helps people affected by crises to preserve their lives, livelihoods and dignity. Yet this is the basis of governments' responsibilities under international humanitarian law and the driving force behind the Good Humanitarian Donorship (GHD) initiative, to which wealthy donor governments committed themselves in recognition of their special role in ensuring more effective humanitarian action.

The HRI 2009 key findings

The scale and scope of its research process allows the HRI to draw attention to areas where governments and humanitarian organisations can work to increase the effectiveness and impact of humanitarian funding and support. This year, four issues affecting the quality and impact of international humanitarian assistance stand out as areas in critical need of attention. These areas are:

- Understanding good practice
- Humanitarian access
- Protection of at-risk populations
- Conflict and disaster prevention and preparedness

Gaps in understanding good practice, challenges to humanitarian access, shortfalls in protection and a lack of attention to prevention and preparedness were failings seen in many of the crises studied this year. They had serious consequences for the quality and impact of the humanitarian response. Given the widespread nature of these failings, they deserve special attention by donors and their partners.

1 Gaps in understanding and applying good donor practice

Donors face difficulties meeting their commitments and accountability to the people their humanitarian assistance intends to support. The challenges include understanding the context and needs of a crisis, and identifying the best channel and approach for a given humanitarian response. Respondents interviewed by HRI field missions tend to distinguish between those donors that have a presence in-country and those who do not. The donors in the latter group may be less knowledgeable of the situation and less capable of effective engagement and comprehensive support, but they tend to have fewer competing interests guiding their humanitarian response.

Improvements in individual donor policy and practice can have enormous repercussions in terms of improving overall donor performance and, as a consequence, the quality and effectiveness of humanitarian action. The HRI rankings offer a synoptic view of donor performance and the results highlight the need for better collaboration between good and poor performers on how best to embed and put into practice the *GHD Principles*. Such a process of sharing good practice would be of particular benefit to those donors who have only recently signed up to the GHD initiative.

2 Barriers to access populations in need of humanitarian assistance

In many of the crises studied in this year's HRI, the lack of access to humanitarian assistance for crisis-affected and at-risk populations was a serious obstacle to efforts to provide life-saving assistance and support. There are growing examples of remote management of operations, where neither donors nor operational organisations have direct access to the affected populations – and therefore little evidence that interventions are meeting actual needs. In all cases, insecurity for both humanitarian workers and affected populations continues to hamper access to assistance.

This is an area where donors, working together with all stakeholders to respect the rights of affected populations to assistance, could be well placed to provide the resources and diplomatic pressure required to facilitate safe access for humanitarian workers.

3 Failures in protection of populations at risk

Protection of civilians in crises is at the core of both the Geneva Conventions and international humanitarian law. The inclusion of protection in the *GHD Principles* was a major achievement. It recognised that donor governments play an important role in ensuring that the protection of crisis-affected populations is a priority and is respected by all actors. Despite this commitment, there were many crises where the protection of affected populations was weak or inadequate. The results of the HRI field research indicate how widespread the problem is, with many HRI crisis reports revealing that the humanitarian system is ill-equipped to respond effectively to the issue of protection, particularly of internally displaced peoples (IDPs).

The best examples from the research, however, show that donors are in fact in a position to take a more active and coordinated stance around protection issues. For example, donors can provide adequate funding to mechanisms such as the protection cluster; they can help agencies develop institutional and operational capacity for protection and assistance; and they can assertively advocate that all parties respect the rights, physical integrity and dignity of people caught up in crisis.

4 Continued neglect of prevention and preparedness

Much has been said about the importance of investing in prevention and preparedness. Countless lives and livelihoods could be saved if the international community made a concerted effort to prevent human suffering through scaled-up preparedness and risk-reduction measures. Yet support for prevention remains weak within the international community.

While most of the emphasis has been on disaster risk reduction, little has been said about the need for wealthy countries to invest also in conflict prevention and preparedness measures. The HRI crisis reports underscore how ill-prepared the international community is to anticipate and prepare for the humanitarian consequences of disasters and conflict. A serious shift in donor policy and practice is needed to scale-up support for conflict and disaster prevention and risk-reduction efforts at the community level. Prevention needs to be fully factored into the aid system.

Key messages and recommendations

1 If donors wish to achieve greater impact with their assistance they need to know how to apply the agreed *GHD Principles* better in their agencies and among their partners in today's complex and evolving environments. This process could be helped by engaging in wider discussions with all stakeholders, including non-traditional donors, about how donors can best support effective humanitarian action. Clear practical guidance is needed to apply concepts of good donor practice in different crisis contexts, and the HRI findings offer evidence and practical examples of good practice to support this urgent task.

2 Donor governments should be encouraged to look for ways to overcome the barriers that impede effective access to much-needed humanitarian assistance through the development of policy guidelines and common but flexible approaches to access issues. These range from humanitarian diplomacy at the highest levels to operational support and resources at the field level.

3 More should be done to prioritise the protection of people at risk or affected by crisis in order to protect their lives and dignity. Donor governments should consider supporting agencies with a protection mandate such as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in developing and implementing operational guidelines for protection. They should also consider combining this with their own high-level diplomatic efforts to ensure protection is recognised and respected by all parties in a conflict or crisis.

4 Donor governments should consider prioritising investment in disaster risk reduction and contingency planning to minimise the impact of disasters. In natural disasters, the role of the state needs to be recognised and local capacities should be considered in the early stages of the response. Donors should also consider developing and supporting conflict preparedness and prevention strategies to minimise the loss of lives and suffering caused by conflicts.

In the sections that follow, these issues are explored in greater detail. The findings help to understand the challenges facing donors and their operational partners, as well as providing examples of good practice that may help donors find solutions to these problems. The first section provides a brief overview of the current context of humanitarian action, with an emphasis on the global economic crisis and its effects on the humanitarian sector. The following sections outline the HRI 2009 donor rankings and changes from last year, as well as overall performance against the five different pillars of good practice that make up the HRI. Some of the emerging issues and critical failings identified from the HRI field research are discussed in the next section, while the final section draws out some preliminary policy implications and recommendations for donors.

Trends and challenges to humanitarian aid effectiveness

Last year, the HRI 2008 report drew attention to a number of issues and challenges facing aid effectiveness. These were: maintaining the neutrality and impartiality of humanitarian assistance, improving the quality and use of needs assessments, supporting links between relief, recovery and development, promoting better use of quality standards and investing in the capacity of the humanitarian system to prevent and respond to future crises (DARA 2009). The HRI 2009 research confirms that these issues remain relevant and valid today.

A number of developments over the past year affected how government donors and humanitarian organisations responded to crises. These included the trend towards a shrinking of humanitarian space, problems with access and security for humanitarian workers, growing evidence of the humanitarian consequences of climate change and the effects of the global economic crisis on the humanitarian sector. At the same time, several positive trends and developments helped to strengthen and reinforce efforts to improve the capacity, performance and accountability of the sector to deal with an increasingly complex operating environment. The purpose here is not to review all these trends but simply to provide a backdrop against which to put the HRI findings and results from this year into context.

Increasingly complex operating environments

A number of crises and emergencies last year had extremely complicated operating environments making it difficult for donors and humanitarian organisations to respond adequately to needs. For example, Afghanistan, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Haiti and Sri Lanka – all crises examined in past editions of the HRI, and again this year – show how challenging it is for the humanitarian sector to consolidate gains and move beyond emergency relief to more integrated approaches to stability and recovery. This is not a new situation, but it does reflect a trend that appears to be growing.

The expulsion of aid workers from Sudan following the International Criminal Court (ICC) indictment of President Bashir was perhaps the best example of how difficult the operating environment is becoming and how inadequate the current approaches appear to be. But the response to the earthquake in China also illustrates a positive trend of growing capacity at the national and community levels to respond to crises – and the corresponding challenges of adapting and integrating the international humanitarian response system to such a context (Cosgrave 2010a).

Increasing and interlinked risks and vulnerabilities

Studies released this year predict a rapid and dramatic increase in the scale and scope of humanitarian emergencies on the horizon. Those addressing the human impact of climate change indicate that the lives and livelihoods of more than four billion people are vulnerable and at risk today. The number of lives lost is predicted to increase by two thirds by 2030, compared with today. Add to this the projections of the humanitarian costs of responding to climate change and its multiplier effects (poverty, health, conflicts, migration, etc.), and the picture becomes truly alarming (GHF Geneva 2009 and Oxfam International 2009). All these studies emphasise that the scale and frequency of disasters, conflict and poverty will increase, with multiple threats combining to have even more devastating effects on the world's poorest and most vulnerable. The evidence from the HRI's field research over the past three years suggests that this trend is already underway and that the humanitarian system is insufficiently prepared for the convergence and combination of risks and vulnerabilities.

Waning interest in humanitarian reform

Progress in carrying forward the humanitarian reform agenda continued over the past year, though it appears that political interest and commitment to reform has diminished. As indicated in the HRI 2008, moving beyond the United Nations system to include other actors continues to be a challenge (DARA 2009). The recent evaluation of the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) funding has highlighted both positive and negative experiences. There are signs that it is becoming more inclusive and accessible to non-UN actors, yet obstacles remain and the amount of funding available within the CERF is limited. For example, as of October 2009, less than US$400 million was pledged and committed for the CERF this year (OCHA 2008).

Achieving more effective coordination is still an elusive goal for humanitarian reform, as is the aim of consolidating the role of Humanitarian Coordinators. The effectiveness of the cluster approach has been mixed, depending on the crisis context, showing that there is still room for improvement. However, efforts to establish performance indicators in each cluster are a positive sign that the approach is becoming institutionalised.

Another issue, already highlighted in the HRI 2008, was donors' failure to report regularly to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs' (OCHA) Financial Tracking Service (FTS) (DARA 2009). FTS was intended to increase the transparency in donor reporting of humanitarian assistance, in line with *GHD* Principle 23. Without this information, it is difficult for the sector to plan and distribute resources equitably, in proportion to needs. There have been efforts over the past year towards building consensus on standardised definitions and data sources for tracking humanitarian assistance (IATI 2009), but as yet the potential of FTS has failed to be achieved. The level of accuracy and impetus of reporting has fallen from 2005, when donors were far more consistent with their reporting following the Indian Ocean tsunami.

Taking quality and accountability issues seriously

One positive observation is that more and more humanitarian organisations are considering the issues of integrating quality and accountability in the way they provide assistance. For example, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) members embarked on a peer review process to examine how their organisations are accountable to crisis-affected populations. As part of the revision process of both the Humanitarian Accountability Partnership (HAP-I) and the Sphere Project, there have been more efforts to share learning and liaise at the field level (2009). At a wider level, the Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action (ALNAP) launched a Humanitarian Outcomes project to benchmark the performance of the humanitarian system and complement its annual evaluation of humanitarian action (Humanitarian Outcomes 2009).

These examples show a positive trend towards better harmonisation and integration of the many different quality and accountability initiatives in the sector – even though there is still no overall consensus on what accountability means in humanitarian action.

An expanding donor club

One of the trends noted in last year's HRI was the expanding humanitarian donor landscape, with more and more actors funding and supporting humanitarian action around the world. The global financial crisis may slow this expansion, but the HRI research this year shows the trend continuing. Knowledge about how these new and non-traditional donors act and how they interpret good practice is still very limited. However, initial research in the HRI 2009 into how these donors and their funding mechanisms are perceived by humanitarian organisations offers insights into how and where to engage with them around issues of good practice, quality and accountability.

Meanwhile, membership of the GHD donor group continues to expand with a number of donor governments joining the original 23 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development – Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) members, bringing the total to 35 governments (see Table 1). This shows that new and emerging governmental donors are interested in good practice – although progress is slow. The volume of humanitarian assistance provided by the new GHD donors is extremely small, making it difficult to measure and compare with more established donor governments.

Challenges and constraints in donor capacity

Over the past three years, the HRI has regularly stressed the importance of building the capacity of individual donor agencies in order to engage and coordinate more effectively with other donor agencies and the humanitarian system. However, the overall trend this year seems to be that donor agencies in fact have decreasing capacity and fewer resources available for humanitarian assistance. Many donor agencies are reducing staff and budgets, and this creates a real obstacle in their applying, monitoring and following up the implementation of *GHD Principles* in donor practice. HRI interviews with donor representatives at the field level show there is a real lack of practical guidance for donors on how to translate the *GHD Principles* into specific actions or behaviours.

This finding is reinforced by a report on donor coordination at the field level commissioned by the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Department (ECHO) on behalf of the GHD (Channel Research 2009). The report notes that donors continue to lack practical guidance in applying and prioritising the *GHD Principles* in different contexts. Donor funding studies that DARA participated in as part of the Tsunami Evaluation Coalition (TEC) reached the same conclusion nearly four years ago, reflecting how difficult it has been to institute changes in the way donors act (TEC 2006). This illustrates why it is important that the GHD group reflect on how it can deepen understanding and give practical orientation to donors and their partners in order to make the GHD useful and relevant.

Table 1: The GHD donors

GHD donors	
Australia	*Latvia*
Austria	*Lithuania*
Belgium	Luxembourg
Bulgaria	*Malta*
Canada	Netherlands
Cyprus	New Zealand
Czech Republic	Norway
Denmark	*Poland*
Estonia	Portugal
EC	*Republic of Korea*
Finland	*Romania*
France	*Slovak Republic*
Germany	*Slovenia*
Greece	Spain
Hungary	Sweden
Ireland	Switzerland
Italy	UK
Japan (observer status)	US

Countries in italics are new GHD members and non-DAC donors that are not covered in the HRI's rankings and analysis as the volume of humanitarian assistance is not sufficient to draw comparisons with other GHD donors

Broadening perspectives on good donor practice

An encouraging development is that one of the principal messages to donors in last year's HRI has been acted on. At the last Montreux meeting on humanitarian financing, donors made a commitment to continue to explore ways to improve the quality and use of needs assessments (ICVA 2009). The GHD donor group also took positive steps towards understanding the needs and concerns of the non-governmental organisation (NGO) community and the role donors can play to support NGOs in carrying out humanitarian action. The most recent meeting of the GHD group in Geneva included discussions on the 'Principles of Partnership' with NGOs that form part of the Global Humanitarian Platform (GHP) (2009). This was regarded as a very positive step and it will hopefully lead to closer collaboration in the future.

Greater engagement of the GHD group with the HRI

The past year saw renewed efforts between DARA and the GHD group to engage in a constructive dialogue around the HRI and explore how the HRI can be of use to donors in terms of improving humanitarian action. While the GHD donor group continued to express concerns about ranking donors and the methodology used to do this, more and more staff of donor agencies told DARA that the HRI is a useful tool for internal lobbying within their agencies to encourage and apply good practice.

Constant improvement and refinement of the HRI's design and methodology is embedded in the HRI process, and this year DARA focused on refining the survey design. The statistical reliability and analysis of many of the indicators and the data sources used to construct the HRI were also refined and DARA is continuing its efforts to improve

communication around the HRI methodology so we can clarify misunderstandings and build more confidence in the instrument. At the same time, the GHD group has refined its own collective indicators to measure the progress of implementation and there is now more alignment with HRI indicators. This shows that the HRI can be compatible with donors' own efforts to measure and improve their performance.

The uncertain consequences of the economic crisis

At the end of last year, the alarm created by the financial meltdown left many wondering whether and how aid budgets would be affected by the economic recession. Official Development Assistance (ODA) experienced a net 14 percent decline in Austria (OECD 2009) but in practice, most traditional aid budgets remained largely unchanged as many were set before the last quarter of 2008. However, the crisis may impact traditional donors' future aid budgets. Ireland has already cut nearly US$315 million from its 2009 aid budget (a 22 percent decline) and Italy announced aid cuts of 56 percent (Concord 2009). On the positive side, the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID) announced that "the UK, unlike many donors, is delivering on its aid commitments. Total UK ODA in 2008 was GB£6.8 billion (0.43 percent of Gross National Income (GNI)" (DFID 2009).

While this is true in many countries, currency depreciation has taken a toll on assistance. The change in value of the British pound with respect to the US dollar during the first half of 2009 had a tremendous impact in countries such as Ethiopia where the UK is the largest donor. The ICRC and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), whose operational budgets and reserves are in Swiss francs and subject to great fluctuations, have raised similar concerns about the consequences for their response capacity (RCRC Donor Forum 2009).

Table 2: Generosity of humanitarian assistance

Donor	Rank
Ireland	1
Luxembourg	1
Norway	1
Sweden	1
Netherlands	5
Denmark	6
Switzerland	7
Finland	8
New Zealand	9
Australia	10
Canada	11
UK	12
US	13
Belgium	14
Spain	15
Germany	16
Greece	17
Japan	18
Austria	19
Italy	20
France	21
Portugal	22
EC	n/a

The HRI indicator for generosity and burden sharing of humanitarian assistance measures the generosity of a country in terms of its humanitarian assistance in proportion to the country's GNI. The indicator accounts for seven percent of the total weighting of the HRI rankings, demonstrating its importance as a proxy of donor good practice.

This year, four donor countries are tied for first place, as each meets or exceeds an 'ideal' value of total humanitarian assistance of ten percent of total ODA. This percentage is often regarded as the target benchmark for a country's humanitarian assistance. Nevertheless, this is one of the HRI indicators with the greatest disparity among donors. It demonstrates that the idea of collective responsibility and burden sharing expressed in the GHD Principles is still far from a reality in donor practice.

How will the generosity of humanitarian assistance be affected in the midst of the global economic crisis? The data so far is inconclusive. With the overall GNI of advanced economies set to decline by 3.8 percent in 2009 (IMF 2009), simply maintaining current levels of aid in real terms would require an allocation of an even greater share of GNI to aid. This is unlikely given the other constraints and priorities facing governments.

An unprecedented shortfall

The global economic crisis has contributed to an unprecedented shortfall in funding for humanitarian assistance. The UN recently revealed that its consolidated aid appeals experienced a record US$4.8 billion funding gap for their 2009 aid projects, which cover 43 million people in need of assistance (OCHA 2009a). Other studies show that the organisations on the front line of supporting people affected by disasters, conflict and crisis have been hit hard themselves, with falling incomes combining with an increased demand for services. Private funding has increasingly accounted for a larger share of humanitarian assistance, but has declined sharply as a result of the financial crisis. In 2007, US international aid from corporations, foundations, charities and individuals totalled about US$36.9 billion. This is more than 1.5 times the aid provided by the government that year. The downturn in the economy severely struck private foundation endowments, with US charitable foundations losing US$150 billion in assets in 2008 (Shimelse 2009). NGOs and National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, which rely more heavily on private funding, have been hit hard by the crisis.

The funding gap is the equivalent of less than one percent of the money provided to western banks over the first half of 2009. It is the result of both decreased funding (in real terms) and increased humanitarian needs (Foley 2009). Some of these additional needs resulted from the global recession itself. Others resulted from crises, such as that in Pakistan where more than two million people were displaced and where dramatically increasing needs led to a revision of the UN Pakistan appeal to US$543 million in May 2009 – almost ten times more than the original appeal for US$55 million (OCHA 2009b). At the time of the revision, with US$88,524,302 already provided, the balance needed to help an average 1.5 million affected in Pakistan from May to December 2009 was more than US$450 million.

In September 2009, the World Food Programme (WFP) signalled a funding gap of US$4.1 billion for its 2009 US$6.7 billion budget for emergency food rations. In the words of WFP, with regards to East and Central Africa, "We are feeding more people in more inaccessible and dangerous locations for longer periods, which pushes our costs up. At the same time, donors are giving less – leaving us barely one-third funded almost two thirds of the way through the year" (Watch International 2009).

The increase of aid appeals reflects a rise in humanitarian needs combined with the system's increased ability to respond to those needs. In Kenya, funding requirements rose by US$187 million because of acute food insecurity and an influx of new refugees fleeing from fighting in Somalia. In the occupied Palestinian Territory (oPT), needs increased by US$341 million as a result of the military operation in Gaza at the beginning of the year and the continuing restrictions on entry of basic aid to Gaza. In Sri Lanka, humanitarian requirements rose by US$114 million with 285,000 people displaced in camps and in need of sustained help. In Zimbabwe, aid requirements increased to US$169 million (OCHA FTS 2009).

According to the UN, the downturn has also increased needs in protracted crises such as Afghanistan, DRC and Sudan. Remittance flows have decreased for all regions of the world, reflecting the difficult conditions migrants are facing. With the decrease in remittances, people in developing and crisis-affected countries receive less aid from their relatives abroad and are less able to cope.

From the NGO perspective, it is their "ability to respond to these disasters that is being tested by increasing needs on the one hand, and reduced security and funding on the other [and] those most affected are the world's poorest and most vulnerable people" (Concern Worldwide 2009). Similar sentiments were expressed within the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement (RCRC Donor Forum 2009).

Pillar 1
Responding to needs

This pillar assesses to what extent donor funding practices respond to needs, respect the fundamental humanitarian principles of impartiality, neutrality and independence and that donor's objectives are aimed at saving lives, preventing and alleviating suffering, and restoring dignity and not other objectives. There are 11 qualitative and 7 quantitative indicators in this Pillar, corresponding to GHD Principles 1, 2, 5, 6, and 11.

Pillar 2
Prevention, risk reduction and recovery

This pillar assesses to what extent donors' support capacity for disaster and conflict prevention, risk reduction, preparedness and response, as well as support for recovery and the transition to development. There are 5 qualitative and 2 quantitative indicators in this pillar, corresponding to GHD Principles 1, 7, 8 and 9.

Pillar 3
Working with humanitarian partners

This pillar assesses how well donors support the work of agencies implementing humanitarian action and their unique roles in the humanitarian system. There are 10 qualitative and 6 quantitative indicators in this pillar, corresponding to GHD Principles 10, 12, 13, 14, and 18.

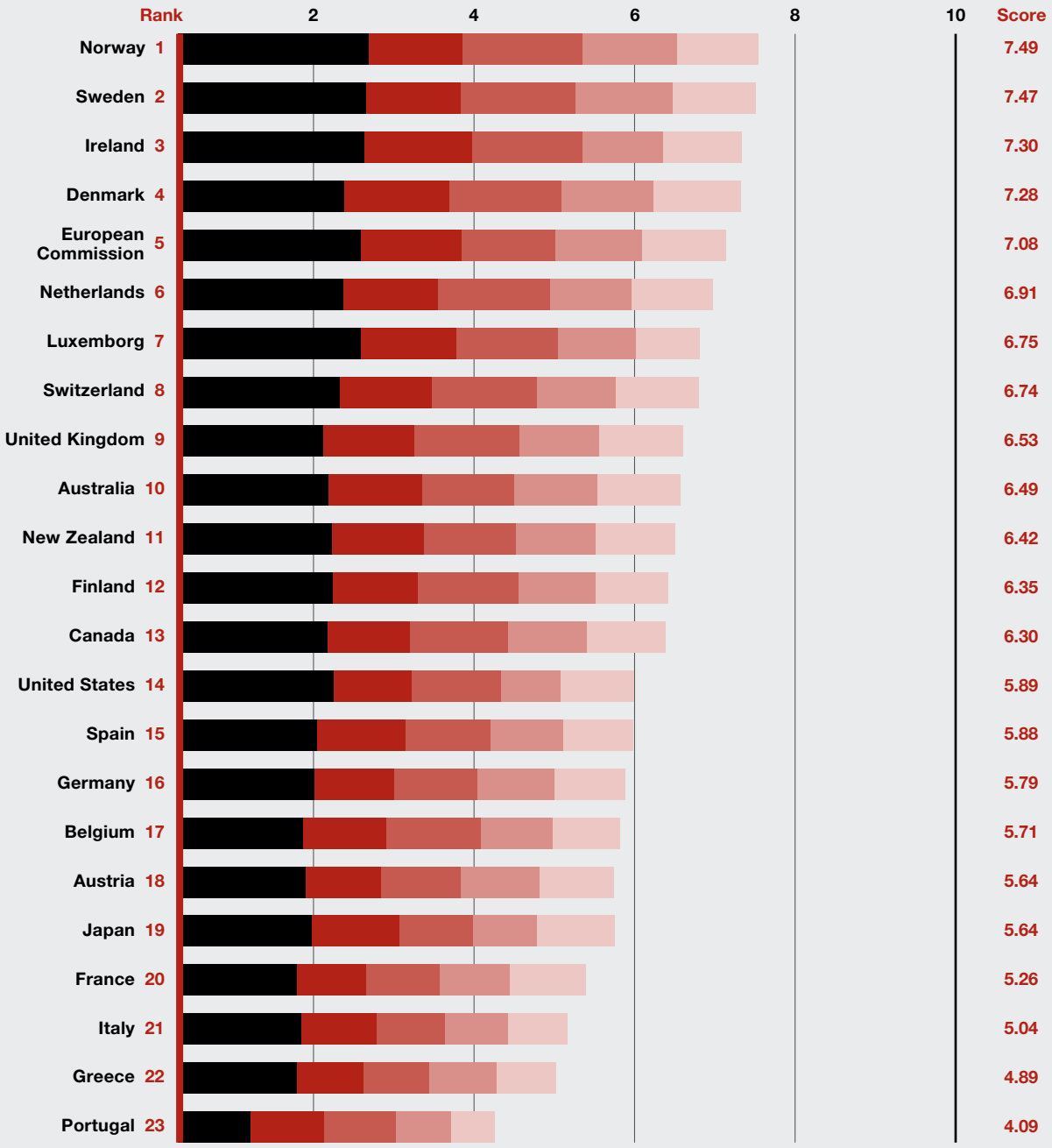
Pillar 4
Protection and International Law

This pillar assesses to what extent donors integrate protection and the application of international humanitarian law and other international guidelines and legal mechanisms into their funding policies and practices and ensure that operational actors apply these. There are 6 qualitative and 3 quantitative indicators in this pillar, corresponding to GHD Principles 3, 4, 16, 17, 19, and 20.

Pillar 5
Learning and accountability

This pillar assesses how well donors support initiatives to improve the quality, effectiveness and accountability of humanitarian action. There are 8 qualitative and 2 quantitative indicators in this pillar, corresponding to the concepts outlined in GHD Principles 15, 21, 22, and 23.

Figure 1: Donor Government Rankings



Changes in the HRI rankings

This year's HRI rankings show some interesting changes. Sweden is replaced by Norway at the top of the rankings and falls to second place. Ireland exchanges places with Denmark to take the third slot. Switzerland and the UK also swap eighth- and ninth-place positions from last year, while Australia moves up one place in the rankings, to tenth place. New Zealand climbs two positions to 11th place, while Canada and Belgium both fall three places to 13th and 17th respectively. The US, Spain and Germany all climb one spot in the rankings, to 14th, 15th and 16th places respectively. Austria also shows improvements, climbing to 18th from its 21st place position last year.

In general, the shifts in donor rankings over the past three years show that deliberate and consistent efforts to align national humanitarian policies more closely with internationally recognised principles and standards of good practice do lead to improvements in a donor's performance over time. In contrast, donors that fail to sustain efforts to improve their policies and practices perform less well.

Regardless of a donor's position, the HRI donor rankings and scores for this year show once again that there is great room for improvement among all donors in terms of applying the principles of good practices contained in the GHD declaration.

Overall analysis of findings

The following section examines in greater detail the overall findings according to each of the five pillars that make up the HRI rankings, as well as some of the key indicators that make up the index. Before looking at the specific scores and rankings by pillar, it is helpful to have a general overview of how donors are performing.

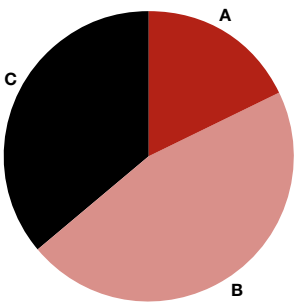
Table 3: HRI rankings 2007-2009

Donor	HRI 2007 Rank	HRI 2008 Rank	HRI 2009 Rank
Norway	2	2	1
Sweden	1	1	2
Ireland	6	4	3
Denmark	3	3	4
European Commission	5	5	5
Netherlands	4	6	6
Luxembourg	12	7	7
Switzerland	10	9	8
United Kingdom	9	8	9
Australia	14	11	10
New Zealand	8	13	11
Finland	11	12	12
Canada	7	10	13
United States	16	15	14
Spain	17	16	15
Germany	13	17	16
Belgium	15	14	17
Austria	20	21	18
Japan	18	18	19
France	19	20	20
Italy	22	19	21
Greece	23	23	22
Portugal	21	22	23

Continued lack of awareness of the *GHD Principles*

The HRI findings this year once again reinforce how little known the *GHD Principles* are to donors' main stakeholders. In general, the overall awareness and familiarity of humanitarian organisations with the principles has actually decreased since last year. Only one in five of the people interviewed for the HRI survey considered themselves to be "very familiar with the GHD" – fewer than the number reported in last year's survey, which was around a third of respondents. Less than half said they were "somewhat familiar" with the GHD, compared with a third in 2008. Over one third were "not familiar" at all, similar to last year's results.

Figure 2: Familiarity of survey respondents with the GHD



A Very familiar – 18%
B Somewhat familiar – 46%
C Not familiar – 36%

Unwanted funding

Several organisations reported refusing or declining funding from four main sources:

EC – Some organisations refused ECHO funding, reporting that obtaining funding was labour intensive, with funding not always delivered in a timely fashion and with cumbersome reporting requirements.

US – The organisations that refused funding from USAID often did so in conflict settings as a result of the underlying strategic, political and military objectives in 2008. Others considered USAID conditionality unreasonable, as implementing partners were sometimes required to engage with military forces and stay out of guerrilla-controlled areas. For some, USAID funding implied an even greater security concern in highly sensitive conflict environments.

UN agencies – NGOs that declined funding from UN agencies reported that the agencies often focused more on funding than implementation and added an additional administrative layer, despite not covering the administrative costs of their own implementing partners.

Private companies – Organisations that declined funding from private companies generally did so on the basis of ethical concerns over vested commercial interests. Establishing a code of conduct for private companies, similar to the GHD, may be a good way to address this issue.

This suggests that awareness of the *GHD Principles* is even lower now than a year ago. Even these results may be distorted positively by the HRI process itself, which has been an instrument to raise awareness about the commitments donors made in the GHD. The results include respondents from GHD pilot countries such as DRC, but even here familiarity is less than what would be expected, at around 35 percent "very familiar" with the principles.

The fact that there is such limited awareness and familiarity with the GHD is critical. If donors' principal partners are unfamiliar with the GHD, it means they do not know what they can expect from donors in terms of good practice, nor do they know the extent of donors' responsibilities and accountabilities in supporting and promoting a more effective response to crises. While it might be unrealistic to expect representatives of humanitarian agencies to know the *GHD Principles* in detail, one might expect them to have some familiarity with them, especially as survey respondents tend to be the head of mission who has working relationships with donors.

Some donor representatives interviewed were not familiar with the GHD at all. While no hard figures were gathered, there were enough examples in the different crises areas visited to suggest that this is an issue to track. This finding is supported by ECHO's recent study on donor coordination at the field level, in which many donor representatives stated that they lacked orientation on how to interpret and prioritise the *GHD Principles* and how to integrate them into their work (Channel Research 2009).

In the HRI field research, donors collectively scored highest in Timor Leste and Sri Lanka, followed by Chad, Georgia, Colombia and Afghanistan. The generally higher scores in these crises mask the reality faced by humanitarian organisations, each of which is working under very difficult conditions, and each tackling different issues and experiencing different dynamics with donors. Respondents provide scores for those donors that fund their efforts and are therefore actively providing aid in the crisis.

In Sri Lanka, for example, despite some of the highest scores of all the crises studied, donors were censured by all organisations (UN, Red Cross Red Crescent and NGOs) for not doing more to facilitate access to civilian populations affected by conflict or working more actively to prevent and mitigate the effects of conflict. The majority of donors that were present and active in-country were praised for promoting guiding principles and trying to coordinate a common stance in the response (Hidalgo 2010). In Colombia and Ethiopia, humanitarian organisations were critical of donor complacency in accepting governments' assessments of the crises without challenging them to recognise the extent of humanitarian needs and supporting the work of humanitarian organisations (Espada 2010 and Solé-Arqués 2010a). In Myanmar, donors seem to have worked around the difficult political issues around access initially, but faced problems later on issues of rehabilitation and development (Cosgrave 2010b) – and yet they scored around the average for all crises.

The crises with the lowest average scores for donors were in Somalia, DRC, China, the oPT and Haiti. It is surprising to see the results for DRC, given the long-term donor engagement there as a GHD pilot country. There are, though, clear examples of good donor practice in DRC, and the lower scores are related primarily to the lack of comprehensive coverage of needs in the country and the view that donors are not addressing root causes or exerting enough pressure on the government to protect its citizens (Gasser and Dijkzeul 2010). Somalia and the oPT, on the other hand, are extremely challenging contexts. The low scores for donors here reflect the frustrations of humanitarian agencies and their expectations that donor governments find a more consistent and coherent approach to addressing the serious issues around protection and access (Hansch 2010 and Solé-Arqués 2010b).

Table 4: HRI 2009 – Rankings and scores by pillars

	Ranking and scores by pillars											
	Responding to needs		Prevention, risk reduction and recovery		Working with humanitarian partners		Protection and International Law		Learning and accountability		Overall ranking	
Donor	**Rank**	**Score**	**Rank**	**Score**	**Rank**	**Score**	**Rank**	**Score**	**Rank**	**Score**	**Rank**	**Score**
Australia	12	6.48	8	6.07	13	6.00	5	7.11	6	7.11	**10**	**6.49**
Austria	18	5.50	19	4.86	18	5.13	10	6.79	14	6.49	**18**	**5.64**
Belgium	19	5.38	15	5.39	12	6.09	17	6.20	19	5.79	**17**	**5.71**
Canada	13	6.42	16	5.37	10	6.31	11	6.77	9	6.81	**13**	**6.30**
Denmark	6	7.18	2	6.74	3	7.23	3	7.95	1	7.60	**4**	**7.28**
European Commission	5	7.86	3	6.52	11	6.11	4	7.39	3	7.29	**5**	**7.08**
Finland	10	6.67	14	5.47	8	6.55	14	6.67	16	6.27	**12**	**6.35**
France	22	5.11	22	4.48	20	4.73	18	6.06	13	6.54	**20**	**5.26**
Germany	16	5.86	17	5.17	17	5.39	15	6.63	17	6.16	**16**	**5.79**
Greece	21	5.12	23	4.30	23	4.22	19	5.89	22	5.09	**22**	**4.89**
Ireland	3	8.03	1	6.97	5	7.15	7	6.94	10	6.80	**3**	**7.30**
Italy	20	5.31	20	4.84	22	4.43	21	5.38	21	5.22	**21**	**5.04**
Japan	17	5.76	13	5.67	19	4.77	20	5.52	12	6.64	**19**	**5.64**
Luxembourg	4	7.88	4	6.21	9	6.53	12	6.77	20	5.48	**7**	**6.75**
Netherlands	7	7.10	5	6.15	4	7.18	6	7.10	8	6.97	**6**	**6.91**
New Zealand	11	6.62	10	5.92	14	5.99	8	6.89	11	6.79	**11**	**6.42**
Norway	1	8.19	7	6.08	1	7.77	2	8.10	7	7.01	**1**	**7.49**
Portugal	23	3.13	21	4.75	21	4.61	23	4.77	23	3.74	**23**	**4.09**
Spain	15	5.97	12	5.73	16	5.45	16	6.35	18	6.01	**15**	**5.88**
Sweden	2	8.10	6	6.11	2	7.46	1	8.31	5	7.17	**2**	**7.47**
Switzerland	8	6.98	9	5.96	6	6.82	13	6.72	4	7.19	**8**	**6.74**
United Kingdom	14	6.27	11	5.84	7	6.80	9	6.83	2	7.30	**9**	**6.53**
United States	9	6.69	18	5.03	15	5.76	22	5.19	15	6.31	**14**	**5.89**

Pillar 1
Responding to needs

Pillar 1 corresponds to the core *GHD Principles:* that the primary aims of humanitarian assistance should be to save lives, prevent and alleviate suffering, and restore dignity, and that assistance should be in proportion to needs. Consequently, this is the most heavily weighted pillar within the HRI, representing 20 percent of the rankings.

The findings in Pillar 1 show that donors continue to lag behind in their commitments to allocate resources equitably among crises and in accordance to needs, leaving millions of people without adequate assistance. This issue was identified in last year's HRI, but progress has been slow. As the most recent Montreux meeting on humanitarian financing noted, "there [is] a proliferation of needs-assessment instruments, which were often deployed to maximise funds raised for individual agencies, without adequate coordination or sharing of information" (ICVA 2009).

On a positive note, some donors, such as DFID, are committed to strengthening more evidence-based approaches to needs assessments, as seen in their support for a comprehensive joint needs assessment in the aftermath of cyclone Nargis in Myanmar (Blewitt et al 2008). However, many organisations that participated in the HRI field interviews cautioned against developing monolithic systems and instead called for flexible and complementary approaches to ensure that all needs are identified and all responses context-specific.

In this pillar, Norway ranked first, followed by Sweden, Ireland, Luxembourg and the European Commission (EC). This group of donors best represents good efforts to align responses to need, maintain generosity in the levels of funding committed and ensure that humanitarian assistance is impartial, neutral and independent. As such, they are an example for others. In this group, Norway stands out, with comments made in many field interviews commending its strong and principled stance on issues around protection and access. As in last year's HRI, the inclusion of Luxembourg and Ireland in the top five positions in this pillar shows that smaller donors can find a niche and use their assistance in ways that complement and reinforce the core *GHD Principles* (see Table 5).

In the crises studied, donors on average performed better in survey questions and qualitative indicators for Pillar 1 in Sri Lanka, Georgia, China and Myanmar, but poorest in Haiti, the DRC and the oPT. Donors' highest average scores in all crises were around questions regarding the respect for neutrality and impartiality, non-discrimination, and alignment with the humanitarian objectives of saving lives and alleviating suffering. In contrast, the lowest average scores were for survey questions asking if the donors' assistance was influenced by other interests, such as political, economic or military/security interests. This was also the question with the highest range of differences between the top-scoring and lowest-scoring donors.

The challenge of humanitarian access

Humanitarian access emerged as the major challenge in far too many areas around the globe this year. In countless crises, humanitarian aid and personnel are prevented from reaching the millions of people in need of vital assistance. In some of the crises studied, such as Georgia, Somalia, Sri Lanka and the oPT, government donors seem unable to advocate successfully or intervene to guarantee access. In the case of Afghanistan, donors were unable to separate security interests from humanitarian efforts. In others, such as Myanmar, Ethiopia and Colombia, donors could have been more assertive, employing 'smart' diplomacy to challenge the host governments' attempts to restrict access, conceal the extent of humanitarian needs and even deny the very existence of a humanitarian crisis. In all cases, insecurity for both humanitarian workers and affected populations continues to hamper access to assistance and remains an issue for donors to address.

The obvious consequence of problems of access is increased human suffering. Needs may not be covered adequately or at the level of quality required. There are growing numbers of examples of remote management of operations, where neither donors nor operational organisations have direct access to the affected populations and where they cannot therefore obtain evidence that their interventions are meeting actual needs. This is creating a situation of 'remote accountability'. Somalia, where 90 percent of humanitarian organisations operate from outside the country, making for enormous difficulties in meeting humanitarian needs (Hansch 2010), is a case in point.

Security has acted as a real concern and a major obstacle in many conflict areas, with relief workers facing difficulties in obtaining safe access to vulnerable civilian populations. In 2008, more than 260 humanitarian aid workers were killed, kidnapped or seriously injured. Too often, access is obstructed, hindered or only granted sporadically with authorities often wanting full control over resources and activities (Concern Worldwide 2009).

In many of the conflicts seen in the past year, the deliberate deprivation and targeting of civilians was part of the political and military strategy. Access was often denied because it was viewed as contrary to the political and military goals of local governments or warring parties. In Somalia, most aid agencies reported that access topped the list of challenges in 2008 and 2009. In this crisis, the number of full-time expatriates working with NGOs, UN agencies, the ICRC and donors dropped from several hundred in 2007 to none at all in 2009. In Somalia, where the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) constantly monitors the level of humanitarian access and agencies refer to access coefficients, "there are many areas where access is completely denied and security is as much a problem as authorities limiting or denying access" (OCHA Somalia 2009). In Afghanistan, as a result of the growing insecurity and limited access in most of the southern and eastern parts of the country, the real dimensions of the crisis are unknown. Access was also restricted in response to a 'natural' disaster in the context of Myanmar. In the South Ossetia crisis in Georgia, it was not until almost three months after the conflict that Russia allowed humanitarian agencies access to a buffer zone around South Ossetia and Abkhazia (Marañón and Redheffer 2010).

In the crises covered by the HRI 2009, key efforts related to ensuring access involved monitoring attitudes towards civil society and the humanitarian community. In Sri Lanka, negative campaigning in the media against the bulk of the international community's aid effort was a cause for concern. There were many instances in which humanitarian workers were accused of collaborating with terrorism or being terrorists (Hidalgo 2010).

Access is very much associated with the term 'humanitarian space' which was defined as "a space of freedom in which we are free to evaluate needs, free to monitor the distribution and use of relief goods, and free to have a dialogue with the people" (Brauman 2007). The existence of this free space in humanitarian action is directly associated with the adherence to the key principles of neutrality and impartiality. More thought should be given as to how this space could be opened up and secured.

In Ethiopia, donors were generally unwilling to push the government on access issues and felt that it was more appropriate for the UN to take on this role. In response to Norway's actions in Ethiopia, the government ordered six Norwegian diplomats to leave the country in September 2007 and relations were only normalised a year later (Reuters 2007). As in other contexts, there was fear of reprisal. Access to internal conflict areas, particularly the Somali region, remains severely curtailed. The Ethiopian Government controls the secondary and final distribution of aid and tries to decrease the number of beneficiaries the international community wants to cover. Both the US and, to a lesser extent, the UK did lobby the government on access issues and this was regarded as very good practice by agencies on the ground, particularly by UN personnel who felt that the UN had insufficient leverage. Donor positions were, however, inconsistent. The EC decided not to fund certain agencies in the Somali region because of the lack of access and transparency, while the UK targeted this region specifically and asked that the same agencies focus their assistance there (Solé-Arqués 2010a).

In Georgia, donors were generous in monetary terms, but did not direct enough effort and pressure towards achieving access. The Georgian Government claimed that the humanitarian actors entering South Ossetia would undermine their territorial integrity (Marañón and Redheffer 2010).

These examples emphasise why donors should consider acting consistently and assertively to address access issues. Donors have a clear role to play not only in bringing about humanitarian access, but also in taking care that their actions do not further compromise desperately needed 'humanitarian space'. In the *GHD Principles*, donors have committed to "maintain their readiness to offer support to the implementation of humanitarian action, including the facilitation of safe humanitarian access". Given the current level of challenge, donors in the GHD group might want to consider developing a common approach with guidance on how to address issues of access. Any such approach would need to be flexible and pragmatic, recognising that the dynamics of each crisis are different, while being guided above all by humanitarian objectives.

Good practice and areas of concern

The following examples of good practice were revealed in the HRI survey:

Ethiopia Thanks to pressure exerted by USAID on the Ethiopian Government, the restrictions on access to the Somali region eased slightly in autumn 2008. The government allowed UN representatives to assess the situation and to open regional offices there. It permitted WFP to set up special operations. Similarly, DFID also put pressure on the Ethiopian Government, prioritising funding to the Somali region to conduct a nutritional survey.

Myanmar Concerted diplomacy from ASEAN countries helped ease tensions with Myanmar authorities and opened the door for international assistance.

Sri Lanka Given the difficult working environment, donors came together to develop guiding humanitarian principles appropriate to the Sri Lankan context. Traditional donors made an effort to ensure that Japan remained involved in the common framework.

The following areas of concern were also revealed:

Access This remains a key area where donors need to focus their efforts.

Fund allocation Donors tend to allocate funding to respond to the needs of specific beneficiary categories, such as refugees and IDPs, and in specific geographic areas. This is often at odds with a holistic needs-based approach and a comprehensive response that takes local contexts into account and factors in host populations and capacities.

Areas of action Donors have failed to address the root causes of human suffering in complex emergencies such as Afghanistan, Colombia, Chad, the DRC or Somalia.

Recommendation

Donors could, with increased coordination at country level and less initial earmarking of their own assistance, help curb the level of fragmentation and imbalance of their current humanitarian response.

Pillar 2
Prevention, risk reduction and recovery

Pillar 2 is based on the *GHD Principles* that recognise that an effective emergency response must meet immediate needs while respecting and building local capacity to cope with crises and laying the foundation for longer-term recovery and development. The *GHD Principles* also emphasise the need for donors to invest in prevention and risk reduction in order to minimise the human costs of disasters and conflicts.

The issue has been the topic of many different policy papers, research and discussions, but these have yet to lead to significant changes in donor behaviour. For example, the most recent report of the Global Humanitarian Forum (GHF) on the humanitarian consequences of climate change again reinforced the need for comprehensive and integrated approaches to prevention and mitigation strategies. Similarly, a recent paper on donor engagement for humanitarian assistance highlights the difficulties of both the US and European donor agencies in adequately addressing the situation (Stoddard 2009). The HRI 2008 report also raised the issue of a gap in donor support for prevention and preparedness, and for adequate support for the transition from relief to recovery and development (DARA 2009). This year's donor scores show little improvement in this area.

In this pillar, Ireland, Denmark, the EC, Luxembourg and the Netherlands took the top five slots. This group of donors has shown they are serious about meeting the *GHD Principles* around investing in prevention, risk reduction and recovery as an integral part of humanitarian response. Luxembourg and Ireland are again in the top five positions in this pillar, reinforcing the message that small donors can play an important role in leading by example.

In terms of prevention, risk reduction and recovery, there is a significant gap between what donor governments commit to in the GHD and what is actually delivered on the ground. Donors also lag behind in supporting efforts to build the preparedness and prevention capacity of at-risk communities (and humanitarian organisations), and integrating humanitarian assistance with long-term strategies for both disaster risk reduction and climate change adaption.

Within the pillar, the indicator for donor funding for local capacity has the lowest average score of all the HRI indicators, yet local capacity is critical to effective preparedness and rapid response to crises, as well as for long-term coping skills and resilience. Donors received low scores for their funding of international disaster risk-mitigation mechanisms, but showed great disparity between the top-ranked donors and the rest. Similarly, the survey-based indicators around donor support for the transition between relief, recovery and development, and support to prevent and strengthen preparedness for future crises, also received low scores. This is an area where donors are consistently rated poorly by their operational partners (see Table 6).

In the HRI field research, donors overall received some of the lowest scores against Pillar 2 survey questions. In Timor Leste and Sri Lanka, donors rated well above the donor average, followed by Colombia. This might be due to the long-term livelihoods and recovery programming in these countries. All other crises had lower scores for these questions, reflecting the overall perception by humanitarian organisations that donors are not doing enough in this important area.

With climate change already causing severe social and economic upheaval, and threatening to create a massive increase in the numbers of people in need, the human costs of inaction on prevention and preparedness will be enormous. HRI field research in Haiti and Myanmar shows the devastating consequences when local communities and the humanitarian system are not prepared and have little capacity to respond effectively to a disaster. These crises illustrate how a sustained investment in risk-reduction efforts could have saved lives and helped to recover livelihoods and maintain human dignity (Gasser 2010 and Cosgrave 2010b). Crises resulting from climate change are expected to become more common, more far-reaching and more complex, with catastrophic combinations of different kinds of human vulnerabilities. This calls for serious investment in building response capacities, in strengthening community resilience and coping strategies, and in prevention efforts.

While most of the emphasis so far has been on disaster risk reduction, the HRI findings also emphasise the need to invest in conflict prevention and preparedness measures. The HRI crisis reports on the conflicts in the oPT, Sri Lanka and Georgia show how the international community was ill-prepared for the humanitarian consequences of these conflicts on civilian populations (Solé-Arqués 2010b, Hidalgo 2010 and Marañón and Redheffer 2010). Equally, the military surge in Afghanistan and in neighbouring Pakistan shows that there is a need for increased efforts to monitor the effects,

think through the potential scenarios and prepare for the likely humanitarian consequences (Polastro 2010). The fact that these conflicts were predictable and perhaps avoidable underscores the need for greater diplomatic efforts before planned military interventions to minimise the human costs. HRI research shows that better support for preparedness measures (such as contingency planning and pre-positioning of supplies, humanitarian personnel, etc.) in anticipation of the likely humanitarian needs would enable a more effective response, and active advocacy is required before and during a conflict for all parties to respect international law and access.

If wealthy country governments want to maximise the value of their humanitarian assistance, they should consider massively scaling up their investment into effective crisis-prevention and preparedness measures to reduce and mitigate the effects of crises today and in the future. Specific actions that government donors could take include streamlining and harmonising the different and often fragmented funding available for conflict- and disaster-prevention response and recovery in order to refocus on reducing vulnerability and strengthening capacities for response. This would be for those disasters anticipated as a result of climate change as well as other crises.

Pillar 3 Working with humanitarian partners

The third pillar of the HRI – working with humanitarian partners – assesses how well donors support the work of agencies implementing the humanitarian response. The *GHD Principles* explicitly recognise the distinct but complementary roles of the UN system, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in humanitarian action. The *GHD Principles* suggest that each of these channels is legitimate and important for a balanced and complementary response, and that donors should support the work of each of these components of the system.

Donors achieve mixed scores with regard to their relationship with their operational partners. Norway, Sweden and Denmark took the top three positions in this pillar, with the Netherlands coming in at fourth place and Ireland at fifth. Scores against the specific indicators for this pillar are among the lowest of all indicators in the index. In the quantitative indicators, funding to UN coordination mechanisms and common services is the second-lowest average score of all HRI indicators, at 3.28 on a ten-point scale. It is also the indicator with some of the largest variations between donors. Three donors, Ireland, Norway and Sweden, scored ten, while ten other donors scored less than two points. Other indicators where donors scored poorly related to earmarking of funding, funding to NGOs and survey questions around long-term funding arrangements and strengthening humanitarian response capacity (see Table 7).

In the field research, donors received particularly low marks in this pillar in Haiti and China, reflecting concerns about the quality of the relationship between the government, humanitarian organisations and donors. With the exception of the IFRC and other Red Cross partners, international donors and agencies were relegated to a secondary role in China, which is unfamiliar territory for many agencies (Cosgrave 2010a). Haiti, on the other hand, reflects the deep sense of frustration of humanitarian organisations with donors (Gasser 2010).

Last year, the HRI 2008 findings underlined the need for donors to invest in building and sustaining the capacity of their partners, in particular local authorities and civil society organisations in crisis-affected countries (DARA 2009). While there are some modest improvements in terms of expanding funding to support better non-UN agencies engaged in humanitarian action (for example, changes in the CERF allow NGOs more access to funding), donor funding is still overwhelmingly biased towards international actors. This situation undermines local and national-level NGOs and civil society organisations in crisis-affected countries. These organisations are critical to any response, but are most likely to be affected by problems in accessing funding locally because of the effects of the current global economic crisis and the projected increase in the number and scale of humanitarian emergencies in the future.

There are positive signs too though. A recent meeting of the GHD donors placed the issue of how donors could better support NGOS and local actors on the agenda. Participants discussed how to support initiatives such as the Principles of Partnership, to guide how the components of the humanitarian system work together. This is a step forward, but one that would benefit from further efforts and a common approach by all donors (Global Humanitarian Platform 2009).

Pillar 4 Protection and International Law

Pillar 4 of the HRI assesses to what extent donors integrate the *GHD Principles* that call on donors to respect and implement international laws, guidelines and other legal mechanisms, as well as ensuring protection of crisis-affected populations. The HRI attempts to assess not only if donor governments have signed up to such legal instruments, but whether they actively promote their respect and application in different crisis settings.

The average scores in this pillar are deceptive as the survey responses and field interviews scored very differently. Sweden, Norway and Denmark took the top marks, followed by the EC and Australia. Overall, donor scores averaged 6.62. In survey-based indicators around donor support for protection, the average score was 7.62, with little difference between the highest-ranking and lowest-ranking donors. The average score on the indicator around donors facilitating safe access was slightly lower, at 6.57, again with little difference among donors. But in the field interviews, these were the two issues that were raised as a concern consistently by humanitarian organisations in the majority of crises studied, including situations of disasters. The other indicators in this pillar include alignment with and application of a number of international legal conventions. There are wide differences between the top-ranked and bottom-ranked donors around respect for international humanitarian law, human rights law and refugee law (see Table 8).

At the field level, there is a certain disparity among the crises. Donors rated extremely poorly in Haiti, the oPT, Ethiopia and Somalia, with donors once again taking the top scores for their response in this pillar in Sri Lanka and Timor Leste. It is interesting to note that even in situations of 'natural' disaster, there is an expectation from many humanitarian organisations that donors should be more active in advocating respect for international laws, and for protection and safe humanitarian access.

Protecting populations at risk

The widespread problem of protection is another issue where donors and the humanitarian sector face serious challenges in meeting the most basic need of crisis-affected populations – their safety from harm. The inclusion of protection as a specific objective of humanitarian action was viewed as an important achievement in the *GHD Principles*. While the primary responsibility for civilian protection rests with governments, "protection efforts must be focused on the individual rather than the security interests of the state" (OCHA 2001). Traditionally, donors have been little inclined to fund protection efforts because of the low visibility of these actions. Donors funding mechanisms also tend to create an incentive to channel commodities in lieu of an often much-needed staffing presence. Protection, like prevention, appears to be difficult to fully grasp and support because it is not reactive and its results and impact are not directly established.

Appropriate protection measures are conflict-specific and can involve populations caught up in low-intensity conflicts or in grey areas between war and peace. In Sri Lanka this year, providing protection in the east of the country, in 'liberated areas' without an established rule of law, was seen as a need to which few agencies and donors were providing a response. Similarly, before this year's intensified fighting, plans for defeating the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in Tamil-held areas and the potential humanitarian consequences were well known, yet few donors were willing to fund agency personnel to ensure a humanitarian presence in the country before the intensive onslaught (Hidalgo 2010).

Even in the DRC, where *GHD Principles* have been piloted and major progress made with respect to needs-based funding and implementing humanitarian standards, it was found that donors could provide greater leadership on protection issues. The HRI mission to the DRC established that humanitarian action there is better at responding to basic needs than addressing the chronic character of the crisis as this meant engaging in comprehensive efforts where elements of security-sector reform were involved (Gasser and Dijkzeul 2010).

Pillar 5 Learning and accountability

All donor responses show there is great potential for improvement in learning and accountability. While evaluations are a well-embedded practice in the humanitarian system, the utilisation of evaluations is limited. Even among donors, positive elements such as OECD-DAC peer reviews of donors' humanitarian assistance frameworks do not necessarily lead to the changes required to apply good practice in donors' working methods. Learning from the successes and mistakes of donors, as well as other parts of the humanitarian system, is an essential element in increasing accountability towards people affected by crisis.

As previously mentioned, there are a number of initiatives to improve learning and accountability in the humanitarian sector. While there is much overlap and there are some contradictory approaches, there is also evidence of growing convergence among initiatives and greater attention to evaluations, learning and accountability towards affected populations at the operational level. Many of these initiatives have been supported by donors. However, donors have not necessarily applied the same energy and resources in tackling issues around how to improve 'downward' donor accountability towards their partners and the people that humanitarian action hopes to support.

The top-ranked donor in this pillar was Denmark, with the UK a close second, the EC third, Switzerland fourth and Sweden fifth. The average overall score for the pillar was 6.44, far short of the maximum ten on the HRI's scale. One of the lowest average scores in the specific indicators in this pillar was a 5.75 score against survey questions asking if the donor provides timely, transparent and accessible information about funding and decision-making processes. Donors also scored poorly in terms of supporting initiatives to improve accountability towards affected populations and for working with their partners to support implementation of evaluation recommendations. And while GHD donors did well on requesting that their partners apply good practice and quality standards in their programmes (7.91), actual monitoring of adherence to those standards scored significantly lower on average, as did the scores for supporting agencies to implement recommendations from evaluations (see Table 9).

At the field level, as with other pillars, the overall donor response was rated highest in Sri Lanka and Timor Leste, and lowest in the oPT. All this seems to point to an inherent weakness among donors, who do little to reflect their commitment to prioritise accountability towards affected populations in their practices. This is clearly an area where donors could improve their relationships with humanitarian organisations, host governments and local authorities, as well as with affected populations.

The performance of non-traditional 'donors'

This year, the HRI survey process was expanded to include non-GHD donor countries in the responses. While OECD-DAC donors provide the bulk of humanitarian funding (around 85 percent), non-traditional and emerging donors and new funding mechanisms are steadily gaining ground. To understand how these non-traditional funders behave, the HRI asked humanitarian organisations to assess them against the same questions as GHD donors. The results allow for some preliminary analysis and comparisons of the perceptions of humanitarian organisations for donors who have signed up to the GHD against other donors and funding sources which have not. This comparison helps to pinpoint areas for further analysis to identify any lessons and good donor practice for the entire humanitarian sector.

For this exercise, DARA defined a donor as any agency or institution that directly funded the work of the organisation, excluding donations or funding from the general public. In many cases, the original source of the funding may have come from an OECD-DAC donor, a 'back-donor' – but the funding relationship is not managed directly by the back-donor so there is no direct relationship with the recipient organisation. For example, 61 percent of CERF funding comes from just four OECD-DAC donors: the UK, Norway, the Netherlands and Sweden (OCHA FTS 2009), but the fund itself is managed through OCHA. Similarly, national Red Cross societies in OECD-DAC countries and the IFRC and ICRC often receive funding from OECD-DAC governments as well as the general public, but channel the funding through their own network.

These donors' funding sources were broadly divided into the following categories:

- Non-DAC government donors, comprising new donors, such as Saudi Arabia, Venezuela and India, and several EU countries, some of whom have signed up to the *GHD Principles.*
- UN agencies that contract or fund other organisations to undertake response activities, for example WFP when it contracts a local NGO for food distribution.
- Red Cross Red Crescent Movement when it channels funding (most often from Red Cross societies from OECD-DAC countries) to the IFRC, ICRC or other national Red Cross Red Crescent societies
- Pooled Funds, including CERF, Humanitarian Response Funds (HRF) and other funding mechanisms largely financed through the DAC donors but independently managed and administered through the OCHA or UN Development Programme (UNDP).
- International NGOs (INGOs) and their networks that often work with, or channel funding through, local partners to implement programmes at the country level.
- Foundations and corporate donors, which typically only provide funding and are not engaged in operational activities.
- Multilateral non-UN agencies such as the World Bank and Inter-American Development Bank (IADB).

The nature of the relationship between the non-DAC donors and the implementing organisation is of interest in beginning to determine if some of the core concepts of good practice that governments agreed to in the GHD are applicable or relevant to these other 'donors'. The results only reflect survey questionnaire responses and have not been cross-checked against other secondary sources so they are still very preliminary and by no means conclusive. Nevertheless, the following findings are interesting:

- Humanitarian organisations that received funding from INGOs consistently rated them the highest in all pillars, showing that INGOs are well regarded in the way they fund and support their partners.

- The Red Cross Red Crescent was the next highest-rated donor type and was ranked first by respondents for support in Pillar 2 (Prevention, risk reduction and recovery), reflecting a long-standing commitment in this area.
- UN agencies and Pooled Funds were consistently rated below average (including below the DAC donor countries average) in nearly all the pillars, with the exception of Pillar 4 (Protection and International Law), where they performed reasonably well.
- DAC donor countries were rated as average in all pillars in comparison to other donor types.
- Non-DAC donor countries were consistently rated as the poorest in terms of good practice. The exception was in Pillar 2 (Prevention, risk reduction and recovery), where there was virtually no difference at all between DAC and non-DAC donors.

These results suggest that INGOs and the Red Cross Red Crescent have clearly taken the lead in terms of applying good practice in the way they fund and support humanitarian action, at least against the criteria of the *GHD Principles*. There may be lessons to be learned in the way their assistance and funding is structured and provided that would be of interest to the GHD group, particularly around the working relationships and partnerships that they have with other actors.

The poor ratings for UN agencies and Pooled Funds are another area where more analysis is required. As many government donors have invested in these multilateral mechanisms, it would be in their interests to review how the UN and Pooled Funds interact with humanitarian organisations in order to streamline and improve their functioning. The previously mentioned two-year evaluation of the CERF fund is a good first step towards this understanding.

Finally, with the growing importance of non-DAC countries in funding and supporting humanitarian action, there is a clear need to work more closely with these donors so that they can understand and apply good practice in their relationships with humanitarian organisations. Some of these donor countries have already signed up to the *GHD Principles*, but the GHD group should consider doing much more to engage with these donors in order to work towards a common understanding of how best to support effective humanitarian action.

DARA intends to continue to explore these issues in more detail to build a more complete picture of what constitutes good practice in the sector and how to apply the lessons from other experiences to government donors.

Recommendations

The HRI findings from the many different crises studied this year identify four critical failings in humanitarian response. In doing so, they pinpoint the need to deepen awareness and understanding of what constitutes good donor practice, improve humanitarian access, prioritise the protection of vulnerable populations and renew efforts targeted at prevention and preparedness. Donors should consider doing much more to support and facilitate effective and pragmatic solutions to each of these issues, with an emphasis on balancing the needs for a systematic and coordinated approach with enough flexibility to adapt to the specific dynamics of different crises.

The following recommendations are an initial set of suggestions on where and how donors should consider focusing and prioritising their collective efforts, and where they could help to drive an agenda for change with the aim of ensuring that the needs and priorities of crisis-affected people come first. These recommendations are informed by hundreds of interviews with representatives of humanitarian organisations working in some of the most difficult crisis contexts imaginable: Afghanistan, Chad, Colombia, Sri Lanka, etc. The HRI offered these representatives an opportunity to reflect on how donors can better support their work. The recommendations are based on DARA's analysis of the overall HRI findings and the trends and patterns emerging after three years' experience of investigating donor performance and accountability.

Specific recommendations to the GHD group

Creating understanding and ensuring progress

The HRI points to several areas where GHD donor agencies should consider prioritising their work in the coming year in order to boost efforts to improve donor performance and accountability. The GHD declaration was a critical step forward to bring donors together with a commitment to a common aim: making sure that donor assistance contributes in the best way possible to meeting humanitarian objectives. The GHD deserves continued political support from governments. It is now time to review progress and revise the concepts of what good donor practice is in the light of advances in the humanitarian reform agenda and a growing convergence in ideas about quality, performance and accountability in the sector. Accordingly, the HRI suggests that, to move forward, the GHD group should consider the need to:

1. Renew donor commitment to transparency by reporting their aid through FTS
2. Recognise and fund coordination tools and mechanisms other than those of the UN
3. Engage in a wider discussion on what good donor practice means in today's context
4. Develop specific, practical guidance to donor agency staff and partner organisations on implementing GHD practice
5. Refine and revise the language of the *GHD Principles* to clarify inconsistencies and better reflect recent developments in the sector

Recommendations for donor governments

Facilitating access

As outlined above and in the HRI crisis reports, the issue of humanitarian access is a growing concern in too many crisis contexts. Access is an issue both for affected populations in terms of access to the resources and support they need to survive and recover from crisis, and for humanitarian organisations to gain physical access to provide assistance. In too many crises, political interference and security issues hamper adequate access. In others, the difficult physical conditions and enormous resources needed to access populations is a further impediment. Regardless of the causes, the consequences are that much-needed support and assistance is not available to affected populations, and this increases and often prolongs their suffering. Donor governments should therefore consider the need to:

6 Develop more specific guidelines and common approaches on how to advocate greater access. In the crisis situations studied this year, either government or other authorities in crisis-affected countries denied access to, or even the existence of, a humanitarian emergency. Any guidelines developed should be adaptable to different situations and build on good practice and specific lessons learned. For example, the solution to problems of access in Myanmar was not the sabre-rattling of French or US naval ships, but a more subtle regional approach through the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Similarly, access in a security-driven context such as Afghanistan, or a politically driven context such as Ethiopia (which is a Paris Declaration pilot country), present different challenges (Polastro 2010 and Solé-Arqués 2010). Donors need to learn from these successes and their mistakes so as to be better prepared to act in a coordinated manner in future.

7 Provide the necessary political support and resources to operational agencies facing access issues. In many of the crises studied, donors were viewed as unassertive when pushing for safe access with the government or parties to a conflict. At times, this was perceived to result from a reluctance to challenge or confront a government. Donors should consider exerting pressure in a positive manner, using more effective diplomacy and other means to encourage access. More often than not the message that access is a priority does not get through. Donors could also help by providing the necessary resources to operational agencies as too often restricted funding for increased overheads and costs associated with access in difficult conditions is not permitted by donors.

Prioritising protection

The HRI findings highlight the persistent problem of protection of at-risk populations. This is one of the worst examples of how governments and the international humanitarian system fail to fulfil their duties to preserve and protect the human rights and physical and psychological integrity of people already suffering the effects of crisis. Despite years of efforts to raise the profile of protection issues, the system as a whole has not made enough progress. Consequently, donor governments should:

8 Significantly increase the resources available for protection, insisting on the importance of protection among all partners and stakeholders. This could be achieved by supporting training and other tools to better equip humanitarian organisations to deal with the challenge of protection, as well as by regularly monitoring protection issues. This could include support from some of the initiatives developed by humanitarian agencies that promote greater accountability towards affected populations.

Scaling-up prevention and preparedness

The underlying theme of most of the HRI findings in this report, as in last year's, is the urgent need to increase efforts significantly to prevent or at least minimise the effects of the much greater number of crises and the vastly increased humanitarian needs predicted in the future. The HRI research confirms that neither donors nor humanitarian agencies are prepared for the unprecedented levels of need that a potential confluence of multiple risks are likely to have as a result of climate change, economic uncertainty and conflicts. Donor governments should therefore:

9 Invest in conflict and disaster prevention and risk reduction. The economic and human benefits of investing in prevention are clear, but the lack of coherent approaches by donors and the serious under-investment in the area hamper the ability of the humanitarian sector to minimise the effects of disaster and conflicts. Governments need to see conflict prevention as an integral part of the overall humanitarian response.

10 Set aside contingency funding and fund organisational preparedness. Governments cannot continue to rely on humanitarian actors to fill the gap in crises without investing in maintaining and expanding their operational capacity. Access to funding to allow humanitarian organisations to anticipate, prepare for and adapt to a rapidly changing humanitarian environment would help to ensure that the system is able to cope with changing operating conditions and expanding needs.

11 Better harmonise the various funding available for prevention; preparedness; risk reduction; linking relief, rehabilitation and development (LRRD); climate change and peace-building. There is too much fragmentation in the way donors assess and provide aid to these different areas of work, yet the consequences in terms of vulnerability are often the same. Donors governments could, with their different agencies, consider taking a more pragmatic view of how best to coordinate and integrate efforts in all these areas, based on the central idea of reducing vulnerability and strengthening coping capacity and resilience.

Table 5: Pillar 1 Rankings – Responding to needs

Qualitative indicators based on the Questionnaire on Donor Practice Donor	Saving lives and maintaining human dignity	Neutrality and impartiality	Non-discrimination	Independence from non-humanitarian objectives	Needs based responses	Assessing needs	Funding decisions on needs assessments	Support not affected by other crises	Beneficiary involvement	Donor capacity for informed decision-making	Timeliness of funding
Australia	9	15	6	15	13	6	4	6	12	10	11
Austria	2	1	1	2	1	16	3	22	14	14	10
Belgium	17	22	22	20	21	19	21	21	20	16	20
Canada	3	5	14	5	5	17	10	13	7	9	16
Denmark	16	6	4	12	8	7	6	17	1	6	7
EC	4	11	17	11	6	18	9	10	3	1	15
Finland	13	17	7	4	15	2	2	2	21	18	18
France	18	21	19	21	16	21	20	15	13	18	12
Germany	7	9	8	6	4	11	7	19	6	5	17
Greece	19	14	5	9	22	22	22	4	22	22	21
Ireland	6	7	11	1	3	9	17	11	17	13	4
Italy	22	20	18	18	20	20	19	18	11	20	19
Japan	14	12	16	17	18	13	15	9	15	12	14
Luxembourg	20	13	12	3	12	3	18	8	19	21	9
Netherlands	12	10	9	14	10	8	14	12	10	11	6
New Zealand	1	3	2	7	19	4	1	1	2	15	13
Norway	8	8	10	13	11	5	5	7	9	8	3
Portugal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Spain	21	18	21	19	17	12	16	20	18	17	22
Sweden	10	4	13	8	7	10	8	5	5	7	2
Switzerland	5	2	3	10	2	1	11	14	16	4	1
UK	11	16	15	16	9	15	12	3	8	2	5
US	15	19	20	22	14	14	13	16	4	3	8

Quantitative indicators Donor	Equitable distribution of funding to different crises countries	Funding to forgotten emergencies and those with low media coverage	Timeliness of funding to complex emergencies	Timeliness of funding to sudden onset disasters	Generosity and burden sharing	Equitable distribution of funding in accordance to needs in the crisis	Equitable distribution of funding against level of crisis and vulnerability
Australia	17	5	18	1	10	3	1
Austria	17	19	20	7	19	16	13
Belgium	17	9	23	11	14	4	1
Canada	8	17	12	14	11	10	16
Denmark	2	8	8	19	6	20	1
EC	N/A	7	1	8	N/A	2	12
Finland	1	11	17	10	8	22	10
France	17	12	21	3	21	8	15
Germany	11	14	19	16	16	15	17
Greece	9	21	13	21	17	9	21
Ireland	16	16	1	9	1	14	22
Italy	3	10	22	4	20	17	18
Japan	5	4	10	23	18	5	1
Luxembourg	13	20	9	5	1	19	14
Netherlands	4	3	16	22	5	13	1
New Zealand	15	18	7	6	9	21	20
Norway	7	6	5	15	1	18	1
Portugal	17	23	1	12	22	23	23
Spain	10	22	15	13	15	1	1
Sweden	6	13	4	20	1	11	11
Switzerland	12	15	14	18	7	12	19
UK	17	2	11	17	12	7	1
US	14	1	6	2	13	6	1

Main Sources: OCHA FTS, OECD/DAC, the World Bank, IFRC, the Federal Reserve, ECHO, Alertnet
Note: Qualitative data from Portugal has been removed from this table in order to maintain the confidentiality of the questionnaire respondent

Table 6: Pillar 2 Rankings – Prevention, risk reduction and recovery

Qualitative indicators based on the Questionnaire on Donor Practice / Donor	Mainstreaming risk reduction and prevention into the response	Crisis prevention and preparedness measures	Strengthening local community capacity for disaster and crisis preparedness	Supporting the transition between relief, early recovery and development	Building local capacity to work with humanitarian actors
Australia	6	11	11	12	3
Austria	16	10	18	7	20
Belgium	18	19	16	14	16
Canada	13	18	20	10	13
Denmark	1	8	2	13	1
EC	7	6	8	19	10
Finland	5	17	6	11	6
France	21	20	19	21	18
Germany	3	3	12	17	14
Greece	22	21	21	8	22
Ireland	11	12	15	2	19
Italy	20	22	14	20	17
Japan	14	16	13	6	11
Luxembourg	19	9	22	4	21
Netherlands	9	13	3	16	15
New Zealand	2	5	5	1	5
Norway	8	2	10	5	7
Portugal	-	-	-	-	-
Spain	15	15	7	22	2
Sweden	17	4	4	9	12
Switzerland	4	1	1	3	4
UK	10	7	9	15	8
US	12	14	17	18	9

Quantitative indicators / Donor	Funding local capacity	Funding international disaster risk mitigation mechanisms
Australia	9	7
Austria	21	16
Belgium	3	18
Canada	11	13
Denmark	13	1
EC	2	5
Finland	7	18
France	22	18
Germany	19	15
Greece	20	18
Ireland	1	6
Italy	14	14
Japan	8	11
Luxembourg	10	2
Netherlands	5	8
New Zealand	4	18
Norway	15	4
Portugal	23	18
Spain	6	10
Sweden	18	3
Switzerland	12	12
UK	16	9
US	17	17

Main Sources: OCHA FTS, OECD/DAC, the World Bank, IFRC, UNDP, ICRC, ISDR, the Federal Reserve
Note: Qualitative data from Portugal has been removed from this table in order to maintain the confidentiality of the questionnaire respondent

Table 7: Pillar 3 Rankings – Working with humanitarian partners

Qualitative indicators based on the Questionnaire on Donor Practice Donor	Adapting to changing needs	Reliability	Coordination	Advocacy for local and government authorities to carry out their responsibilities	Support local and government authorities' coordination capacity	Respect for the roles of the different components of the humanitarian sector	Conditionality that does not comprise humanitarian action	Flexibility	Longer-term funding arrangements	Strengthening humanitarian response capacity
Australia	12	12	4	9	14	4	10	5	20	15
Austria	18	1	12	1	18	20	14	14	6	7
Belgium	11	11	18	2	9	9	17	3	8	21
Canada	3	8	13	12	11	10	8	11	11	10
Denmark	10	3	11	15	15	8	6	9	2	16
EC	2	13	7	10	2	15	21	22	15	13
Finland	4	20	14	11	20	14	5	17	5	2
France	19	16	20	17	17	19	20	12	21	18
Germany	8	7	5	16	10	2	18	21	17	4
Greece	21	21	22	21	21	22	7	16	22	22
Ireland	20	17	19	18	22	21	1	1	16	3
Italy	17	22	21	22	16	13	22	20	18	19
Japan	7	10	17	14	12	7	15	18	14	5
Luxembourg	16	18	15	7	19	18	13	10	4	20
Netherlands	15	9	10	5	3	1	9	7	7	8
New Zealand	13	19	9	19	7	11	12	2	19	17
Norway	5	6	2	4	4	6	2	6	10	9
Portugal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Spain	22	14	16	20	13	17	16	19	13	6
Sweden	14	4	6	6	5	5	3	8	3	14
Switzerland	6	2	3	3	1	3	4	4	1	1
UK	9	15	1	8	8	12	11	13	9	12
US	1	5	8	13	6	16	19	15	12	11

Quantitative indicators Donor	Funding UN coordination mechanisms and common services	Funding to NGOs	Funding to CERF and other quick disbursement mechanisms	Un-earmarked funding	Funding UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeals	Funding IFRC and ICRC Appeals
Australia	6	18	12	16	11	12
Austria	20	9	16	14	21	20
Belgium	10	17	14	12	8	13
Canada	11	16	10	17	12	1
Denmark	5	2	1	10	1	1
EC	N/A	5	N/A	22	N/A	N/A
Finland	8	13	9	11	10	1
France	19	12	20	7	20	19
Germany	18	1	15	20	19	17
Greece	17	19	19	18	18	18
Ireland	1	6	1	6	1	1
Italy	16	22	17	19	15	16
Japan	21	20	21	21	16	21
Luxembourg	15	7	1	15	1	1
Netherlands	4	15	1	2	1	1
New Zealand	14	10	13	3	14	1
Norway	1	3	1	4	1	1
Portugal	22	23	18	1	22	22
Spain	13	21	1	9	17	15
Sweden	1	14	1	8	1	1
Switzerland	7	8	11	5	13	1
UK	9	11	1	13	1	1
US	12	4	22	23	9	14

Main Sources: OCHA FTS, OECD/DAC,ICRC, IFRC, the Federal Reserve
Note: Qualitative data from Portugal has been removed from this table in order to maintain the confidentiality of the questionnaire respondent

Table 8: Pillar 4 Rankings – Protection and International Law

Qualitative indicators based on the Questionnaire on Donor Practice Donor	Protection	Advocacy for the respect for human rights	Advocacy for the respect for and implementation of IHL	Supporting needs of refugees	Supporting needs of internally displaced persons	Facilitating safe humanitarian access
Australia	4	5	13	13	8	13
Austria	19	15	1	1	12	11
Belgium	14	10	17	18	21	21
Canada	7	11	7	4	5	14
Denmark	1	3	8	2	1	2
EC	8	6	6	12	7	10
Finland	9	14	10	15	22	1
France	17	17	19	16	14	20
Germany	16	12	2	3	9	15
Greece	22	21	14	19	20	3
Ireland	21	22	11	21	17	4
Italy	20	19	22	20	19	22
Japan	15	13	18	6	16	7
Luxembourg	11	16	16	11	18	18
Netherlands	10	1	4	9	6	12
New Zealand	2	7	15	22	4	5
Norway	3	2	9	7	3	16
Portugal	-	-	-	-	-	-
Spain	18	20	21	14	13	19
Sweden	6	4	3	5	2	17
Switzerland	5	8	5	8	10	9
UK	13	9	12	17	15	6
US	12	18	20	10	11	8

Quantitative indicators Donor	Respect for international humanitarian law	Respect for human rights law	Implementation of refugee law
Australia	13	15	3
Austria	14	17	10
Belgium	9	16	13
Canada	8	13	14
Denmark	4	4	4
EC	N/A	N/A	N/A
Finland	5	19	6
France	20	9	17
Germany	15	8	16
Greece	18	14	21
Ireland	3	1	8
Italy	16	20	18
Japan	19	21	22
Luxembourg	11	6	7
Netherlands	17	12	5
New Zealand	10	5	11
Norway	1	2	2
Portugal	22	10	19
Spain	12	7	15
Sweden	2	3	1
Switzerland	7	18	12
UK	6	11	9
US	21	22	20

Main Sources: OCHA FTS, OECD/DAC, the World Bank, EU, ICRC, OHCHR, UNHCR, the Federal Reserve
Note: Qualitative data from Portugal has been removed from this table in order to maintain the confidentiality of the questionnaire respondent

Table 9: Pillar 5 Rankings – Learning and accountability

Qualitative indicators based on the Questionnaire on Donor Practice Donor	Accountability towards affected populations	Transparency of funding and decision-making processes	Evaluations of partners' programmes	Support for monitoring and evaluation	Use of recommendations from evaluations	Promotion of good practice and quality standards	Monitoring adherence to quality standards.	Reporting requirements for humanitarian actors
Australia	3	15	14	7	18	1	6	3
Austria	1	1	1	4	2	6	3	1
Belgium	7	9	8	15	15	17	14	10
Canada	17	10	10	18	19	14	10	12
Denmark	15	16	9	2	1	7	11	9
EC	10	3	2	5	8	5	4	22
Finland	11	4	18	22	12	20	19	20
France	19	11	15	19	9	19	17	13
Germany	6	5	5	3	16	3	5	7
Greece	21	20	21	21	20	21	15	19
Ireland	20	12	20	13	21	10	20	2
Italy	18	21	19	20	22	16	18	18
Japan	9	16	17	6	17	9	1	17
Luxembourg	4	22	16	14	4	18	22	5
Netherlands	16	14	13	1	14	4	13	16
New Zealand	2	19	7	17	11	10	8	15
Norway	8	8	11	9	3	13	16	8
Portugal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Spain	22	18	22	16	13	22	21	21
Sweden	13	6	6	12	7	15	12	4
Switzerland	12	2	12	8	6	12	9	6
UK	5	7	4	11	5	8	7	11
US	14	13	3	10	10	2	2	14

Quantitative indicators Donor	Participation and support for accountability initiatives	Conducting evaluations
Australia	8	8
Austria	22	17
Belgium	16	20
Canada	10	10
Denmark	1	4
EC	5	7
Finland	17	6
France	15	1
Germany	14	19
Greece	20	22
Ireland	2	14
Italy	19	22
Japan	18	11
Luxembourg	22	18
Netherlands	7	12
New Zealand	13	2
Norway	11	5
Portugal	21	15
Spain	12	15
Sweden	3	9
Switzerland	6	3
UK	4	13
US	9	21

Main Sources of hard data: OCHA FTS, OECD/DAC, Accountability initiatives, the Federal Reserve
Note: Qualitative data from Portugal has been removed from this table in order to maintain the confidentiality of the questionnaire respondent

Notes

1 Receiving less than half the US $9.5 billion it sought for humanitarian aid this year.

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The HRI 2009 Technical Annex

The HRI Process and Methodology

This technical annex explains some of the key elements in the HRI research process and methodology used to generate the annual rankings of government donors. The annex begins with a summary of the main refinements made to the HRI methodology this year, followed by an overview of the HRI's conceptual foundation. This is followed by a summary of the HRI data collection and analysis process, and detailed information on the statistical model used to create the index.

Summary of the refinements to the HRI this year

Each edition of the HRI is an opportunity to continue to refine and improve the methodology and process, based on feedback and lessons learned from the previous year. While the framework and general scheme of indicators for the HRI 2009 remains the same as in the previous two editions, DARA has made several minor adjustments and improvements to help strengthen the quality of the index and ensure that the HRI findings are based on a solid methodological basis. The main refinements made this year include:

- Expanding the number of crises studied (from 10 to 13), increasing the number of survey responses for GHD donors (from 1400 to 1600)
- Improving the survey design and expanding the statistical analysis to increase survey reliability and validity
- Expanding the survey to assess non-GHD "donors" such as governmental INGOs, UN and Pooled Fund mechanisms, and private foundations. With over 500 survey responses this is a good foundation to explore how these actors perform as donors
- Improving the reliability of several quantitative data sources, and
- Improving the statistical formulations and analysis on many indicators

Aims and purposes of the HRI

The HRI is a collaborative research process that examines the role of donors in supporting more effective responses to humanitarian crises. One of the reasons DARA developed the HRI was to provide the humanitarian sector with an empirical evidence base to assess donor performance. Government donors are still the main funders of humanitarian assistance, and understanding how donors are contributing to meeting humanitarian objectives is key to achieve reforms and improvements in the humanitarian system as a whole.

As explained in previous editions of the HRI report, DARA selected an index and a ranking system as the most appropriate means of tracking government donors' progress in applying recognised good practice in the way they fund and support humanitarian action around the world. The HRI is similar to other annual ranking assessments such as the UNDP's Human Development Index, the Center for Global Development's Commitment to Development Index, or even the OECD's annual PISA assessment, which annually compares and ranks the performance of member states' educational systems. Each of these other indices has become an entry point for a more informed and balanced debate on these issues.

The HRI aims to do the same for the vital issue of how to ensure governments' humanitarian assistance actually contributes to meeting the needs of the millions of people affected by crisis, conflict and disaster each year. Through a comprehensive review of donor performance and accountability, the HRI highlights areas where government donors, humanitarian actors and civil society organisations can work together to improve the quality, effectiveness and impact of humanitarian assistance.

The underlying assumption of the HRI is that tracking and benchmarking donor performance and level of commitment against key indicators of good practice will stimulate improved donor policies and practice, which will be reflected in the way donors support and fund humanitarian organisations. This in turn will help maximise the quality and effectiveness of humanitarian action, which will contribute to reducing the loss of life, decreasing human suffering and preserving human dignity in situations of crisis, and preventing and minimising the impact of future crises.

Figure 1: HRI Logical Framework

Conceptual foundation of the HRI

The conceptual foundation of the HRI is the 23 *Principles of Good Practice* contained in the *GHD Declaration*, of 2003 (see Box 4). The advantages of using the GHD as the basis for measuring donor performance is that it is currently the only existing point of reference for government humanitarian donors on what constitutes good practice in humanitarian assistance. Because the *GHD Principles* have been signed (in 2005) by all the members of the OECD-DAC (22 countries and the European Commission), the principles themselves provide a framework to assess the depth and extent of governments' political commitment to supporting effective humanitarian action. The disadvantages of using the GHD as the basis for a measurement framework is that it is a consensus-based "political" declaration which contains somewhat vague and at times contradictory language on what donors should – and should not – do. The GHD is therefore open to a high degree of interpretation among signatories as to what constitutes good practice and what should be prioritised in terms of implementation.

The HRI attempts to redress this gap by assessing and benchmarking donors against 60 quantitative and qualitative indicators aligned against the main concepts contained in the *GHD Principles*. The indicators are grouped into five pillars of good practice:

- Responding to needs
- Prevention, risk reduction and recovery
- Working with humanitarian partners
- Protection and International Law
- Learning and accountability

Each pillar has a series of indicators assigned to it which attempt to provide a basis to measure and benchmark donors against the core concepts of the *GHD Principles*. Data collected during the research process is converted into scores and rankings for donors in each of the HRI's five pillars of good practice.

Box 1: Description of HRI pillars and indicators

Pillar 1 Responding to needs (30% of Index weight)

This pillar assesses to what extent donor funding practices respond to needs, respect the fundamental humanitarian principles of impartiality, neutrality and independence and that donor's objectives are aimed at saving lives, preventing and alleviating suffering and restoring dignity, and not other objectives. There are 11 qualitative and seven quantitative indicators in this Pillar, corresponding to GHD Principles 1, 2, 5, 6 and 11.

Qualitative indicators

1 Saving lives and maintaining human dignity
2 Neutrality and impartiality
3 Non-discrimination
4 Independence from non-humanitarian objectives
5 Needs-based responses
6 Assessing needs
7 Funding decisions based on needs assessments
8 Support not affected by other crises
9 Beneficiary involvement
10 Donor capacity for informed decision-making
11 Timeliness of funding

Quantitative indicators

12 Equitable distribution of funding to different crises countries
13 Funding to forgotten emergencies and those with low media coverage
14 Timeliness of funding to complex emergencies
15 Timeliness of funding to sudden onset disasters
16 Generosity and burden sharing
17 Equitable distribution of funding in accordance to needs in the crisis
18 Equitable distribution of funding against level of crisis and vulnerability

Pillar 2
Prevention, risk reduction and recovery (20% of Index weight)

This pillar assesses to what extent donors' support capacity for disaster and conflict prevention, risk reduction, preparedness and response, as well as support for recovery and the transition to development. There are five qualitative and two quantitative indicators in this pillar, corresponding to GHD Principles 1, 7, 8 and 9.

Qualitative indicators

19 Mainstreaming risk reduction and prevention into the response
20 Crisis prevention and preparedness measures
21 Strengthening local community capacity for disaster and crisis preparedness
22 Supporting the transition between relief, recovery and development
23 Building local capacity to work with humanitarian actors

Quantitative indicators

24 Funding local capacity
25 Funding international disaster risk mitigation mechanisms

Pillar 3
Working with humanitarian partners (20% of Index weight)

This pillar assesses how well donors support the work of agencies implementing humanitarian action and their unique roles in the humanitarian system. There are ten qualitative and six quantitative indicators in this pillar, corresponding to GHD Principles 10, 12, 13, 14 and 18.

Qualitative indicators

26 Respect for the roles of the different components of the humanitarian sector
27 Adapting to changing needs
28 Reliability
29 Coordination
30 Advocacy for local and government authorities to carry out their responsibilities
31 Support local and government authorities' coordination capacity
32 Conditionality that does not compromise humanitarian action
33 Flexibility
34 Longer-term funding arrangements
35 Strengthening humanitarian response capacity

Quantitative indicators

36 Funding UN coordination mechanisms and common services
37 Funding to NGOs
38 Funding to CERF and other quick disbursement mechanisms
39 Un-earmarked funding
40 Funding UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeals
41 Funding IFRC and ICRC appeals

Pillar 4
Protection and International Law (15% of Index weight)

This pillar assesses to what extent donors integrate protection and the application of international humanitarian law and other international guidelines and legal mechanisms into their funding policies and practices and ensure that operational actors apply these. There are six qualitative and three quantitative indicators in this Pillar, corresponding to GHD Principles 3, 4, 16, 17, 19 and 20.

Qualitative indicators

42 Protection
43 Advocacy for the respect for human rights
44 Advocacy for the respect for and implementation of IHL
45 Supporting needs of refugees
46 Supporting needs of internally displaced persons
47 Facilitating safe humanitarian access

Quantitative indicators

48 Respect for international humanitarian law
49 Respect for human rights law
50 Implementation of refugee law

Pillar 5
Learning and accountability (15% of Index weight)

This pillar assesses how well donors support initiatives to improve the quality, effectiveness and accountability of humanitarian action. There are eight qualitative and two quantitative indicators in this pillar, corresponding to the concepts outlined in GHD Principles 15, 21, 22 and 23.

Qualitative indicators

51 Accountability towards affected populations
52 Transparency of funding and decision-making processes
53 Evaluations of partners' programmes
54 Support for monitoring and evaluation
55 Use of recommendations from evaluations
56 Promotion of good practice and quality standards
57 Monitoring adherence to quality standards
58 Reporting requirements for humanitarian actors

Quantitative indicators

59 Participation and support for accountability initiatives
60 Conducting evaluations

However, as the HRI 2008 points out, since the *GHD Declaration* was drafted, the humanitarian landscape has changed dramatically, and some of the assumptions implicit in the GHD may be out of date. In other instances, the use by donors of tools such as OCHA's Financial Tracking Service (FTS), which is key to improving the transparency of donor funding flows, seem to be losing ground, making it difficult for interested stakeholders to have access to reliable indicators of donor financing. Equally, as the reforms to the humanitarian system advance, and as new actors become engaged as humanitarian donors, the definition of good donor practice may need revision and updating. In this regard, the indicators used in the HRI are only a proxy of good practice, as the *GHD Principles* themselves are at times not explicit, or can be interpreted differently as to what good practice actually is.

As with any performance measurement framework, the selection of indicators is never an exact science, but a process of consensus on what constitutes the best possible measure of practice based on the data available, given the time and resources required to gather such information. In the case of the HRI, a wide consultation process was held in 2006 and 2007 to define a set of indicators that best captured the *GHD Principles*. As it stands, the HRI indicators are the best possible representation of good donor practice.

The limitations of the HRI indicators are a reflection of limitations within the humanitarian system itself. The absence of timely and reliable information in such areas as assessment of needs, volume of funding, channels of funding and others make the challenge of tracking donor performance even more difficult. DARA has continually refined and improved the HRI indicators through an ongoing process of consultation and feedback (including with donor agencies). However, as in any research and evaluation process, the more information available, validated from more sources, the more likely it is that donors and their partners will have a more complete picture of the current state of donor practice and what can be done to improve it. In this regard DARA continues to work with other stakeholders to build a common approach to defining standard data sources and performance indicators, and has initiated a wide consultation process to go beyond the *GHD Principles* to identify other concepts of good donor practice to incorporate into the HRI's analysis in the future.

Advantages and added value of the HRI approach

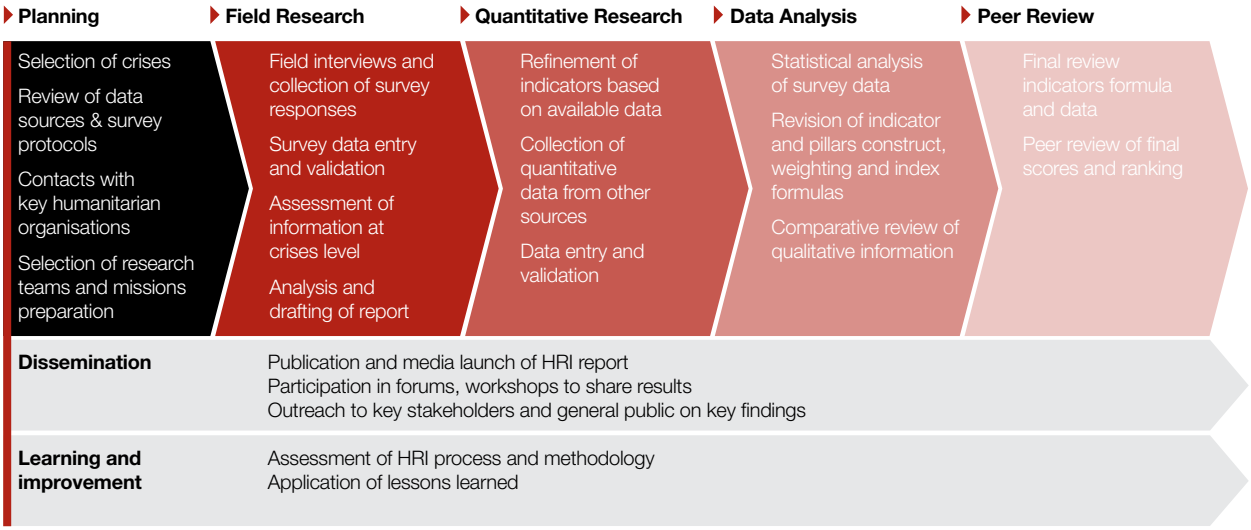
The HRI complements existing assessment tools and mechanisms used by donors themselves, such as the collective indicators to track progress of GHD implementation and OECD-DAC peer reviews of humanitarian assistance. These efforts are valid and important, but they tend to provide a limited perspective on donor performance, and do not focus on the differences between donors. The HRI rankings and scores allow for a comparative analysis among different donors, as well as a rich body of information for individual donors and other components of the humanitarian system about how well they are performing in different crisis contexts and against a range of different indicators. This allows the HRI to point out any specific strengths and areas for improvement.

The HRI's individual rankings also help to uncover the top performers and poorest performers – thereby addressing the problem of 'free-rider' behaviour, where poor performers benefit from the performance of others, and where the efforts of good donors may go unacknowledged. This may in fact serve as an incentive to government donors to work towards applying their commitments to good practice, and a means to exert pressure on governments whose policies and practices may in fact be contrary to effectively meeting humanitarian objectives. It also provides a good basis to help frame discussions at the international level on collective actions needed to improve the quality and impact of humanitarian assistance. The HRI thereby provides the general public, civil society, humanitarian organisations and donor governments themselves access to independent, objective and reliable data on donor performance, rather than informal or anecdotal views of how well governments are doing.

Research process

For DARA, the HRI research process is just as important as the end findings. Through a wide engagement with different actors in the humanitarian system, the HRI offers a unique opportunity to reflect on the quality and nature of donors' relationships with other actors in the humanitarian system, identify good and poor donor practice and highlight issues that donors and other stakeholders in the humanitarian system need to address in order to improve the quality, effectiveness and impact of humanitarian action.

Figure 2: HRI Process



Field research

One of the added values of the HRI is that it goes beyond a simple examination of secondary sources and quantitative data to gather primary data directly from the field on the perception of how donors are performing in different crisis contexts. The HRI includes field research and case studies of a wide number of humanitarian crises, interviews with hundreds of humanitarian actors, a survey questionnaire with over 2000 responses, and is complemented with comprehensive data from secondary sources around donor practices. This makes the HRI the largest and most comprehensive annual review of how donors and the international humanitarian system are responding to meeting humanitarian needs.

Crisis selection

Each year, the HRI conducts field research in a representative sample of different crisis contexts to assess how the *GHD Principles* are being applied in practice. Based on information from UN and IFRC appeals, FTS and consultations with the HRI's peer review committee (see p 44), crises are selected on the basis of the type of crisis (disasters, conflicts, complex emergencies), geographic and regional distribution, scale and nature of the international response and a significant presence of GHD donors to ensure a sufficient sample size for the field survey on donor behaviour. The selection process also attempts, when possible, to include crises where the nature of the crisis or its response is unique, thereby allowing an opportunity to learn how the humanitarian system can best adapt to different situations.

For 2009, the crises selected were: Afghanistan, Chad, China, Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Georgia, Haiti, Myanmar, occupied Palestinian Territories, Somalia, Sri Lanka and Timor Leste (a field mission to Sudan was cancelled due to the volatile situation there). Several of these crises were included in the HRI 2007 and HRI 2008, which allows an opportunity to assess how the international community's response has changed or evolved over time. These include: Chad, Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Occupied Palestinian Territories, Sri Lanka and Timor Leste

Once the crises area selected, DARA contacts all humanitarian organisations (UN agencies, Red Cross/Red Crescent, INGOs and local organisations) working in the response that have received government donor funding to request their participation in the data collection, and whenever possible, provide any logistical or operational support. For the HRI 2009, for example, field teams in Chad and DRC had operational support from the IFRC and ECHO, who facilitated contacts with other organisations, local transportation and security arrangements. DARA also attempts to contact donor agencies' headquarters and field offices to inform them of the mission and to invite them to participate in the interview process.

Field team members are selected based on their knowledge of the crisis country, language, and experience, and often include external experts who can provide additional insight and analysis on the situation and context. A pre-mission briefing is conducted with teams to review the documentation about the crisis, go over research protocols and finalise other mission preparations.

Field interviews

Once in the field, the teams begin the process of interviewing humanitarian organisations and conducting surveys of humanitarian organisations' view donor behaviour. In most cases, HRI teams are able to meet with almost all of the agencies working in the crisis (in some cases, up to 90 percent of the agencies), as well as government officials, local authorities, civil society organisations and donor representatives. Whenever possible, teams also visit the affected areas to see first-hand the response to the crisis and speak to field staff and beneficiaries. This gives teams an unprecedented overview of the crisis response.

This year, field missions took place between February and May of 2009. While in the field, interviews were conducted with over 450 representatives of humanitarian organisations involved in the response to the crises studied, ranging from local authorities, Red Cross /Red Crescent, UN agencies, NGOs, and whenever possible, donor representatives. These representatives provide their assessment on donors who are funding or supporting their organisation's response to the crisis through a standardised survey questionnaire on donor practice, based on key concepts in the *GHD Principles*. (see Figure 3).

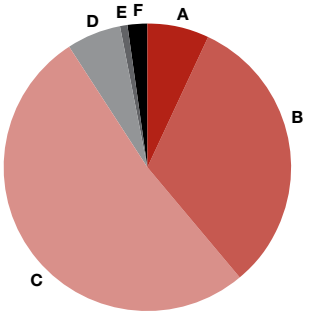
HRI survey questionnaire on donor practice

One of the key research tools used in the HRI is a survey questionnaire on donor practice. The survey allows the HRI to systematically gather the perspectives of humanitarian organisations on how donors are supporting the response to the crisis, and convert qualitative opinions into quantitative scores of how donors are applying the principles of good practice in different crisis situations using standard statistical survey analysis tools (see Box 3 for the complete survey questionnaire).

Only organisations that receive institutional donor funding (as opposed to public donations) are asked to participate in the survey portion of the field research. The survey is deliberately targeted to capture the perspectives of the people who have the most comprehensive knowledge and information about the crisis and the donors that are funding their response activities. In most cases this is the head of mission or other senior staff.

Survey respondents are asked to answer a series of 40 questions and statements on how well they feel each of their donors supports their work and if they believe donors are applying key concepts of good practices from the GHD, using a five-point Likert scale. Each question is linked to core concepts contained in the GHD, such as timeliness of funding or donor support to facilitate safe humanitarian access. The survey also includes several open-ended questions to allow the interviewer and respondents to clarify and expand on any answers. Survey responses are confidential to ensure more candid answers and in order to protect the often delicate relationship between funders and recipients of aid money.

Figure 3: % of survey responses by organisation



A Red Cross Movement – 7%
B UN – 32%
C International NGOs – 52%
D Local NGOs – 6%
E Government bodies/organisations – 1%
F Other – 2%

Table 1: HRI 2009: Distribution of survey responses by donor and by crisis surveyed

Donor	Number of responses
Australia	63
Austria*	24
Belgium	37
Canada	103
Denmark	33
EC	301
Finland	17
France	68
Germany	60
Greece	12
Ireland	25
Italy	60
Japan	50
Luxembourg*	24
Netherlands	63
New Zealand	13
Norway	90
Portugal**	1
Spain	91
Sweden	93
Switzerland	43
UK	117
US	223
Total	**1611**

Other funding sources	Number of responses
INGOs	78
Multilateral agencies	22
Non-DAC government donors	83
Pooled Funds	125
Private foundations	49
Red Cross/Red Crescent	16
UN agencies	130
Total	**503**

Total survey responses **2114**

Crisis surveyed	Number of responses
Afghanistan	150
Chad	79
China	59
Colombia	119
DRC	248
Ethiopia	115
Georgia	72
Haiti	148
Myanmar	129
OPT	219
Somalia	129
Sri Lanka	84
Timor Leste	38
Total	**1589**

* *Responses include 2008 survey sample.*

** *Portugal's single response is considered proportionate to its limited level of funding.*

Representativeness and validity of responses

Because a standard survey instrument is administered in each of the crises studied (with some adjustments to clarify wording), survey responses are comparable between different crises. In addition, with over 2000 survey responses, the HRI´s large sample size and representative participation by all parts of the system across a range of crises helps ensure the statistical validity and reliability of the HRI survey findings. The high number of responses helps to 'smooth' the scores to compensate for any 'outliers' – responses that are on the extreme ends of the scale, so that responses for one particular donor or from one crisis do not unduly affect the overall scores and rankings. Another unique aspect of the HRI is that the survey questionnaire is translated and administered in the working language of organisations engaged in the crisis response, thereby overcoming an inherent Anglophone bias in much of the research done in the field of humanitarian studies.

In several cases, it was difficult to obtain a sufficient number of survey responses from certain DAC donors, in particular Austria, Luxembourg, Finland, Greece, New Zealand and Portugal. In these cases, DARA conducted an analysis of the representativeness of the responses gathered by reviewing the total number of partners receiving funding from each of these donors against the numbers of surveys gathered in the field missions. In most cases, the survey sample size was sufficiently representative to be included in the analysis. In other cases, however, it was necessary to pool survey responses with responses from last year in order to have a sufficient sample size for statistical analysis. These were checked carefully to ensure that there was no bias from one year to the next and that there was a good correlation between responses from this year.

In the specific case of Portugal, only one single survey response was gathered this year, and only two last year, illustrating the very limited funding provided to humanitarian organisations operating at the field level. In this case, for reasons of confidentiality, the responses to questions are not included in tables.

Non-OECD-DAC donors and other funding mechanisms

This year, the HRI survey process was expanded to include non-GHD donors in the responses. While OECD-DAC donors provide the bulk of humanitarian funding (around 85 percent) non-traditional donors and new funding mechanisms are steadily gaining ground. For this exercise, DARA defined an institutional donor funding as any agency or institution that directly funded the work of the organisation. In many cases, the original source of the funding may have come from an OECD-DAC donor – a so-called 'back-donor' – but the funding relationship is not managed directly by the back-donor, so there is no direct relationship with the recipient organisation. For example, 61 percent of CERF-funding comes from just four OECD-DAC donors: the United Kingdom, Norway, the Netherlands and Sweden (OCHA FTS 2009), but the fund itself is managed through OCHA.

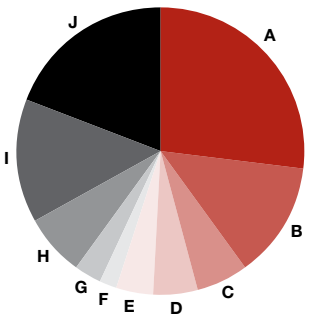
In order to understand how these non-traditional funders behave, the HRI asked humanitarian organisations to assess these donors against the same survey questions as GHD donors. The results allow for some preliminary analysis and comparisons on the perceptions of humanitarian organisations for donors that have signed the *GHD* against other donors and funding sources that have not. This in turn will help to pinpoint areas for further analysis to identify any lessons and good donor practice for the entire humanitarian sector.

The survey and field interviews represent a tremendous effort to generate primary data on donor performance in different crisis contexts, and are one of the largest undertakings of its kind within the sector. The information gathered through the survey and interview process is critical for more in-depth analysis and understanding of how humanitarian organisations and donors relate to each other in different crisis settings and is one of the unique added values of the HRI to the sector.

Quantitative data collection

The quantitative indicators that make up the HRI scores and rankings come from a variety of different sources. Much of the data on humanitarian financing and donor funding comes from UN OCHA's FTS and OECD-DAC databases, supplemented by data from the World Bank and other sources. Data of donor coverage of UN CAP and Flash Appeals, IFRC and ICRC appeals are also used to assess indicators such as the timeliness of funding, the distribution of funding in accordance to needs and support to coordination.

Figure 4: Quantitative data sources



A UN – 27%
B FTS – 13%
C OECD – 6%
D IFRC – 5%
E ICRC – 4%
F WB – 2%
G EC – 3%
H IMF – 7%
I Other sources – 14%
J Government websites – 19%

Note: 'Other sources' includes data from Alnap, AlertNet, EMDAT – Emergency Events Database, Sphere, HAP, Provention, Groupe URD, CEPII, MSF and GHD.

Other quantitative indicators examine how consistent donor governments' policies are with key elements of the *GHD Principles*, such as support for capacity building, or recovery and livelihoods. The HRI also determines if donor governments are complying with international humanitarian law (IHL) and other legal conventions and instruments aimed at facilitating humanitarian action based on principles of neutrality, impartiality and independence, and other relevant standards and guidelines. These are extremely important elements of the *GHD* that go beyond simple questions of financing and funding flows, and focus on the quality of assistance. Sources include the World Bank, UN, OECD-DAC (see Figure 4 on data sources).

Data analysis

The next stage in the HRI research process is the data analysis. This section provides an overview of the statistical analysis for each of the indicators used to generate the HRI's scores and rankings.

Survey data analysis

Because the HRI uses a standard survey instrument, it is possible to perform a number of different statistical analyses to generate comparative data between donors and crises. The approach is essentially the same for all of the 40 survey questions, summarised below.

First, field teams submit all survey data daily from the field missions. This is then compiled and validated to ensure that responses have been entered and coded correctly and to detect any missing values or responses. Then the data is analysed using standard statistical survey analysis, such as variance, multivariate analysis, etc., that tests the validity of the data and the design of the survey instrument. At the end of the mission, a summary descriptive analysis with basic information on trends in the responses is prepared to share with the field team, and when possible to organise a field debriefing with all the organisations that participated in the process. This is an opportunity to get on-the-spot validation from humanitarian actors, and to begin to interpret and contextualise the reasons behind the trends detected. This basic information is also used to help prepare the crisis report – a case study of the dynamics of the response in each crisis.

Quantitative data analysis

In this section a detailed mathematical and conceptual definition of the quantitative indicators is presented, as well as an explanation of changes from the 2008 Index to this year's HRI. Box 2 sets out the mathematical formulation of the indicators, the different variables included, the selected optimal values (in case those are applicable to the indicator), as well as the sources for each of them.

Pillar 1
Responding to needs

Equitable distribution of funding to different crisis countries: GHD Principle 6 commits donors to "allocate humanitarian funding in proportion to needs". Other principles affirm the need to ensure that aid is not linked to political, economic or other interests, and that donors have a collective obligation "to strive to meet humanitarian needs" and contribute appeals on the basis of burden sharing. The HRI assesses donors' commitment to the core concepts in these statements by examining the geographic distribution of donors' assistance, and determining that aid is not unduly influenced by political or geographic proximity or colonial ties, but allocated equitably based on needs. This indicator is constructed using an econometric model in which aid flows are regressed over different explanatory variables related to historical and geographical factors.

Funding to forgotten emergencies and those with low media coverage: This indicator captures other dimensions of Principle 2: Since donor funding should fundamentally be guided by considerations of need, donors whose humanitarian interventions are not biased against forgotten emergencies and are reasonably independent from extensive media coverage are scored higher. The indicator considers over 150 emergencies in 2008 and classifies donor funding by the extent of media coverage each emergency receives, and by whether the emergency in question has been classified as 'forgotten'.

Timeliness of funding to complex emergencies: This indicator calculates the funds within an appeal committed or disbursed to complex emergencies in the first quarter after the launch of the appeal as a percentage of the total funds within the appeal during 2008.

Timeliness of funding to sudden onset disasters: Using data on natural disasters from FTS and funding to IFRC appeals, a small refinement 'to last year's definition was made in this indicator, considering "timeliness" as funding committed or disbursed within the first two weeks (rather than six weeks) after the disaster declaration, or launch of the appeal in the case of IFRC data, as a percentage of total funds inside or outside an appeal up to six months after the disaster declaration date.

Generosity and burden sharing: This indicator, introduced in last year's edition of the HRI, has remained fixed in its simple calculation – total humanitarian aid in relation to GNI – but has grown in importance in the weighting, reflecting the importance of equitable burden sharing, as suggested by the *GHD*.

Equitable distribution of funding in accordance to needs in the crisis: This indicator is calculated using the UN budget allocation to sectors in all their appeals, as a benchmark and optimum needs assessment. Using the standard deviation of the actual donor sectoral distribution of funding to the benchmark, we define as the best donor the one with the least funding deviation.

Equitable distribution of funding against level of crisis and vulnerability: This indicator builds on ECHO's 2008 global needs and vulnerability assessment which identifies the most vulnerable countries as those most in need of humanitarian assistance. The crisis and vulnerability indicators include human development and poverty, health of children, malnutrition, mortality, access to health care, prevalence of HIV-AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, the gender-specific human development and Gini Indices, and crisis indicators such as ongoing or recently resolved conflicts, recent natural disasters and the extent of population movements. This indicator maps donor funding to over 130 recipient countries according to the ECHO's Crisis and Vulnerability Index scores and rewards donors whose humanitarian assistance is allocated to the most needy and vulnerable countries, as identified by a total score of more than 4, summing up both indices.

Pillar 2
Prevention, risk reduction and recovery

Funding local capacity: Integrating relief and development is considered to be essential for ensuring that outcomes initiated during a humanitarian intervention are sustainable. It is clear that the returns on investment in humanitarian assistance will be higher where long-term development issues have been addressed in a comprehensive manner during the emergency phase. However, donors often lack mechanisms for funding recovery and reconstruction, work. This indicator captures a donor's commitment to local capacity building, by looking at funding of reconstruction relief and rehabilitation, on the one hand, and disaster prevention and preparedness, on the other, as a percentage of total ODA.

Funding international disaster risk mitigation mechanisms: This indicator adds funding to UNDP's thematic Trust Fund for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (2007), the World Bank's Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (2007 and 2008), the EC's Disaster Preparedness facility DIPECHO (2008) and ProVention (2008) as a percentage of total ODA when available. We take a two-year period of funding in order to cover the evolution of the donor involvement in these initiatives.

Pillar 3
Working with humanitarian partners

Funding UN coordination mechanisms and common services: Principle 10 addresses aspects of the relationship between donors, the United Nations and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, and non-governmental organisations. Donors recognise the critical role played by these three actors in the delivery of humanitarian assistance and are, therefore, called upon to maintain a broadly balanced selection of partners between the UN, NGOs and the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, based on their competence and capacity. Grounded in the collective indicators, this indicator recognises the leading role of the UN agencies in humanitarian action – particularly in the light of the new approaches to sector coordination – by capturing funding to the UN coordination mechanisms and common services during 2007–2008 as a share of total requirements, using a fair share criterion. This criterion takes into account the share of an individual donor's GDP in total OECD-DAC GDP in allocating scores across donors. Funding amounts are defined as those contributing to "coordination and support services" inside UN CAPs.

Funding to NGOs: Donor support and recognition of the key role of NGOs in delivering humanitarian aid is measured in this indicator by weighing up the amount of donor funding to NGOs in relation to total humanitarian assistance in 2007 and 2008, and considering the proportion of foreign NGOs supported instead of being restricted to funding only NGOs of their own nationality.

Funding to CERF and other quick disbursement mechanisms: Principle 12 is derived from donor concerns for the need to develop good practices in donor financing and management of financial resources. Specifically, it addresses the issue of the desirability of ensuring flexibility in funding to UN agencies, so as to "ensure a more predictable and timely response to humanitarian emergencies, with the objectives of promoting early action and response to reduce loss of life". This indicator takes funding to CERF and the other main mechanisms for committing funding under flexible terms as a percentage of total humanitarian assistance. These other mechanisms allow funds to be disbursed to key humanitarian organisations more widely than only to UN agencies, funds and programmes, and enable the Humanitarian Coordinators to act independently and robustly in support of humanitarian objectives. The funds considered in the composition of this indicator, other than CERF are: the IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund, the Common Humanitarian Funds piloted in Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Central African Republic in 2008, the Emergency Response Funds in 2008 for Indonesia, Ethiopia, Iraq, oPT, Somalia and Zimbabwe. Scores are allocated based on a country's share of total GDP.

Un-earmarked funding: Principle 13 calls upon donors to "enhance the flexibility of earmarking, and of introducing longer-term funding arrangements". This indicator gives credit to donors that provide a greater share of their humanitarian assistance in un-earmarked form by considering the percentage of unearmarked funds to agencies (OCHA, UNHCR, IFRC, ICRC, WFP, OHCHR, UNICEF) out of total humanitarian assistance to these agencies during the period 2007–2008.

Funding UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeals: Principle 14 encourages donors to respond to United Nations and Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement appeals, recognising their lead roles in responding to humanitarian emergencies. The UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeals Process (CAPs), identifies the funding needs of the crises they apply to. This indicator calculates donor funding to the 2008 CAPs as a proportion of total needs. In estimating donor scores, we use a fair share concept, which takes into account the share of an individual donor's GDP in total OECD-DAC GDP, in keeping with the reference in Principle 14 to equitable burden-sharing considerations in determining the size of contributions. Given the humanitarian implications of much higher food prices during the past year, this indicator also includes, using a fair share measure, funding to a special appeal by the World Food Programme (the WFP EMMA 2009).

Funding IFRC and ICRC appeals: The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement – consisting of the IFRC, the ICRC and Red Cross and Red Crescent national societies – have their own annual appeals process. This indicator captures the funds directed to IFRC and ICRC appeals, both annual and emergency in 2008, as a share of total needs. As with the previous indicator, a fair share criterion is used in allocating scores to individual donors.

Pillar 4 Protection and International Law

Respect for international humanitarian law: Principle 4 calls for donors to "respect and promote the implementation of international humanitarian law, refugee law and human rights". This indicator captures three dimensions of implementation. First, from a total of 25 key international humanitarian law treaties, it registers the total number of international instruments actually signed and/or ratified by individual donor countries. Second, implementation requires that states adopt domestic laws and regulations as well as spread knowledge of the relevant conventions and protocols as widely as possible; the indicator therefore gives additional credit to countries that have created national commissions aimed at ensuring effective application of IHL, as advocated by the ICRC. Finally, the indicator includes total donor funding in relation to GDP of the ICRC, in its role as promoter and guardian of international humanitarian law.

Respect for human rights law: This indicator also captures three dimensions of implementation. First, it gives credit to donors in proportion to the number of principal legal instruments on human rights and accompanying protocols they have signed or ratified, including: the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and its protocols, the Convention on the Non-applicability of Statutory Limitations to War Crimes and Crimes Against Humanity, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its protocols, the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and its protocols, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its protocols, the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its protocols, and the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance. Second, it gives credit to donors that have duly accredited national human rights institutions in proportion to their accreditation grades, determined by the OHCHR. A third dimension included is core funding (in relation to GDP) to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, as promoter and guardian of international human rights treaties.

Implementation of refugee law: This indicator encompasses three elements: First, whether the state in question is a party to the principal legal instruments of international refugee law, including the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 protocol, the two Protocols on Organized Crime, the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. Second, the indicator gives credit to countries that accept persons as part of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees resettlement programme; finally, it also gives credit to countries reflecting levels of funding (in relation to GDP) to UNHCR, in its role as promoter and guardian of refugee law and the agenda for protection.

Pillar 5
Learning and accountability

Participation and support for accountability initiatives: Principle 21 commits donors to "support learning and accountability initiatives for the effective and efficient implementation of humanitarian action". A number of initiatives exist, including the Sphere Project and the Humanitarian Accountability Project (HAP), aimed at defining standards for field-level action. Others aim to improve the overall management (Quality COMPAS), or the human resources (People in Aid) of organisations. ALNAP (Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action) has a unique role in promoting evaluation and learning from experience as a tool to improve overall performance of agencies and donors. The GHD initiative encourages donor accountability by defining principles and standards as a framework to guide official humanitarian aid. This indicator seeks to capture both a) donor support for and commitment to these initiatives by capturing various dimensions of their participation, and b) the proportion of funding assigned to ALNAP (2007-2008), HAP (2008), Quality Compass (2007-2008), Sphere (2007-2008), as well as to those projects that support learning and accountability and are listed in OCHA FTS over the total humanitarian aid for the years 2007 and 2008. The scores are calculated in relation to total humanitarian assistance funding. In the case of ALNAP, membership in, and attendance of, biannual meetings are considered key factors in evaluating support. The indicator assigns different weights to each initiative, reflecting their relative importance in terms of impact on humanitarian action to date.

Conducting evaluations: Principle 22 encourages donors to make "regular evaluations of international responses to humanitarian crises, including assessments of donor performance". Evaluations assess humanitarian interventions according to defined criteria such as relevance, efficiency and impact, and are useful to assess lessons learned to enhance the effectiveness of future donor interventions. Donors can evaluate their own performance, commission evaluations of activities carried out by organisations funded by them, or engage with other agencies and donors in joint exercises. This indicator counts the number of publicly available individual evaluations carried out, or funded, by donors in the last four years (2004–2007). It also includes a measure of joint evaluations, given their broader scope. The indicator also takes into consideration the existence of evaluation guidelines, viewed as another means of promoting the practice of evaluations.

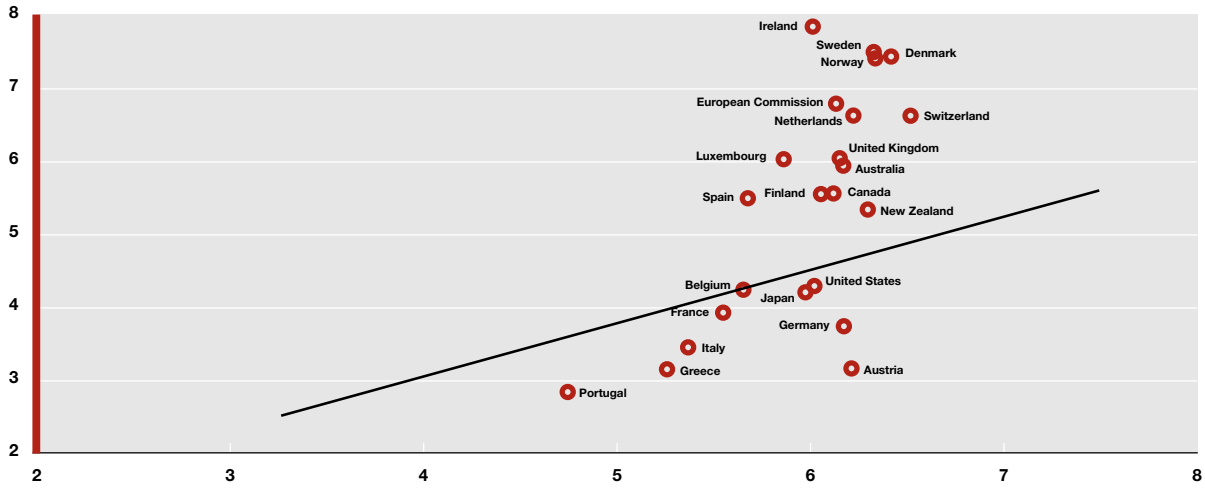
Testing the robustness and validation of indicators

The next stage of the process involves carefully reviewing the construction of each of the indicators that make up the HRI Index. This involves ensuring that the data sources are as accurate and reliable as possible, that the indicator measures the intended concepts from the *GHD Principles* and the validity of the statistical formulas used to calculate the scores and rankings, and refining if necessary. At this stage, distribution of indicators according to the five pillars of the HRI is also reviewed, and adjustments are made if necessary, on the basis of clarity and alignment.

Particular attention is given to reviewing the alignment between quantitative and qualitative data and to any indicators that show wide variance in scores. A preliminary set of scores and rankings are produced for internal review, with a definitive ranking produced only after all indicators and scores have been reviewed and validated (see Figure 5).

During this validation process, all validation tests and tools employed have yielded satisfactory results, including the absence of systematic correlation among indicators, low levels of response concentration within indicators, and a moderate alignment between quantitative and qualitative subsets of indicators among all donors. The statistical validation of survey-based data has turned out to be particularly satisfactory. The internal consistency and reliability of the survey has yielded an excellent performance in terms of the most commonly used statistical reliability tests, meaning that each of the items measured in the survey is significant and non-redundant.

Figure 5: HRI 2009 – Correlation between quantitative and qualitative indicators



Data aggregation, weighting and normalisation process

The normalisation process is the mathematical transformation of data that allows for full comparability among different indicators. In other words, by normalising the original values of indicators the results can be expressed in a common scale that is easier to interpret and compare, but without altering the relative performance of donors in each of the indicators. The normalisation process is particularly important in the case of quantitative data, whose original values are expressed in a wide range of different units (ratios, percentages, variances, monetary units, etc.).

The HRI commonly uses the Min-Max method in order to make results comparable among different indicators. This mathematical transformation obtains values within a 1 to 10 scale, by assigning 10 to the best performer donor in that particular indicator, 1 to the worst performer, and maintaining proportional values in between for the rest. Data are transformed using the following formula:

$$n = 10 + \frac{(X - X_{best}) * (1 - 10)}{X_{worst} - X_{best}}$$

Where,
n is the final normalised value of the indicator for each specific donor country

X is the original value of the indicator for the specific donor country

X_{best} is the original value of the indicator corresponding to the best performer among all donor countries

X_{worst} is the original value of the indicator corresponding to the worst performer among all donor countries

However this normalisation process may lead to uncompensated or unbalanced results in the case of extraordinarily good (or bad) donor performers in a particular indicator. If this was the case, moderately good performers would obtain a downwards (or upwards) biased result. In order to overcome this methodological shortcoming, optimal values have been defined, so that all donors performing above a specific optimal threshold would obtain the maximum score (10).

With regard to the survey-based qualitative data, as explained above, all responses are originally expressed on the basis of a 1 to 5 scale. In order to maintain full comparability with quantitative indicators, data are transformed into a 1 to 10 scale using an equidistant transformation of original data.

Once quantitative and qualitative indicators have been properly normalised and validated through solid statistical tests, data are suitable for the final aggregation that yield the final scores of the HRI. This process compounds two different stages: aggregation within each of the five pillars and aggregation of mean values for each pillar. For each of these two phases, the HRI has followed the most widespread linear aggregation method, namely the summation of weighted and normalised individual indicators.

$$HRI_c = \sum_{p=1}^{p} w_p * I_{pc}$$

With $\sum_{p} w_p = 1$ and $0 \leq w_p \leq 1$

Where
p = pillar

c = country donor

I_p = mean value for pillar p

w_p = weight for pillar p

As noted above, pillars have been weighted in accordance to the relative importance of the concept contained in the *GHD Principles*. Individual components of indicators have remained unweighted within each indicator, except in the case of the generosity of donors' humanitarian assistance, which receives a greater weighting than the rest. All of these structural adjustments in the composition of the Index are the result of a thorough consultation process with a peer review committee and with experts, who were asked to assign relative importance to each of these elements.

Interpretation of the results

Once the preliminary scores and rankings are produced, the results are compared against the information gathered through the field interviews, as well as other available information such as OECD-DAC peer reviews, studies, and research. This provides a 'reality check' to ensure that the HRI results are in line with existing knowledge and information about donor performance. The process of interpreting the data then begins, to attempt to provide an explanation for the reasons behind the scores in individual indicators or by donors, identify trends and patterns emerging from the research, and draw conclusions and recommendations for further analysis and action by the humanitarian sector.

Peer review process

Throughout the HRI research process, a peer review committee of experts in the field of humanitarian performance, accountability and index methodology is engaged to review the work on the Index. Members include representatives from OCHA, CARE International, ICVA, SCHR and the Center for Global Development, among others. The peer review committee provides valuable suggestions and constructive criticism and recommendations on how to improve the design and methodology and analysis, and advice on how to best present the results to the humanitarian community. The work of the peer review committee is complemented by additional expertise from the sector, and from the HRI´s advisory board, which includes leading figures such as Antonio Guterres (UN High Commissioner for Refugees), Mary Robinson (former President of Ireland), José María Figueres (former President of Costa Rica) and Larry Minear (Tufts University).

Box 2: Mathematical formulations of the HRI 2009 quantitative indicators

Pillar 1
Responding to needs

Equitable distribution of funding to different crisis countries (Indicator 12)

Indicator 12 = R2 of the following econometric model:

$$X_{ij} = A + \beta_1 * D_{ij} + \beta_2 + L_{ij} + \beta_3 * C45_{ij} + \beta_4 * SS_{ij} + \beta_5 * C_{ij} + \beta_6 * ML_{ij} + \beta_7 * CC_{ij}$$

Where,
X_{ij} = Funding by donor country *i* to crisis country *j*

A = the constant term of the equation

D_{ij} = the distance in kilometres between donor *i* and crisis *j*

L_{ij} = a dummy variable that takes the value 1 when donor country *i* and crisis country *j* share a common official language

$C45_{ij}$ = a dummy variable that takes the value 1 when crisis country *j* has been a colony of donor *i* at any moment after 1945

SS_{ij} = a dummy variable that takes the value 1 when donor country *i* and crisis country *j* have been part of the same state

C_{ij} = a dummy variable that takes the value 1 when crisis country *j* has been a colony of donor *i*

ML_{ij} = a dummy variable that takes the value 1 when donor country *i* and crisis country *j* share a minority language (spoken by at least 9 percent of the population)

CC_{ij} = a dummy variable that takes the value 1 when donor country *i* and crisis country *j* have been colonised by the same country.

Optimal values: values above 10 percent are considered to be optimal (=10)

Source: FTS and CEPII (www.cepii.fr)

Funding to forgotten emergencies and those with low media coverage (Indicator 13)

Indicator 13 = $\frac{\sum_{j=1} \left(\frac{MI_j/_j + FI}{2} * X_{ij} \right)}{\sum_{j=1} X_{ij}}$

Where:
MI = number of media reports of the crisis during the year, normalise as follows:

+5000→7
1000-5000→6
500-1000→5
100-500→4
10-100→3
1-10→2
0→1

FI: is the forgotten crisis index, which is obtained as follows

FI = 0 if A+B>0
= 1 if A+B=0

where,
A = 1 if the crisis has been identified as a one of the ten most under-reported stories, and A = 0 otherwise

B = 1 if a+b>6
B = 0 otherwise where ,
a = Forgotten Crisis Assessment 2008/09
b = crisis index 2008/09

Source: FTS, MSF, ECHO and AlertNet

Timeliness of funding to complex emergencies (Indicator 14)

Indicator 14= $\frac{F1Q}{TF} * 100$

Optimal values: values above 75 percent are considered to be optimal (=10)

Where,
F1Q = funding committed during the first quarter of the year
TF = total funding during calendar year

Source: FTS

Timeliness of funding to sudden onset disasters (Indicator 15)

Indicator $15 = \frac{F2W}{F6M} * 100$

Source: Figures are the result of summing up data from FTS (inside and outside an appeal) and IFRC

Where,
F2W = Funds committed to individual onset disasters or emergency appeals within first two weeks
F6M = Total funds committed to individual disasters up to six months after the disaster declaration.

Generosity and burden sharing (Indicator 16)

Indicator $16 = \frac{THA}{GNI} * 100$

Optimal values: values above 10 percent are considered to be optimal (=10)

Source: OECD, ICRC, UNHCR, WFP, OHCHR, UNICEF, IFRC, OCHA, UNRWA, WHO.

Where,
THA (total humanitarian aid) = MHA+CERF+BHI
GNI = Gross National Income
MHA = un-earmarked multilateral humanitarian aid (own calculations)
BHI = bilateral humanitarian aid (data from OECD)

Equitable distribution of funding in accordance to needs in the crisis (Indicator 17)

Indicator $17 = \sqrt{\frac{\sum_{j=1}^{n} (X_i - X_i^*)^2}{n}}$

Source: FTS

Where,
X_i= budget by country *j* for sector *i* over the total budget of the country
X_i^* = total budget for sector i over total budget (benchmark proportion)

Equitable distribution of funding against level of crisis and vulnerability (Indicator 18)

Indicator $18 = \frac{\sum_{j=1}^{n} (X_{ij} - * C_j)}{\sum_{j=1}^{n} X_{ij}}$

Optimal values: values above 90 percent are considered to be optimal (=10)

Source: FTS and ECHO

Where,
X*ij* = funding from donor *i* to crisis *j*
C*j* = 1 if CI+VI>4
0 otherwise
CI = crisis index
VI = vulnerability index

Pillar 2
Prevention, risk reduction and recovery

Funding local capacity (Indicator 24)

Indicator $24 = \frac{RRR+DPP}{ODA} * 100$

Source: OEC

Where,
RRR = funds to 'Reconstruction Relief and Rehabilitation'
DPP = funds to 'Disaster Prevention and Preparedness'
ODA = total official development assistance

Funding international disaster risk mitigation mechanisms (Indicator 25)

Indicator $25 = \frac{UNDPTTF07+GFDRR07+GFDRR08+DIPECHO08+ProVention08}{ODA}$

Sources: OECED, World Bank, Provention and ECHO

Where,
UNDPTTF = funds by donor to UNDP Thematic Trust Fund for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (2007)
GFDRR= funds by donor to World Bank/ISDR Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (2007-2008)
ProVention = funds by donor to Provention (2008)
DIPECHO = funds by donor to DIPECHO (2008)
ODA = total official development assistance

Pillar 3
Working with humanitarian partners

Funding UN coordination mechanisms and common services (Indicator 36)

$$\text{Indicator } 36 = \frac{X_i}{\underbrace{\frac{GDP_i}{GDP} * X}_{\text{Fair share}}} * 100$$

Optimal values: values above 200 percent are considered to be optimal (=10)

Source: FTS

Where,
F2W = Funds committed to individual onset disasters or emergency appeals within first two weeks
F6M = total funds committed to individual disasters up to six months after the disaster declaration.

Funding to NGOs (Indicator 37)

$$\text{Indicator } 37 = 0.8 * PartA_{normalized} + 0.2 * PartB_{normalized}$$

$$PartA = \frac{FNGO}{THA} * 100$$

where,
FNGO = Total Humanitarian Assistance through NGOs by donor
THA = Total Humanitarian Assistance by donor

Source: FTS and HRI 2009 survey

$$PartB = \frac{FINGO}{TNGO}$$

where,
FINGO = Number of foreign NGOs receiving funds from the donor
TNGO = Total number of NGOs receiving funds from that donor

Funding to CERF and other quick disbursement mechanisms (Indicator 38)

$$\text{Indicator } 38 = \frac{QGM}{\underbrace{\frac{GDP}{GDP} * QDM}_{\text{Fair share}}} * 100$$

Optimal values: values above 150 percent are considered to be optimal (=10)

Source: CERF, DREF, ERF and CHF

Where,
QGM*i* = actual funding by donor *i* to quick disbursement mechanisms
QDM = total funding to quick disbursement mechanisms

Un-earmarked funding (Indicator 39)

$$\text{Indicator } 39 = \frac{UHA}{HA}$$

Source: ICRC, UNHCR, WFP, OHCHR, UNICEF, IFRC, OCHA, UNRWA, WHO

Where,
UHA = un-earmarked multilateral humanitarian aid by donor country
HA = total humanitarian aid by donor country

Funding UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeals (Indicator 40)

$$\text{Indicator } 40 = \frac{UNCIAA_i}{\underbrace{\frac{GDP_i}{GDP} * UNCIAA}_{\text{Fair share}}} * 100$$

Optimal values: values above 200 percent are considered to be optimal

Where,
UNCIAA*i* = Funding to UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeals and WTO EMMA, by donor country
UNCIAA = Funding to UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeals and WTO EMMA by all donor countries

Funding IFRC and ICRC appeals (Indicator 41)

$$\text{Indicator } 41 = \frac{ICRC_i + IFRC_i}{\underbrace{\frac{GDP_i}{GDP} * ICRC + IFRC}_{\text{Fair share}}} * 100$$

Where,
ICRC*i* = funding to ICRC by donor (2008)
IFRC*i* = funding to IFRC by donor (2008)
ICRC = funding to ICRC by all donors (2008)
IFRC = funding to IFRC by all donors (2008)

Optimal values: values above 250 percent are considered to be optimal (=10)

Pillar 4
Protection and International Law

Respect for international humanitarian law (Indicator 48)

Indicator 48 = Part A normalised + Part B normalised

List of international treaties on humanitarian law

Convention (I) for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field. Geneva, 12 August 1949.

Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts. Geneva, 8 June 1977.

Declaration provided for under article 90 AP I. Acceptance of the Competence of the International Fact-Finding Commission according to article 90 of AP I.

Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts. Geneva, 8 June 1977.

Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Adoption of an Additional Distinctive Emblem (Protocol III), 8 December 2005.

Convention on the Rights of the Child, New York, 20 November 1989.

Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, New York, 25 May 2000.

Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, 17 July 1998.

Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, The Hague, 14 May 1954.

First Protocol to the Hague Convention of 1954 for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, The Hague, 14 May 1954.

Second Protocol to the Hague Convention of 1954 for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, The Hague, 26 March 1999.

Convention on the prohibition of military or any other hostile use of environmental modification techniques, New York, 10 December 1976.

Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and Warfare, Geneva, 17 June 1925.

Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction, Opened for Signature at London, Moscow and Washington, 10 April 1972.

Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons which may be deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to have Indiscriminate Effects, Geneva, 10 October 1980.

Protocol on non-detectable fragments (I). Protocol on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby-Traps and Other Devices (II).

Protocol on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Incendiary Weapons (III).

Protocol on Blinding Laser Weapons (Protocol IV to the 1980 Convention), 13 October 1995.

Protocol on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby-Traps and Other Devices as amended on 3 May 1996 (Protocol II to the 1980 Convention).

Amendment to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons which may be deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to have Indiscriminate Effects (with Protocols I, II and III), Geneva, 21 December 2001.

Protocol on Explosive Remnants of War to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons which may be deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to have Indiscriminate Effects (with Protocols I, II and III), Geneva, 28 November 2003.

Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction, Paris, 13 January 1993.

Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction, Oslo, 18 September 1997.

Convention on Cluster Munitions, 30 May 2008

PartA = 0.5*(X/50)+0.5*Y

Where,
X = a variable that measures the number of ratifications of international treaties on humanitarian law by the donor, assigning the value 0 when not signed, 1 when signed but not ratified, and 2 when ratified. The maximum score possible (when all treaties are ratified) is 50.

Y = a dummy variable that takes the value 1 when the donor has national committees on humanitarian issues

$$PartB = \frac{ICRC}{GDP} * 1000000$$

Where,

ICRC = funding by donor to ICRC

Source: ICRC

Respect for human rights law (Indicator 49)

Indicator 49 = 2*Part A normalised + Part B normalised

$$\text{Part A} = 0.5*\frac{X}{X_{MAX}} + 0.5*Y$$

Where,
X = a variable that measures the number of ratifications of international treaties on human rights law by the donor, assigning the value 0 when not signed, 1 when signed but not ratified, and 2 when ratified.
XMAX = the maximum score possible (when all treaties are ratified) – varies depending on the type of donor:
Members of the European Council: 33 treaties to be considered (Maximum score = 66)
Other donors: 18 treaties to be considered (maximum score = 36)
Y = variable that takes the value 3 when the donor has an A accreditation status regarding its national institutions on human rights, 2 for B, and 1 for not accredited.

$$\text{Part B} = \frac{OHCHR}{GDP} * 1000000$$

Where,
OHCHR = Core funding to OHCHR as promoter and guardian of international human rights treaties

Sources: UN Treaties Database, Council of Europe and OHCHR

Implementation of refugee law (Indicator 50)

Indicator 50 = 2*Part A normalised + Part B normalised +2*Part C normalised

$$\text{Part A} = \frac{X}{12}$$

Where,
X = a variable that measures the number of ratifications of international treaties on refugee law by the donor, assigning the value 0 when not signed, 1 when signed but not ratified, and 2 when ratified. The maximum score possible (when all treaties are ratified) is 12.

Source: UNHCR, FTS and UN Treaties Database

Part B = Number of persons received as part of UNHCR resettlement programmes (per million of inhabitants) in the donor country

$$\text{Part C} = \frac{UNHCR+RL}{GDP} * 1000000$$

Where,
UNHCR = Funding to UNHCR as promoter and guardian of refugee law and of Agenda for Protection
RL = Funding to protection/human rights/rule of law (excl. funding to UNHCR, ICRC and UNOHCHR)

Pillar 5
Learning and accountability

Participation and support for accountability initiatives (Indicator 59)

Indicator 59 = Part A normalised + Part B normalised

Part A
This subindicator is a weighted average of different dummy variables that capture membership (and attendance) of humanitarian accountability and learning initiatives, including, ALNAP, GHD (co-chair), HAP, Quality Compass, Sphere and People in Aid.

Source: ALNAP, GHD, HAP, Groupe URD, Sphere, People in Aid and FTS.

$$PartB = \frac{FLAI}{HA}$$

where,
FLAI = Amount of funding directed to humanitarian accountability and learning initiatives (ALNAP, HAP, Quality Compass, Sphere) and projects on learning and accountability (listed in OCHA FTS)
HA = total humanitarian aid (2007 – 2008)

Conducting evaluations (Indicator 60)

Indicator $60 = \frac{2}{3} \star \frac{E}{ODA} + \frac{1}{3} \star G$

Source: DAC Evaluation Resource Centre (DEReC), ALNAP, individual donor websites and OECD

Where,
E = Number of self and joint evaluations of humanitarian assistance interventions (publicly available on relevant websites and humanitarian activities evaluated based on standard criteria) for the period 2004 – 2008.
G = dummy variable scoring 1 when the donor has evaluation guidelines in the field of humanitarian aid

Box 3: Questionnaire on Donor Practice

Introduction

First, we would like some general information about yourself and your organisation.

a Organisation name:
b Type of organisation:
c Name of respondent:
d Sex: M / F
e E-mail:
f Position within the organisation:
g Can you tell us how many years you've been involved in humanitarian or development work?
h Can you tell us how long you have been working in this crisis?
i How familiar are you with the Humanitarian Response Index?
- very familiar
- somewhat familiar
- not familiar

j How familiar are you with the Good Humanitarian Donorship initiative?
- very familiar
- somewhat familiar
- not familiar

Crisis context

Now for some background information on the crisis.

k Can you give a brief overview of how and when your organisation got involved in this crisis?

l What kinds of programmes and activities are you implementing in response to the crisis?
(Note to interviewer: check off all boxes that are relevant, and note any specific programme areas, such as maternal-child health. Also include any development-type programmes that are related to the response to this crisis).
- Agriculture
- Education
- Food security
- Logistics
- Health
- Camp Coordination & Management
- Emergency Telecommunications
- Water, Sanitation & Hygiene
- Nutrition
- Early Recovery
- Emergency Shelter
- Livelihoods
- Protection
- Other Assistance

m Do you participate in any coordination mechanisms? If yes, which ones? (Ex. Clusters, NGO umbrella, etc.) How effective are they?

n In your opinion, what are the biggest challenges in terms of the response to this crisis?

For the next part of the interview, we would like to ask a series of questions around this crisis, and different aspects of your relationship with donor agencies.

For each question or statement, we would like you to answer using the following scale.

5 Completely agree
4 Mostly agree
3 Neutral (Neither agree nor disagree)
2 Mostly disagree
1 Completely disagree
DKDon't know the answer
NANot applicable to this context

Before we go to the next section, can you tell *us which donors are supporting or financing your work* in this crisis? For this survey, a donor means any agency or institution (such as government donors, private foundations, etc.) that *directly funds* your work. Please only include funders that provide over 50,000 Euros (or dollars). We are not including funding that comes from direct donations from the general public.

Now, *please respond* to the following statements for *each donor:*

Objectives of humanitarian action

1 The donor's objectives are consistent with the centrality of saving lives, alleviating suffering and maintaining human dignity.
2 The donor is committed to supporting neutral and impartial humanitarian action.
3 The donor's funding decisions discriminate against groups or individuals within the affected population.
4 The donor's humanitarian assistance is not influenced by political, economic, military/security interests.

Response in accordance to needs

5 The donor strives to respond on the basis of identified needs.
6 The donor provides the necessary funding to identify affected populations and their needs.
7 The donor's funding decisions are based on needs assessments.
8 Donor support for your programmes in this crisis has been negatively affected by other crises.

Beneficiary participation

9 Engagement of beneficiaries in all stages of your programming is important to the donor.
10 The donor verifies that you adapt your programmes to meet changing needs.

Local capacity and recovery

11 Integrating risk reduction measures into your programming (such as disaster preparedness or conflict prevention activities) is encouraged by the donor.
12 In general, the donor supports actions to prevent and strengthen preparedness for future crises.
13 Strengthening community capacity to prepare for and respond to disasters and/or conflicts is important for the donor.
14 The donor provides adequate support for the transition between relief, early recovery and/or development in your programmes.
15 The donor has supported you consistently throughout your involvement in this crisis.

Coordination and a well-functioning system

16 The donor supports coordination among all actors in this crisis.
17 The donor supports efforts to build the capacity of local communities to work with humanitarian actors.
18 The donor advocates for governments and local authorities to fulfil their responsibilities in responding to the humanitarian needs.
19 The donor supports governments and local authorities' capacity to coordinate with humanitarian actors.
20 The donor has the capacity and expertise for informed decision-making in this crisis.
21 The donor respects the roles and responsibilities of all the different components of the humanitarian system (UN, Red Cross Red Crescent, NGOs) in this crisis.

Funding relationship with donors

22 The donor places conditions on its funding that compromise your ability to carry out your work.
23 The donor gives you flexibility to define how and when you use the funds provided.
24 The donor consistently provides funding in a timely manner, when it is needed.
25 The donor works with you to find long-term funding arrangements when appropriate.
26 The donor works with you to maintain and strengthen your organisational capacity, in areas like preparedness, response, and contingency planning.

Implementing quality standards and international guidelines

27 The donor supports the protection of affected populations.
28 The donor advocates for the human rights of affected populations.
29 The donor requests that your organisation fully apply good practices and quality standards in your programming.
30 The donor regularly monitors your adherence to quality standards.
31 The donor advocates for the implementation of international humanitarian law.
32 The donor supports the implementation of the relevant laws and guidelines related to refugees in this crisis.
33 The donor supports the implementation of the relevant laws and guidelines related to IDP's in this crisis.
34 The donor actively works to facilitate safe access and protection of humanitarian workers.

Learning and accountability

35 The donor supports initiatives to improve accountability towards affected populations in this crisis.
36 The donor provides you with timely, transparent, and accessible information about its funding and decision-making.
37 Regular evaluations on the efficiency and effectiveness of your programmes are part of the donor's funding requirements.
38 The donor provides sufficient funding for monitoring and evaluation.
39 The donor works with you to implement recommendations from evaluations into your programming.
40 The donor's reporting requirements are unreasonable.

Conclusions

41 Finally, on a scale of 1 – 10, where one is very poor, and ten is excellent, how would you rate each of your donors in terms of their response to the crisis? (Please feel free to rate donors who do not fund you, but you are familiar with.)
42 In general, how well do you think donors are supporting the work of humanitarian organisations in this crisis?
43 Which donors are the best and worst to work with? (Please feel free to rate donors who do not fund you.) Why?
44 Are there cases where you have refused offers of support or funding from a donor? If yes, which donors, and why did you reject their funding?
45 Can you give any specific examples of good or poor donor practice in this crisis?
46 How would you characterize the response to this crisis? Is there anything that makes this crisis unique or different from other crises?
47 Are there any lessons that could be applied to improve the response to this crisis or others?
48 If you had one message to give to donors, what would it be?

Box 4: Principles and good practice of humanitarian donorship

Endorsed by Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, European Commission, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Objectives and definition of humanitarian action

1 The objectives of humanitarian action are to save lives, alleviate suffering and maintain human dignity during and in the aftermath of man-made crises and natural disasters, as well as to prevent and strengthen preparedness for the occurrence of such situations.

2 Humanitarian action should be guided by the humanitarian principles of humanity, meaning the centrality of saving human lives and alleviating suffering wherever it is found; impartiality, meaning the implementation of actions solely on the basis of need, without discrimination between or within affected populations; neutrality, meaning that humanitarian action must not favour any side in an armed conflict or other dispute where such action is carried out; and independence, meaning the autonomy of humanitarian objectives from the political, economic, military or other objectives that any actor may hold with regard to areas where humanitarian action is being implemented.

3 Humanitarian action includes the protection of civilians and those no longer taking part in hostilities, and the provision of food, water and sanitation, shelter, health services and other items of assistance, undertaken for the benefit of affected people and to facilitate the return to normal lives and livelihoods.

General principles

4 Respect and promote the implementation of international humanitarian law, refugee law and human rights.

5 While reaffirming the primary responsibility of states for the victims of humanitarian emergencies within their own borders, strive to ensure flexible and timely funding, on the basis of the collective obligation of striving to meet humanitarian needs.

6 Allocate humanitarian funding in proportion to needs and on the basis of needs assessments.

7 Request implementing humanitarian organisations to ensure, to the greatest possible extent, adequate involvement of beneficiaries in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of humanitarian response.

8 Strengthen the capacity of affected countries and local communities to prevent, prepare for, mitigate and respond to humanitarian crises, with the goal of ensuring that governments and local communities are better able to meet their responsibilities and co-ordinate effectively with humanitarian partners.

9 Provide humanitarian assistance in ways that are supportive of recovery and long-term development, striving to ensure support, where appropriate, to the maintenance and return of sustainable livelihoods and transitions from humanitarian relief to recovery and development activities.

10 Support and promote the central and unique role of the United Nations in providing leadership and co-ordination of international humanitarian action, the special role of the International Committee of the Red Cross, and the vital role of the United Nations, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and non-governmental organisations in implementing humanitarian action.

Good practices in donor financing, management and accountability

(a) Funding

11 Strive to ensure that funding of humanitarian action in new crises does not adversely affect the meeting of needs in ongoing crises.

12 Recognising the necessity of dynamic and flexible response to changing needs in humanitarian crises, strive to ensure predictability and flexibility in funding to United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and to other key humanitarian organisations.

13 While stressing the importance of transparent and strategic priority-setting and financial planning by implementing organisations, explore the possibility of reducing, or enhancing the flexibility of, earmarking, and of introducing longer-term funding arrangements.

14 Contribute responsibly, and on the basis of burden-sharing, to United Nations Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeals and to International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement appeals, and actively support the formulation of Common Humanitarian Action Plans (CHAP) as the primary instrument for strategic planning, prioritisation and co-ordination in complex emergencies.

(b) Promoting standards and enhancing implementation

15 Request that implementing humanitarian organisations fully adhere to good practice and are committed to promoting accountability, efficiency and effectiveness in implementing humanitarian action.

16 Promote the use of Inter-Agency Standing Committee guidelines and principles on humanitarian activities, the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and the 1994 Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in Disaster Relief.

17 Maintain readiness to offer support to the implementation of humanitarian action, including the facilitation of safe humanitarian access.

18 Support mechanisms for contingency planning by humanitarian organisations, including, as appropriate, allocation of funding, to strengthen capacities for response.

19 Affirm the primary position of civilian organisations in implementing humanitarian action, particularly in areas affected by armed conflict. In situations where military capacity and assets are used to support the implementation of humanitarian action, ensure that such use is in conformity with international humanitarian law and humanitarian principles, and recognises the leading role of humanitarian organisations.

20 Support the implementation of the 1994 Guidelines on the Use of Military and Civil Defence Assets in Disaster Relief and the 2003 Guidelines on the Use of Military and Civil Defence Assets to Support United Nations Humanitarian Activities in Complex Emergencies.

(c) Learning and accountability

21 Support learning and accountability initiatives for the effective and efficient implementation of humanitarian action.

22 Encourage regular evaluations of international responses to humanitarian crises, including assessments of donor performance.

23 Ensure a high degree of accuracy, timeliness, and transparency in donor reporting on official humanitarian assistance spending, and encourage the development of standardised formats for such reporting.

The HRI 2009 Technical Annex

The HRI Process and Methodology

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2

Part 2

Perspectives from Leading Practitioners

Chapter 1

Driving Change in the Humanitarian World

A Historic Opportunity for the United States

Frederick Barton and John Ratcliffe

True excellence in humanitarian action demands agility in the face of ever-changing challenges.[1] Addressing the suffering of millions of people therefore requires constant improvement – an objective that is more likely to be met if the United States, the global leader in funding humanitarian action, is an engaged, innovative and constructive partner for change.[2]

The US poor showing on the Humanitarian Response Index (HRI) should give pause to American policymakers. More importantly, it should encourage a stronger commitment to improving American practice. But, in fact, the HRI and its rankings are not the central issue. Today's humanitarian contexts are increasingly complex, demanding a rapid adaptability that is vexing to those engaged in humanitarian work, as well as for their principles and metrics. In these environments, donors cannot be satisfied with 'business as usual', even in areas in which they appear to excel. The days when shortcomings could be excused under the banner of 'saving lives' are coming to a close and it is now time for the humanitarian community to take a confident look at how it does business and, more importantly, how it can do it better.

Fortunately, a number of factors in the US and the wider world seem to be converging, offering an opportunity for real and positive change. The first section of this chapter will examine these factors and the potential they offer. Looking more closely at US performance on the HRI, the second section will consider current American strengths and weaknesses, as well as the Index itself. Finally, the chapter will offer broad suggestions for the US Government to bolster its humanitarian portfolio.

A historic opportunity

Recent trends in US public life reveal a shift in how Americans view their place in the world. As a result, the US is seeking to resume its role as a true global leader rather than a lone superpower. The distinction is crucial: real leadership implies not only authority, but a firm commitment to collaboration and dialogue in addressing the world's challenges.

This shift overlaps with a desire for progress among humanitarians faced with new threats and unprecedented global vulnerability, creating a 'golden moment' that offers the best shot at successful reform in years. Such reform – both in the US and in the wider response community – is critical if humanitarians are to meet the emerging challenges that will threaten millions around the globe.

A new sense of responsibility

In the US, there has been a sea change in the way Americans – officials, academics, businesspeople and private citizens – view their responsibilities. During a recent series of focus groups across the country, for example, the vast majority of participants characterised US leadership as 'arrogant', and they were not happy about it.[3] Popular energy is being channelled into reform efforts targeting every aspect of American society, including how the US provides assistance overseas.

The Modernizing Foreign Assistance Network (MFAN) (2009) is a powerful example of such efforts, bringing together a broad-based consortium dedicated to taking a fresh look at American development policy with an eye towards modernising the Foreign Assistance Act and building a National Strategy for Global Development. Humanitarians should view these initiatives as an opportunity to press their own case for reform, especially given the widespread unfamiliarity with humanitarian issues outside the response community and the inseparability of these issues from post-crisis transition and development work.[4]

President Obama has, in many ways, set the tone for this new direction, commenting in Cairo that, "America does not presume to know what is best for everyone," and that, "we have a responsibility to join together on behalf of the world that we seek," (The White House Press Office 2009a). By creating an inclusive policy environment that is open to debate, this administration is sending a clear signal that no practices – even successful ones – should be immune to a discussion of how they can be improved. So the opportunity is now there for humanitarians to put their issues on the table and start the process of educating decision makers.

Many policymakers outside the response community are unaware of the degree to which humanitarian action could use a fresh look. Nonetheless, there is a growing awareness that some of the traditional distinctions – between 'development' and 'humanitarian' or 'prevention' and 'recovery', for example – are outmoded. Having pressed this point for years, humanitarians should take advantage of the current policy climate to advocate greater integration of humanitarian, transition and development issues in US assistance.

This sort of advocacy may require a change in attitude within some sectors of the humanitarian community, but ultimately the argument for greater integration should not be difficult to make, particularly in light of recent lessons. Watching as their government grossly mismanaged Hurricane Katrina, for example, Americans witnessed the striking degree to which all these issues are linked: a vicious circle in which a chronically poor area was disproportionately affected by a predictable disaster, the impact of which was exacerbated by an incompetent response. Humanitarians could use these experiences, as well as prevailing policy conditions, to press for a sensibly integrated approach to assistance.[5]

International factors

International conditions also contribute to today's favourable climate as the factors driving crises around the world strain traditional response methods and create a powerful incentive for change. Challenges once considered 'new', such as widespread intra-state civil conflict and internally displaced persons (IDPs), now characterise numerous crises, often overwhelming structures designed for a different era. Meanwhile, emerging threats such as climate change will require a re-evaluation of global vulnerability (Kent 2002) and, by extension, a more flexible response system.

In almost every quarter, the humanitarian community is searching for ways to recast itself to better respond to these challenges, offering a constructive outlet for the new US drive for global leadership. Over the past 15 years, humanitarians have undertaken ambitious reforms at the international level,[6] but many of these efforts have shown mixed results in practice. Having come this far, the humanitarian community seems to be crying out for leadership at the precise moment that the US is seeking to remould its role in world affairs.

The well-intentioned but uneven cluster initiative from the United Nations Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) represents a case that could benefit from such leadership.[7] By designating lead agencies for thematic response issues, the clusters have in many ways contributed to a more predictable response system, at times even reflecting best practice. The education cluster, for example, is co-led by a UN agency and an NGO, and since its implementation in 2007 it has been instrumental in integrating education into the humanitarian agenda.[8] But field attitudes towards the clusters have been more ambivalent, with many complaining of 'meeting mania', as well as a redirection of funding away from NGO field delivery and towards cluster leads – all of which, apart from the education cluster, are UN agencies.[9]

Too often promising initiatives such as the clusters have not enjoyed sustained donor support and, in many cases, these initiatives have arrived at the point where they will either become entrenched or they will atrophy. By committing itself to bolstering promising efforts, the US has the opportunity to re-energise the increasingly anaemic global commitment to humanitarian reform.[10]

Constructive evaluation

Conditions in the US and abroad make it clear that meaningful humanitarian reform is more likely today than it has been in a long time. In seizing the opportunity for reform, however, humanitarians should open all their approaches to a confident review. This means that no practice, no matter how cherished, should be exempt from the sort of constructive evaluation that will better prepare the system to address tomorrow's challenges. Too often the humanitarian community has found it easier to repeat debate about issues such as the role of the military rather than recognise nuances at play. Recent initiatives focusing on civil-military relations in emergencies[11] are steps in the right direction, but even these efforts can appear overly rigid.

Interestingly, aid workers and soldiers on the ground report less difficulty with these questions (Kent and Ratcliffe 2008), indicating that the mutual acrimony between the humanitarian and defence communities may be more headquarters-driven rather than indicative of irreconcilable differences. Despite notable controversy, some military and humanitarian collaboration has appeared successful – even in political crises, such as the 1999 Kosovo humanitarian air drops.[12] At the headquarters level, cooperation has also been known to work, such as NGO and UN consultations with coalition forces during the 2001 invasion of Afghanistan.[13]

Seizing the current historic opportunity means discarding inflexible attitudes – on the military or other issues – and striving to work with any partner whose input could strengthen response capabilities. It is now up to humanitarians to play a central role in the chance to move reform forwards.

The Humanitarian Response Index and US performance

It is indisputable that current US performance on the HRI is disappointing. As a model, the HRI is admirable for its independence and for holding donors accountable to exacting standards.[14] In addition, it does a remarkable job of translating the donor-approved Principles of Good Humanitarian Donorship (GHD) into a measurable set of indicators.[15]

The problem arises when one begins to consider whether the *GHD Principles* themselves are well formed. These Principles tend to emphasise ideals over execution, and they often lack specificity. However, to keep pace with evolving threats, donors – and their evaluators – must strive to take a broader view of humanitarian assistance, and one that will be more receptive to self-criticism. This section will consider this issue in relation to three 'hot topics' on which the US is often criticised: politicisation, the military and multilateralism.

Weighing ideals against practice

The US loses points in the HRI for failing to provide assistance without considering competing agendas, violating the humanitarian ideal of neutrality. On this point, it is clear that political objectives play a role in deciding where and how the US will support relief operations. For example, the government recently announced an additional US$100 million in humanitarian assistance for Pakistan, with Secretary of State Hillary Clinton commenting that the package was "essential… to the security of the United States", (The White House Press Office 2009b). This issue – perhaps best demonstrated in the enormous US assistance flows to Iraq and Afghanistan – raises two important questions.

First, how should donors be penalised for this sort of infraction and, second, how should that penalty be framed?

The HRI mostly groups neutrality and similar indicators under the 'responding to needs' pillar and it is at least somewhat debatable whether these principles should be so heavily weighted over technical aspects of service delivery. If, for example, a country provides assistance for mostly political reasons but is skilled at responding to needs on a technical level, should that country be judged more for its motivations than its technical competence?

No intervention can be perfectly executed, but this issue is especially salient in conflict zones – areas that are saturated with ambiguities and politics. In some sense, *any* intervention in a conflict area will be interpreted as political and humanitarians should accept this fact as a reality of the field – particularly given conflict's prominent place in contemporary crises.[16]

But a second issue also arises: the very legitimate objections to broadly politicised humanitarian assistance. When a donor regularly invokes its national interest as a litmus test for responding to crises, it becomes questionable whether this assistance can rightfully be described as 'humanitarian'. Once a donor arrives in Iraq, for example, it probably should matter little *why* they came when measuring how well they respond to needs. But if that donor's entire humanitarian portfolio is easily identified as politically-motivated, this should reflect poorly on the donor's overall performance. Airdropping humanitarian assistance from a military plane, for example, should be construed differently from the politicisation of assistance across the board. Ultimately, the question of how to weigh ideals against practice is one that the donors themselves could address by giving greater clarity to the *GHD Principles* themselves.

This issue plagues many donors and the HRI 2008 demonstrates that the US is not alone in politicising its assistance.[17]

In fact, approaches to 'politicisation' are precisely the sort of area where the *GHD Principles* could use greater clarity. For example, donors' tendency to concentrate on countries, often former colonies, with which they have a 'special relationship' appears unmoved in the face of commitments to de-politicise humanitarian assistance.

In ranking these situations – such as Spain after Hurricane Mitch or France in Côte d'Ivoire – it may be time to recognise the nuances of these relationships, which are driven by a hybrid of genuine humanitarian concern and political instincts. Accounting for such assistance purely as 'violations' is inappropriate, particularly given the fact that donors often marshal *new* resources to assist countries for which they feel a special responsibility. It is worth bearing in mind, for example, that much of the aid sent to Iraq and Afghanistan from the US Congress results from entirely separate appropriations and is not a raid on the overall humanitarian account.

Still, the US Government is unique in the degree to which it publicly trumpets ulterior motives in responding to crises, particularly in conflict environments. One reason American policymakers might be so vocal on this issue is that the US is heavily involved in providing assistance in locations that include sectors that are violently opposed to the humanitarian enterprise. As the US has waded into these situations, it has not always made the right choices.

The Partner Vetting System (PVS) from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) stands out as a powerful example. Under this programme, US-funded NGOs would be directed to vet not only international staff and board members, but also local personnel for links to terrorism.[18] Active since 2007 in the occupied Palestinian territories, but with plans for a future global roll-out, this programme imposes enormous political, financial and logistical burdens on implementing organisations. Furthermore, many in the NGO community feel that it sets an ugly precedent that could lead to *beneficiary* vetting, which would constitute a negation of the most basic humanitarian idea – helping people in need.[19]

Ambiguity and conflict situations

Politicised assistance aside, it is important to recognise the ambiguities inherent in situations marked by civil conflict or counterinsurgencies. These environments are frequently characterised by violent opposition to aid operations and they provide an urgent argument for reviewing how humanitarian principles apply in contexts where they are not universally observed.

The PVS is an example of needlessly exacerbating such a situation, but this example should not detract from the fact that in many of these environments, even the most scrupulously neutral organisations will be perceived as having a political stake. For this reason, it may be time for humanitarians to consider developing a 'new contract' between front-line workers and their employers. This contract would take stock of the inherently political nature of humanitarian intervention and work to minimise the associated risks rather than pushing a broad neutrality that is unevenly recognised beyond the aid community itself. The challenges posed by anarchical situations outside existing conventions – as witnessed by civilian attacks, kidnappings and public bombings – require a thoughtful discussion rather than a strict constructionist approach.

One area this new contract might address is the proper role for the military in unstable environments with humanitarian needs. In addition to politicisation, this issue is frequently cited by humanitarians as a shortcoming of US assistance and is a legitimate area for concern. It is true, for instance, that Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) in Iraq impair the neutrality of associated projects by integrating military officers with civilian efforts, which may contribute to hostility to aid workers. But the rampant insecurity in these areas should also be borne in mind, particularly in light of the relatively few NGOs active in Iraq before 2003.[20]

Humanitarian assistance requires security in order to be effective, both for aid workers and beneficiaries. In many conflict-affected environments, security conditions are insufficient to allow aid delivery, forcing an overlap between the humanitarian and military spheres. These contexts require greater policy manoeuvrability. Attempts to impose a one-size-fits-all principle are ultimately destined to undercut the efficacy of assistance.[21]

Cooperation and centres of excellence

A third issue that frequently attracts criticism of the US is the historically questionable US commitment to multilateralism. Working with partners is a crucial aspect of successful humanitarian work and responsible leadership. But it is time to move towards a new kind of multilateral thinking – one that does not automatically view 'multilateralism' as a synonym for 'international organisations'. Multilateralism should represent a broad-based approach that draws on the strengths of a wide range of actors and tools in concert, of which the UN and other traditional mechanisms are a critical part.

But a multilateral approach should also encourage the US to partner with other governments in areas where they have complementary expertise or see opportunities to make an impact. Traditional multilateral institutions, such as the UN, should likewise be encouraged to operate outside their historic comfort zones and participate more fully in successful initiatives, such as the Afghan National Solidarity Program (NSP). This innovative programme matches grants to rural communities for infrastructure projects and has benefited upwards of 13 million Afghans since its inception in 2003 (World Bank 2007). While the Fund is run by the World Bank, some senior observers have remarked that the project could benefit from more robust participation by the wider UN system in Afghanistan (Barton 2009).[22] Multilateralism should be focused on external actors cooperating across institutional lines to engage centres of excellence wherever they exist, rather than necessarily working through traditional channels.

This point can be illustrated by a more specific issue: international pooled funding. The principle – to set up funding mechanisms that isolate humanitarian money from politics and ensure support for 'forgotten crises' – is an excellent one. But there are legitimate reasons for countries, particularly large countries with the resources to oversee entire aid operations, not to put all their eggs in the pooled basket. Writing a cheque directly to an NGO can save on the administrative costs – measured both in dollars and time – associated with mechanisms such as the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF). Improving access to these mechanisms, as well as their agility, could go a long way towards boosting donor participation. An instructive example could be the UK Conflict Pool, which aims to combine funding and expertise of players across the humanitarian, transition, development and defence communities. Pooling money and capabilities, as well as casting a wider net when looking for partners, is a sensible approach to multilateralism. In the meantime, a judicious mix of pooled and bilateral funding is likely to remain necessary in the face of highly variable circumstances. The determining factor in this case should be the impact of funding strategies on the quality of assistance, rather than adherence to any one strategy purely for its own sake.

Many of the issues for which the US is criticised – politicisation, militarisation and multilateralism among them – point to a real need to improve American practice, as well as advance the humanitarian community's engagement with these issues more generally. The complexity of the humanitarian landscape will only intensify in the coming years and it would be unfortunate to judge the US, or indeed any other actor, solely on standards that may not have kept pace with key challenges.

Moving forward: models for change

The HRI has broadened the vital debate on how donor practice can be improved. In doing so, it is also useful to make some suggestions for moving forward. Intended mostly for the US Government, these suggestions show how the current 'golden moment' can be exploited to improve how the US does business. They also offer potential models for wider reform.

1 Put people first

Humanitarian action is about responding to the needs of people. Policies should reflect this basic commitment and policymakers should make every effort to avoid competing agendas. This applies to the US Government, which is frequently accused of politicising its assistance, as well as to the wider humanitarian community (whose penchant for self-referential debates can likewise do a disservice to beneficiaries).

- **Develop programmes that respond to needs**

  Financial constraints will always limit programming to some degree and it is unlikely that donors will intervene in every deserving case. Programmes that do win funding must be based on an honest needs assessment rather than prevailing budget conditions. Too often it has been possible to identify inequalities across similar programmes. In the Balkans in the 1990s, for example, per capita food assistance was noticeably higher than for similar programmes outside Europe. Presumably, however, a Bosnian refugee does not need to eat dramatically more than a Congolese IDP.[23] The US and other donors should examine existing programmes for biases as a workable 'first step' towards the larger goal of giving *all* crises equal consideration. Developing test cases – such as long-term refugee situations, like Kakuma in Kenya or the flood of IDPs in northwestern Pakistan – could help refine a more responsible approach while measuring true costs.

- **Eliminate tied humanitarian assistance**

  Earmarked or otherwise tied assistance fails to allow the flexibility that humanitarian contexts require and their use means evolving needs can go unmet when they are unforeseen by donors. Not only is that inefficient, but it can also exacerbate inequality across crises.[24] Donors should have faith in the due diligence they perform before deciding to fund any humanitarian agency and should not constrain their partners in the face of complexity and rapidly changing conditions.

- **Lower transaction costs**

  The most important measure of humanitarian action is how quickly and how much assistance reaches suffering people and any decision – including pooled funding, partner funding, logistics choices and others – should be taken with a view towards minimising transaction costs wherever possible.[25]

- **Encourage greater accountability**

  The mixed reaction to the HRI among donors is indicative of a troubling fact: that the commitment to accountability is often rhetorical. A robust donor commitment to truly independent evaluations – along the lines of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees' 2000 evaluation (UNHCR's 2000) in Kosovo[26] – will highlight strengths and weaknesses and, by extension, promise stronger programming in the future. In the US, humanitarian action could be linked to 'forensic audits' undertaken by neutral parties such as the Government Accountability Office (GAO).

2 Attract wider participation

The humanitarian lexicon can appear impenetrable to outsiders, with the result that the public is often put off from participating in debates in the humanitarian world. Ultimately, though, taxpayers underwrite all official crisis response and humanitarians should encourage a keener interest in how their money is spent. Congress, the public, the private sector – all sections of the community – could also offer humanitarians a much-needed fresh perspective. Finally, building an engaged domestic constituency – perhaps through the myriad faith groups and other civic organisations that already donate – will ensure a sustained commitment to regularly improving practice.

- **Develop a comprehensive US National Strategy for Global Development**

  Efforts to create an integrated development strategy deserve support. The strategy should embrace recent international commitments, including the Millennium Development Goals and the Paris Declaration, but also needs to incorporate a sophisticated understanding of humanitarian assistance. This should advocate a view of humanitarian response as part of an inextricable 'woven cloth' that includes both post-crisis transitions and longer-term development. Greater integration does not imply a wholesale merger, however. These issues should be seen to exist in a thoughtful equilibrium with one another, meaning that each should be emphasised as individual circumstances dictate. Specifically, the strategy should:

- Dispel the outdated view of some outsiders that humanitarian assistance is 'tents and water' that has contributed to difficulties in achieving real progress;

- Illustrate how timely, professional humanitarian assistance mitigates the effects of crises on existing development work, and how successful development policies decrease the need for future humanitarian interventions;
- Encourage participation from officials, industry, academics and other experts;
- Expand the influence of transition programming, which has provided some of the most innovative work in conflict-affected settings.[27]

Make greater use of American 'smart power' in advocating humanitarian reform

Policymakers are increasingly aware of the importance of 'smart power' – an approach based on a balanced use of multiple strengths (and recognition of limitations), inspirational leadership and dialogue – in achieving US objectives. Used correctly, it could be a catalyst for global humanitarian reform. Smart power advocacy should:

- Encourage a robust, constructive renewal of humanitarian principles that is unhampered by a strictly constructionist view;
- Create a dedicated forum for humanitarian research and analysis to bring together a range of international experts to forge consensus on long-standing controversies and engage in emerging challenges. The UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) could serve as an institutional model (Kent and Ratcliffe 2008);
- Become a leader on issues and threats that require greater integration. By engaging in apparently overwhelming challenges, such as climate change, the US can work with its partners to reform the humanitarian system and shape how it responds to future threats. Engaging in cross-cutting thematic issues, such as youth and gender, offer similar incentives for change and opportunities for leadership.

Advocate a broad concept of multilateralism

The US should embrace a multilateralism that seeks to drive international collaboration towards existing centres of excellence. For example, if the US responds in a context where another country or organisation has an established expertise, US policymakers should work to align their efforts rather than strive to become the leader themselves or channel efforts by default through established multilateral channels. Multilateralism is a virtue insofar as it serves the humanitarian 'bottom line'. Its use will be highly context-dependent and should not be hampered by narrow or arbitrary definitions.

3 Overhaul the US Government's vision and strategy

The US Government parcels out different elements of its humanitarian work among different offices and there has been little innovation in recent years, even among successful agencies. Getting the government's house in order will improve US response performance and could offer a potential model for wider humanitarian reform efforts.

Get the institutional architecture right

Humanitarian assistance is an integral part of a continuum that includes post-crisis transitions and longer-term development, yet it remains administratively separated from these issues. Even within the humanitarian portfolio, roles are balkanised among different offices. For US performance to move to the next level, the government needs to create a dedicated home for humanitarian assistance.[28] It should:

- Create a USAID Deputy Administrator for Humanitarian Assistance whose office will have a Congressional mandate for humanitarian issues, dedicated funding and an expanded career service component. This office would greatly improve the coherence of US assistance and would develop a US humanitarian vision, including a strategic approach to engaging the UN and other international partners;
- Ensure that this office collaborates with relevant USAID departments, incorporating transition and development concerns at every step of its work;
- Designate the office as the US Government 'lead agency' for humanitarian issues, creating a single focal point for other arms of the government as well as the wider humanitarian community.[29]

- **Understand where money is being spent**
  The US$3 billion figure cited as US humanitarian spending represents official humanitarian aid. Giving through non-governmental channels, for example through private citizens, faith groups and the private sector, would probably add significantly to this total, as would some expenditures that fail to qualify as humanitarian.[30] The government should commission a broad accounting of US spending, including unofficial funding flows, to categorise how money is allocated between different response priorities and gain a clearer sense of whether spending matches objectives. Prevention spending, for example, is likely to be grossly undercounted as many development projects incorporate risk-reduction elements, such as dams to prevent flooding.

- **Encourage innovative practices and experimentation**
  Good ideas are too frequently buried in a bureaucratic culture that spurns innovation. The US Government should – probably within the new Deputy Administrator's office – sponsor the development and piloting of new ideas. Official support for experimentation will help move successful innovations into standard practice and could offer a model to the world. Initial focuses could:

- Experiment more widely with direct cash grants to beneficiaries as a response strategy (which will serve to lower transaction costs and has already been used to great effect by a striking mix of responders);

- Support the creation of a 'virtual warehouse' that would catalogue all the existing US relief supplies in a searchable, web-based system – including supplies that the private sector and other non-government entities agree to make available in advance of a crisis (Kent and Ratcliffe 2008, pp 41-42);

- Expand existing early-warning models into pre-crisis 'response matrices' that will plan for specific, predictable disaster scenarios before they occur (Kent and Ratcliffe 2008, pp 38-41);

- Reward successful practices and institute an 'Academy Awards' programme to recognise excellence and promote healthy competition among humanitarians. Scaling up and marshalling greater attention to existing efforts, such as the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation's prize for humanitarian excellence,[31] could be a useful starting point.

Conclusion

As the world's largest humanitarian donor, the US should strive to ensure that the quality of its humanitarian assistance reflects the magnitude of its contributions. The need for reform becomes even more urgent given the real possibility of multiple crises. Imagine, for example, a deadly flu epidemic followed immediately by a massive California earthquake and a 'dirty bomb' in London – events that could overwhelm the capacity even of advanced societies. Fortunately, factors in the US and abroad have created a unique opportunity for reform, giving American policymakers the chance not only to improve US practice, but to serve as a model for the world.

In moving forward, humanitarians have a responsibility to conduct an honest review of their work and its underlying principles, which will require breaking out of historically circular debates and accounting for evolving conditions. In the final analysis, any humanitarian operation must be focused on people, meaning that all the members of this community – field workers, headquarters managers, donors, implementers and others – must be open to constructive debates that will, ultimately, improve their practice.

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Notes

1 Current approaches are in need of critical re-evaluation, a fact illustrated most alarmingly by the unprecedented spike in aid-worker killings over the past few years. In 2008, more aid workers were killed in the line of duty than in any other year on record (Batha 2009).

2 According to Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) statistics (2009), the US provided roughly US$3.15 billion in officially tracked humanitarian assistance, out of a global total of about US$8 billion. The second-largest single donor, the European Commission, provided US$1.43 billion in the same year. See: HRI 2008 (DARA 2009, p 274 and p 240).

3 As part of the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) Smart Power initiative, a series of focus groups was held in mid-2007 in Iowa, Minnesota, New Hampshire and South Carolina on the US role abroad. Thirty-four out of 35 groups came to the conclusion that American behaviour was arrogant and they expressed displeasure with this fact (CSIS 2007).

4 Although it is widely accepted within the humanitarian community that response, transition and development work constitute an inseparable whole, this understanding has not always reached other members of the assistance community. Some perceptions of the Modernizing Foreign Assistance Network (MFAN) itself characterise the leadership as not having a sophisticated knowledge of how humanitarian and transition work complement development objectives, instead seeing humanitarian assistance as an "uncontroversial subset of development work" (CSIS 2009).

5 The financial year (FY) 2008 operating budget for the domestically focused Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) was US$5.187 billion but with the addition of US$4.3 billion of disaster relief and other items FY 2008 expenditures reached US$9.7 billion; its international counterpart, the Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) was US$739.5 million. FEMA, despite its sizeable budget, flagrantly mishandled Katrina. Greater public engagement would benefit both.

6 Many reform initiatives have focused on efforts to set standards for various aspects of response. Major efforts include the Sphere Project, the Humanitarian Accountability Partnership (HAP-I), the Good Humanitarian Donorship Initiative, the Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance (ALNAP) and the UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee's (IASC's) cluster approach.

7 Launched in 2005, the 'cluster approach' designates a lead agency for 11 response sectors (agriculture, shelter, etc.) and four cross-cutting issues (gender, age, etc.) in advance of a crisis. The objective is to enhance predictability in response, as responding organisations will 'cluster' around the lead agency and collaborate (OCHA 2009).

8 Since the global education cluster was launched in late 2007, funding for education in emergencies through the UN Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP) has increased by a factor of roughly 2.5 (Education Cluster 2009, p8).

9 Many of these ideas were expressed by NGO leaders in a CSIS round table meeting on 17 June 2009. For a full list of the cluster leads, see: http://ocha.unog.ch/humanitarianreform/Default.aspx?tabid=217. One other cluster besides education has a hybrid structure. The emergency-shelter cluster is led by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), with the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) designated as a "co-chair and convener", without formally being considered a cluster lead.

10 The HRI 2008 correctly points out that aid budgets have not grown in step with escalating needs, and that "efforts to reform the humanitarian system appear to be losing momentum" (DARA 2009, p 3).

11 Voluntary Organisations in Cooperation in Emergencies (VOICE), a European NGO consortium that includes more than 85 member organisations, launched a members' working group to draft EU guidelines for humanitarian-military relations in emergencies which were published in May. See VOICE (2009). This effort follows other recent initiatives, including an effort launched by the US Institute of Peace in 2005, resulting in a US set of guidelines published by US NGO consortium InterAction. See: http://www.interaction.org/files.cgi/5896_InterAction_US_Mil_CivMil_Guidelines_July_07_flat.pdf

12 USAID Assistant Administrator for Humanitarian Affairs Hugh Parmer's aggressive view of humanitarian air drops in Kosovo – as Serb forces initiated a siege against KLA rebels and their supporters – ended up being a noble experiment that exceeded the conventions of the US military and humanitarians. The food drops saved lives and were conducted by chartered Ukrainian planes flying lower than the US Air Force had felt was possible. Was this the modern-day equivalent of the Berlin airlift or an updated version of the decade-long Sudan feeding programme? Would strict neutrality or a rigid separation of humanitarian and military action prevent these modern adaptations to emerging threats?

13 UN and InterAction leaders were present at US Central Command in Florida during the invasion to consult with coalition forces on coordinating humanitarian and military roles during and after hostilities. They left US Central Command (CENTCOM) after the fall of the Taliban (Dobbins et al 2003).

14 Before the HRI, formal donor evaluation was largely limited to the OECD/DAC peer-review process, which has questionable independence (as evaluators are other donors) and is noticeably less accessible than the HRI findings.

15 The Good Humanitarian Donorship initiative sets forth 23 Principles that were approved by all OECD donors, including the US. These principles are intended to guide how donors conduct their assistance policies and can be downloaded here: http://www.goodhumanitariandonorship.org/background.asp

16 Many humanitarians recognise this fact already and a good deal of rigorous analysis has been published on how humanitarian actors can operate in highly-charged political environments. *Humanitarian Diplomacy: Practitioners and their Craft* (Minear and Smith 2007), for example, delves into this issue in greater depth. Still, while humanitarians have become increasingly skilled at managing political contexts to improve their access and funding, this has not always translated into an acceptance of the fact that the assistance itself will be perceived as political.

17 For example, France scores very low on measures that would indicate politicised assistance (neutrality, impartiality, etc.), perhaps as a result of strong ties to ex-colonies. But these tendencies exist at some level for all donors (DARA 2009 pp 18-19) and cannot solely be explained by invoking historical factors.

18 For more information on the PVS and NGO reactions to the programme, see InterAction (2008).

19 Concerns about possible beneficiary vetting were raised by NGO leaders at a CSIS round-table meeting on 17 June 2009.

20 Membership of the NGO Coordination Committee in Iraq – the first NGO coordinating body in Iraq after the invasion – rose from 14 international NGOs in April 2003 to approximately 80 today (NCCI 2009).

21 This was true in the refugee camps of Goma, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), following the Rwandan genocide and remains true in Darfur and many conflict-riddled cases today. In Afghanistan, more than 400 people working on USAID contracts have perished in the past seven years, with more than 300 of those being killed by conflict-related violence.

22 This point was made in an informal discussion with the designers of the Afghan National Solidarity Program in Washington, 24 June 2009.

23 Donations to refugees in the Balkans have been consistently higher than to refugees in Africa. Sometimes African refugees do not receive enough food aid for daily caloric necessity, while Kosovo refugees received extra calories. Several UN studies and articles cite the aid discrepancy (Development Initiatives 2002), (Wiles et al 2000) and (Miller and Simmons 1999).

24 Toby Lanzer (2005) points out that one result of the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami was to affect, at least temporarily, donor attention to less visible crises, as demonstrated by lower funding commitments through the CAP. Given that some tsunami funding came from extraordinary donor expropriations, however, he argues that concerted donor efforts to ensure equitable funding could minimise such effects.

25 An important example of avoidable transaction costs are requirements that American assistance be American sourced, such as mandating the use of US surplus agricultural products or US air carriers in delivering relief supplies. These sorts of riders inflate the cost of providing assistance without any benefit to intended beneficiaries.

26 Efforts to unify US humanitarian action under a single roof date back to at least the 1990s. Many of the ideas promoted in this section are cited in work led by Mort Halperin at the US State Department (2000).

27 This has been the official case but is not always observed and could be bolstered with a Presidential Decision Directive.

28 In an interview, InterAction Director Sam Worthington states that for every dollar of US Government support, NGOs receive three dollars from non-government sources, including 13.6 million individual Americans. This figure should give some indication of the depths of 'unofficial' assistance that is not captured by the official US$3 billion figure (USAID 2009).

29 http://www.hiltonfoundation.org/main.asp?id=38

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Chapter 2

Invisible Actors

The Role of National and Local NGOs in Humanitarian Response

Elizabeth Ferris

It often appears that the international humanitarian system includes only international actors: UN agencies, international NGOs (INGOs), and donor governments. Likewise, most discussions on issues of crucial importance to the humanitarian world – such as humanitarian reform, accountability, finance, coordination, integrated missions, security and military-civilian relations – tend to focus on international organisations and how these issues affect them.

However, the world of humanitarian actors is much broader, deeper and more complex than this. Largely ignored in most discussions are the many national and local NGOs (NNGOs), as well as other civil society groups, which play a key role in the humanitarian system – and the rules of the international humanitarian system continue to be made largely by international actors. This is despite repeated calls to build support for, and respect the capacity of local actors.

Last year's Humanitarian Response Index (HRI), for example, concluded that donor governments are not sufficiently supporting local capacity – despite commitments in the *Principles and Good Practice of Humanitarian Donorship* to do this. According to the HRI, donors should "systematically invest more resources into strengthening the humanitarian system's capacity at all levels", particularly the capacity of local organisations – the front-line workers in most humanitarian emergencies. The HRI also concluded that the international humanitarian system needs to better understand how to "adapt international response mechanisms to local contexts while respecting and supporting and strengthening – not undermining – local capacity to respond and cope with and recover from crises." The theme is reinforced in several of the country case studies included in the HRI 2008 (DARA 2009).

The HRI's findings are amply validated and supported by research, including fieldwork conducted as part of the Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement. This article, based partly on interviews carried out with NNGOs in four countries (Ferris 2009), looks at the role of national-level organisations – NNGOs, civil society and community-based organisations – in humanitarian response, and suggests that, collectively, the international community needs to do much more to build bridges between international and local actors.

NNGOs – how to define them

In a humanitarian system that seems to thrive on applying standard definitions and precise terminology, NNGOs are not easy to define. For this article, they are defined as those NGOs that respond to humanitarian crises exclusively in their own country; while INGOs operate in countries other than the one in which they are headquartered. But this is a distinction that is increasingly blurred and it is not simply a north-south dynamic.

The sheer number of local and national organisations is staggering. Literally hundreds, sometimes thousands, of nationally and locally registered NGOs are involved in humanitarian response. When major flooding occurred in the Indian state of Bihar in 2007, some 30,000 national and local-registered NGOs were ready to respond, while the international community struggled to mobilise resources and staff (Southasiadisasters.net 2007).

Some NNGOs based in the global south, such as Philippines-headquartered Community and Family Services International (CFSI), Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) and Church's Auxiliary for Social Action (CASA), in India, carry out programmes in other countries. Moreover, many NNGOs in developed countries function exclusively as service providers and first responders to emergencies in their own countries. Then there are NGOs in developed countries which wear two hats, mounting relief operations both at home and internationally. Thus Church World Service (CWS) has a network for domestic disaster response and also channels funds to support local church-related partners in other parts of the world. And a few INGOs, such as Christian Aid, are not operational in developing countries, but work exclusively through NNGOs.

It is not always easy even to recognise an NNGO as they are often lumped in with other civil society organisations, such as churches, labour unions, professional associations and community-based groups. For example, in Colombia, there are hundreds of associations of internally displaced persons (IDPs), most of which provide mutual support and advocacy for their members. Some of these IDP associations work closely with both NNGOs and INGOs, but they generally have not developed into independent NGOs registered under Colombian law.

National civil society organisations may also be linked with international networks, such as regional and global church bodies, so that while functioning as NNGOs in their own countries, collectively they represent considerable power as a global entity. Thus the Caritas network is made up of national associations of Catholic bishops which undertake humanitarian assistance programmes in their countries, functioning similarly to NNGOs. Collectively, though, the Caritas network is represented in 198 countries and "commands more personnel, a greater budget, and a broader public involvement than any agency of the United Nations" (Raper 2003).

Finally, there are difficulties in classifying national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies, which are major players in most humanitarian emergencies but are not NGOs as a result of their special status under the Geneva Conventions. And while they function as NNGOs in many respects, they have privileged relationships with their governments. They also work on both national and international levels.

Key – but unrecognised – players in the humanitarian system

Humanitarian crises can occur in very many different contexts: international aid may be necessary to assist conflict-affected populations, to respond to a drought or famine or to rapidly deploy resources in the wake of a major natural disaster. In the vast majority of cases, NNGOs and other civil society organisations are almost always the first on the scene after a natural disaster and it has long been acknowledged that most of the lives saved after a natural disaster are the result of local communities on the ground when tragedy strikes. Across the board, NNGOs play a key role – especially as international actors may be forced to take a back seat because of security concerns, hostile host governments or a robust national response.

However, these organisations often find themselves bypassed once the internationals arrive – and on their own when the internationals scale back or move on to the next crisis.

Even in cases where the international humanitarian community finds itself at the forefront of an emergency response, the growing capacity of some NNGOs in many different crisis-affected countries suggests that the situation is changing. Some NNGOs and local authorities are becoming more assertive about taking the lead role in the response, and criticising – correctly – that their 'counterparts' in INGOs are often unfamiliar with the particularities of a crisis, making them less suited to respond effectively.

Yet despite the growing capacity and assertiveness of NNGOs, funding, planning, management and decision making remain largely in the hands of international actors. The bias of the humanitarian system tends to reinforce the role of northern-based organisations as the providers of funds, know-how and capacity, and relegate southern organisations to the role of service providers and 'beneficiaries' of these resources, a situation far removed from the often-stated ideal of 'equal partners'.

As Larry Minear points out in his chapter in the HRI 2008, donor nations are more likely to approach local actors with a mindset of "patronage" than "partnership", a shortcoming that can fundamentally impede real progress in chronic crises (Minear 2009). This is well supported in the survey data and interviews conducted in the HRI crisis reports, and in many other studies, yet it continues to be a challenge for the international system (DARA 2009). If the system is truly to recognise the value and contribution of local actors, the inequities and power dynamics in the relationship between international actors and NNGOs need to be understood and confronted.

Uncharted territory and trends

Part of the problem may be that the international actors in the system know so little about local and national NGOs, or other community-based organisations. For example, there is very little information about the extent of the financial resources they mobilise, or how to calculate the economic value (or efficiency) of locally-based human resources employed in a response. Sophisticated monitoring systems measure the exact percentage of funding for Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP) appeals, but do not attempt to count the truckloads of goods that local and national organisations deliver to communities affected by conflicts or natural disasters.

Indeed, there is no summary figure for the amount of resources the NGO world as a whole mobilises to support humanitarian action, the best estimates we have being for INGOs, with even these usually focusing on the largest. Thus, Development Initiatives recently reported that €4 (US$5.7) of every €10 (US$14.2) of global humanitarian assistance was spent by NGOs (2009), but there is no breakdown of the contributions of the large number of NNGOs.

There is also little in the way of systematic research into NNGOs. Rather, what we do know tends to be based on anecdotal evidence and is sometimes coloured by political orientation or ideology. Some hold up national organisations as the authentic embodiment of community spirit, whose work is often undercut by neo-colonial humanitarian actors. Others, while affirming the importance of NNGOs in the delivery of services, warn that they are susceptible to political pressures and corruption precisely because they are part of the local context; they contend that international actors are able to rise above these pressures.

Diverse bodies

In fact, any NNGO generalisations are dangerous. These organisations vary tremendously in size, capacity and mandates; while some are small associations of well-meaning volunteers providing assistance to needy people, others employ hundreds of staff and have high professional standards.

Moreover, there are major differences between local and national organisations. For a community-based organisation in Mindanao, national-level Filipino organisations may seem as removed from their day-to-day reality as an INGO with an office in Manila. The differences between NNGOs are probably as great as among different INGOs. And just as it would be unrealistic to assume that Médecins sans Frontières, CARE International and Christian Aid share policy positions on, say, humanitarian reform, it would be foolish to expect NNGOs, even those from the same country, to have similar perspectives on a given issue.

However, although there is no systematic research available to confirm it, there are signs that the world of NNGOs, like their international counterparts, is characterised by both an increasing proliferation in their number and a growing concentration of their resources in the hands of a few mega-players.

Thus, in Sri Lanka in 2007, Oliver Walton reported that there were approximately 800 active NGOs registered with the national coordinating body, of which around 350 were NNGOs, 250 were active sub-national NGOs receiving foreign funds and 200 were INGOs (Walton 2008). He goes on to note that a 2007 survey of 81 of the NNGOs revealed that they had a median annual income of US$13,000, while the three largest had an annual income of US$7 million and the largest received US$14 million (ibid). A similar pattern was evident in the NNGO interviews carried out by the Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement in 2008, where NNGO annual budgets ranged from a few thousand to many millions of dollars.

Strengths, weaknesses and security

While international actors acknowledge the essential role of NNGOs and civil society, their unique value is often seen in terms of their implementation of programmes on the ground. The late Fred Cuny captured a typical view when he wrote: "International NGOs will continue to bear the brunt of operations [to reach the victims of conflict]. While many new local NGOs will spring up and some of the existing ones may expand and become more professional, most will find it difficult to work in conflicts because their governments can pressure their staffs to comply with government policies... International NGOs, supported by donors, can better stand up to repressive governments" (cited in Cohen and Deng, 1998).

Limits of action

There is some truth to the limits faced by NNGOs in conflict situations. In Sri Lanka, for example, Lang and Knudsen note that local agencies faced particular pressures from their government in speaking out on protection (2008) – although international organisations which are operational in Sri Lanka have also been reluctant to openly challenge that government's policies. In other situations, such as Colombia, Georgia and Turkey, NNGOs have been outspoken advocates on protection concerns.

The fact is that protesting about human rights violations is a political act which has consequences for *all* NGOs. NNGOs may risk direct attacks on their staff or having their organisation shut down; INGOs may fear their neutrality will be questioned, their funding jeopardised or they may be kicked out of the country.

With the increasingly restrictive security environment in many crises, there is growing recognition of the particular strengths of NNGOs. Dawit Zawde, President of Africa Humanitarian Action, argued that "international NGOs dominate the humanitarian arena, ostensibly because they have experience, competence and wider coverage. Yet as the security environment changes and calls to involve local actors increase, the need for local capacity cannot be over-emphasised... Strong indigenous organisations are essential for effective humanitarian response in Africa" (Cater 2004).

By the 1990s, both local and international NGOs had established their reputations as being able to go where "others fear to tread" (Rufin 1993). But concern has skyrocketed over the past decade about the security of humanitarian workers, both within UN agencies and in the broader NGO world.

In a comprehensive study on security of humanitarian workers, Abby Stoddard, Adele Harmer and Victoria DiDomenico (2009) note that "international aid work has the fifth highest job-related death rate among US civilian occupations and is the only one for which the cause of death is predominantly intentional violence. Between 1997 and 2005, nearly as many aid workers were killed in intentional violence as were international peacekeeping troops." However, their study finds that while the number of violent incidents against aid workers has increased in recent years, the increase is actually very slight after controlling for the number of aid workers. Moreover they found that nearly 80 percent of aid worker victims were national staff and that the number of national staff victims more than doubled between 1997 and 2005 while the incidence rate for internationals is stable or declining. In other words, humanitarian work is not only risky for everyone, but it is increasingly so for national staff of INGOs and UN agencies.

Double standards

There is also a double standard in media coverage of attacks, kidnappings and killings of humanitarian workers; more attention is given to international staff than to local staff of international agencies – and even less to staff of NNGOs. While there is often an assumption by international organisations that national staff face lower risks, the 2009 study found that this assumption was a faulty one. Among other things, there are lower security resources, including that for training and equipment, made available to national staff than for expatriate staff.

With remote management becoming increasingly popular as a way of continuing to work in dangerous areas without risking the lives of expatriate staff, there are serious ethical issues about transferring risk from INGOs and their staff to local organisations (Haver 2007). The use of remote-control style humanitarian assistance has serious drawbacks for the quality of aid, as it hampers accurate needs assessments. Crises such as Afghanistan, considered extremely high-risk environments for aid workers, also experience problems of rapid INGO staff turnover and inexperience.

With rising concern about the security of humanitarian workers, there seems to be a greater appreciation for the particular strengths which national staff and NNGOs bring. For example, Pantuliano and O'Callaghan (2006) found, in the case of Darfur, that "national staff proved considerably more aware of key protection issues related to land and new power structures in the camps; expatriate personnel would rarely refer to these problems unless prompted."

Others, while affirming the importance of local knowledge, suggest that the answer lies in different approaches taken by international actors. Thus Lang and Knudsen (2008) conclude that "while local NGOs can be politicised and part of ethnic or sectarian conflicts, international agencies are beginning to recognise that taking a longer-term commitment to particular communities enables them to understand more effectively the threats, vulnerabilities and capacities of communities to build locally resonant approaches."

Funding issues – a question of survival

All humanitarian actors need funds to do their work. UN agencies depend on member governments to fund their appeals and keep their agencies running; member governments depend on their legislative and executive bodies to authorise funds for humanitarian response and INGOs depend on a varied mix of government funds, private foundations and individual contributions. In an increasingly competitive world, international actors depend on media coverage, public information and branding to convince their donors to continue their financial support.

A question of survival

Like other humanitarian actors, NNGOs spend a lot of time looking for money and reporting to donors. But unlike other humanitarian actors, the activities undertaken by the NNGOs mainly depend on the availability of funds from sources outside their own countries.

Gariyo's study of NGOs in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda found that of the 62 NGOs and grassroots organisations surveyed, 32 depended on foreign donations for between 75 and 100 percent of their funding. Fowler's study on Kenya showed that both local and foreign NGOs are almost totally dependent on non-Kenyan sources for their finances, with more than 90 percent of their funds coming from foreign aid. This reliance on external funding tends to deprive them of a strong base in their own societies and makes it difficult to conduct long-term planning (Obiyan 2005).

With very few exceptions, the NNGOs interviewed for the Brookings-Bern Project study, all indicated that the quest for funding affects their work. While it is likely that INGOs and UN agencies would indicate similar pressures, by their very nature NNGOs usually have fewer options than international actors. At the very least, they are different.

International actors facing a lack of funding for particular programmes generally reduce or close programming in a particular area – and at least some INGOs move on to other countries where funding is available. For example, in mid-2009 INGOs are reportedly scaling back plans to assist the large number of displaced Pakistanis because the necessary funds are not forthcoming. NNGOs do not have that option. If their operations are not funded they cannot move on to another country more attractive to donors. Having insufficient funds is often a question of survival for the NNGO.

The system of humanitarian financing – including pooled-funding mechanisms such as the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) – are overwhelmingly biased towards UN, INGO and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent system rather than local actors. In spite of repeated statements and commitments to build local capacity, most donors prefer to channel their funds through international organisations. Results from the HRI annual surveys of local and international actors consistently underscore this issue, and indicate that there is a long way to go before the transfer of funds matches the rhetoric (DARA 2009).

This need for funding affects relationships between INGOs and NNGOs. Larger INGOs usually have greater financial resources than their national counterparts and sometimes subcontract with NNGOs to implement certain activities. But INGOs are also increasing their presence in southern countries. The number of INGO field offices rose 31 percent to 39,729 between 1993 and 2003 and this number has surely increased since then (Mclean 2005). Some major donors now require the field presence of an INGO as a condition for funding.

NNGOs complain that in some cases, INGOs are displacing them from work they have carried out for many years. They also report that INGOs often hire their best staff at salaries which they cannot afford to pay. While there are many cases where relations between international and national NGOs are based on mutual respect and complementarity, the partnership is usually an unequal one.

Although data are lacking, it is obvious that when donors give funds to INGOs or UN agencies to be transferred to NNGOs for programme implementation, transaction costs accrue to the international actor. Channelling funds through international actors, it is argued, is necessary to ensure accountability and reporting, and yet this is happening at the same time that remote management has become the standard operating procedure in many major operations. NNGOs can be trusted to run major programmes in Somalia and Iraq even though the funds are channelled through international actors.

In Bangladesh, NNGOs expressed concern that INGOs are no longer just bringing in funds to support their work from foreign sources, but are increasingly mobilising local resources as well – resources which had been seen as the province of NNGOs. Mawa Jannatul (2000) laments the unfair advantage that INGOs have in accessing these funds: "Their expatriates/ technical experts can talk on equal terms, often in the same language, as their fellow-countrymen in the embassies and donor agencies." He goes on to make the case that "national Bangladeshi NGOs are ultimately owned and managed by Bangladeshis, closely regulated within the country and accountable to the NGO Affairs Bureau. By contrast, INGOs are owned and registered abroad. They may be registered here and subject to project approval by our government, but their legitimacy and accountability lies beyond these shores" (ibid).

The resentment felt by NNGOs regarding the treatment they receive at the hands of INGOs is widespread. NNGOs in Lesotho report that donors do not trust local NGOs. "Donors will often not fund our programmes, but when our organisations fail, the very same staff are utilised by donors and international NGOs. International NGOs come and attract funding from all over the world and bully Lesotho NGOs into areas where they work." (Lesotho Council of NGOs 2005.)

The competitive reality

Relationships between international and national NGOs are complex. Ideologically they are often allies – standing up for private voluntary action together and jointly advocating more assistance to victims of conflict or natural disasters. On the ground, too, there is usually collaboration in sharing information between staff of INGOs and NNGOs. But there is also competition, rooted in the competitive reality of the need to raise funds to support ongoing work.

In the Brookings-Bern Project interviews, NNGOs indicated a range of relationships with INGOs. In Georgia, for example, several reported strong cooperation, characterising relationships as "excellent", "like one family" or "partners". Others were more critical: "We write the proposals and then the INGOs come in as donors," one said. In both the Philippines and Nepal, NNGO staff reported that information-sharing with INGOs seems to be one-way. The disparity in resources between INGOs and NNGOs plays out in different ways in different contexts, but always seems to affect relationships.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) carries out much of its work through both INGOs and NNGOs. In 2007, UNHCR had 550 agreements with 424 NNGOs for a total of US$89.4 million. It had 417 agreements with 151 INGOs for US$138 million. While UNHCR has far more NNGO partners, much more funding goes to INGOs – and, to complicate matters, working with NNGOs is a challenge for UNHCR. As one UNHCR staff member said: "It's as much work to develop and monitor an agreement for US$10,000 with a national NGO as for an agreement for US$1 million with an international NGO. And our monitoring capacity is limited" (UNHCR 2007).

The importance of capacity building

Capacity building is a concept that is widely affirmed, but very differently interpreted. There is no consensus about what constitutes capacity or about how it is built. Although the term is rarely defined, there nevertheless seems at times to be an assumption that capacity is a quality that NNGOs lack – albeit one they can develop through training programmes offered by INGOs. As Linda Abirafeh (2007) asks, has capacity building come to mean, "a North-driven, patronising and unidirectional transfer of knowledge?"

If capacity is the ability to protect and assist vulnerable people, clearly local NGOs bring strong capacities. The ability to speak a local language and understand the complexities of local clan structures may be more important capacities in protecting people than the ability to manipulate log frames.

But even leaving aside the different understandings of capacity, there is little consensus about what actually works. For example, is it more cost-effective to organise a one-off training seminar for 100 people or to support one individual to take a three-week course? Is it more beneficial to send a consultant to work with a local NGO for several months to deal with administrative issues or to organise a training course for all NGOs on administrative management in a particular town? Are there ways that capacity can be built aside from training?

Independence or organisational ability?

All of the NNGOs interviewed for the Brookings-Bern Project on IDP protection were familiar with the term 'capacity building'. Although they indicated different understandings of what capacity building means, in all four countries it was bound up with notions of sustainability and independence. Capacity building was generally seen as a way of enabling the organisation to operate on its own, to "stand on its own two feet", in the words of a Kenyan respondent.

A similar perspective was evident in a recent report on the New Partnership process to strengthen relations between African Red Cross and Red Crescent societies – NEPARC. This process was initiated in response to the huge challenge of the African national societies' inability to generate funds to support their core personnel and infrastructure costs while still being expected to implement large frontline programmes effectively. Without adequate infrastructure, they couldn't attract or retain top talent or provide the quality of reporting required by donors. This led to a lack of trust from donors "who often insisted on costly oversight, often patronisingly provided by junior or inexperienced expatriates" (Thomas and Bliss 2007).

However, although comparative data are lacking, it is likely that most international actors would see capacity building in terms of increasing organisational ability to meet the needs of the population to be served, rather than in terms of the independence or continued operation of the organisation.

Such differences in understanding affect relations between NNGOs and INGOs. While NNGOs often call for increased support for capacity-building initiatives from INGOs, INGOs often counter that their main purpose is not to increase the capacity of local NGOs, but rather to deliver needed services to vulnerable people. When it comes down to it, they say, they are not in the business of building up local organisational structures, but of fulfilling their mission to serve people in need.

INGOs often implement their work through local NGOs, which represents a form of capacity building. However, many local NGOs, as Brooke Lauten (2007) points out, begin their work as implementing partners of large INGOs; this provides a flow of funds but doesn't allow them to develop their own vision of where they want to go.

A fascinating study by Sadiki Byombuka (2004) on the experience of local NGOs in the Kivus reports that in the initial aftermath of the flood of Rwandan refugees in 1994 international aid agencies were unable to cope with the situation and simply subcontracted work to local NGOs in areas such as food distribution, shelter, firewood and health. "Competition among local NGOs for these contracts was intense; some abandoned existing projects for work with prominent international organisations" (Byombuka 2004). Some of the local NGOs were able to parlay their work as subcontractors into their own humanitarian aid projects and at least some were able to mobilise local resources to respond to the humanitarian crises (ibid).

Humanitarian reform

NNGOs are recognised as playing an important role in the international humanitarian system and there have been attempts to include them in important humanitarian initiatives, such as UNHCR's Partnership in Action (PARINAC) process. But the PARINAC process, by creating regional focal points and funding regional meetings for NNGOs, also created expectations that could not be sustained. Who can pay for networking meetings among southern NGOs on a sustained basis? Consultations between UNHCR and NGOs, including NNGOs, have a long history and other UN agencies such as the World Food Programme and UNICEF have implemented similar consultative mechanisms.

The Global Humanitarian Platform

As part of the humanitarian reform process, a new initiative known as the Global Humanitarian Platform (GHP) was convened in July 2007 by the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) and the chair of the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) who was representing the 'non-UN world'. This GHP was intended to bring together the three main families of humanitarian actors – NGOs, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, and UN and other intergovernmental agencies – and put them on an equal footing in order to increase the effectiveness of humanitarian response. The July meeting adopted 'Principles of Partnership' to serve as a basis for the relationships: equality, transparency, a results-oriented approach, responsibility and complementarities.

Several NNGOs participated in the GHP meetings but their number was far fewer than that of INGOs.

One African participant in the 2007 meeting recounted that present at the meeting in his country to talk about the Principles of Partnership were 27 UN representatives, 26 INGO representatives, three from the Red Cross and only one from an NNGO.

Some participants in the GHP saw the initiative as a way of challenging the traditional UN-centric model of humanitarian action and perhaps offering an alternative to the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC). While it seems unlikely that the GHP will lead to this kind of radical change, it has probably contributed to reforms within the IASC, notably increasing the number of NGO participants, almost all of which represent INGOs.

The cluster approach

In some cases, NNGOs are involved in clusters operating at the national level, but too often NNGOs are left out of the policy discussions and in many cases they remain on the margins of humanitarian reform. While virtually all of the NNGOs interviewed in 2008 by the Brookings-Bern Project were active in national or local coordination mechanisms in their communities, none of the NNGO respondents in Georgia or the Philippines and only one respondent in Nepal had heard of humanitarian reform. It seems that initiatives taken at the international level do not automatically 'trickle down'; rather, more proactive measures are needed as in the regional consultations organised by the GHP in 2008.

HRI findings also confirm that national and local NGOs in many of the crises studied, recent reform of the international aid system, including the use of clusters and pooled-funding mechanisms, do not involve NNGOs, can be out of touch with local conditions and so contribute to the further marginalisation of NNGOs (DARA 2009).

Some interesting questions

A focus on NNGOs gives rise to a number of interesting questions:

1 Is the line between national and international NGOs becoming blurred?

While it is easy to distinguish between national and international NGOs on the basis of where their headquarters are located, the distinction is less clear when it comes to staffing and decision making. The vast majority of those working for INGOs in the field are national staff who not only deliver services, but also channel information back to INGO headquarters. Increasingly, INGOs (like donor governments) are devolving power to regional or national offices to decide on programming priorities. But it has long been recognised that those who provide the information, frame the alternatives and make the recommendations are, in fact, setting policy. And most of those people are national staff.

If so, could it be that the most effective capacity building taking place is through INGO hiring, training and promoting of national staff, as well as the devolving of power to them? And, as many INGOs have promoted national staff to positions in headquarters, could it be that the policies of INGOs are increasingly shaped by people from affected countries? The issue of the relationship between national staff of INGOs and NNGOs deserves further study.

2 Should NNGOs become more like INGOs?

It is often argued that it is pressure from donor governments that disadvantages NNGOs – for example, pressure to spend funds quickly and to document impact rigorously through pre-approved indicators. Some would argue that NNGOs are more concerned with process than with measurable results and that the rules of the game are skewed toward northern standards rather than to what people need.

Others argue that NNGOs can compete with the most professional of INGOs and cite as evidence the impressive results of a number of large NNGOs which not only adhere to the highest standards but are increasingly bypassing the middlemen of INGOs and dealing directly with governmental donors. Is the way to ensure greater NNGO participation in the humanitarian system for NNGOs to become more like INGOs (which incidentally seem to be becoming more like UN agencies)? Or is the answer to consider another type of international humanitarian system?

3 How should the international system adapt to the new understanding of NNGOs?

A focus on NNGOs also raises fundamental questions about the prevailing 'business model' of the international humanitarian system. Almost by definition, a disaster is an occurrence which requires international response. As the Operational Guidelines on Human Rights and Natural Disasters spells out, a natural disaster is "the consequences of events triggered by natural hazards that overwhelm local response capacity and seriously affect the social and economic development of a region" (IASC 2006). In other words, the international community becomes involved, usually by mobilising financial and human resources matching the scale of the disaster and donor interest. And yet, even when funds are readily available, there are shortcomings. In reference to the tsunami (admittedly an extraordinary disaster by all counts), Arjuna Parakrama (2007) writes, "the more external aid there is, the more local capacity is undermined". Does it have to be this way?

In more typical humanitarian crises, then, necessary funding should be tightly linked to the transfer of capacity, responsibility and leadership to the national and local actors which best know the area and which will find themselves at the forefront of the next crisis response. Looking at the international system from the perspective of NNGOs leads to fundamental questions about the nature of the international humanitarian community.

Conclusion

There are some positive developments. Certainly there is a greater awareness of the need to include NNGOs in fora where humanitarian issues are discussed and a growing realisation that including NNGOs should mean more than simply inviting them to meetings planned by international actors.

Thus the GHP organised regional meetings with NNGOs to encourage a frank exchange of views. In some of the global federations, there are interesting experiments in which NNGOs based in the south are evaluating and monitoring activities of their counterparts in the north. There are other cases where NNGOs are seeking to bypass INGO middlemen and approach donor governments directly.

It is time to take NNGOs seriously as important humanitarian actors in their own right and as a subject of serious analysis. It may be illustrative to point out that, 20 years ago, INGOs were in a similar position. Placed largely outside the central humanitarian policy debates, they were seen either as marginal players or as simple implementers of policies made by others.

INGOs are now acknowledged as major players – for the resources they bring, the issues they raise and the expertise and commitment they have demonstrated. They are also increasingly studied by academic researchers. It will be interesting to see if the coming decades bring forth a surge of similar academic interest in NNGOs.

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Chapter 3

Addressing the Crises
Renewing Partnerships and Innovating Support

Bekele Geleta

Our world is a world of crises: the oil crisis, the food crisis, the financial and economic crisis... Our world is also *in* crisis on many levels – global, regional, local, family and individual crises. It is a crisis of civilisation.

This environment could easily lead to our loss of confidence in – or at least an apprehension about – continuing our involvement in meeting humanitarian and development projects aimed at saving and improving lives and promoting greater human dignity that were committed to in very different circumstances. We could abandon an outward-looking vision in favour of a narrower focus, cancel major projects, reduce financial aid and adopt egotistical attitudes and short-term decision making as we 'wait out the storm'.

However, this would be to forget that the word crisis – from the Greek '*krisis*' – means 'moment of choice, time of decision'. A crisis is not the fact of the disaster, but a pressing invitation, an opportunity to develop a vision, take courageous decisions and shape the terms of a new ambition in order to move forward with renewed energy and confidence.

Where the humanitarian sector is concerned, this necessity takes on particular urgency.

First, there is an urgency to act because by nature our work is directed towards those on the fringes of society – working in the crevices of vulnerability and poverty, and in the sectors that bear the brunt of the planet's afflictions. As humanitarian actors, we deal with crises on a day-to-day basis, developing a capacity for rapid decision making and defining response formulae in particular circumstances to assist those in need for as long as necessary.

Second, because many of us, such as the Red Cross and Red Crescent, have long worked in close contact with a wide variety of actors: communities,

local authorities, NGOs, the military, governments, companies and international organisations. Guided by local volunteers and staff who live in the heart of the communities they serve, we are able to adapt our programmes and services to the different cultural contexts in which we operate. This gives us the ability to develop solutions in complex environments, often against the backdrop of a crisis or disaster.

Third, because as humanitarian actors we are well positioned to analyse trends, shift the focus of political and economic priorities, and influence decisions and modes of action according to a global vision in keeping with our mission. In this regard, humanitarian action plays a political, albeit non-partisan, role; a function that involves assisting the shaping of 'public management', based on our principles of neutrality, impartiality and independence – and with human dignity as our only goal.

Are we prepared for the unprecedented challenges ahead of us? Can the humanitarian sector apply the knowledge and experience gained over decades at the local and global level to better respond to the current crisis and its inevitable long-term effects of increased human suffering? What kind of paradigm shift and innovations are needed to allow us to focus and prioritise our efforts to have greater impact?

This article surveys the enormous challenges that must be met in the humanitarian and developmental fields. It outlines some recurring difficulties and pitfalls in linking local priorities to global responses, and in designing management models of partnerships that are effective while respecting our humanitarian principles and values. Lastly, it explores possible solutions and the types of changes necessary to adapt to the new and unprecedented context in which we operate.

A planet at risk

The future of the planet should be seen, at the very least, as urgent. There are 2.6 billion vulnerable people in the world today – almost half the planet's inhabitants (UNDP 2008). This already staggering figure could rise dramatically as a result of the combined and unprecedented effect of certain risk factors.

Climate change, undoubtedly, ranks high on the risk scale. A wealth of data and studies show that climate change exacerbates vulnerability and is plunging humanity into an era of uncertainty. In a report published in May 2009, the Global Humanitarian Forum (GHF) estimates that 40 percent of disasters are linked to climate change (GHF 2009). This is widely backed by years of experience and analysis provided by the IFRC in the annual World Disasters Report (IFRC 2009b). As an example of the escalating dimension of disasters, the IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) has increased its allocations by almost 300 percent over the past five years, mainly because of the growing number of small-scale disasters. Floods, storms, heat waves and droughts account for around 60 percent of the funds allocated (IFRC 2009a).

Although there is still not enough data available to provide a wholly reliable analysis of the situation, everything seems to indicate that this unprecedented phenomenon will intensify further. Greenhouse gas emissions and the melting of the polar ice caps are outpacing forecasts.

The multiplier effect

In addition to triggering natural disasters, climate change acts as a catalyst, aggravating other disturbing factors that increase vulnerability, such as migration. According to a joint study by the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), the United Nations for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) (2009), 20 million people were displaced as a result of sudden-onset natural disasters in 2008.

It is also clear that climate change is interacting with world population growth, urbanisation and the geopolitics of conflict in an unprecedented way, creating the potential for multiple forms of vulnerability and complex crises. The effects of climate change therefore heighten and exacerbate a wide range of vulnerabilities associated with food insecurity, lack of access to water, the chaotic development of slums and shanty towns, and increased health risks, such as the emergence of malaria at higher altitudes.

In other words, climate-change risks have a multiplier effect on the age-old scourges: poverty, the spread of disease, inequality and discrimination.

In spite of significant progress, particularly in Asia, there are still hundreds of millions of people in the world today living on less than a dollar a day. As many as 50,000 people die every day because they lack the means to survive (UN Secretary General 2007), with AIDS still killing 8,000 (Speicher 2008) and malaria claiming the lives of 3,000 children (Okafor 2008) daily. The number of children who died from diarrhoea over the last ten years of the 20th century exceeds the total number of people killed in the Second World War (WHO 2000).

The risk of a pandemic is another cause for global concern. Severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and avian influenza brought the danger of a lethal and fast-spreading infectious agent into the public spotlight. The H1N1 virus – swine influenza – confirmed that this was no fleeting risk, but one with which the planet must come to terms and live.

The international community has failed to meet the ambitious challenges set by the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Furthermore, the chances of stepping up efforts to achieve them now seem bleak in view of the downward trend in funding flows which began two years ago – even before the onset of the global financial and economic crisis, which has yet to show the full extent of its impact.

The need for a paradigm shift

At the global level, we have well-defined agendas, such as the MDGs, the major agreements established under the aegis of the UN, particularly the Hyogo Framework for disaster risk reduction, and the negotiations currently underway on climate change. However, most observers agree that the goals set by the international community will not be met by the target date of 2015.

We must acknowledge that the world in which we live is in upheaval. These times of crisis call for urgent analysis and a candid re-assessment of our operating assumptions in order to define the response and innovation needed to meet the enormous challenges ahead. The UN Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, keenly aware of this upheaval, has rightly called for a major paradigm shift in the humanitarian field. It is a call echoed by the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, which itself is engaged in a wide debate on how to redefine the strategic direction of our work for the next ten years (see http://ourworld-yourmove.org).

On the positive side, the world has experienced an extraordinary level of mobilisation over the past few decades to address humanitarian needs. A number of achievements receiving sensational media coverage demonstrate that the citizens around the world are concerned about addressing human suffering. And there has been an expansion in the landscape of actors operating in the field: large and small NGOs, companies (operating directly or through foundations), institutional donors, consulting firms, governments, UN agencies, global funds and so on, all with shared aims (though not all with the same experience, capacity or understanding of the fundamental principles of humanitarian action).

Credit must be given to this phenomenon, which has made it possible to save, assist and support hundreds of millions of people, as well as raise public awareness about the crises and disasters that have struck across the world. We must also pay tribute to the altruistic dedication and humanitarian values put into action each day by tens of millions of people within the Red Cross and Red Crescent and other organisations, who volunteer their time and energies in support of humanitarian endeavours.

However, the race against poverty and suffering, the struggle for development and the fight to achieve the ideal of a decent life for everyone are far from over. The results have not been commensurate with the level of mobilisation. Today's crises are stark reminders of that. One of the main reasons for this state of affairs is that more than 90 percent of international humanitarian aid is spent on emergency response and short-term action (Tearfund 2005a).

Another crucial explanatory factor is the multiplicity of uncoordinated actors and the slow workings of the institutional mechanisms deployed to support humanitarian action before, during and after a disaster. Thanks to the 'cluster system', which was established by the UN with a view to streamlining coordination mechanisms, great strides have been made in correcting the effects of dispersion. However, advances are confined, at this stage, to emergency response, and to a certain extent, to the UN and other large international players. Decisive progress is required for a more effective and radical integration of the resources and modes of action deployed by the international community and to integrate the system with capacities at the local level.

In short, humanitarian action requires greater leverage to influence decision makers and opinion leaders at all levels, with a view to combining action in the field and to better protecting the vulnerable in both the short and long term.

Building capacity

The humanitarian paradigm shift called for by the UN Secretary-General falls within the scope of this global framework for analysis – a framework that coincides with and echoes the priorities that the IFRC has been promoting for many years. Essentially, he advocates a major refocusing of aid towards capacity building.

The aim is to strengthen the capacities of civil societies and communities so that they can look after themselves. Gone are the times of overly simplistic or excessively rigid plans, driven by an emergency-based approach as defined in the capital cities of the 'developed' world. The time has come for long-term humanitarian practitioners – those who are in touch with the reality of the plight of the most vulnerable – to take the lead in reshaping the system to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow.

It is also necessary, as the Humanitarian Response Index 2008 report suggests, to strengthen the capacities of the humanitarian actors themselves to enable them to fulfil their mission in accordance with the non-negotiable principles of quality, efficiency, transparency and accountability (DARA 2009).

In this context, emergency action is, and will continue to be, an essential part of humanitarian response. However, there must also now be a shift in the focus of financial aid towards the vital task of building a culture of prevention, and of sustainable development in the interests of the most vulnerable.

Twin essentials: adaptation and prevention

The troubled times ahead require us to review both the focus of financial aid and the mechanisms for allocating it.

The meetings in Bonn to prepare for the Copenhagen Conference on climate change and the session of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) Global Platform, held in June 2009, provided an opportunity to highlight the fact that the fight against climate change is not just about reducing emissions. Adaptation to the reality of climate change is crucial to warding off its current and future consequences.

Adaptation is a key issue because the poorest countries and communities are already bearing the brunt of climate change, when they are, in fact, the least to blame. It is also a key issue because the technological advances and cultural changes necessary to manage climate variations will take decades to implement. Even if the international community is able to reach an agreement to reduce emissions drastically at the Copenhagen Conference in December, global temperatures will continue to rise for at least several decades (IPCC 2007). Meanwhile, the most vulnerable communities – hundreds of millions of people living in high-risk coastal areas or fragile environments – will pay a high price. Implementing adaptation measures is the only way to anticipate crises more effectively and to provide the proactive responses required before irreparable damage is done.

The Poznan Conference, held in December 2008, brought the question of adaptation into the debate on climate change. Including the need for a fund to support climate change adaptation (UNFCC 2008). The aim is to ensure that a climate change Adaptation Fund becomes an essential, adequately financed part of the mechanism created to address climate change. Such a fund needs to be sustained by resources other than existing ones, and is not just a repository for a remix of existing funds, and ensure that the fund has a real, positive and lasting impact on communities.

In the same spirit of the Adaptation Fund, there should be a shift in the focus of humanitarian aid resources towards capacity building for local actors to ensure that development and poverty-reduction processes are implemented effectively and sustainably, in accordance with the MDGs.

Investing in risk reduction

Financing mechanisms must also be defined on the basis of meteorological data. Thanks to scientific developments in this field, it is possible to predict the probability of disasters, paving the way for early-warning systems and advance-financing mechanisms aimed at limiting the impact of extreme weather events. There is no point talking about development if decades of effort can be wiped out by a minor disaster or extreme weather event. After Hurricane Mitch in 1998, the President of Honduras declared that his country had lost in just a few days what it had taken 50 years to build (Tearfund 2005b, p13).

According to current calculations, one dollar invested in disaster prevention saves at least four dollars in terms of emergency response (IFRC 2009b). In times of crises, such as these, the entire humanitarian community, particularly governments and donors, should recognise the importance of investing in prevention. Current projections highlight the urgency of it.

Reticence about investing in this area stems largely from an inability to see the impact of risk reduction, as well as the vague and sweeping nature of its definition. The real and lasting impact of such risk-reduction measures can only be appreciated over a longer timescale and increased analysis, study and research are needed to establish an effective set of indicators.

Even so, many programmes have shown convincing, even spectacular results. Examples include flood preparedness in Mozambique, advance mobilisation in Bangladesh and early-warning and response mechanisms in Cuba and Costa Rica.

The humanitarian community must also make efforts to build the resilience of vulnerable communities an absolute priority. At the session of the ISDR Global Platform, OCHA proposed reallocating ten percent of the total funds currently assigned to emergency response to risk reduction (Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction 2009). This short-term goal should be more ambitious, establishing a target of at least 20 percent.

Strengthening civil societies

Capacity building and risk reduction are not confined solely to constructing dykes and establishing early-warning systems. They involve a great deal of work, including needs and vulnerability analysis, planning, education and training, pre-positioning of resources, safer land use and building-construction standards, ensuring means of food production and a safe water supply, the protection of schools and hospitals, pre-positioning of emergency response supplies and so on. These programmes, involving a multiplicity of public and private actors, lay the foundation for adaptable, sustainable development. Community participation guarantees the success of them and ensures that they are permanently in place before, during and after disasters or crises.

In short, this shift in focus towards strengthening civil societies is the cornerstone of a culture of prevention and regulation. Our planet and its inhabitants must now pay as much attention to this issue as they do to economic development.

We are aware that the effort will require adapting the way donorship is organised, particularly in better bridging emergency and development funds, but also in longer-term planning and partnerships – many of the same conclusions of the Humanitarian Response Index 2008 report. This is the message we repeat when addressing decision makers, opinion leaders and others in the donor community. For example, at the occasion of the IFRC 90-year anniversary in May 2009, we adopted a sharp, one-page Red Cross and Red Crescent Declaration calling on the international community to invest massively in prevention. The Declaration was presented to M. Nicolas Sarkozy, President of the French Republic, in the presence of more than 100 ambassadors.

Towards integrated relationships

The refocusing of humanitarian action goes hand in hand with a fundamental reorganisation of practices and modes of action to achieve a clearer division of tasks and greater integration in new partnerships.

Operating, as it must, in a multiple-risk environment, the humanitarian community needs to improve its capacity to organise and structure itself in terms of quality and coherence. The current multiplicity of operators has helped create healthy competition in recent decades and spur the expansion of the humanitarian community on the international and national scene.

At the same time, however, this expansion has led to some confusion about the role of humanitarian actors – and the competition could prove to be counterproductive to the humanitarian community's mission in the long term. Just one example is the 'war' over humanitarian logos and signs in Rwanda, in the wake of the genocide, and in the former Yugoslavia. The quest for exposure and visibility is an outward sign of the increasingly fierce competition for access to funding and support.

Furthermore, there are still organisations operating under the humanitarian banner, that sometimes fail to uphold the principles underpinning humanitarian action, starting with the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence.

Despite expectations and efforts, in practice UN agencies, governments, the Red Cross and Red Crescent, and NGOs remain difficult to coordinate with their differing priorities, and operational and delivery mechanisms. The difficulty is compounded by the expanded role of the military and private sector in humanitarian responses.

A partnership charter

Today's challenges call for the immediate implementation of an effective global humanitarian management system based on complementary roles rather than competition, and on synergies rather than divisions. In the spirit of the reform initiated by the UN, 'Deliver as one', this management system should be based on close, integrated partnerships which make the most of the different areas of expertise and the comparative advantages of all the actors involved: humanitarian operators, donors, government agencies, and research and consultancy centres.

This global initiative would require compliance with certain conditions under a partnership charter. These include:

- The establishment of objectives and a common agenda;
- A clear plan to distribute roles and responsibilities of different actors;
- A financing plan;
- A common planning process;
- An integrated approach to resource deployment;
- Monitoring and control mechanisms;
- A flexible, integrated support and management structure.

Looking back on recent reforms of the UN system or within the IFRC, we admit that they have not all resulted in impressively significant outcomes so far. The main obstacle remains persistent overlaps and competing areas rather than a focus on clear, comparative advantages. For example, climate change has today become everyone's concern – which is good news – but all major UN agencies have climate change-related strategies. This eventually blurs perceptions and fails to ensure a collective difference can be made. Territoriality may be our biggest problem – despite our common goal.

The humanitarian community also needs better-integrated tools, including technical tools, to make joint capacity building more efficient than regular meetings, training and periodic long updates. To achieve this, we need to engage strategies and approaches that are much more integrated, and sometimes more flexible, than before. This requires better focus from partners to facilitate complementary work and effective collaboration.

As an example, the IFRC has set up two global alliances, one for HIV/AIDS and the other for risk reduction. Conceived as part of an integrated plan, these alliances provide a framework for partnerships among internal actors – particularly our national societies – and also between actors outside the IFRC. We can undoubtably learn from this experience, and share the lessons more widely within the system, just as others can do the same.

These alliances would undoubtedly benefit from a better harmonised general-management model. This is particularly true as far as integrating the following areas:

1. Basic standards in terms of humanitarian principles, transparency and accountability, especially towards affected communities.
2. Common approaches for needs assessments and capacities analysis, with a focus on how to best leverage action based on local participation and ownership of programming, and partnerships with the authorities.
3. Improved, results-based planning tools and other support functions, such as common reporting, monitoring, and impact indicators and criteria, etc.
4. Reinforced capacities for the collection and analysis of data and statistics, conducting research and analysing trends, particularly the impact at the community level of humanitarian and development interventions.
5. Integrated IT systems and tools to facilitate knowledge sharing and good practice.
6. Better tools and an 'organisational culture' within the humanitarian sector for reflection, forecasting and innovation.

Pooling expertise and capacities

The need for a more integrated partnership model in terms of management and support for governance structures is self-evident. Although numerous initiatives have been launched, they have not been carried through. This has partly been a result of a lack of time and resources, and partly a failure, in some cases, to define strategic areas for action clearly – an essential prerequisite to developing synergies.

Greater attention and assistance is required from donors for the systems and mechanisms that support programmes in the field and for the strategic development of humanitarian operators. This is the other side of the coin, the other dimension of the paradigm shift now in progress, which requires efforts to pool partners' expertise and capacities.

The IFRC has already made significant efforts to clarify what 'lines of work' it is concerned with becoming a reference point in the community to help people prepare for and respond to crises: disaster management (before, during and after an event), strengthening the capacities of communities and national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies, and education and awareness to overcome exclusion and discrimination (Strategy 2020). A series of initiatives is also under way to determine more accurately the scope of its added value, to improve its capacity for analysis and to facilitate the creation of effective and successful partnerships (*Code of Good Partnership*). But we recognise that these efforts cannot be inward-looking, and need to engage widely with other actors with the humanitarian sector and beyond.

The past decade has seen tremendous advances in operational capabilities, further development of accountability mechanisms, better structured coordination of emergency response and growing understanding of the need for risk reduction and preparedness – not only by the Red Cross and Red Crescent, but also by other agencies. We are today more confident than ever of our ability to offer a principled and coherent response to meet the needs of people caught up in humanitarian crises.

Empowering people and innovating

The whole humanitarian aim is to prevent and alleviate human suffering and promote human dignity. To achieve this, the key is to empower people and develop local capacities. Growing local capacity means actors both want and are demanding a voice and participation in managing programmes. In the humanitarian world the 'imperative to act' often ignores this.

The international humanitarian system has to learn how to work in partnership with local actors, in particular by giving them greater ownership and responsibility in designing and implementing programmes, no matter where funds are coming from. Work in partnership with local actors should be considered as both a key outcome and a primary criterion for successfully implementing programmes. Without local ownership, programme impact is seriously diminished and programmes will never be sustainable. Giving a greater voice to local actors also encourages local democracy and responsibility, and contributes to well-functioning civil societies.

Improving connectivity

The need for improved information systems also needs to be considered. Increasingly, the very populations affected by disasters are regarded as those best placed to help humanitarian organisations untangle the complexity of an emergency and provide important inputs when identifying their most urgent needs. At the same time, communities wracked with conflict or disaster do not always automatically seek out relief items, such as food commodities, from international aid groups; rather they want them to speak out and advocate on their behalf. They want the humanitarian assistance of information "so the outside world knows what is happening". Affected people are not empowered to make decisions and as such have no influence over the aid response. They are often excluded from the life-changing decisions that directly affect them.

Aid workers are finally waking up to the fact that people caught up in a crisis are not helpless victims, but rather are a potential first line of response. They are at the same time a potent information resource and in desperate need of life-saving information. As such, communities at risk need greater access to the best information possible to allow them to make informed decisions, minimise the impact of the crisis or, even better, prepare for and anticipate a crisis so as to be able to cope with its effects.

Open communication channels and better connectivity between aid organisations and affected communities can also ensure the delivery of the aid the community itself has defined as most essential and appropriate. In time, humanitarian organisations need to be every bit as accountable to those they are supporting and assisting as they are to those who provide funding for aid operations.

Therefore, action should be urgently taken to:

1. Introduce more accountable and principled responses (in line with improved operational capacities of agencies);
2. Build capability at the community level through trained volunteers;
3. Change the way we respond so affected people have access to modern technology to ensure information flows to and from them;
4. Respect and embrace national and local aspirations to lead and direct the response in their own countries and communities.

A different kind of business

A humanitarian organisation is obviously not a business in the usual sense, although it is required to meet obligations in terms of resources and performance just like any other business. It is not a business like the rest because it is at the daunting crossroads between humanity and civilisations. It puts volunteers, experts, financiers, managers, politicians, technicians and researchers in contact with each other, with a view to saving lives and improving the plight of the most vulnerable. It is also a sector with resources subject to constraints and uncertainty, frequent understaffing problems and very elastic working hours.

However, the diversity of the humanitarian sector and the constraints it has to deal with mean that it has adapted its structure to the needs in the field. This notion of adaptation and innovation must be mirrored in its organisational and partnership model.

One of the major issues in the area of adaptation and innovation is human resources and competencies. It is quite normal for people to work ten, 15 or 20 years in the same organisation in the field or, more often, at headquarters. This means there is little 'mixing' among partner organisations, which consequently know little about each other. It also prevents the 'oxygenation' of competencies, which remain 'suffocated' in a closed field.

The solution involves promoting greater internal mobility and knowledge sharing. It could also include exchanging expertise and building more bridges among humanitarian operators, donors, government agencies, research centres and companies. This would make human-resource management more dynamic, achieve greater mutual understanding among partners, particularly with regard to constraints, and may even attract people with expertise from outside the Red Cross and Red Crescent interested in this kind of experience.

Another measure that could prove useful in achieving greater integration and transparency is the promotion of closer relations or networking among governance structures. Relations at this level are often confined to occasional events and more systematic interactions at the governing board level would undoubtedly be helpful in the move towards a common agenda, particularly among humanitarian operators and donors.

The same is true for communication strategies. All too often, such strategies focus solely on enhancing visibility when they should, in fact, seek to improve positioning and reliability, thereby promoting synergy of messages and greater trust. So partnerships between operational organisations and donors should also involve a concerted communication strategy, incorporating the goals of the partners and developing a 'win-win' approach.

Banking on a shared and lasting impact rather than resorting to a simplistic quest to score in the visibility stakes is an approach that will inspire 'influential partnerships', capable of influencing policies and decisions about vulnerable people in order to give them a voice in the political arena and enhance participation and accountability. The humanitarian sector needs diplomatic leverage, and partnerships are, once again, the key to achieving it. This type of leverage needs to be enhanced, more clearly understood and better resourced.

Conclusion

The humanitarian action of this century cannot be effective without a collective ability to exert its influence on the world market. It urgently requires a review of partnership relationships to anticipate unprecedented challenges and to increase the self-sufficiency of communities and individuals in need.

The challenges ahead are not insurmountable. But it will be difficult to make an impact unless we have the political will and courage to seize the opportunity presented by today's crises to innovate, adapt and improve our ways of working. The effort and resources required will be enormous, but the costs of our inaction would be devastating. The lives and livelihoods of millions of vulnerable people are at stake.

The paradigm shift we need requires active intelligence, a voluntaristic mindset, courage and renewed energy in order to decisively renovate the way we work and our modes of action, based on clear priorities. Our mission also involves meeting intangible needs, such as hope and trust, by projecting itself as the provider of solutions and resilience, and embodying the active principles of humanitarianism.

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Chapter 4

The Right to Survive
Humanitarian Challenges and Solutions for the 21st Century

Raymond C. Offenheiser[1]

Humanitarian emergencies caused by conflict and environmental hazards create immense suffering. For those who do not immediately lose their lives, many lose loved ones, experience catastrophic damage to their homes and livelihoods, witness the destruction of their communities, and suffer the dangers and humiliations of displacement and destitution. The aftermath of a disaster can become a struggle for survival, for dignity and for a future.

Each year, disasters become reality for nearly a quarter of a billion people in the world and, as climate change takes its human and environmental toll, there is every reason to expect that number to rise quickly and dramatically. But funding for humanitarian action is failing to keep pace with current emergencies and the global economic crisis is both deepening the needs on the ground and reducing the flow of aid to address them.

The trends are alarming, yet it is still possible to influence them. The global humanitarian community has potentially strong allies among citizens, governments, international bodies and one another to deliver effective, well-funded disaster response and risk reduction under challenging new conditions.

But a new framework for humanitarian action is needed – one that helps place disaster-affected communities and all those who aim to assist them in better alignment with one another, and one that is founded on a key principle: that survival and security are fundamental human rights.

Growing threats, increasing vulnerability

Climate change

According to a recent Oxfam study, by the year 2015 there may be a greater than 50 percent increase in the number of people affected annually by climate-related disasters. Nearly 250 million people are now affected by disasters triggered by natural events; of these, 98 percent suffer from climate-related emergencies such as floods and droughts. The new research projects that within six years climate-related disasters may affect as many as 375 million people annually (Oxfam International 2009).

Disasters have been increasing in frequency for the past 30 years, including a marked increase since the mid-1990s in climate-related shocks such as cyclones and floods (United Nations 2007). Mega-disasters that affect millions of people may continue to cause the majority of disaster-related deaths, but smaller, climate-related emergencies are likely to affect a growing number of people.

The impact of climate change will not be confined to 'natural' disasters:[2] environmental changes that affect crops, water supplies and grazing land can also precipitate violence. One study has suggested that climate change will place 46 countries – home to 40 percent of the world's population – at increased risk of violent conflict (Smith and Vivekananda 2007).

Vulnerability

Vulnerability – the combination of factors that place some people in harm's way – is closely linked to poverty. Factors such as chronic malnourishment, unsafe housing and a lack of clean water and health care can turn natural hazards into disasters for people living in extreme poverty. Statistics underscore this stark reality: in rich countries the average number of deaths per disaster is 23; in the poorest countries it is 1,052 (IFRC 2007).

Poor people who are also subjects of discrimination or confining traditional roles, such as women and girls, face additional risks. A woman, for example, whom tradition has prevented from learning to swim may not be able to survive a flood or tidal surge; a mother caring for small children may not have the mobility to find food and water; the insecure environment of an emergency may expose her or her daughters to sexual abuse; and if she has been largely confined to the role of housewife and has no experience earning a living, the aftermath of an emergency may leave her desperately poor.

Where poverty and population density collide, vulnerability is deepened further. As urban populations swell, poor people are often forced to build homes of poor quality materials located in areas prone to landslips and flash flooding. Sudden shocks such as landslides are not the only risks for poor urban populations: lacking adequate housing, water and sanitation, health services and information, they live at risk from epidemics of communicable diseases.

In rural areas, people are trying to eke out livings on land that is becoming more and more arid and degraded. The size of family holdings is shrinking as plots are subdivided among children, making it increasingly hard to meet basic food needs even when the harvest is good. Chronic undernourishment erodes people's health, leaving them less resilient to shocks such as drought, flooding or violence. The Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations estimated that in 2008 there were 963 million undernourished people worldwide – a number that is set to increase (FAO 2008).

Forced displacement is another source of vulnerability. Stripped of livelihoods, assets and supportive networks, people who must flee their homes have few resources with which to face additional challenges to their health and safety. Some estimates suggest that, under pressure from climate change and other factors, up to one billion people could be forcibly displaced between now and 2050 (Christian Aid 2007).

The rising tide of disasters and vulnerability intensifies the need for humanitarian actors to join forces to improve the quality, depth, breadth and sustainability of disaster response and risk reduction.

A new humanitarian framework

Rights and responsibilities

In 1948, the world's governments made a firm commitment through the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to safeguard all people's rights to life and security. The declaration and the binding conventions that flowed from it oblige states to take the necessary steps to realise those rights. Armed conflicts are addressed by international humanitarian law, which sets out a series of rules for the humane treatment of civilians – such as facilitating the rapid and unimpeded passage of humanitarian relief – and requires all parties to a conflict to uphold them. But the rights that have been recognised on paper have, in many cases, not been realised.

It is national governments that have the primary responsibility to safeguard the lives of their citizens in the face of disasters and to build long-term security, but clearly many have failed to do so. While it may be morally responsible for them to help their people prepare for, respond to, and avert disasters, it is not always in their political interests unless an engaged civil society insists on it.

The UN and non-governmental organisations have shouldered some of the responsibility for citizens' rights to survival and security, stepping in where governments have been unable or unwilling to do so to ensure that disaster-affected communities receive what they need. But simply supplying goods and services does not improve the odds that the government of a disaster-affected country will invest in future emergency response and risk-reduction efforts. In fact, external aid providers often give the impression that they are absolving governments of their humanitarian responsibilities.

States must assist their people in the immediate aftermath of disasters and reduce their long-term vulnerability to hazards; vulnerable citizens must be empowered to demand adequate and timely assistance and to hold their governments accountable when they fail. In a new, more effective framework for humanitarian action, aid providers would assume roles on both sides of this equation – supporting governments to do their jobs and supporting disaster-affected communities to claim their rights.

A humanitarian framework that places emphasis on governance does not preclude international aid agencies providing essential goods and services in emergencies. Instead, it encourages aid providers to look for opportunities to strengthen rather than undermine the roles of government and local civil-society organisations in order to help create more effective long-term relationships between governments and their people. For example, in a major disaster aid providers can aim for maximum coordination with government authorities rather than maximum independence; and to help countries deal with the host of small-scale, climate-related emergencies that are on the horizon, humanitarian groups can help governments, local NGOs and communities develop their own strategies for preventing natural hazards from triggering disasters.

Governments of wealthy countries that are less vulnerable to disasters also have key roles to play in upholding the rights of poor people at times of crisis. Ensuring that aid efforts are adequately funded, of course, is crucial. But as the countries most responsible for triggering climate change, wealthy nations need to lead the way in cutting emissions of greenhouse gases. And as the countries that have benefited most from globalisation, rich nations have significant responsibility to reform rules of trade that have contributed to poverty and disaster vulnerability around the world.

Reducing vulnerability

Another crucial element of a new framework for humanitarian action is in expanding the capacity of aid providers and governments to address not only immediate threats to life but also people's vulnerabilities to future emergencies.

At the second World Conference on Disaster Reduction in 2005 in Japan, 168 governments signed the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA), which calls for a more sustained and durable approach to reducing the risks from environmental hazards. Few governments have lived up to their commitments and when they do invest they often focus on centralised, highly technical projects where local initiatives might be more suitable. Bangladesh has made substantial progress through such local investments, creating cyclone shelters, community-based preparedness systems, evacuation plans and early warning systems, as well as mobilising volunteers – initiatives that have paid off in recent years with a drastic reduction in casualties from cyclones.

Reducing vulnerability can go beyond preparedness to mitigating or even averting disasters. In February 2007, 350,000 people were affected by floods in Bolivia. Tens of thousands of hectares of agricultural land were devastated and 25,000 people were evacuated to temporary shelters. Working with local partners, Oxfam responded to the emergency by providing drinking water and sanitation facilities to displaced families and, when the emergency was over, set about finding a durable solution to the problem.

Taking inspiration from pre-Inca agriculture, Oxfam worked with local municipalities to develop an agricultural system involving elevated seedbeds, or *camellones*, that could cope with droughts and floods, and improve the productivity of the land. The *camellones* prevent seasonal floodwater from destroying crops and the water channels that surround them reduce the need for watering in dry periods. An added bonus: fish have repopulated the water channels and now provide an additional food source to the farmers.

While the threat from hazards will increase in the 21st century, it is the extent of people's vulnerability to those hazards that will determine how many lives will be lost. Aid providers and governments need to place far greater emphasis on long-term action to minimise disaster risks.

Speeding the pace of change

In the wake of troubled humanitarian responses in the African Great Lakes region and the Balkans in the 1990s, agreement on the need for reform reached a tipping point. Important initiatives such as the Sphere Project, Humanitarian Accountability Partnership International (HAP-I), the Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance (ALNAP) and the Quality and Accountability (Q&A) initiative emerged. Yet it is only in this decade that they have gained wide recognition and acceptance in the humanitarian community. Change came slowly, which is cause for concern for current initiatives on disaster risk reduction (DRR) and climate change adaptation (CCA).

But perhaps we can speed the integration of DRR and CCA into humanitarian practice by building on the earlier reform efforts. Using the Sphere model, we can identify clear standards and indicators to define the quality of our work. Taking guidance from HAP-I, we can prioritise community participation and accountability towards crisis-affected communities. As ALNAP suggests, we can establish forums for exchanging experiences and lessons. And, again like Sphere, we can build our work on the foundation of rights.

Incorporating the hard-earned knowledge and principles of the global humanitarian community may help DRR and CCA initiatives gain the support they so urgently need.

Improving existing programmes

At its best, humanitarian assistance saves lives, is delivered impartially, is transparent and accountable to both donors and recipients, builds durable solutions and is sufficiently resourced. It meets international standards for quality, reaches the most vulnerable populations and is rigorously coordinated. Projects involve members of disaster-affected communities in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation process, and they provide mechanisms to allow community members to report failures and abuses. In conflict settings, humanitarian aid providers are clearly distinguished from military actors and are not pressured to distribute aid on any basis but that of need.

There are countless success stories in which these goals are achieved, but many humanitarian programmes around the world fall short of them. While the accelerating pace of humanitarian emergencies requires that aid providers pursue new approaches to our work, it is crucial that we continue to make progress on ensuring existing programmes and policies meet the high standards that disaster-affected communities both need and deserve.

Resources to meet growing needs

As the number of humanitarian disasters increases, so too do the funding needs for aid providers. Oxfam's projection that by 2015 the numbers of people affected by climate-related disasters in an average year will increase by more than 50 percent indicates that, if we were to maintain current levels of assistance, by 2015 the world would need to spend around US$25 billion per year on humanitarian aid.

But there is a pressing need to broaden the scope of humanitarian activities. While risk-reduction work, for example, will likely reduce the cost of disaster response over time, it requires significant investment of resources, as does helping poor communities adapt to the new climate realities that threaten their crops, water supplies, livestock and security.

Improving the quality of ongoing humanitarian aid is another source of additional expenses.

The world spends very little of its wealth on humanitarian aid. In 2006, international humanitarian aid was estimated to be US$14.2 billion (Development Initiatives 2008), which was less than the world spent on video games in the same year. By contrast, military expenditure in 2006 totalled US$1.3 trillion (SIPRI 2008). If we are to meet the present and future humanitarian needs of the world, donors must substantially increase their support.

- The 23 countries that are members of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) – most of whom fall well short of their stated goal of donating 0.7 percent of gross national product (GNP) to development assistance – must meet or exceed their commitments for funding development and humanitarian programmes.

- Increasing and sustaining the commitment from non-OECD countries could help fill the funding gap that will otherwise widen drastically in the next few years. Non-OECD countries now provide up to 12 percent of the money used for disaster relief worldwide (SIPRI 2008). Saudi Arabia, for example, provided US$100 million in response to Cyclone Sidr in Bangladesh, representing around 53 percent of the total humanitarian funding for the crisis (OCHA's Financial Tracking Service).

- We must examine to what extent the private sector can help meet future humanitarian funding needs. The benefits of long-term partnerships between aid providers and the private sector can be considerable. Yet when businesses pursue humanitarian activities for reasons that go beyond public relations – when they use them to develop new markets and contacts, for example – the principle of impartiality may take a back seat to the profit motive. When private sector actors attempt to participate in disaster relief, it is imperative that those who engage their services require them to act according to commonly accepted humanitarian principles and standards.

How humanitarian funding is spent is as important as how much of it there is to spend. To be effective, funds must be timely and adequate, and they must be distributed impartially. Too often, they are none of these. Bureaucratic impediments often prevent the rapid mobilisation of funds, and emergencies that donors feel disconnected from – due to lack of sufficient media coverage or other factors – are often severely underfunded. (The contrast between the value of aid made available to survivors of the Indian Ocean tsunami – US$1,241 per person – and that made available to survivors of the conflict in Chad that same year – US$23 per person – underscores the problem. (OCHA's Financial Tracking Service).

The Humanitarian Response Index (HRI) 2008 captures key areas where wealthy countries could strengthen the impact of their donations: commit themselves to providing aid that is impartial and neutral (assistance that is based on need, not politics); invest in improving the quality of needs assessments; help strengthen local capacity to recover from crises; link humanitarian work to long-term development; invest in the capacity of the humanitarian system itself; and – especially in the areas of protection, assistance and accountability – actively promote international standards and good practices. By addressing these issues as part of a new humanitarian framework based on rights, donor governments could make a vital contribution to improving the quality and effectiveness of their humanitarian assistance.

Finally, as we come to grips with urgent new funding needs, the humanitarian community must reach out to new donors and aid providers and help bring them along in the journey towards increased transparency and accountability in the way aid is provided. Yet some have deliberately partisan agendas. The principle of leaving no one behind in the face of disaster must remain at the heart of humanitarianism, but there is work to be done to articulate a vision of impartiality that speaks to every cultural and religious tradition.

Making headway

Signs of progress in donor funding are heartening, The endorsement of the *Principles and Good Practice of Humanitarian Donorship* by 35 donor countries indicates that more and more donors are taking an interest in applying good practice in the way they work. But, as the HRI points out, even the best donors could do more to improve, and there is still a long journey ahead before a more proactive, rights-based humanitarianism is no longer relegated to the fringes of the international humanitarian community.

Key failings of the 2005 HFA – the lack of specific objectives and financial targets – are now being addressed: in June 2009, the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (the international body charged with advancing the HFA) called for allocation to DRR of at least 10 percent of all humanitarian and reconstruction funding, at least one percent of development funding and at least 30 percent of CCA funding.

And the decision by the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID) to commit 10 percent of its disaster-response funding to preparedness and mitigation programmes is helping transform DRR theory and planning into practice. Hopefully, more and more donors will follow suit and look beyond the strict confines of humanitarian funding for more creative, integrated and sustainable approaches to tackling these pressing global challenges.

Conclusion

There is nothing inevitable about a future in which greater numbers of people die or are made destitute by natural hazards and conflict. Despite climate change and what may turn out to be a proliferation of emergencies, the world can still mitigate threats and reduce people's vulnerability to disasters.

It all comes down to choices – choices made by disaster-affected communities and their governments, aid agencies, wealthy donor countries, the UN and others – and a rights-based framework to help guide those choices.

Governments and aid providers need to put DRR and CCA high on their agendas in order to avert looming crises.

Rich countries that haven't done so already should sign up to the *GHD Principles* and should hold one another accountable for realising its objectives. But more than just signing on to the *GHD Principles*, donor governments should deepen their understanding of what constitutes good practice, and take steps to assimilate lessons learnt to ensure aid money is used for greatest impact (as the HRI itself attempts to do). Further, they must make a far bigger investment in humanitarian aid and must meet their wider responsibilities to cut greenhouse gases and make trade fair for developing nations.

Aid providers must work to ensure that their emergency responses are consistently effective, timely, accountable and impartial. We need to engage disaster-affected people as active partners rather than passive beneficiaries. And, as we work to make DRR and CCA more central to our work, it is crucial that we build on the important lessons of the past two decades of humanitarian practice.

The most critical factor in whether or not governments in disaster-affected countries choose to safeguard life and address vulnerability is whether they consider it to be in their interests to do so. Empowered citizens and assertive civil society organisations who demand respect for their rights in crisis are crucial to creating an environment in which politicians can and must act. International aid providers can play important roles both in supporting communities to claim their rights and in supporting governments to fulfill those claims.

The humanitarian challenges of the 21st century are immense as the world faces greater threats with fewer resources to spare. The global community has the means to safeguard the lives and rights of those at greatest risk. The fate of millions depends on whether it has the collective will to do it.

About the Author

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Raymond C. Offenheiser is the president of Oxfam America. Before joining Oxfam, he served for five years as the Ford Foundation Representative in Bangladesh and, before that, in the Andean and Southern Cone regions of South America. He has also directed programmes for the Inter-American Foundation in Brazil and Colombia, and worked for Save the Children Federation in Mexico. Mr. Offenheiser serves on the Board of InterAction, the trade association for US international NGOs, and was a founding board member of the ONE Campaign. He currently serves on advisory boards to the Aspen Institute, the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, the Kellogg Institute for International Studies at Notre Dame University, the World Agricultural Forum, the World Fish Center, and Biovision, a French initiative to promote dialogue on science and technology in agriculture. He is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations.

Notes

1 This article is based on "The Right to Survive: The humanitarian challenge for the 21st century," a report published in 2009 by Oxfam International and available at: http://www.oxfam.org/en/policy/right-to-survive-report. The original report was written by Tanja Schuemer-Cross and Ben Heaven Taylor. It was summarised by Elizabeth Stevens, with additional contributions and inputs from Jacobo Ocharan.

2 The causes and impact of disasters are often anything but natural. Disasters are the interaction of environmental shocks (such as storms, floods and droughts) with human vulnerability (who one is, where one lives and how one makes a living), creating risk (the danger of losing life and livelihood). Other exacerbating factors include environmental mismanagement, such as the failure to maintain infrastructure such as dams and flood defences.

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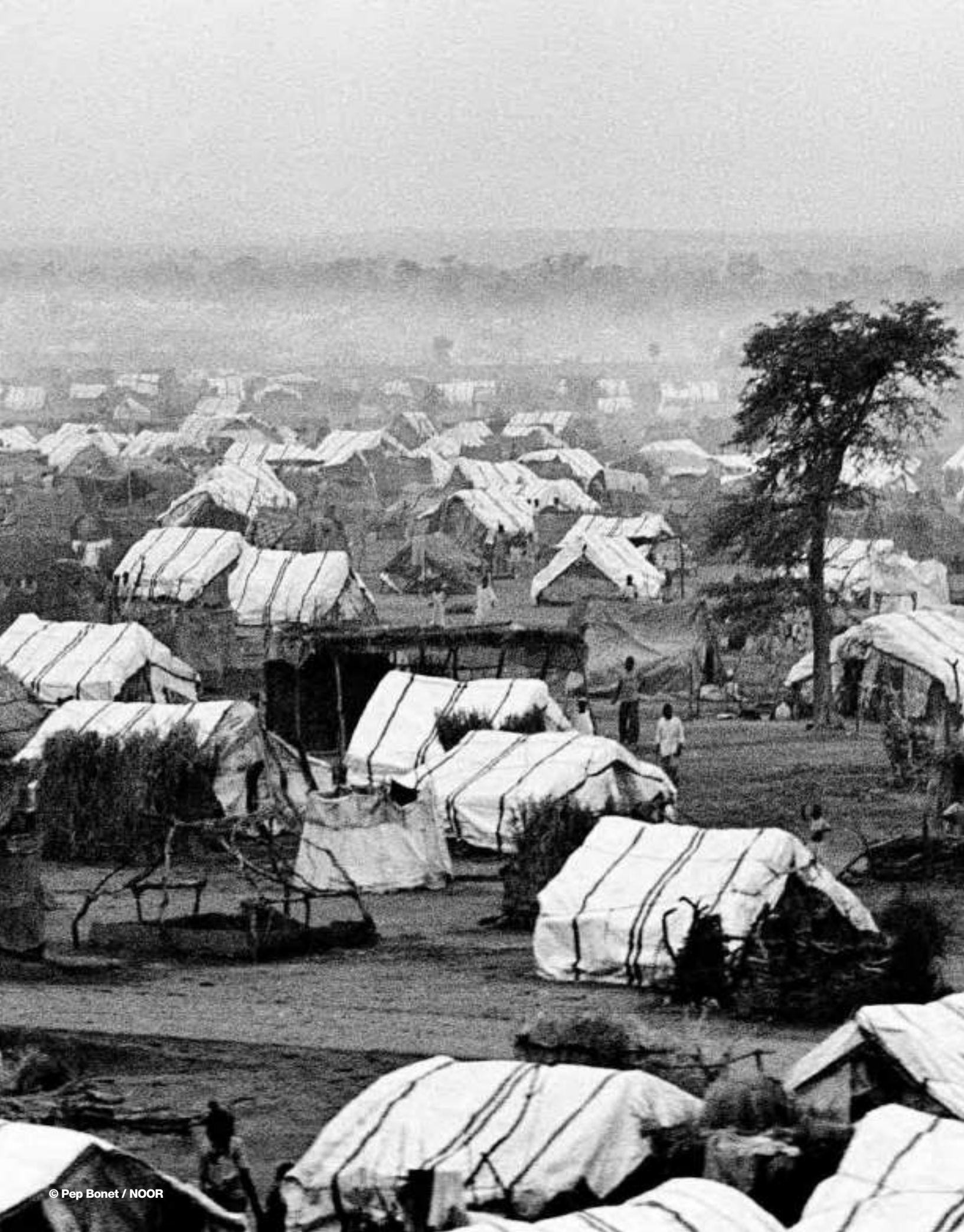

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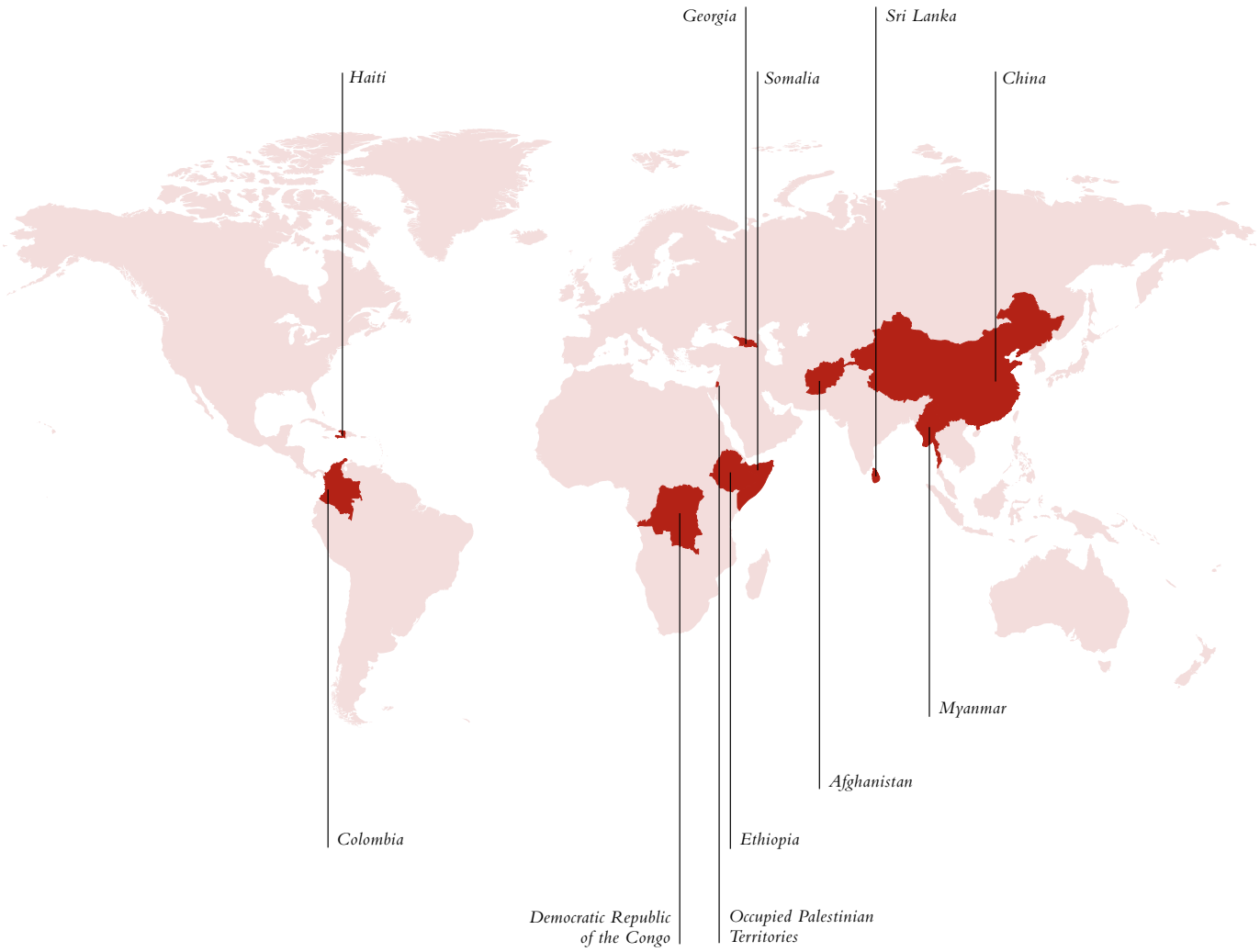
Part 3

Crisis Reports

Crisis Reports



A major part of the HRI research is based on field missions that assess how well donors are applying their commitment to implement the Principles of Good Humanitarian Donorship (GHD) in the ways they support humanitarian action around the world.

This year, DARA carried out 13 field missions to a representative sample of crises around the world, ranging from disasters to conflicts and complex emergencies. Crises selected as case studies include Afghanistan, Chad, China, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Ethiopia, Georgia, Haiti, Myanmar, the occupied Palestinian Territories (oPT), Somalia and Sri Lanka.*

Several of the crises have been included in past HRI research, allowing us to track changes in donor performance from year-to-year in ongoing crises. Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Sri Lanka have been assessed since the inception of the HRI, in both the HRI 2007 and 2008, and again this year. Haiti and Timor Leste were included in the HRI 2007 and Afghanistan and Chad in the HRI 2008. This allows the HRI to provide a longer-term perspective on how the response has evolved over time.

During the field missions, teams attempt to interview the heads of all the different humanitarian organisations present in the crisis, as well as government authorities, local NGOs and civil society organisations and donor representatives. In addition, the HRI conducts a survey questionnaire on donor performance with those organisations that receive external funding for their response operations. For this year's HRI, over 450 organisations were interviewed, and over 2,000 survey responses gathered, a significant increase over last year. The survey questions are each related to specific concepts contained in the *GHD Principles*, which allows the HRI to systematically collect information on how humanitarian organisations view donors' performance and compliance against their commitments to good practice. The survey responses provide much of the qualitative indicators that are used to construct the overall HRI scores and rankings.

The information collected through surveys and the extensive field interviews, along with data from secondary sources such as assessments and evaluations of the crisis response, are brought together in a synthesis crisis report. This highlights areas in each crisis where donors have performed particularly well, as well as the challenges they face, and areas to improve the overall response of the international community.

Examining donor performance across the crises, donors receive their highest scores in Pillar 1, Responding to needs, and their lowest scores in Pillars 2 and 3, Supporting local capacity and recovery and Working with humanitarian partners, with Pillars 4 and 5, Protection and International Law and Learning and accountability, falling in the middle range. Within Pillar 1, donors appear to be doing relatively better in Sri Lanka, Timor Leste, Georgia, China and Myanmar; close to the average in Chad, Ethiopia, Colombia and Afghanistan, and below average in Somalia, DRC, Haiti and oPT. In Pillar 2, donor scores were highest in Timor Leste, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan and Colombia, close to average in Chad, oPT, Ethiopia, Myanmar and Georgia, and below average in Somalia, China, Haiti and DRC. In Pillar 3, donor ranked highest in Timor Leste, Sri Lanka, Georgia, Colombia and Chad; were close to average in Afghanistan, Somalia and DRC, and below average in Ethiopia, Myanmar, oPT, China and Haiti.

Overall, donor performance across the five pillars was highest for Timor Leste, Sri Lanka, Chad, Georgia, Colombia and Afghanistan. Donor scores were middle range for Myanmar, Ethiopia and Somalia, and the lowest for DRC, China, oPT and Haiti. Looking at specific survey questions, it is interesting to note that donors received their highest score for 'supporting neutral and impartial humanitarian action', yet the question related to providing humanitarian assistance influenced by political, economic and military/security interests is the question with the greatest dispersion among the donors. It is clear that the provision of humanitarian assistance based purely on needs is an area in which donor performance varies significantly, with some donors doing well, while others need to improve greatly. Donors received their lowest score overall for providing 'longer-term funding arrangements when appropriate', yet this question has the second highest dispersion of donor scores.

Three themes are recurrent throughout the crisis reports; safe access, protection and preparedness. Access to affected populations and shrinking humanitarian space is highlighted as a major problem in many of the conflict and post-conflict crises. Donor response to access problems, however, varies from one crisis to the other. The crisis reports also raise the importance of donor support for the protection of civilians and their human rights. Finally, sudden-onset emergencies like China, Haiti and Myanmar illustrate the importance of disaster preparedness, with vast differences in the response to each crisis.

*Note: A field mission to Sudan was planned, but the expulsion of aid groups following the ICC rulings against Sudanese President Bashir required alternative plans to be made. Chad was chosen as a replacement, and a short mission to Timor Leste was also conducted: however, reports for these crises are not included due to limited space.

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Crisis Reports

Afghanistan

Afghanistan at a Glance

Country data

- Population (2006): 33 million
- Under five mortality rate (2006): 257 per 1,000
- Human Development Index Ranking (2005): 174
- Life expectancy (2006): 43 years
- Official Development Assistance (2007): US$3.9 billion

The crisis

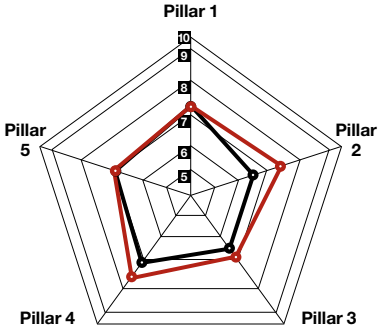
- Grave human suffering caused by more than three decades of warfare, with rising insecurity and civilian casualties in 2008;
- Food insecurity heightened by recent rise in food prices, nationwide drought and pressure on resources from return of more than five million refugees since 2001;
- Access to affected populations is increasingly restricted by conflict, targeting of aid workers, and political, military and security concerns;
- Focus on security and state-building may be overshadowing humanitarian needs.

The response

- Afghanistan is the second-largest recipient of ODA, with 36 percent of its Gross National Income (GNI) coming from international development assistance;
- Top five donors in 2008 were the US, Japan, ECHO, Germany and Norway – but US military spending versus humanitarian spending is greater than 200:1;
- 2008 Joint Emergency Appeal for Afghanistan only 49.9 percent covered, though 2009 CAP appeal currently 68 percent funded;
- Aid organisations' performance hurt by limited access, dangerous conditions, politicised funding, inexperienced staff and overall failure to coordinate assistance.

Donor performance

- All OECD-DAC donors, except Switzerland and Ireland are parties to the military conflict, prioritising security over a neutral, independent, needs-based humanitarian response;
- Donors scored highest in Prevention, risk reduction and recovery (Pillar 2), and lowest on working with humanitarian partners (Pillar 3);
- Donors criticised for lack of flexibility and transparency, though perceived to hold aid agencies to high standards of good practice.



HRI 2009 scores by pillar

Pillar 1 Responding to needs
Pillar 2 Prevention, risk reduction and recovery
Pillar 3 Working with humanitarian partners
Pillar 4 Protection and International Law
Pillar 5 Learning and accountability

Afghanistan
All crisis average

Sources: ICRC 2009, UNICEF 2008. UNDP 2005, OECD 2007. ICRC 2007, UN 2008, FAO/WFP 2008, GoA & UN 2008, UNHCR 2009, OECD 2008, OCHA FTS 2009, UN News Centre 2008, Minear 2008. UN Millennium Development Goal Gap Task Force 2009.

Afghanistan

The Need to Decouple Humanitarian and Security Agendas[1]

Riccardo Polastro[2]

Afghanistan has been devastated by more than three decades of intense armed conflict involving domestic, regional and international parties, and today faces significant political instability and human suffering.

A landlocked country vulnerable to recurrent slow and fast onset disasters, such as droughts, earthquakes, floods and landslides, Afghanistan is in need of a significantly improved humanitarian response framework capable of meeting the needs of a population at risk from both violent conflict and natural hazards[3]. In order to achieve this improvement, the donor community must first admit the existence of a humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan and acknowledge its failure to respond to it.

Since 11 September 2001, the foreign relations agendas of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) countries have been dominated by a new security paradigm that integrates defence, diplomacy and development activities. This year's HRI field mission to Afghanistan[4] indicates that humanitarian organisations face serious limits on their capacity to deliver, as well as threats to their neutrality, impartiality and independence. This stems from the subordination of the fundamental principles of humanitarian action to political and military objectives, by the OECD-DAC governments.

Such poor donor practice has damaged humanitarian action. A continued failure to respect the *Principles and Good Practice of Humanitarian Donorship (GHD)* will cause further harm unless donors reform. The main challenge will be to separate humanitarian activities from post-conflict, peace-building, counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency efforts. Donors should grant humanitarian work a higher priority, implement a needs-based response, and recognise fully the *GHD Principles*.

An escalating conflict

Afghanistan has been labelled a 'post-conflict country' since the overthrow of the Taliban regime in 2001 and its replacement by an internationally-supported government. This has led donors to shift their focus to development and state-building, despite the fact that conventional and unconventional warfare continues throughout the country. The conflict in Afghanistan remains intense–and actually escalated in the second half of 2008, with security conditions reaching their worst levels since 2001 (Waldman 2009).

Today the country is the theatre of regular fighting between armed groups and joint national–international forces. There is also a growing number of insurgent and counter-insurgent groups as well as a rise in targeted killings, suicide bombings and deliberate intimidation of civilians (ICRC 2008 and 2009). During the HRI field mission, 31 of the country's 34 provinces were experiencing asymmetric warfare, with nine of these (mainly in the south and east) experiencing intensive insurgency and counter insurgency attacks. Conflict has progressively diminished only in Badakhshan, Bamiyanm and Daikundi. Civilian casualties had risen since 2007 and direct attacks on soft targets had doubled (ANSO 2009). The operational environment throughout much of the country had deteriorated to such a point that only the ICRC retains access to rural areas in the south and east of the country.[5]

According to the International Crisis Group (ICG) (2009): "In several areas the [Afghan] Government is unable to establish a continual operational presence and the population still does not perceive the state as capable of delivering security, good governance and the rule of law." The tribal structure of Afghan society, which is composed of some 20 different ethnic groups, has further complicated the establishment and recognition of a secure central state, allowing corruption and lack of governance to prevail.

Additionally, the current conflict has eroded both formal and traditional forms of justice and allowed rampant corruption to impede effective governance. The situation has led donors to focus on geopolitical and security concerns, especially in the wake of September 11th, as Afghanistan is considered a threat to regional stability and a base for trans-national terrorist groups such as Al-Qaeda and the Taliban.

One of the world's poorest nations

The donor community's focus on security, counter-terrorism, counter-narcotics and nation-building has drawn attention away from the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan and constricted the space available to humanitarian agencies. In fact, despite recent economic progress, Afghanistan remains among the world's poorest nations. More than 42 percent of its population lives on less than 45 cents per day, and the nation ranks among the lowest six countries on the Human Development Index (UN Food and Agriculture Organisation and World Food Programme (FAO/WFP 2008); UN Development Programme (UNDP 2007). The predominantly informal Afghan economy produces more than 80 percent of the world's opium (UNODC 2008).

Rising insecurity and civilian casualties highlight the government's lack of control across much of the country and its inability to provide basic services to its population. Though prospects are improving for 2009, dwindling land and water resources, food insecurity,[6] and land mine infestation have increased basic humanitarian needs exponentially over the past three years, and for most of the population the economy continues to deteriorate as the conflict persists (WFP 2009). While illegal sectors of the economy, such as poppy production, people smuggling and arms trafficking are thriving, a 200 percent increase in the price of wheat flour, the most important staple in the Afghan diet, has caused considerable hardship for the poor, especially casual labourers (Afghanistan Government and UN 2008a). The recent drought, which caused a poor harvest nationwide and devastated rural incomes, worsened standards of living already jeopardised by limited access to essential services, including safe drinking water and health care.

The population of Afghanistan has also experienced one of the world's largest forced migration crises since World War II, with a peak in 2001 of eight million refugees and more than one million internally displaced persons (IDPs) (Margesson 2007). The establishment of a fragile and localised peace, combined with external political pressure, has since fostered a historic 'voluntary'[7] return of more than 5.2 million Afghans – a fifth of the present in-country population (UNHCR 2009). Yet returnees enter a fragile and war-torn social fabric ill-equipped to handle their demands for scarce land and water resources. As many as three million Afghans remain refugees in Pakistan and Iran, though many face recurrent deportations (UNHCR 2007).[8]

All these factors have combined to significantly increase Afghanistan's dependency on foreign aid. Yet violent conflict over scarce resources, including the specific targeting of aid workers for kidnapping and assassination, has created severe problems of access to the affected populations. Due to the growing insecurity and limited access in most of southern and eastern Afghanistan, the real dimensions of the crisis there are unknown.

Security concerns hinder international response

In Afghanistan, the OECD-DAC donors are parties to the military conflict. This type of involvement has blurred the lines between military, development and humanitarian work – and unlike in Iraq[9], where the international presence has recently diminished – the resurgence of violence in Afghanistan has brought about a troop surge on the part of the United States and others.

Since the overthrow of the Taliban in 2001, the predominance of the security agenda and the military nature of the donor presence in Afghanistan has deeply undermined aid policies, repeatedly violated international humanitarian law (IHL), and impeded neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian action. Though the OECD-DAC donors are signatories to the Geneva Conventions and their additional protocols, both aerial and ground military operations in Afghanistan have been marked by a failure to distinguish between combatants and civilians. Donors have also violated the rights of prisoners of war in sites of forced detention such as Bagram and Guantánamo.[10] Moreover, the military strategy of trying to win 'hearts and minds' by building schools and health clinics fails to address the root causes of violence in the country and causes the local population to associate aid workers with military actors. Though the new US administration is working to address several of these issues, the impact on humanitarian action has yet to be seen.

Furthermore, because donors have tended since 2001 to view Afghanistan through a security lens, the country has been labelled a post-conflict zone and development agencies have progressively taken over humanitarian organisations. Meanwhile, warfare activities have actually flared up throughout most of the country, increasing humanitarian needs. Yet today only a few core humanitarian organisations are still present in Afghanistan; most organisations are multi-mandate or development-oriented and often ignore fundamental humanitarian principles. Working predominantly through government channels[11] and/or through the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs), development agencies depend on resources that are heavily tied to political and military objectives and geographically earmarked for priority areas. Together, the type of actors present in Afghanistan, and the way in which funds are allocated, limit the ability of humanitarian aid organisations to respond to the needs of the population.

The humanitarian response to the conflict should be distinguished, however, from the response to the drought in the north and west of the country. The latter has been timely and effective, and has helped to deter a large-scale internal displacement from rural communities to urban areas (ICRC 2009a). The response to conflict-affected areas, on the other hand, has been limited and generally ineffective, primarily because most of the aid community present in the country has not made the effort to engage with local power structures. Humanitarian action has been severely constrained by growing insecurity and limited access to most of the east and south, as well as to portions of western Afghanistan.

A band-aid approach

When Afghanistan became the first frontline of the War on Terror, it also became an 'aid cherry'.[12] In fact, since 2002, when the international community embarked on efforts to stabilise and reconstruct the country and to support political reform, this fragile state has been the second-most important beneficiary of international assistance. Official Development Assistance (ODA) rocketed from US$323 million in 2001 to nearly US$3 billion in 2007. This corresponds to 36 percent of the Afghan gross national income, a figure which highlights the nation's level of aid dependency. Over the same period, however, the proportion of the total ODA marked for humanitarian aid diminished drastically – from one half to one tenth (OECD 2008 and 2009).

Given that the costs of Operation Enduring Freedom have risen from US$21 billion to US$36 billion (Belasco 2009), the overall budget for humanitarian action in Afghanistan now represents just 0.8 percent of the US military budget. US military expenses for the global War on Terror are 12 times higher than the OECD-DAC ODA budget, a clear indication that the donor community has primarily focused on peace and security objectives.

According to the UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs' Financial Tracking Service (OCHA's FTS), the top five donors to Afghanistan in 2008 were the US, with a commitment of US$156 million, or 29 percent of total contributions; Japan, with US$86 million, or 16 percent; the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO) with 9 percent; Germany with 7.4 percent; and Norway with 6 percent (OCHA 2009). As of 1 June 2009, these numbers had changed: the US again ranked first with a contribution of US$208 million, or 57 percent of the total; Japan came second with US$65 million, or 18 percent; Germany came third with US$19 million, or 5 percent; and India and the UK followed in fourth and fifth place. Interestingly, the Afghan Government itself is the seventh largest donor, and other non-traditional donors such as Kazakhstan and the Czech Republic also rank among the top 23 donors to the consolidated appeal (OCHA FTS 2009).

In spite of its ranking, the US' military expenditure is more than 200 times higher than its humanitarian aid contribution (Belasco 2009 and OCHA FTS 2009). Aid is becoming simply a 'band aid' in its political strategy, and its "anti-terrorist stance offers less alternative for humanitarian action" (Grünewald 2009). Until now, aid organisations reliant on US funding have increasingly fallen into the trap of playing an instrumental role in the conflict, pressured to provide 'aid for victory' rather than needs-based and neutral assistance. For example, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) requires its aid partners to 'hold and build' areas that have been 'cleared and shaped' by the military. Major aid organisations have even been asked by United States AID to distribute food and non-food items only in areas under government control. These restrictions violate the *GHD Principles*.

"The use of humanitarian action as a tool to achieve political or military objectives leads to failure."

© ICRC / Marko Kokic

Donors lose sight of the *Principles of Good Humanitarian Donorship*

All OECD-DAC countries except Switzerland and Ireland are both donors and parties to the conflict, but the primary objective of most is to contribute to national, regional and global security by preventing Afghanistan from again becoming a safe haven for terrorists.[13] As Larry Minear (2009) points out: "The United States is not the only government whose security agenda infiltrates humanitarian activities characterised by human need, neutrality, impartiality and independence." Despite the fact that Afghanistan has more OECD-DAC donors on the ground than any other current crisis, their presence is problematic because they subordinate humanitarian to military agendas. Only ECHO maintains a clear humanitarian mandate and presence that fosters a neutral, impartial and independent needs-based response; even the UN is perceived to be allied closely with government and foreign troops. This privileging of security and foreign policy objectives over the humanitarian imperative has deliberately overridden the donors' GHD commitments.

The aid system is highly fragmented, with relief often delivered piecemeal and on an ad-hoc basis. Though there are sufficient resources, there is no political will to map the vulnerable population or to coordinate relief efforts. Such an uneven and politically-driven response has compounded the problems of limited access and limited absorption capacity that exist especially in southern and eastern Afghanistan. OCHA re-established a presence in Afghanistan in January 2009 with the aim of coordinating effective and principled humanitarian action (OCHA 2009), but it has thus far been unable to negotiate access for the humanitarian players or to collect or analyse information on the humanitarian crisis as a whole. During the HRI field mission, therefore, there was no up-to-date system providing information on the overall emergency response.

The struggle to maintain independence

According to an aid representative interviewed during our field mission: "[Aid organisations] are pushed to work in the path of donors and where they want us to work. If you want to maintain independence then you find that your portfolio of donors and projects is very thin. If you are operating according to humanitarian principles then you find very few donors because they focus mostly on the regions where they have troops, where the incumbent has to work in their military area of operations.

"Working with government means taking sides in the conflict and we think that we have to maintain neutrality.[14] Donors are pushing [for aid organisations] to support the government. Let me be clear: if you want to get involved in government-sponsored programmes then you get millions and millions of dollars."

Unsurprisingly then, most organisations interviewed tend to work where OECD-DAC donors' troops and PRTs are present, and to compete for available resources. The wealth of the PRTs tends to promote an asymmetric level of response, while the lack of coordination among PRTs aggravates the fragmentation of aid. According to both donors and aid organisations, there is also a high pressure to deliver. This means that large amounts of resources are spent in short timeframes, which fundamentally reduces transparency and accountability to beneficiaries. Partly as a result of this problem, only one fifth of the resources allocated reaches Afghan recipients.[15] The response in Afghanistan has thus become supply-driven rather than needs-based. Even though OECD-DAC governments adhere to *GHD Principles*, only donor agencies such as ECHO and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) apply them coherently;[16] as a result, efforts to save lives, alleviate suffering and maintain human dignity are severely constrained.

Limited access and incomplete information

Access to much of Afghanistan has been severely limited due to the growing impact of deteriorating security conditions, non-conventional warfare and coalition ground operations and air strikes on the civilian population, as well as on the assets and personnel of humanitarian organisations. From 2007 to 2008, civilian and humanitarian aid worker casualties doubled (ANSO 2009). In fact, Afghanistan ranks among the world's most hostile environments for aid workers, who face extremely high rates of abductions and killings.

To make matters worse, the prevailing insecurity and difficult living conditions in Afghanistan fuel staff turnover, thereby reducing the quality and level of expertise available. Seasoned workers often consider the country a 'no-go' duty station, and the majority of aid organisations are forced to recruit inexperienced staff.

Deteriorating security and limited access also impair the capacity of humanitarian organisations to target aid based on valid needs assessments (UN News Centre 2008). They cannot respond in proportion to the protection and assistance needs of affected populations. The reliable data and figures necessary to determine the most vulnerable groups are very hard to obtain and essentially depend on secondary or tertiary sources. The nature and scope of the information available is becoming increasingly inaccurate, incomplete and 'impressionistic' rather than evidence-based. This complicates decision-making and limits overall efficiency, effectiveness and strategic coordination.

Coverage of needs has become even more irregular due to the increasing number of 'no-go' areas. Most aid is delivered to district or provincial capitals, rather than at the community level, causing tension with traditional power relations; some communities prosper on aid distributions while others' needs remain unaddressed. Often, aid organisations cannot even directly involve beneficiaries in their planning processes or in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the humanitarian response.

Consequently, 'remote-control' operations are proliferating. Many groups have placed international staff in Kabul and rely on national teams or partner organisations to maintain operations. By default, this causes the response to become supply-driven rather than needs-based and damages the quality of response and the efficiency of service delivery. Together with limited access, inexperienced staff and incomplete information, it prevents the allocation of funds in proportion to the actual needs of local populations.

Lessons learnt and recommendations for the future

1. Afghanistan is experiencing a complex humanitarian emergency. It is critical that all organisations present there understand the implications of associating exclusively with one of the parties of the conflict – or in this case, of associating only with the government and the US-led coalition.

2. The aid community, with the support of donors, needs to return to the *GHD Principles* and the provision of basic services. If it accommodates the overriding military and political objectives prioritised by OECD-DAC donors, its humanitarian principles and work will increasingly lose significance. Donors, meanwhile, should recognise the neutrality and independence of humanitarian organisations and strive to guarantee them access to affected populations. In this vein, donors should pursue strategies that seek acceptance from all parties to the conflict.

3. The present set-up of the international community in Afghanistan does not allow for proper identification of needs or for a principled response. To address these issues, there is a need to improve independent humanitarian capacity among both donors and humanitarian organisations. In essence, life-saving and protection activities should be fostered and decoupled from military agendas. Humanitarian aid should not be linked to political or military action.

4. In line with the above, OECD-DAC donors should minimise tied and earmarked funds, and engage in covering the costs of 'remote-control' operations. Their response in Afghanistan should shift from an area-based to a needs-based approach allocating aid more evenly across the most vulnerable and neglected regions.

Conclusions

Despite the huge amounts of bilateral and multilateral aid that have been provided to stabilise, democratise and reconstruct Afghanistan, the operating environment for humanitarian aid organisations throughout the country is deteriorating. Equally troubling, interviews have revealed that aid resources are difficult to trace, as most of the population of Afghanistan remains without medicine, doctors, or other basic services. This both calls into question the accountability, transparency and efficiency of aid flows and casts serious doubt on the overall effectiveness and impact of the international humanitarian response in Afghanistan.

The use of humanitarian action as a tool to achieve political or military objectives leads to failure. In humanitarian crises, it is essential to respect the principles of neutrality and impartiality and to maintain a needs-based response. Yet in Afghanistan, donors' demonstrated intention of "overriding or disregarding such principles is likely to lead to reduced access to at-risk populations and endanger the lives of humanitarian aid personnel" (OECD 2001). With elections coming up and an ongoing major military offensive underway, the intensity and complexity of the Afghan crisis could increase. In this context, the humanitarian enterprise will fail if aid organisations are even perceived as taking sides in the fighting, discriminating when protecting or assisting affected populations, or engaging at any time with political or ideological agendas.

About the Author

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Riccardo Polastro heads the Evaluation Department of DARA. He has 16 years of experience in humanitarian assistance and development aid in more than 50 countries for the International Movement of the Red Cross, the UN, NGOs and donors. Mr. Polastro lectures in several universities on development-related topics. He has led HRI missions since 2007. He has carried out policy and operational evaluations for the Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid of the European Commission, the Inter Agency Standing Committee, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Swedish International Development Agency. He holds an MPhil in Peace and Security, a Master's in International Relations, and is a Maîtrise of the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Paris.

Notes

1 Information based on field interviews with key humanitarian agencies in Afghanistan from 13 April 2009 to 20 April 2009, and 200 questionnaires on donor performance (including 163 OECD-DAC donors).

The HRI team, composed of Riccardo Polastro, Sergio Molinari and Gabriel Reyes, expresses its gratitude to all those interviewed in Afghanistan. The opinions expressed here are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of DARA.

2 The author would like to thank Antonio Donini, Senior Researcher from Tufts University, and Manuel Sanchez Montero, member of the HRI Peer Review Committee, for their helpful comments, as well as HRI team members Sergio Molinari and Gabriel Reyes.

3 According to the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC 2008), between 1998-2007 more than 10.6 million Afghans were affected by disaster.

4 This is the second HRI survey mission to Afghanistan. Due to time and security constraints, interviews were conducted only in Kabul, with 40 aid organisations and donor representatives. It was not possible to consult the population directly. The findings below are based on both the interviews and on a literature review.

5 The Taliban has a chain of command in some locations but not in others, making it very difficult to negotiate with them for safe access.

6 In 2008, food security deteriorated in 22 of the 34 provinces of Afghanistan due to drought and conflict (GoA and UN 2008b).

7 Forced return of Afghan refugees from Iran is being reported by several organisations on the ground.

8 In June 2009, as the fighting between the Government of Pakistan and the Taliban intensified in the SWAT Valley and other tribal areas, this trend was reversed and many sought refuge in Afghanistan.

9 Iraq sees higher levels of violence but fewer actors on the ground, which allows for improved coordination.

10 For more information on the treatment of prisoners of war, refer to Geneva Convention III, ICRC (1949).

11 For instance, at least 50 percent of DFID's annual aid to Afghanistan (GB£127.5 million) will be channelled through government systems (DFID 2009).

12 After the Cold War period, Afghanistan became an aid orphan where aid allocations fuelled the civil conflict. As Minear and Weiss (1993) point out, "In the Afghanistan civil war, aid allocations by the West among the various mujahidin contributed to jockeying among them that continued even after the withdrawal of the Soviet Union. Moreover, channelling aid through these groups at the expense of directing aid through Kabul made assistance an extension of the war rather than a contribution to peace."

13 See Denmark's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Defence (2008).

14 As Donini (2009) points out: "Neutrality is not an end in itself; it is a means to fulfil the humanitarian imperative. And the perception of being associated with a belligerent carries potentially deadly consequences for humanitarian workers, as well as for vulnerable groups who are denied assistance because of this association."

15 In fact, an average of between 15 and 30 percent of aid money is spent on security for aid agencies, and 85 percent of products, services and human resources used by agencies are imported, thus providing few jobs for Afghan workers (Hemming 2008).

16 During the field mission, Switzerland was the highest-scoring donor.

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China at a Glance

Country data

- Population (2005): 1.31 billion
- Under five morality rate (2006): 24 per 1,000
- Human Development Index Ranking (2008): 94
- Life expectancy (2006): 73 years
- Official Development Assistance (2007): US$1.4 billion

The crisis

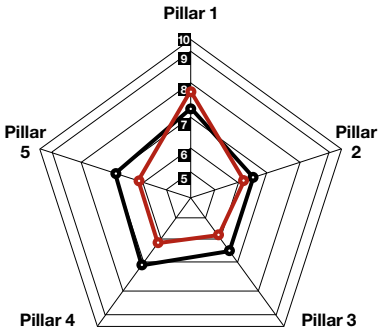
- Earthquake of magnitude 7.9 struck Wenchuan County in Sichuan on 12 May 2008; quake killed 87,150 people, injured 275,000, destroyed more than four million homes and left more than 40 million people requiring assistance;
- Chinese Government mobilised massive human and financial resources for relief and recovery operations;
- More than 360 billion Chinese yuan (US$54 billion) were allocated for immediate relief operations and one trillion yuan (US$150 billion) budgeted for reconstruction.

The response

- Response was mainly a national one; international donors and organisations asked to support in part to show 'openness' of the government, but also so Chinese authorities could learn from external actors;
- Strong government control of response complicated coordination and monitoring for INGOs and donor agencies, but overall the government's response was good;
- Extremely ambitious timetable for reconstruction and recovery, but some criticisms of missed opportunity to invest in preparedness and disaster risk-reduction measures.

Donor performance

- Main donors were internal; of the international response, OECD countries provided only 25 percent of funding compared with an average 97 percent to 99 percent in other humanitarian crises;
- OECD-DAC donors generally perceived as neutral, impartial and responding to needs (Pillar 1);
- Donors criticised for failing to support organisational capacity of relief agencies, especially regarding preparedness and long-term disaster risk-reduction initiatives.



HRI 2009 scores by pillar

Pillar 1 Responding to needs
Pillar 2 Prevention, risk reduction and recovery
Pillar 3 Working with humanitarian partners
Pillar 4 Protection and International Law
Pillar 5 Learning and accountability

China
All crisis average

Sources: World Bank 2009, UNDP 2008, UNICEF 2008, OECD 2007 OCHA FTS 2009, Xinhua News Agency 2009, USGS 2008, Toronto Star 2009.

China
An Aid Giant in the Making?[1]

John Cosgrave

The Sichuan earthquake of May 2008 left 87,150 people dead and 275,000 injured, and destroyed more than four million homes. In the wake of the disaster, China asked for international assistance, something which surprised members of the international community working in the country.

Aid workers interviewed by DARA in China viewed the request as being driven by:

- Politeness, so the international community would feel it had a role.
- Political considerations prompted by the negative reactions to the 'no assistance needed' policy of the Myanmar Government after Cyclone Nargis.
- The desire to improve its response by learning from experience gained elsewhere.
- The wish to develop China's own capacity to respond to such disasters in other countries.

China's calls for international assistance were clearly not aimed at funding. The Chinese Red Cross alone raised 65 billion yuan – about US$9.5 billion. The Chinese Government planned to spend more than one trillion yuan (about US$147 million) on the reconstruction. This is more than the annual total of all official development assistance.

The Sichuan earthquake provides an interesting study in terms of good humanitarian donorship. China is a newly industrialised country, a permanent member of the UN Security Council, is of crucial importance to the global economy, and of vital strategic interest. It is also a country with immense national resources, which it used freely in response to the earthquake. All of this raises questions about the role of donors in situations where countries do not need donor funding.

The quake and the aftermath

At 14:28[2] in the afternoon of 12 May 2008, Wenchuan County[3] in Sichuan was struck by a magnitude 7.9 earthquake. The epicentre was about 80km west-north-west of the provincial capital Sichuan (USGS 2008).

Earthquakes are a well-known hazard in China. The magnitude 8 Shansi earthquake of 23 January 1556 is regarded by United States Geological Services as the deadliest earthquake of all time, with an estimated 830,000 fatalities. China was also the site of the deadliest earthquake of the 20th century: the magnitude 7.5 Tangshan earthquake of 27 July 1976 that killed 242,000.[4]

The behaviour of the Chinese Government after the Sichuan earthquake was in complete contrast to its attitude after the Tangshan earthquake 32 years earlier. In 1976, during the final year of Mao Zedong's life, the government allowed only a belated three-line confirmation of the quake from the official China news agency. The true scale of the human toll and devastation only emerged three years later, when officials quietly confirmed the scale of the disaster (Gowing 2009).

Some of our interviewees suggested that the negative international reaction to the behaviour of the Myanmar Government after Cyclone Nargis[5] was one of the factors influencing the Chinese Government's relatively open policy (open by Chinese standards, that is). However, it was also clear that increasing openness, the growth of cell phone ownership,[6] and rising internet access, meant that the Chinese Government simply did not have the option of treating this earthquake like the Tangshan one.

An immediate relief operation

The Chinese Government began an immediate relief operation, and the response remained a national one throughout. The Chinese Premier, Wen Jiabao, immediately travelled to the affected area and took several key decisions on the response, including the decision to deploy the military on a large scale. Some interviewees suggested that this was prompted in part by the very favourable public reaction to his appearances at train stations during winter storms to reassure travellers that the government was doing everything possible to get them home for the Chinese New Year holiday. The government deployed a large fleet of military helicopters and soldiers also carried relief items into inaccessible areas.

The funding for the response was also predominantly national. The Chinese Government had invested 360 billion yuan (about US$52.7 billion) by April 2009.[7] There were also large collections by the Chinese Red Cross Society as well as direct donations from twinned provinces and municipalities.

The combination of adequate funding and strong national determination means that China is now undergoing what is probably the fastest reconstruction following an earthquake of this scale. It seems likely that the ambitious targets set by the government for reconstruction (rural homes to be rebuilt by September 2009 and urban homes by May 2010) will be largely met (Xinhua News Agency 2009). The government announced that more than three-quarters of rural homes had been rebuilt by May 2009 and only 4.3 percent had yet to begin reconstruction (Yongrong and Yinan 2009).

The speed of reconstruction demonstrated the advantage that dictatorship brings in such crises–with no delays due to lengthy planning processes or public consultations. However, this speed also has its costs; reports in the Chinese media revealed that some local officials made life more difficult for the survivors in their eagerness to meet government targets (Reuters Foundation 2008).

Mainly Chinese funding

There were three main types of donation for the Sichuan earthquake:

1. Internal donations: These were donations from within China, from private citizens, celebrities, companies and others. These donations were behind the huge amounts of money raised by the Chinese Red Cross.
2. 'Solidarity' donations: These were donations from the Chinese community overseas.[8] Chinese expat communities donated large amounts, and Chinese embassies overseas received contributions from these as well as from private individuals. The presence of an extensive Chinese community in Canada led to very large donations by the Canadian International Development Agency through its matching grants programme. Canadians donated CA$11.6 million for Cyclone Nargis (which occurred first) and then some CA$30 million for the Sichuan earthquake (CIDA 2008).
3. Corporate donations: Seventy percent of Japanese Red Cross funding was provided by corporate donors. Because of previous tensions in the relationship between Japan and China over the Japanese occupation, Japanese corporations doing business in China were keen to be seen as acting generously – and worried that a small donation would be interpreted as a lack of concern for the Chinese people.

Corporate donations figured strongly within China itself and also in international fundraising. Some corporate donors abroad gave directly to the Chinese Red Cross, which received US$30 million in foreign donations, half from the United States. Of the direct donations from the US, 80 percent came from corporate sources. Corporate donors also supported NGOs with, for example, Western Union matching US$250,000 in contributions to the Mercy Corps website (Mercy Corps 2008).

One particularly useful donation was from Wells Fargo, which temporarily provided a free transfer service to China for clients in the US. However, interviewees were generally of the opinion that many corporate donations were driven by commercial calculation rather than by humanitarian concerns. They were perceived as signals to the Chinese Government and people rather than as expressions of humanitarian concern. This is similar to the political motives that sometimes drive donors' allocation of funding.

Traditional donors played a very small part in the response. However, there was still room for some useful support, especially where it allowed agencies to bring learning from other emergency situations.

Unlike many similar crises, there was no gap between the ending of emergency funding and the start of recovery funding[9] in the Sichuan earthquake. This is because the Chinese Government, from the earliest stages, understood that the earthquake response was not about providing relief, but about rebuilding livelihoods. There is a lesson here for the donor community.

Non-traditional donors

The problem for donors after the Sichuan earthquake was China's enormous national resources, meaning the need for external financial assistance was effectively nil. Interviewees repeatedly emphasised the trivial scale of international contributions against the scale of national contributions.

When one examines the top seven donors it becomes clear that the chief donors are non-traditional donors and corporate donors.[10]

1. **The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**
   US$76,199,510
2. **Business Roundtable**
   US$57,986,680
3. **United Arab Emirates**
   US$50,821,925
4. **US–China Business Council**
   US$30,000,000
5. **Canada** (matching funds)
   US$28,306,132
6. **Russia** (all in kind)
   US$20,000,000
7. **Central Emergency Response Fund**
   US$8,045,731

Only one OECD country appears in the top seven donors, and Canada features there because of the impact of providing matching funds to money raised by charities in a country with a large and prosperous Chinese community.[11] Two corporate collectives appear in the top seven.

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) data shows that OECD countries, which normally account for 97 to 99 percent of humanitarian donations, accounted for just 25 percent of the pledges for the Sichuan earthquake, and that non-OECD countries accounted for 75 percent of the international funding for the Sichuan earthquake against three percent for all UN appeals in 2007.

All but two OECD members are shown by OCHA Financial Tracking Services (FTS) as contributing to the Sichuan appeal. The exceptions were Denmark and Mexico. Most OECD members contributed relatively small amounts for a disaster on this scale. With the exception of Germany, Italy and South Korea, all contributed less than US$5 million.

It has to be presumed that the generous support by non-traditional donors owed more to China's strategic importance to them, rather than to particularly humanitarian concern. They were certainly not as generous with regard to the far greater unmet needs for Cyclone Nargis.

The low level of OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) donor support for the individual agency appeals is appropriate given the general limited role of UN agencies and international NGOs in China. At the same time, the support received enabled agencies to provide specialised assistance to China.

Innovation and some old problems

There are many examples of good practice in the wake of the Sichuan earthquake – practices that could well be adopted by other countries facing similar disasters. One of these was the twinning of the most affected counties with other provinces and municipalities in China. This meant that these counties received large amounts of assistance directly from other provinces as local authorities competed with each other.

The downside to the twinning was that some counties were not twinned, and the assistance delivered by the twins (which themselves have very different financial capacities) varied a great deal (Zhang and Hu 2008). Even so, the impact of the initiative was that there were multiple channels of assistance for the affected counties, not just the central government one.

This model is particularly appropriate to the Chinese context, where provincial and municipal administrations still control extensive construction and other resources. But it is also more widely applicable, particularly in cases where local capacity has been damaged by the disaster. Essentially, it is a distributed approach to reconstruction, with the twins assisting their twinned counties to rebuild infrastructure, social structures and housing. This may be one of the factors contributing to the unique swiftness of the reconstruction.

One could easily see the same model being used in other disaster contexts where administrative units from different parts of the country are given responsibility for helping with reconstructions in smaller administrative units in the affected area. How much faster would reconstruction after Hurricane Katrina have been if different US states had been allocated responsibility for assisting specific wards in New Orleans? Clearly, such an innovative approach would require a change in the view that disasters are the problem of the area affected rather than a national problem.

"China proves that recovery need not always take five years or more, but can be much faster when the will is there."

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There were examples of good practice on the donor side, particularly in the bringing in of lessons from elsewhere. The United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID) for example, translated the ALNAP/Provention[12] paper on learning from 30 years of post-earthquake relief and recovery operations (Cosgrave 2008) into Chinese.

Interviewees cited three general types of poor donor practice:

- Time limits on contributions. This was particularly the case for donations by Canada, which had to be spent within 12 months of the quake. In sudden-onset natural disasters in general, and in the case of earthquakes in particular, the main concern is recovery. The acute humanitarian phase ends very quickly and the main problem is that of restoring shelter, infrastructure, services and livelihoods. Therefore, short time-frames for funding are particularly inappropriate.
- Vacillation by donors. Sweden came in for some criticism from interviewees who stated that they had been encouraged to believe that they would have Swedish funding initially, but that this later failed to materialise.
- Excessive rigidity by some donors. Interviewees cited instances of rigidity by some donors that made necessary changes in projects very difficult and time-consuming to agree. The Japanese Government was cited as being the most rigid. However, most interviewees regarded donors as very flexible and willing to accommodate quite large changes in projects.

Lessons learnt and recommendations for the future

The case of China offers lessons on the need for greater disaster response capacity in a changing world. It also highlights the advantages that a concerned government and rapid decision making can bring to the response and recovery.

1. Developing national capacity to cope with disasters is key, not only because national response can be more timely, but also because it can lead to a more disaster-aware culture nationally, which can in turn prompt more investment in risk reduction. This is happening now in China with the rebuilding of schools, sadly too late for the thousands of children who died at their desks.
2. The international humanitarian community needs to develop the capacity to provide information and expertise rather than funding in future similar situations. Interviewees acknowledged that they were not sufficiently prepared to bring learning from elsewhere as they did not have rosters of specialists who could advise on such topics as designing more child-friendly schools.
3. The international humanitarian community should try to harness more effectively the growing capacity in Asia, in order to deal with future disasters in the region. While the frequency of earthquakes is essentially constant, with some natural variation, the risks posed by earthquakes increase as populations grow in areas with significant seismic activity. The growth of mega-cities in earthquake zones means that an earthquake with a million fatalities is not inconceivable (Bilham, 2004).
4. The Chinese model of twinning affected zones with unaffected zones offers a model to speed recovery in large countries by multi-tracking assistance paths. While it had its flaws, the model helped to provide more and quicker assistance than would have been possible with all assistance channelled through the central government.
5. It is vital to take early decisions on recovery and to invest adequately in reconstruction so that people are returned to normality as quickly as possible. This will be aided by early and adequate pledges on recovery assistance. China proves that recovery need not always take five years or more, but can be much faster when the will is there.

About the Author

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John Cosgrave is an independent consultant with more than 30 years of experience of humanitarian action and development in nearly 60 countries. He has worked as an independent consultant in the humanitarian sector since 1997, having spent most of his previous professional life managing NGO projects and programmes in complex emergencies or in the aftermath of natural disasters. His work for NGOs, governments and the UN is focused on humanitarian action, evaluation, training and operations. He combines broad experience with theoretical concepts to produce a coherent world-view of humanitarian action which he communicates through writing and training. Trained initially as a problem-solver (in civil, military, mechanical and agricultural engineering), and later as a manager and social scientist, he holds two Master's degrees, and is currently studying for his third. His current interest is in social research methods and epistemology.

Notes

1 Information based on field interviews with key humanitarian agencies in China from 25 March 2009 to 2 May 2009, and 67 questionnaires on donor performance (including 59 of OECD-DAC donors).

The HRI team, composed of John Cosgrave, Daniela Mamone and Philip Tamminga, expresses its gratitude to all those interviewed in China. The opinions expressed here are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of DARA.

2 This is local time – it was 06:28 GMT, as China uses a single time zone of GMT+8.

3 In China the earthquake is referred to as the Wenchuan earthquake. It is sometimes also referred to as the Great Sichuan Earthquake.

4 While the official figure was 242,419 killed and 164,581 injured (Spence, 2007, p149), there were also estimates of as many as 655,000 fatalities for this earthquake (Blanshan and Quarantelli, 1979, p1).

5 Cyclone Nargis happened nine days before the Sichuan earthquake.

6 There were 620 million mobile phones in China in September 2008 and the number is growing by six million per month (Gowing 2009, p68).

7 This can be contrasted with total international funding of US$13.5 billion for the tsunami response and reconstruction (Cosgrave 2007, p18).

8 For example, the 'Chinese Community at Harvard University' donated approximately US$78,000 via the Hong Kong Red Cross (Hong Kong Red Cross 2008).

9 This is often called the 'recovery gap'.

10 Data from the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) financial tracking system (FTS) on 29 April 2009.

11 The Canadian Government regularly provides matching funds for humanitarian fundraising in Canada after major disasters. It provided matching funding for both Cyclone Nargis and the Sichuan earthquake.

12 The Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action (ALNAP) (www.alnap.org) is a grouping of evaluators from donors, UN agencies, NGOs, and independents that promotes evaluation and other lessons learning strategies in humanitarian action. The Provention Consortium (www.proventionconsortium.org) is a global coalition of international organisations, governments, the private sector, civil society organisations and academic institutions dedicated to increasing the safety of vulnerable communities and to reducing the impacts of disasters in developing countries.

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Colombia

Colombia at a Glance

Country data

- Population (2006): 46 million
- Under five mortality rate (2006): 6 per 1,000
- Human Development Index Ranking (2008): 80
- Life expectancy (2006): 73 years
- Official Development Assistance (2007): US$730 million

The crisis

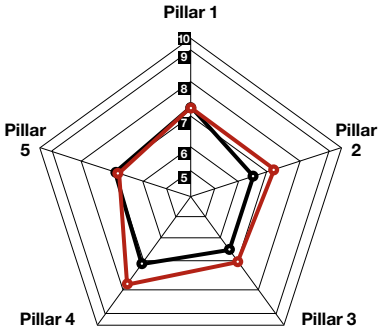
- Internal conflict has plagued Colombia for more than 50 years leaving 4.6 million displaced; 380,863 displaced in 2008 alone, a 25% increase from 2007:
- An additional 1,877,504 Colombians were affected by natural disasters in 2008;
- Overall deterioration of humanitarian situation and increase of human rights violations and violence since the establishment of President Uribe´s Democratic Security strategy

The response

- The Government of Colombia has attempted to minimise the extent of humanitarian needs, despite Colombia having some of the highest figures for IDPs and people affected by conflict in the world;
- 2008 saw humanitarian aid to Columbia drop by seven percent in 2008, falling to US $40,822,975;
- Donor coordination is problematic due to the Colombian government's control over humanitarian operations and the lack of a Consolidated Appeals Process.

Donor Performance

- Donors in Colombia performed slightly better than average in areas such as Responding to needs (Pillar 1) and Protection and International Law (Pillar 4). However, they rated poorly in the area of Learning and accountability (Pillar 5);
- Donors ranked well in survey questions around respecting the neutrality and impartiality of assistance; the lowest survey scores were in questions around long-term funding arrangements, flexibility of funding, and support for needs assessments;
- Donors were criticised for neglecting root causes of conflict and failing to confront the Colombian government on the deteriorating humanitarian situation.



HRI 2009 scores by pillar

Pillar 1 Responding to needs
Pillar 2 Prevention, risk reduction and recovery
Pillar 3 Working with humanitarian partners
Pillar 4 Protection and International Law
Pillar 5 Learning and accountability

Colombia
All crisis average

Sources: World Bank 2009, UNICEF 2008, UNDP 2008, OECD 2007 CODHES 2009, UNHCR 2009, SIGPAD 2008, OCHA 2009

Colombia

True Lies, Disappeared Realities[1]

Fernando Espada

"I believe that the task of making sense of ourselves and our behavior requires that we acknowledge there can be as much value in the blink of an eye as in months of rational analysis."
Malcolm Gladwell, Blink

Volumes of research, articles and political statements have been written about the decades-long conflict in Colombia. But when it comes to actually understanding and confronting the humanitarian consequences of the crisis, the world seems to blindly accept the reality painted by the Colombian authorities and their allies – a reality that denies the existence of a humanitarian crisis, and obscures the role played by the government in contributing to – and even accentuating – humanitarian needs. In a crisis where so many people look the other way and there is always a rationalisation for the suffering, an intuitive analysis might be key for understanding what is really happening.

After three years of field research in Colombia for the Humanitarian Response Index (HRI) and almost 150 interviews with international and local NGOs, UN agencies, the Red Cross Movement and experts, this humanitarian crisis continues to show new nuances while hiding other key aspects. Most humanitarian actors interviewed by the HRI team could discuss the complexity of the Colombian crisis for hours. Few could imagine the solution to the crisis. A report by a consortium of British and Irish NGOs begins by admitting that "While all countries can claim to be complex, Colombia is more complex than most." (ABColombia 2009, p2). Many of the respondents to the HRI accepted the exhaustion and pessimism that accompany a never-ending crisis. They seemed to understand donor countries' fatigue. But they also opposed the so-called 'complexity argument' as an excuse for inaction, a lack of commitment to the real victims and even the complicity of those who have the ability to stop the drama but choose instead to use it for their own benefit.

An aggravated humanitarian situation

"The Losada family was displaced from their ranch in the province of Florida due to menaces from… well, you know who."
RCN News 2009

The figures for internally displaced persons (IDPs) have been growing since 2003, when President Álvaro Uribe's Democratic Security strategy began, and at an ever-increasing rate since 2006.

This trend continued in 2008 when 380,863 people (76,172 families) were newly displaced in Colombia (CODHES 2009), "the highest rate of displacement in 23 years" (IDMC and NRC 2008, p8) and almost a 25 percent increase on the previous year. Since 2006, almost one million people have been displaced, bringing the overall number of IDPs to 4,629,190 (925,838 families) (CODHES 2009).

Nearly half a million Colombians were also forced, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR 2009), to seek refuge in neighbouring countries – 250,000 in Ecuador, 200,000 in Venezuela, 17,000 in Brazil, 13,500 in Panama and 6,000 in Costa Rica.

In addition, natural disasters affected 1,877,504 Colombians in 2008 (SIGPAD 2008), with earthquakes, flooding, landslides and storms aggravating the humanitarian situation of IDPs, confined populations and other vulnerable groups. Massive floods in Chocó and La Mojana, where "seven out of ten households live below the poverty line" (Action Against Hunger USA 2008), led to a food and economic crisis in regions where the armed conflict was, and still is, intense.

The Democratic Security strategy

In spite of the devastating humanitarian consequences of the military approach to the resolution of conflict in Colombia through the Democratic Security strategy, President Uribe has received overwhelming support both at home and abroad due to several factors: improved security in main urban areas, the demobilisation of paramilitary groups, and successful military operations against the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). Does this support for the Colombian Government mean the humanitarian crisis is considered an acceptable consequence of ending the conflict in the country, albeit an undesirable one?

Not exactly. In Colombia, silence and denial are the norm; there is little freedom for outspoken opposition. The Colombian conflict is testimony to the power of storytelling – and, in this case, a story of conflict that is controlled, re-written and polished according to the interests of the elite.

José Manuel Santos, the former Defence Minister, recently published a 50-page evaluation report on the past three years (2006-2009) of Democratic Security. Page after page describes in detail the achievements, military victories and prospects for peace and stability. Interestingly, Minister Santos mentions the term "displaced" only once – and then only in a very limited context. This, despite the fact that the Colombian Government has the most accurate and up-to-date information about the situation in its territory.

In spite of the huge increase in IDP figures, President Uribe presented 2008 as the climax of Democratic Security. In March, Manuel Marulanda, the founder and head of the FARC, died. That same month, Raúl Reyes, the natural successor of Marulanda, was killed during an aerial and ground attack on the border with Ecuador. Four months later, Operación Jaque led to the rescue of 15 hostages, among them Ingrid Betancourt. As a result, President Uribe, the only Latin American president who has declared war against terrorism, saw his popularity rates boosted to unprecedented levels within his country and abroad.

Moreover, the FARC showed signs of weakness, losing leaders, troops and effective control over large parts of the territory. The Commander in Chief of the Colombian Navy even stated: "We are at the end of the FARC." (McDermott 2008). And a donor country representative in Bogotá told the HRI team: "In many capitals, officials began to believe that the end of the conflict was near. What if the Colombian Government was right in its military approach?"

Such was the justification for encouraging international donors to take a post-conflict approach to Colombia, and to shift the focus from humanitarian concerns to a trade and development agenda. This would in turn lead to bilateral aid agreements, approval of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) by the United States' Congress and a new 'face' for Colombia as it hoped for new business and increased prosperity.

However, a year after these proclamations of victory, experts consider that "the insurgents are not close to defeat in the short or even medium term" (ICG 2009a, p24).

Human rights violations

Beyond storytelling and disputes over numbers, human rights violations such as *falsos positivos* (what President Uribe calls extra-judicial executions) and the proliferation of new illegal armed groups present a very different reality from that of the President's statements (ICG 2009b). According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA): "The steady deterioration of the humanitarian situation is likely to continue due to competition over coca production, reported fighting between rebel groups and continued human displacement in areas of landmines, forcible recruitment of children and human rights violations." (OCHA 2008, p3).

Unfortunately, the deteriorating humanitarian situation has not persuaded President Uribe to complement the Democratic Security strategy with a non-military approach, one concentrating on civic organisations. On the contrary, the Presidential Directive (1 March 2009) continues to prioritise the armed forces. Through a so-called 'Strategic Leap', the Directive has the final objective of recovering the Colombian territory currently under FARC and National Liberation Army (ELN) control in 2010 (just before the next presidential elections) through a detailed counter-insurgence strategy.

Most humanitarian actors interviewed for the HRI showed their concern for what could be, as one UN expert put it, "the perfect excuse for the illegal armed groups to see humanitarian organisations as legitimate military targets" – and the likely cause of yet another increase in the numbers of IDPs in 2009 and 2010.

Donor support for Colombia

According to the Financial Tracking Service of OCHA, in 2008 a total of US$40,822,975 of humanitarian aid was allocated for Colombia – eight percent less than in 2007 (OCHA FTS 2009). This figure, however, does not include the aid provided by the main donor, the US. Furthermore, in response to natural disasters the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) contributed $3,135,341 in 2008 (OCHA FTS 2009).

The European Commission is the second largest humanitarian donor in Colombia with 34 percent of the total aid (OCHA FTS 2009). This amounted to almost US$14 million in 2008.

Germany, Norway, Canada, Spain and Switzerland complete the list of donors with contributions well above US$1 million in 2008.

Who is to bell the cat?

"They always talk about human rights, with the only intention of scaring the Armed Forces and the Police."
Álvaro Uribe, February 2009

"The impossibility of accurately measuring the true dimension of [the Colombian] crisis makes the response even more difficult," reported one of the experts interviewed by the HRI team. This was a common complaint among humanitarian organisations in Colombia (DARA 2009a). The interviewee went on to say that "the [Colombian] State wants donors and humanitarian organisations to assist the IDPs, but on the other hand, denies the existence of a humanitarian crisis," as well as its actual dimension. The Colombian State pretends to be the only victim, internally and externally. Therefore, it would *deserve* uncritical international support. And it gets it from some donors.

Most of the people interviewed by the HRI team considered the international response to the humanitarian crisis positive in terms of financial support, but added that they wanted to see a much more critical approach by donor countries toward the Colombian authorities. As one experienced humanitarian worker reported: "The Colombian Government tries to control the response by placing conditions and obstacles everywhere. Incredibly, donor countries don't react" (DARA 2009a). Some donor representatives in Bogotá justified their silence with a closed-doors diplomacy strategy. An argument that, for many humanitarian actors, is nothing but an excuse to justify donors' complacency towards President Uribe's policies. How can the international acknowledgement for improvements in issues like extra-judicial executions be understood when, at the same time, they are denied by the Colombian authorities? As one representative of a reputed international NGO (INGO) said: "We can't continue to accept donors' ingenuity. They know what is going on and who is co-responsible for the humanitarian crisis in Colombia. But, at the end of the day, they refuse to bell Uribe" (DARA 2009a).

The lack of both a common understanding of the crisis and a critical stand towards the Colombian Government is probably why there is no long-term donor strategy – something that most humanitarian actors interviewed by the HRI team in Bogotá said they wanted. As one said: "The international response in Colombia addresses the symptoms (IDPs, mines, demobilisation) but not the causes of the conflict (access to land, poverty, inequality)." So, at the end of the day, this interviewee continued, donor countries in Colombia tend to choose one of two approaches: strengthening civil society (which is efficient, but non-sustainable) and institution-building (which is inefficient, but sustainable). "Almost no donor has a coherent approach to both strategies" (DARA 2009a).

It seems that donor countries seem compelled – or even willing – to accept the narrow framework for action imposed by the Colombian authorities. The implications are obvious not only for an efficient response, but also for the *GHD Principles* such as independence, neutrality and access to affected populations.

Local NGOs were extremely critical of the charity approach of many of the international organisations. According to one displaced woman, "donor countries are responsible for helping to create a dependency framework", where "you find yourself obliged to live in misery if you want to receive some support." (DARA 2009b) So the question becomes, as stated by a local expert: "Why are international donors, the UN and the NGOs in Colombia? The crisis must be solved, not managed. And in Colombia, there is only crisis management" (DARA 2009b).

The need for coordination

"Expatriates come and go. Organisations and their vices stay."
Local humanitarian worker

It is no surprise that coordination is also seen as one of the weakest pillars of humanitarian response in Colombia. According to a UN representative, "there is a huge gap between theory and practice in the [Inter-Agency Standing Committee] IASC" (DARA 2009a), notably due to the complexity of the context, but also because of the constant interferences of the government.

Nevertheless, many interviewees considered that "coordination in the field is sometimes efficient", especially "when we need to respond to a natural disaster, but not when we try to respond to the humanitarian consequences of the conflict". Apart from the interesting and useful experience of OCHA's 'Sala de Situación Humanitaria' (a useful source of updated information), sharing information does not seem one of the best practices of humanitarian actors in Colombia: "Donors and humanitarian actors don't share all the information. It is almost impossible to know who is doing what in real-time. That makes it hard to find gaps in the response and react properly" (DARA 2009a).

It is no surprise therefore that a donor representative in Colombia stated: "In spite of the fact that the most important GHD Principle is financing according to needs, we don't know if the other donors are prioritising it in Colombia. Actually, it seems there is more attention to harmonisation of requirements and other secondary issues. We need to work on a consolidated analysis of the *Good Humanitarian Donorship*. So far, we don't know whether funds are allocated according to needs in Colombia" (DARA 2009a).

A Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP) for Colombia may help to improve coordination between donors and humanitarian organisations. However, as the Colombian Government does not want to draw attention to the reality of the crisis, it refuses to allow any CAP, putting this potential solution out of bounds. Donor countries must make an effort therefore to reach an agreement with the Colombian authorities on a framework for efficient humanitarian coordination without political interferences.

In line with the concerns over the lack of a needs-based response, when the HRI team asked some beneficiaries about the impact of international aid on their lives, the answers were disappointing. "Most of the NGOs are briefcase organisations. They come with their funds, do what they want to do without asking us or even coordinating with other NGOs, and when they are done they leave," explained a long-time displaced woman (DARA 2009b).

Other beneficiaries even criticised the big players: "UN agencies have their own agendas based on things we don't understand. One year they only want to hear about 'A' and then the following year it is all about 'B'" (DARA 2009b).

Many interviewees saw the root of this problem in the lack of funding for needs assessments. "Only Switzerland adequately funds them," said a humanitarian worker (DARA 2009a). Others cited the poor support for monitoring and evaluation. "I have never received a call from a donor to comment on an evaluation," said an INGO representative (DARA 2009a). Or perhaps, as a local NGO worker mentioned: "Donor countries have their agenda, but nothing to do with the needs and the context" (DARA 2009a).

Appropriate needs assessments, monitoring and evaluation are the backbone of every effective response, but are especially critical in a highly complex context such as the Colombian crisis. It is difficult to understand donors' lack of attention to these aspects, all of which receive extensive consideration in the *GHD Principles*.

United States

Plan Colombia is the backbone of the Washington-Bogotá partnership and a good example of uncritical bilateral support, at least in the public arena.

From 2005 to 2010, Colombian authorities will have received US$4,144,559,972 in total – US$1,132,220,970 of this as social and economic aid (Just the Facts 2009). Even though "the Obama administration plans to provide Colombia with less aid" in 2010 (a six percent reduction) (CIPCOL 2009), increasing the proportion of economic and social aid relative to military/police assistance, the fact is that the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) "is completely in line with the Colombian Government". This, according to a humanitarian worker from an INGO, leaves the US's Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration as "a more independent actor, maybe because they work from [Washington] DC, avoiding the constant pressure of Colombian officials" (DARA 2009a).

Nonetheless, it is likely that this honeymoon between the White House and the Palacio de Nariño will be questioned by the US. According to an expert interviewed by the HRI team: "The White House acknowledges the success of Plan Colombia in helping consolidate Colombian institutions, the demobilisation process and the fight against the FARC, but not in the fight against *narcos*. They begin to see the glass half-empty."

Nobody in the US is talking about an exit strategy yet, but the fact is that "Mexico is quickly eclipsing Colombia as an aid destination" (CIPCOL 2009).

The European Commission

Meanwhile, the European Commission has failed to develop positively over recent years with respect to the core *GHD Principles*. While the EC's Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO) plays its natural emergency assistance role, many field interviewees in Bogotá considered the Commission delegation "to be more and more interested in commercial issues", and thus ready to give more weight to bilateral aid.

An example of this is the recent evolution of the Aid to Uprooted People programme from a multilateral budget line into a 'national cooperation programme' (European Commission External Relations 2009) which is channelled through Acción Social, the Colombian agency for IDPs, to the INGOs that previously received the funds directly from Brussels. This reorientation of the programme puts those INGOs with projects in regions controlled by the guerrillas in a very difficult situation with regards to their perceived neutrality.

On the other hand, ECHO was defined as a consistent and coherent donor, even though many interviewees complained about its strict and difficult procedures, its lower profile and decreasing margin of manoeuvre compared with the delegation.

Other donors – namely Germany, Norway, Canada, Spain and Switzerland – seem unable to play an active and critical role towards the Colombian authorities, albeit for different reasons. Instead, each tries to strike a balance between its humanitarian action and its relations with the Colombian Government, keeping a low profile.

However understandable that approach may be, the fact is that neither the efficiency nor the impact of international aid benefits from such a cautious strategy. Moreover, according to one INGO worker, "donor performance in Colombia has been deteriorating for political (i.e. European Commission) or technical (i.e. Spain) reasons."

In addition, many interviewees agreed that "most of the donors don't have the capacity to control and verify the utilisation of their funds." Even the main platform for donor countries in Colombia, the G24, "lacks a clear humanitarian orientation" (DARA 2009a).

An interesting case is that of the United Kingdom, a traditional ally of President Uribe that unexpectedly modified its support, mainly military assistance, to Colombia. In March 2009, ABColombia, released the report *Fit for purpose: How to make UK policy on Colombia more effective*, in which they denounced the fact that "there are presently no guarantees that individuals trained by the UK in human rights are not involved in human rights violations such as extra-judicial executions. British and Colombian citizens have a right to know more about what these training programmes look like, and the methods used to evaluate their success."

The British Government responded by ending bilateral military aid to Colombia, although this decision did not affect counter-narcotics assistance.

A way forward

"We don't eat houses."
María, IDP.

So, what can donor countries do to improve the humanitarian response in Colombia? Many interviewees considered that donor countries should rethink their presence in Colombia and "agree on a common specific strategy for a protracted crisis" (DARA 2009a). For that, the strategy of ECHO, one of the few donors with a clear and consistent plan for Colombia, "could be a good reference" (DARA 2009a), as one humanitarian worker stated.

A second step should be "to recognise and make visible the magnitude and true nature of the humanitarian crisis", something that would inevitably lead to "a stronger position versus the Colombian Government" (DARA 2009a). Such a step would also bring benefits in terms of coordination and needs assessments. Only then could the "integration of public policies, the respect of [International Humanitarian Law] IHL and human rights and the consolidation of peace and democracy in Colombia" (DARA 2009a) be possible, and we could begin to see light at the end of the tunnel.

Donor countries need to accept and understand the complexity of the Colombian crisis. But it is crucial that this does not lead to donor fatigue and the progressive abandonment of the country. A great deal of money and resources have been invested in the humanitarian response in the country, and much more will be needed if the situation fails to change radically, and violence and displacement continue to increase.

But more importantly, what Colombia also needs are more ears willing to listen, more eyes willing to see and more mouths willing to say out loud what is happening in the country. And then there is a need to act in consequence.

No more storytelling. No more blinks.

"The Colombian Government tries to control the response by placing conditions and obstacles everywhere. Incredibly, donor countries don't react."

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Notes

1 Information based on field interviews with key humanitarian agencies in Colombia from 16 May 2009 to 27 May 2009, and 202 Questionnaires on donor performance (including 119 OECD-DAC donors).

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Crisis Reports

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Democratic Republic of the Congo at a Glance

Country data

- Population (2007): 62 million
- Under five mortality rate (2006): 205 per 1,000
- Human Development Index Ranking (2008): 177
- Life expectancy (2006): 46 years
- Official Development Assistance (2007): US$1.216 billion

The crisis

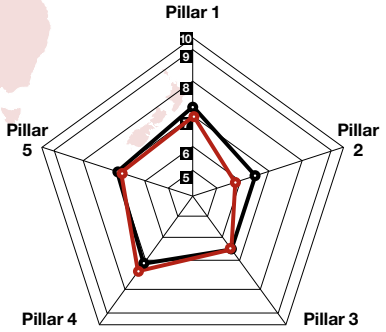
- Large-scale human suffering and displacement in north and east of DRC resulting from renewal of heavy fighting; FDLR rebels continue violent attacks and army remains largest human-rights violator and perpetrator of gender-based violence;
- Emerging food insecurity and malnutrition crisis in west, but humanitarian funds and programmes remain concentrated in the insecure east;
- Global financial crisis further damaging DRC's weak economy, creating more vulnerability.

The response

- DRC is third-largest recipient of emergency aid, but humanitarian needs remain enormous;
- 2008 DRC CAP appeal 77 percent covered (US$564 million), 2009 CAP appeal stands at 53 percent covered (US$440 million);
- Pooled Fund is second-largest source of humanitarian funding, at 25 percent of total HAP funding;
- DRC is testing ground for humanitarian reform and a GHD pilot country; coordination mechanisms well developed, but improvement needed to achieve sustainable progress.

Donor performance

- Donor engagement and funding rated relatively high, but crisis shows limitations of GHD and reform process in complex contexts such as the DRC;
- Donors rated generally well in questions around protection of human rights, applying good practice and alleviating suffering, but rated poorly in Prevention, risk reduction and recovery (Pillar 2), and promoting Learning and accountability (Pillar 5);
- Donors perceived as failing to implement both a viable transition from relief to development and a system capable of preventing future crises.



HRI 2009 scores by pillar

Pillar 1 Responding to needs
Pillar 2 Prevention, risk reduction and recovery
Pillar 3 Working with humanitarian partners
Pillar 4 Protection and International Law
Pillar 5 Learning and accountability

Democratic Republic of the Congo
All crisis average

Sources: World Bank 2009, UNICEF 2008, UNDP 2008, OECD 2007 OCHA FTS 2009, Swedish Foundation for Human Rights 2008, UN Security Council 2008, DRC Provincial Population Movement Committees, UNICEF DRC 2008, CARE DRC 2008, Lilly and Bertram 2008.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Difficult Transitions[1]

Gilles Gasser and Dennis Dijkzeul

Last year's Humanitarian Response Index (HRI) mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) cautiously indicated progress towards peace and stability in the country – a positive sign for a country wracked by years of conflict and instability. In January 2008, 40 groups signed an agreement in Goma calling for a ceasefire and disarmament. During the first part of 2008, many internally displaced persons (IDPs) returned to Katanga. The economy seemed to be picking up and donor attention to the DRC remained relatively high.

On the humanitarian front, under the leadership of the Resident Humanitarian Coordinator (RHC), key instruments for better planning and funding of humanitarian action, in particular the Needs Assessment Framework for the Humanitarian Action Plan (HAP), the Pooled Fund (PF) and the cluster approach, as well as the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), were slowly being improved. Moreover, the United Nations Mission in DRC (MONUC), the largest UN peacekeeping mission in the world, was further expanded to continue its peacekeeping and rebuilding tasks. State-building, albeit slow, was at least possible.

Nevertheless, in the second half of 2008, there was more – quite terrible – fighting, which caused considerable humanitarian problems in the Kivus and surrounding provinces. Disturbingly, there was also growing evidence that the west of the country, although lacking the same security challenges, increasingly faces high rates of malnutrition and food insecurity. The humanitarian response, however, remains concentrated in the east (Lilly and Bertram 2008).

Beyond the traditional mandate

Some donors have expressed unease with the current situation. They are conscious that no substantial progress will be made in the DRC without tackling issues such as peace in the east, corruption or building a democratic state. While it is clear there is a need to continue to respond to the severe humanitarian situation, it is also necessary to develop longer-term programmes and structural assistance with a mixed approach of development and humanitarian assistance. These issues go beyond the traditional humanitarian mandate and require an in-depth reflection by the Good Humanitarian Donor (GHD) donor group. The GHD initiative needs a new vision and stronger leadership to continue to cover basic humanitarian needs but also to stimulate a transition towards building local capacities and finding longer-term solutions for all Congolese.

The violence continues

In 1994, after the Rwandan genocide, the DRC became entangled in the wider conflagrations of the African Great Lakes region. The country became engulfed by horrific violence, and a self-perpetuating war economy developed. International peace diplomacy was unsuccessful for a long period, but in 2003, the warring factions signed a comprehensive peace agreement. Three years later, after the first multi-party presidential and parliamentary elections in 46 years, Joseph Kabila was installed as president.

Unfortunately, in the North and South Kivu provinces bordering Rwanda, high levels of violence continued. The Hutu extremists of the Democratic Liberation Forces of Rwanda (FDLR) and the Rwandan-backed forces led by General Nkunda exploited the population and the region's natural resources. The Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of Congo (FARDC), the corrupt national army, was too weak to defeat both rebel movements and often had to rely on MONUC forces for support. Meanwhile, the cruel Lord's Resistance Army was active in the far north.

International mediation coupled with diplomatic and financial pressure led to an unexpected, but haphazard, peace process between the DRC and Rwanda in December 2008. General Nkunda was captured, while Rwandan and Congolese forces jointly attacked FDLR forces positioned in North Kivu in early 2009. They did not, however, succeed in destroying the FDLR.

The humanitarian consequences

The humanitarian consequences of this turmoil have been and remain huge. All in all, the outbreak of armed conflict and the lack of a sustainable ceasefire has resulted in the displacement of more than 1,350,000 people in South Kivu, North Kivu and the north of Province Orientale since August 1998 (OCHA 2008). The average duration of displacement has increased, contributing to the general impoverishment of the communities that host the IDP populations (McDowell 2008). This is compounded by the fact that local communities are subject to harassment, pillage and aggression.

In August 2008, when fighting resumed in North Kivu, more than 250,000 people became newly displaced (UN News 2008). IDPs have been both caught in the cross-fire and subject to an array of other abuses such as forced recruitment, extortion and gender-based violence perpetrated by the armed militias as well as the FARDC (ICG 2008). The ineffective and corrupt Congolese National Police (PNC) has contributed to the climate of insecurity and impunity (Vinck et al 2008).

Despite these hardships and the fact that the capacities of some host families have become stretched to or beyond breaking point, support through local integration has endured. With the latest waves of displacements, the World Food Programme (WFP) has had to step up its food distribution activities. However, due to the insecurity, the DRC's dilapidated infrastructure and insufficient MONUC escorts, thousands of people in remote areas and conflict zones could not be reached.

Non-conflict areas of the DRC also face growing humanitarian crises. Since 2006, the humanitarian community has enlarged its area of operations after noting alarming indicators in other parts of the country (OCHA 2006). In 2008, for example, nutritional studies undertaken in both eastern and western DRC identified 28 nutritional emergencies, the majority of which were in the western provinces. At the same time, 2008 was marked by epidemics, including measles, meningitis, cholera, pulmonary plague, monkey pox and typhoid fever. The resurgence of acute flaccid poliomyelitis (polio) was also a major public health concern.

Nevertheless, 2008 was also marked by the return of IDPs to Ituri, the northern part of North Kivu (Grand Nord) and a few areas in South Kivu. Between January and October 2008, 29,287 refugees out of a total 318,000 were repatriated with the support of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

In sum, the DRC remains an extremely weak state in a violent neighbourhood that is often unable or unwilling to care for its people. State-building, security-sector reform and the development of a transparent and equitable resource-extraction system are still far from complete – and, despite some positive developments, humanitarian needs remain enormous.

Sustained donor support

During 2008, humanitarian actors focused their efforts on the humanitarian crises created by the resumption of conflict, new waves of displacement and human rights abuses, while many NGOs worked to address health concerns and epidemics. Humanitarian assistance and funding levels of the HAP increased compared with previous years, continuing the trend of the past two years towards sustained donor commitment in the DRC.

According to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs' Financial Tracking Service (OCHA FTS) (2009), donor contributions amounted to US$564,584,996 – or 77 percent of the total estimated needs of US$736,511,765.[2] This reflects the consistently high level of need in the DRC and demonstrates increasing donor confidence in the HAP as a comprehensive framework for prioritising and planning humanitarian programmes across the country.

In 2008, as in 2007, the largest bilateral donor was the United States with US$122 million (21.8 percent of the total humanitarian funding). Solid support also came from the European Commission and the United Kingdom, providing US$79 million (14 percent) and US$78 million (13.9 percent), respectively. Countries such as Sweden and the Netherlands, both PF Board members, also remained important contributors. Japan increased support from US$5.7 million in 2007 to US$22 million in 2008 (3.95 percent).

However, several large countries, such as France and Germany, remained remarkably marginal donors. Meanwhile, the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) contribution was reduced from US$52 million in 2007 to US$41 million in 2008 (OCHA FTS 2009 and OCHA 2009)

Pooled Fund contributions

In 2008, donor contributions to the PF reached US$143 million compared with US$117.8 million in 2007. Although bilateral funding still provides the majority of the funds received in the HAP framework, the PF ranks as the DRC's largest humanitarian 'donor' in 2008. The contributions of the PF represented 25 percent of total 2008 HAP funding. When combined, funding from CERF and the PF represented 32 percent (OCHA 2009).

Donor contributions to the PF also show a year-by-year increase. With a contribution of US$58.7 million, the UK Department for International Development (DFID) is the largest donor, providing 41 percent of all PF funds. This is followed by the Netherlands with US$28 million, Sweden with US$20 million and Ireland with US$10 million. Notably, in 2008 the Netherlands' contribution to the PF reached 74 percent; up from 60 percent in 2007 (OCHA 2009).

As part of the PF, the Rapid Response Reserve (RRR) amounted to US$28 million in 2008 and was used as a rapid and flexible mechanism to fund emergency and priority projects outside the standard allocation process. In 2008, 33 percent of the RRR was allocated through the UN Children's Fund and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNICEF-OCHA) Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM).

"The GHD initiative may have reached many of its objectives in the DRC, but it now needs an overhaul."

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Application of the *Principles of Good Humanitarian Donorship:* the 'G3' takes the lead

Donor willingness to strengthen dialogue with humanitarian partners has been fairly successful. So too have donor efforts to improve coordination at the field level, as well as their attempts to allocate funds on the basis of needs. However, the actual degree of involvement and understanding of the GHD initiative by donors varies considerably. This discrepancy is so great that the EC's Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO), DFID and the US Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) have been nicknamed 'the G3' for their weight and leadership. These three players are calling for greater involvement from other donor countries to regenerate the GHD initiative.

Other donors are interested in the GHD initiative, but lack staff and financial resources to follow it properly. They also lack guidance on how to implement and promote *GHD Principles* among partner NGOs. Similarly, many operational partners in the field still do not know how to 'translate' the *GHD Principles* in practical terms with regard to their relationship with donors. Meanwhile, some donor field representatives have only superficial knowledge of the GHD initiative and continue to follow their own agendas. Although humanitarian action is now more needs-based than five years ago, it is still not sufficiently in line with GHD Principle six, which calls for allocation of funding in proportion to needs. This is particularly problematic given the existing level of needs in the west (OCHA 2008).

The evolution of the HAP

Since 2006, the DRC has been a pilot country for humanitarian reform. Partly based on the GHD initiative, these encompass both the reinforcement of the role of the Resident Humanitarian Coordinator through the implementation of the cluster approach, as well as the reform of the financing system through the PF and CERF. The implementation of these reforms has also strengthened the development of the HAP, the main strategic framework for aid agencies in the DRC.

Since 2007, the evolution of the HAP illustrates how conceptions of the humanitarian crises and relations among actors have changed over time. The 2008 HAP already highlighted the chronic nature of the overlapping humanitarian crises in the DRC and the fact that these crises are not limited to the insecure areas in the east. However, in many cases, NGOs or UN agencies lack the capacity to deploy teams in western regions where needs have been identified and funding made available. Moreover, UN agencies, as part of MONUC, experience explicit political pressure to support peace efforts in the east.

NGOs are also put under pressure by donors, the media and their headquarters to prioritise programmes and increase their visibility in the west. But since 2008, the HAP introduced the notion of sector thresholds, a series of sectoral indicators beyond which immediate humanitarian response is needed regardless of the geographic location in the country. The 2009 HAP again uses threshold indicators and develops cross-sectoral and early recovery strategies. However, some field agencies stated that consultation remains insufficient and that their requests concerning strategy and data compilation are insufficiently reflected in the document (DARA 2009).

The mixed results of the cluster approach

As a result of the cluster approach, there are currently nine clusters in the DRC (DARA 2009). This approach was implemented in response to the need for decentralised analysis and decision-making processes to improve assessment and monitoring mechanisms, strengthen strategy formulation and make humanitarian aid more effective. Generally, humanitarian organisations have acknowledged that the cluster approach has improved efforts to identify and address gaps in services in the field, and the approach has become a key tool in the allocation of PF. However, some donors that do not contribute to the PF have expressed concern that the clusters' resources and capacities are overstretched (DARA 2009). In addition, they would like to benefit more directly from the clusters' analysis for their own bilateral aid.

As could be expected, some clusters have performed better than others, depending on the management of the cluster lead. For example, the water and sanitation cluster was noted for its effectiveness by its participating NGOs.[2] In contrast, the health cluster is widely considered to have failed to play an active role in the identification of needs and priorities for PF allocation and to create a positive working dynamic with partners. This is mainly due to the weak management of its cluster lead, the World Health Organization (WHO).

In 2008, at the request of the RHC, NGOs were asked to co-lead all clusters to foster greater participation and dissipate doubts about PF allocation. While the co-lead has probably improved collaboration, it has also caused a duplication of work and has imposed an additional burden on NGOs.[3] As the PF also mainly funds projects, it has been very difficult to submit multi-sectoral programme proposals, which is an area that could be improved. As such, the cluster approach still fails to adequately promote local NGO and government participation, which creates incomprehension and frustration, and leads local NGOs to feel marginalised.

The Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC) has served as another important tool to ensure inter-agency and multi-sectoral coordination at the provincial capital level. This large forum of UN agencies, NGOs and donors analyses the humanitarian situation on a weekly basis and provides general strategic advice to the humanitarian community. As the Humanitarian Advocacy Group (HAG), at the national level it also tries to prevent gaps in humanitarian action and coordination.

In comparison with the HRI 2008 report, NGOs highlighted significant improvements in coordination, allocation and implementation of the PF. These improvements included less dependence on the UN, along with greater transparency and participation in decision making. However, despite growing support, the PF is still less accessible to small or local NGOs and mainly works well for UN agencies and large NGOs.[4]

Many NGOs criticise the UN Development Programme (UNDP), blaming it for the (remaining) heavy administrative burden and incoherence that delays implementation of programmes. In general, the PF complements rather than duplicates bilateral funding. NGOs insist on maintaining a diversity of funding and stress the continued importance of robust bilateral donor support that provides more flexibility over time.

Lessons learnt and recommendations for the future

Despite the relatively high level of funding in the DRC, it is certain that more funding is needed and there are four areas where donor assistance could be improved. These include:

1 Information collection

Some donors explained that they do not have the capacity to contrast the various information strands they receive. Donors should provide more assistance for the collection of countrywide data for thematic needs assessments.

2 Health

Despite increasing donor assistance to the health sector, basic indicators show little improvement. Corruption, bad governance, low capacities and chronic poverty have increased vulnerability beyond the insecure areas. The donors subscribing to the GHD initiative need to reflect further on their role and priorities in non-conflict zones of the DRC.

3 IDPs

Despite advocacy from NGOs and an evaluation from UNICEF/CARE5 and Oxfam, 6 donor support to host families remains weak (McDowell 2008 and Haver 2008). Donors could push for a 'host family' sub-cluster to address the IDP situation.[7]

4 Leadership

Donors should also provide greater leadership on protection issues. More pressure on the Congolese authorities, in particular on the national army and the police, could help create programmes that empower beneficiaries and encourage IDP return. Currently, humanitarian action in the DRC is arguably better at responding to basic needs than addressing the chronic character of the ongoing crises.

It is highly likely that the Congolese will experience new crises in the near future. To live up to one of the core objectives of humanitarian action that the GHD espouses, that of *preventing* human suffering, donors should:

- Promote programmes to strengthen affected communities' capacities and resilience beyond emergency aid to confront the current crises and prevent new ones.
- Develop early-warning mechanisms to anticipate humanitarian emergencies and link humanitarian and development programmes.
- Foster stronger engagement with provincial and local authorities, as well as with state services, to facilitate the transition from humanitarian to development action.
- Encourage more dialogue and better coordination between humanitarian and development actors.
- Better indicate to government and local authorities the responsibilities and obligations they hold towards their internally displaced population (Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement).

A new approach

Above all, donors – and most particularly the so-called 'G3' – should promote a new GHD implementation plan that will analyse the ongoing complex humanitarian crises, measure the impact of the GHD pilot initiative and develop a comprehensive strategy to renew the GHD mandate in the DRC. Humanitarian aid helps the Congolese survive their country's crises, but neither humanitarian nor most development aid addresses the root causes of the crises.

Donors should re-design their interventions to respond to the whole country's humanitarian context and develop a more coherent common strategy to tackle issues such as human rights violations, corruption, illegal exploitation of natural resources and land distribution which impede peace and stability. Humanitarian actors are not responsible for these phenomena, nor are donors. But donors have the capacity to influence and correct them. Humanitarian actors do not.

Conclusions

Since the *GHD Principles* have been piloted in the DRC, major progress has been made with needs-based funding, implementing humanitarian standards and more coherent coordination to save lives and alleviate suffering. However, humanitarian needs remain huge and the chronic character of the crises is difficult to address. Donors are facing larger questions such as land distribution and state building, and the implementation of development programmes that are key to solving humanitarian problems. Such issues mark the limitations of, but also new opportunities for, humanitarian action.

Since 2005, donors have progressively developed a common approach to implement *GHD Principles*. The initiative now seems to have reached a point where donors should define a new vision of the GHD. Perhaps the lead donors (the 'G3') should stimulate an initiative to redevelop and rearticulate a new humanitarian strategy around *GHD Principles*. Moreover, after almost five years of the GHD pilot initiative in the DRC, the level of GHD knowledge, implementation and understanding from humanitarian actors on the field remains questionable.

The GHD initiative may have reached many of its objectives in the DRC, but it now needs an overhaul. Today there is a need for donors to create a new dynamic and commitment around the initiative to help tackle the root causes of the crises in the DRC. In this respect, the question needs to be asked as to whether or not the last three of the *GHD Principles* – those that deal with learning and accountability – are taken seriously enough by the donor governments themselves. It is time for a joint multi-donor evaluation on the basis of the GHD initiative – similar to those on Rwanda and the tsunami – and a wide-ranging consideration of the achievements and limitations of 15 years of humanitarian intervention in the DRC.

About the Authors

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Gilles Gasser is a journalist and independent consultant specialising in humanitarian aid issues and communication. He was Head of Mission of the NGO Équilibre in Bosnia and Herzegovina from 1993 to 1996 and later worked as an expert from 1997 to 2000 in the humanitarian offices of the European Commission in Sarajevo, Tirana and Pristina. He has undertaken studies for the Tsunami Evaluation Coalition, 'Conversations on Democracy' for the Club of Madrid, and various projects with the think-tank FRIDE. As a journalist, he has travelled to Belfast, New Caledonia, Israel, the Palestinian Territories, El Salvador, Guatemala, Brazil and the Dominican Republic.

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Notes

1 Information based on field interviews with key humanitarian agencies in DRC from 5 May 2009 to 20 May 2009, and 309 questionnaires on donor performance (including 248 OECD-DAC donors).

The HRI team, composed of Gilles Gasser, Lynda Attias, Philippe Benassi, Dina Dandachli, Dennis Dijkzeul and James Dyson, expresses its gratitude to all those interviewed in DRC. The opinions expressed here are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of DARA.

2 In 2007, donors provided 66 percent of US$686 million requested (OCHA FTS 2009).

3 This burden used to be carried out by the bilateral donors before the installation of the PF.

4 In 2008, the PF supported 294 projects, implemented by nine UN agencies (112 projects), 42 international NGOs (INGOs) (146 projects) and 34 national NGOs (32 projects). UN agencies received US$65.4 million (52.4 percent of the 2008 allocation), while funds allocated directly to INGOs amounted to US$58.5 million (43 percent) and US$5.6 million (4.5 percent) to national NGOs (NNGOs) (OCHA 2009).

5 Internal displacement in North Kivu: Hosting, camps and coping mechanisms. UNICEF, Care DRC. April 2008.

6 Haver, K. Building better response to displacement in the DRC by helping host families. Oxfam GB. September 2008.

7 In eastern DRC, 70 percent of IDPs are in host families (Haver 2008).

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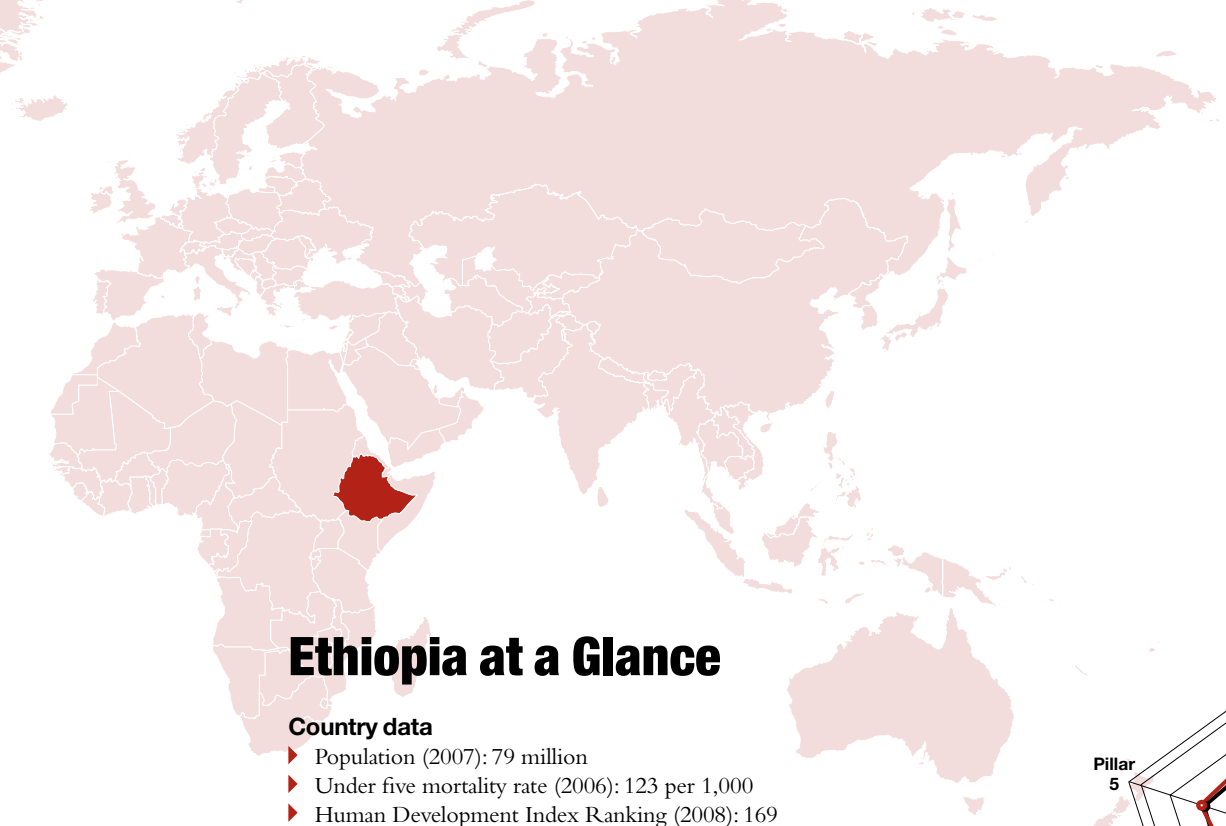
Crisis Reports

Ethiopia



Ethiopia at a Glance

Country data

- Population (2007): 79 million
- Under five mortality rate (2006): 123 per 1,000
- Human Development Index Ranking (2008): 169
- Life expectancy (2008): 52 years
- Official Development Assistance (2007): $2.422 billion

The crisis

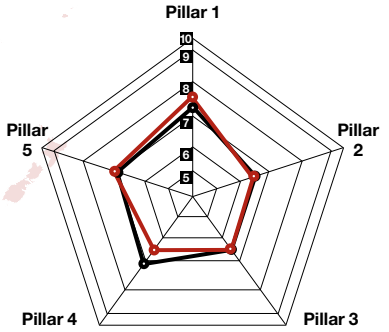
- Forty percent of Ethiopia's population lives in poverty, with an estimated 10 million in need of humanitarian assistance;
- Food insecurity is a constant problem due to rapid population growth, increasing frequency of droughts, inequitable land distribution and rising food prices;
- At least 200,000 Ethiopians displaced by fighting between government and ONLF, and conflicts with Eritrea and OLF remain unresolved;

The response

- Donors provided US$974 million in 2008, making Ethiopia the second-largest recipient of humanitarian aid after Sudan;
- Ethiopia was also a pilot for the implementation of Paris Declaration development assistance harmonisation, but development priorities sometimes conflict with humanitarian needs;
- Humanitarian actors are greatly limited by the Ethiopian Government in terms of access to Somali region and a new civil society organisation law.
- Annual preparation of humanitarian requirements assessments are frequent source of conflict with Ethiopian Government; negotiations delay agencies' ability to respond;

Donor performance

- Donors overall scored highest in Working with humanitarian partners (Pillar 3) and lowest in Responding to needs (Pillar 1);
- Donors rated highly in survey questions related to longer-term funding arrangements and poorly in discriminating against groups or individuals within affected population;
- Donors perceived as not active enough in advocating recognition of humanitarian needs and access



HRI 2009 scores by pillar

Pillar 1 Responding to needs
Pillar 2 Prevention, risk reduction and recovery
Pillar 3 Working with humanitarian partners
Pillar 4 Protection and International Law
Pillar 5 Learning and accountability

Ethiopia
All crisis average

Sources: World Bank 2009, UNICEF 2008, UNDP 2008, OECD 2007, Ethiopia: Building on Progress, A Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty (2005/06-2009/10); Deressa, T., Hassan, R.M. and Ringler, C. 2008; Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre 2008; International Crisis Group 2008; OCHA FTS 2009; Human Rights Watch 2008.

Ethiopia

Blurring the Boundaries Between Relief and Development[1]

Ricardo Solé-Arqués

Ethiopia has yet to achieve stability and self-sufficiency, despite the billions of dollars of development funding and humanitarian aid provided every year by external donors. The regime severely curtails access to internal conflict areas as well as controlling the final distribution of aid and playing down the number of people in need of relief.

Donors tend to mix humanitarian and development aid with political and strategic agendas. The result is a dysfunctional system in which development programmes and frequent emergencies overlap, to the advantage of an autocratic government which seeks to dominate and curb local civil society. The government learnt how to use humanitarian aid as a weapon during its struggle prior to seizing power in 1992.

A unique feature of Ethiopia's chronic crisis is the fact that it creates an inversion of the paradigm of linking relief with development. In this case, development programmes have to bear frequent emergencies, which distort programming and the usual development tools. During 2008, and amidst huge development investments, increasing numbers of people required lifesaving humanitarian aid. However, donors in Ethiopia have difficulty honouring the *Principles and Good Practice of Humanitarian Donorship (GHD)*, because they are committed to development objectives. At the same time, many of them have vested security, political and economic interests in their relationships with the government.

A complex set of problems

A generation has passed since the Ethiopian famines of the mid-1980s, which prompted an unprecedented international response and made Ethiopia almost synonymous with famine. The Ethiopian Government's inability or unwillingness to deal with famine provoked universal outcry. At that time, the combined effects of famine and civil war had put the nation's economy into a state of collapse. A quarter of a century later and largely out of the spotlight, Ethiopia is still struggling to link recovery and development.

The number of people requiring assistance is estimated to be more than 10 million, although the official joint humanitarian assessments cite lower numbers. For example, 126,000 children are estimated to need treatment for severe malnutrition (IRIN 2008), while the assessments believe it to be less than 80,000 (Government of Ethiopia and UN Country Team 2008). Countrywide, the number of centres providing therapeutic feeding rose six-fold during 2008 alone (Government of Ethiopia and UN Country Team 2009). Thousands of reported cases of watery diarrhoea (UNICEF 2008) could indicate hidden cholera outbreaks.

A number of factors, including high population growth, inequitable land distribution and rising food prices, have ensured that food insecurity remains a major problem. Droughts, to which Ethiopia is prone, are becoming more frequent due to climate change (Deressa, Hassan and Ringler 2008).

Internal and external conflicts repeatedly trigger humanitarian needs. Fighting between the Ethiopian Government and the separatist Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) has displaced at least 200,000 people (IDMC 2008). There is active conflict with the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) and the long-standing war with Eritrea also remains unresolved (International Crisis Group 2008).

Refugees are present in the country in limited numbers. Flows to and from Eritrea continue, with a permanent caseload of 23,000 Eritrean refugees in Ethiopia. In the west there are 50,000 refugees from Darfur who are currently in the process of return. The most acute situation is caused by those fleeing the conflict in Somalia, estimated at 120,000 people (United States Committee for Refugees and Immigrants 2008). Internal displacement due to violence or famine is not recognised in Ethiopia, and the euphemism 'reallocation programme' is sometimes used to cover internally displaced persons (IDPs).

Many years of investment, a strong government and sustained economic growth have not translated into a significant improvement in conditions; poverty still affects 40 percent of the population, and vulnerability has barely changed. As long ago as 2004, the director of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) commented: "The donor community cannot sustain the levels of food aid required in Ethiopia. Last year alone USAID provided over US$500 million in food aid to avert a humanitarian disaster. At the same time, due to an unsupportive policy environment in Ethiopia, the USAID-supported agricultural development programme was funded at a level of less than US$5 million. While our food assistance saved millions of lives, the number of chronically food-insecure households increases every year." (USAID 2004, p5). This statement remains valid. Ethiopia poses extraordinary challenges for development policies.

Negotiating needs

Humanitarian needs are a frequent cause of conflict between humanitarian agencies and the government. Ethiopia does not participate in the standard consolidated or humanitarian appeal processes. Instead, it carries out its own 'emergency needs assessments', with humanitarian partners participating for each region.

The assessments gauge available resources against current and predicted needs. Available resources are a mix of what donors have already provided as a response to previously stated requirements, local capacity to generate additional resources and contributions from development or safety net programmes. These assessments, which lead to a yearly humanitarian requirements (HR) document, are always contested on political rather than purely humanitarian grounds and negotiations to agree on figures sometimes take months. This causes delays in the publication of the humanitarian requirements and consequently delays in donors' responses (Lefort 2009).

For 2008, the initial HR document was released in April and covered the emergency needs of 2.2 million people. This figure was revised upwards in June to 4.6 million, largely due to the increase in food prices, and upwards again in October to 6.4 million. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development – Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) members' net aid to Ethiopia amounted to an impressive US$2.4 billion in 2007 (OECD and World Bank 2009). In addition, the World Bank International Development Association (WB/IDA) provided US$1.8 billion, half in the form of grants, the US gave more than US$300 million and the European Commission (EC) and the United Kingdom each provided more than US$200 million (Ibid).

The world's second-largest aid recipient

Donors allocated a total of US$974 million to Ethiopia for humanitarian assistance in 2008 (OCHA 2009). This made it the second-largest recipient, behind Sudan (which received US$1.41 billion) and well ahead of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) (US$573 million) (Ibid). The list of donors to Ethiopia is comprehensive, including all DAC donors, significant private contributors (The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, for example, providing US$3 million) and new donors like Turkey. The largest donor by far has been the US (around US$669 million), followed by the UK (US$69 million), the EC (US$58 million) and Canada (US$41 million) (Ibid).

Ethiopia is one of the main recipients of UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) assistance, the second-largest recipient after DRC, with US$31.5 million. Since the CERF's creation in 2006, Ethiopia has received US$53.8 million, the sixth-largest recipient globally (Ibid).

After the controversial 2005 elections, and in a context of poor governance, donors moved away from budgetary support so that they could have better oversight of poverty reduction programmes (World Bank 2007). Certain conditions were imposed; for example, the government would face the progressive withdrawal of aid unless there was progress on some aspects of governance (World Bank 2006). Currently, however, it seems that donors have adopted a more *laissez faire* attitude toward the political practices of the government, and there has been a return towards more significant budgetary support – through 'support to basic services', the 'productive safety net programme' (PSNP) or even directly.

The PSNP is a coordinated effort by donors and the Ethiopian Government to address the cycle of increasing deprivation. Contributing factors are:

- A predictable increase in the food-insecure population
- An overwhelming humanitarian caseload
- Greater frequency of shocks leading to crisis
- Asset depletion and destitution increasing with each emergency (The IDL Group 2008).

The PSNP operates in seven of the country's ten regions and aims to improve the coping mechanisms of its 7.2 million beneficiaries so they can eventually graduate from the programme. It provides cash or food transfers for six months of the year, at an annual cost of US$250-350 million. Donors include Canada, Ireland, Sweden, the UK, the US, the EC, the World Bank and the World Food Programme (WFP) (Ibid). It has become a tool to assist a specific caseload, but unfortunately the lack of progress in related development programmes has prevented it from reversing the cycle of destitution, asset depletion and vulnerability.

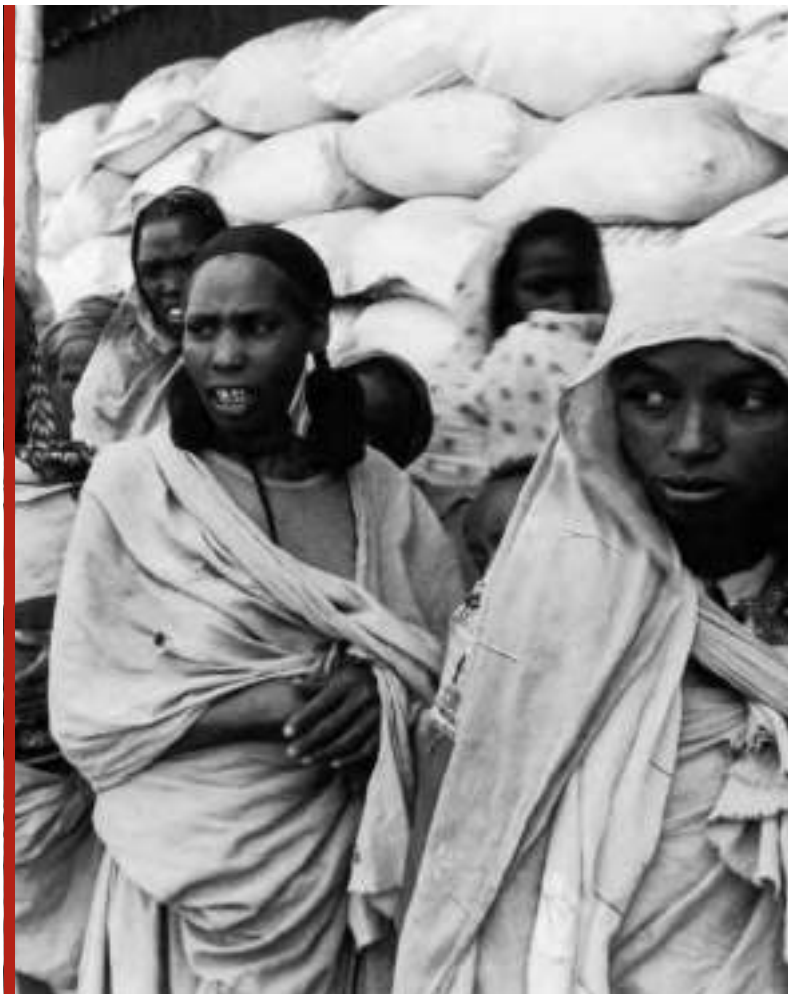
The role of the UN

The UN plays a central role in Ethiopia, having privileged relations with the government and enjoying ample funding, for example for large capacity-building, recovery and development programmes. The UN is regarded by many NGOs as a donor, channelling significant bilateral and pooled funds to them. In this sense some NGOs have a more secondary role, being basically dependent on donor contributions for long-term programmes and humanitarian funds.

All UN agencies are present at different scales. WFP is by far the largest recipient of humanitarian funds (US$747 million), followed by UNICEF (US$46 million). The main NGOs are Save the Children (including the Danish, US and UK branches) receiving a total of US$21.7 million, Mercy Corps (US$19 million), several Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) sections (US$13.8 million), the International Rescue Committee (IRC) (US$7 million) and international humanitarian agency GOAL (US$5.5 million) (OCHA 2009 and OCHA Ethiopia 2009).

WFP targets 9.7 million people in Ethiopia, and conducts the largest protracted relief and recovery operation (PRRO) in the world, with 8.6 million beneficiaries (WFP 2009a). However, in December 2008, WFP projected a shortfall of US$509 million for 2009 (OCHA 2008). The emergency reserve for food security has been depleted and pipeline breaks have been occurring for all commodities. Rations have been reduced to a third of the full ration. (WFP 2009b). The government's import of cement and fertilisers has decreased transportation capacity from the required 100 trucks per day to less than 40, seriously affecting deliveries from Djibouti, the only sizeable hub close to the country. However, WFP's drive to encourage new donors, by ensuring that a traditional donor would cover the collateral costs of placing a donation in the field, has borne some fruit. These so-called 'matching funds' have allowed some donors like Egypt to contribute to the WFP appeal, diversifying its donor base.

"Access to people in need, whether those in conflict areas or certain population groups such as IDPs, should be non-negotiable."



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Harmonising donors' efforts

Donors are not indifferent to these challenges and a number of initiatives are underway. Ethiopia is to be a pilot country for donor harmonisation in the framework of the Paris Declaration, although clear synergies have not yet been identified (OECD 2007). A 'division of labour team' has been created under European Union (EU) auspices and is making progress towards effective donor coordination (Development Assistance Group Ethiopia 2009).

The Ethiopian humanitarian country team[2] works with the government on the coordination of humanitarian response. The respective UN clusters provide support for government-led sectoral task-forces at the federal and regional levels.

The Humanitarian Response Fund (HRF), a pooled fund locally managed by OCHA, was ranked by most respondents as a flexible and appropriate tool to respond to humanitarian needs. The HRF funds short-term emergency needs through international NGOs and UN agencies. Donors include Norway, the Netherlands, the UK, Ireland, Sweden, Spain, Switzerland and Italy. It received US$77.3 million in 2008 and by 21 December 2008 had allocated US$44.8 million to more than 60 projects throughout the country (OCHA/HRF 2009).

The disaster management and food security sector (DMFSS), a new Ethiopian Government department established at the end of 2008, operates an early warning and response department as well as a food security department. Its aim is to shift the emphasis from a relief-led approach to one of risk-reduction and preparedness.

The HRI survey captured quite sceptical opinions about government capacity and donors' willingness to coordinate their activity. The strong government-led coordination system makes it difficult for the cluster system to achieve full effectiveness; this is probably a feature common to crises where national authorities are in control. Clusters do not seem to be improving the sector response, and in fact are seen as an additional mechanism that is not integrated with the existing ones.

When the aid community is focused on development programmes and has a long presence in the country, with existing local coordination mechanisms, the cluster system itself is in question. Most respondents perceived it as cumbersome, dependent on the engagement of the lead agency or individual, and lacking strong leadership by the humanitarian coordinator. The fact that this position is held by a United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) official has been described as a limitation on the strength and independence of the role.

Although donors do not seem to be decreasing their allocations as a result of the financial crisis (OECD 2009), exchange rates are decreasing the real contributions of many and clear measures have not been formulated to maintain the predictability of funding. Finally, the lack of any surge capacity is of concern in this fragile, aid-dependent scenario.

Tensions with the government

In January 2009, the government introduced a law that aims to control civil society organisations (CSOs), and allows their activities to be subject to intimate scrutiny. The charities and societies proclamation bars both Ethiopian and foreign organisations that receive more than 10 percent of their funding from overseas from undertaking activities related to gender equality, human rights, disabled persons' rights, conflict resolution, strengthening judicial practices and law enforcement (Human Rights Watch 2008). The international community has reacted softly to this law; for example, EU representatives invoke the right of the government to pass this type of regulation.[3] Most of the respondents to the survey, however, find donors' tolerance of these autocratic practices unacceptable and in conflict with principled aid policies. NGOs have also voiced their condemnation and have, as a consequence, suffered difficulties in gaining access to certain areas and population groups.

In Ethiopia, donors tend to avoid conflicts with the government and have mixed security and development agendas which affects their independence and neutrality. The capacity of some donors to apply the *GHD Principles* is hindered by the fact that Ethiopia is a proxy in regional conflicts, a front-line ally on the War on Terror and oil companies operate there. As a recipient of funding and with its specific bilateral agreements with the government, the UN is not well placed to apply pressure to assure principled donor practice.

Applying the *GHD Principles* in a restrictive environment

In Ethiopia, the basic principles of humanitarian action cannot be fully applied due to the de facto acceptance of the political manipulation of emergency needs assessments; the denial of the existence of IDPs, preventing access to and protection of those in need; the restricted access to some areas; and the CSO law.

Donors could undoubtedly do more to preserve and promote the *GHD Principles*, although they do get around restrictions by funding operations that are wider than the published requirements. The generous contributions to the HRF are an example of this, inasmuch as they give room to manoeuvre to respond to actual needs. On the other hand, the use of pooled funds by donors can be seen as a way of avoiding their direct commitments to the *GHD Principles* and delegating responsibility to UN agencies.

The work of humanitarian actors has been severely hindered by the government. The situation in the Somali region, where access restrictions have been put in place and the work of humanitarian agencies disrupted, has been particularly serious. These constraints were highlighted by all humanitarian actors contacted during the survey process.

Donors' responses to the access issue have been uneven. This lack of a common approach is unfortunate, and likely to have reduced the ability of the international community to influence the government. Even the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has not been permitted access since 2007 and the humanitarian community has failed to react; the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO) stopped funding operations to the Somali region, claiming lack of access and reliable distribution. On the other hand, the pressure exerted by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) to permit a nutritional survey by prioritising funding to the Somali region has finally yielded returns.

Restrictions in the Somali region eased slightly in autumn 2008, when the government allowed UN representatives to assess the situation and to open regional offices there. The WFP managed to set up a special operation at a cost of US$2.7 million over six months (WFP 2008). This arrangement involved the central government and regional authorities in setting up various hubs for distribution, rehabilitating warehouses and assuring supplies of fuel. This achievement was possible thanks to pressure particularly by USAID, an example of good practice quoted by some respondents.

The survey captured specific examples of good practice – donors being very creative and adapting to the situation, which could be transferable to other protracted crises. Agencies and donors have sometimes addressed the inverted linkage of relief and development with interesting solutions. Many interviewees praised USAID for the 'crisis modifier' it has introduced in its development programmes to allow for flexibility and shifting between budget lines when there is a crisis. The Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) has also been singled out for its emergency fund, which is made available rapidly to pre-qualified NGOs.

Lessons learnt and recommendations for the future

1. Needs must be assessed properly, safeguarding the independence of humanitarian action and ensuring access to areas and groups where the humanitarian space has been blocked. Agencies' performance could be improved if they were to maintain or develop their independence and neutrality, keeping political or other agendas separate from humanitarian objectives. Aid must be allocated on the basis of need and work is urgently needed to support early recovery and prevent new crises.
2. Maintaining neutrality poses an interesting challenge with regard to preserving productive relations with the Ethiopian Government. Donors should make sure that the process of reaching consensus with the government does not delay decisions on the delivery of humanitarian assistance. Access to people in need, whether those in conflict areas or certain population groups such as IDPs, should be non-negotiable.
3. The application of humanitarian reform is uneven in Ethiopia. The CERF has been used to respond both to underfunded needs and for rapid response crisis. While the HRF offers unique improvements in flexibility and timeliness, the roll-out of clusters suffers from lack of leadership and inappropriateness to the context. The size and flexibility of the HRF requires further scrutiny and the dissemination of lessons learnt.
4. Donors should consider supporting the DMFSS, the new architecture of aid coordination proposed by the government, in particular the current early warning system. This would help assure its effectiveness and objectivity and provide the humanitarian system with reliable forecasting tools.
5. More work is needed to reverse the progressive asset depletion of the population, which is still a problem despite the imaginative approaches of donors.
6. Examples of good practice are very significant in Ethiopia. They should be scrutinised so that they can be absorbed and applied elsewhere, particularly USAID's 'crisis modifier', OFDA's emergency fund and WFP's 'matching funds'.

About the Author

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Dr Solé-Arqués is a specialist in internal medicine and public health, a Senior Evaluator in DARA and an international consultant on public health and humanitarian aid. He has been involved in complex emergencies since the early 1990s, serving as an ECHO expert in Bosnia, Kosovo, Angola and Colombia. He was WHO Coordinator for the West Bank and Gaza in 2003 and for the ECHO regional health sector; and Head of the Regional Support Office in Amman in 2006, covering humanitarian operations for Central Asia, the Middle East and North Africa. He has carried out extensive consultancy and evaluation work in the Middle East, Southeast Asia, Africa and Latin America for multiple international organisations, including Médecins Sans Frontières, Médecins du Monde, WHO, ECHO and the EC. He has collaborated with DARA on the TEC and a number of evaluations and has served as Team Leader for several HRI missions; he is also a former member of the HRI's Peer Review Committee.

Notes

1 Information based on field interviews with key humanitarian agencies in Ethiopia from 7 February 2009 to 17 February 2009, and 152 questionnaires on donor performance (including 115 OECD-DAC donors).

The HRI team, composed of Ricardo Solé-Arques, Silvia Hidalgo, Marybeth Redheffer and Nacho Wilhelmi, expresses its gratitude to all those interviewed in Ethiopia. The opinions expressed here are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of DARA.

2 This comprises WFP, UNICEF, WHO, FAO, UNDP, IOM, UNHCR, OHCHR, UNFPA and OCHA with NGO representatives from OXFAM GB, CARE and Save the Children UK.

3 The only statement made by the international community says: "The EPG and DAG recognise the importance of regulations to ensure standards and transparency of NGOs. However, the international community working in Ethiopia is concerned that this law could restrict our support for programmes in areas of mutual interest, such as promoting democracy and good governance, human rights, conflict resolution, and advocacy for women, children and other vulnerable groups." (Norwegian Embassy in Ethiopia 2009).

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Crisis Reports

Georgia

Georgia at a Glance

Country data

- Population (2007): 4.4 million
- Under five mortality rate (2006): 32 per 1,000
- Human Development Index Ranking (2008): 96
- Life expectancy (2006): 71 years
- Official Development Assistance (2007): US$382 million

The crisis

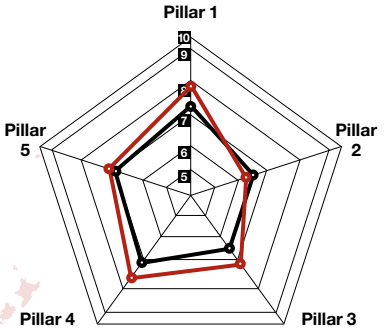
- Armed conflict broke out in August following Georgia's bombing of the South Ossetia region and retaliation by Russia;
- Conflict lasted only 13 days but left 158,000 displaced and caused billions of dollars worth of economic damage. Elderly one of the most vulnerable groups;
- Despite the ceasefire, tensions remain high.

The response

- Political, economic and security interests seem to have influenced donors, who committed to provide more than US$4.5 billion in aid, mainly to banking and transport sectors and in budget support – equivalent to almost $1,000 per person;
- Donors covered 64 percent of US$114 million UN Flash Appeal;
- Donors and humanitarian organisations did reasonably well covering initial needs for food and shelter; significant gaps remain for needs related to early recovery, livelihoods and income generation;
- Coordination among humanitarian agencies worked fairly well, yet was problematic with the Georgian Government;
- Access to South Ossetia remains a major obstacle – only ICRC has access to the population of the autonomous region.

Donor performance

- Overall, donors rated highest in Responding to needs (Pillar 1) and Promotion and International Law (Pillar 4), and lowest in Prevention, risk reduction and recovery (Pillar 2);
- Donors rated relatively higher in questions related to protection of affected populations and supporting neutral and impartial humanitarian action, but poorly in questions related to preparedness, prevention and capacity building;
- Political, economic and security interests seem to have influenced generous immediate response; donors criticised for lack of advocacy, prevention, and meeting longer-term needs.



HRI 2009 scores by pillar

Pillar 1 Responding to needs
Pillar 2 Prevention, risk reduction and recovery
Pillar 3 Working with humanitarian partners
Pillar 4 Protection and International Law
Pillar 5 Learning and accountability

Georgia
All crisis average

Sources: World Bank 2009, UNICEF 2008, UNDP 2008, OECD 2007 IDMC 2008a; European Commission External Relations 2008; ICRC 2008; OCHA FTS 2009.

Georgia

Too Many Eggs in the Same Basket[1]

Marta Marañón and Marybeth Redheffer

In August 2008, conflict between Georgia and Russia over the autonomous region of South Ossetia forced 158,000 to abandon their homes and rely upon humanitarian aid (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC 2008a).

The conflict sparked a huge response for Georgia from donor countries: far greater than one might expect for a middle-income country with a functioning government, and beyond the bounds of the joint needs assessment.

The scale of the response showed the high degree of political, economic and security interests vested in this small country. However, the nature of the response itself, although generous, was not always in line with *GHD Principles*: there was too much focus on visibility rather than appropriateness; too much in-kind aid and too little funding for recovery.

Donors also fell short on measures to hold the Georgian Government and implementing agencies fully accountable for funding received: a weakness that makes the results and impact of the aid hard to calculate.

The conflict and its consequences

The conflict began on 7 August 2008, when Georgia began bombing Tskhinvali, the capital of the autonomous region of South Ossetia. Georgia claimed that the bombing was needed to "restore constitutional order" (International Crisis Group 2008), a claim Russia denies.

Georgia, which gained independence from the Soviet Union in April 1991, has a history of problems around territorial integrity. Before the August war, Georgia engaged in several conflicts over the autonomy and/or independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Separatist movements in Abkhazia led to war in 1992, which forced 300,000 people to abandon their homes during the fighting. Many of the 220,000 to 247,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) who remain from this war continue to live in poor conditions in collective centres (IDMC 2008b).

Tensions were running high before the August conflict. Days before the bombing started, Russian troops were lined along the border and 3,000 people fled South Ossetia because of tension in the area (International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC 2009). When Georgia began bombing Tskhinvali, Russia sent in troops, under the pretext of protecting its citizens in the area (International Relations and Security Network (IRSN 2008). Heavy combat ensued and both Russia and Georgia have been accused of deliberately targeting civilians and using unnecessary force (IRSN 2008). 158,000 people were displaced within Georgia and an additional 30,000 sought refuge in North Ossetia (IDMC 2008a). According to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the elderly and feeble were most vulnerable – those without help were often left behind (2008).

Meanwhile, Russia defeated Georgian troops in South Ossetia, and looted and burned houses in the region (IRSN 2008). Russia continued onwards into Georgian territory and stopped just 60 kilometres from Tbilisi. The infrastructure in Tskhinvali was especially damaged, and there was a great loss of livestock. Gori, the 'breadbasket of Georgia', suffered severe agricultural damage (Han, Packer and Parker 2008). Before the conflict began, international organisations were engaged in development activities, and many agencies that were crucial in responding to the crisis had already left the country (including the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO) and the Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA)), or were preparing their exit strategy (World Food Programme (WFP).

On 8 September 2008, a peace agreement was reached in which Russia agreed to withdraw its troops from the buffer zone around South Ossetia and Abkhazia (IRSN 2008). It was not until November, almost three months after the conflict, that Russia allowed humanitarian agencies to access the population in the buffer zone (Han, Packer and Parker 2008). Only the ICRC is able to access South Ossetia through North Ossetia in Russia – Georgia does not allow access through South Ossetia as it considers this would violate its territorial integrity. Other humanitarian organisations have not been granted safe access to the population – a major hindrance to the response.

An overwhelming response

Donors rapidly committed funding to cover the first Flash Appeal, released on 18 August, with an original requirement of US$58,653,319 (UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA 2009).

The subsequent joint needs assessment conducted by the World Bank and UN, in collaboration with the Georgian Government, identified the need for US$3.25 billion over three years.[2] Outside of the Flash Appeal, international donors pledged US$4.536 billion in total aid to Georgia (European Commission External Relations 2008). This was significantly more than had been requested and seemed excessive to many implementing agencies. Comparison with countries with greater needs is inevitable. In Sudan, for example, a country with 4.9 million displaced (IDMC 2009), and US$2.1 billion in funding requirements for 2009, donors have committed less than half of what is needed, US$983 million (OCHA 2009).

DARA conducted a field survey of humanitarian organisations in Georgia to record their opinions of how well donors supported the response to the crisis. Many interviewees noted a disproportionate response to Georgia.

The swift and generous donor response can be put down to the political, economic and security interests of many foreign agendas:

- A Christian country located between Europe and Asia in the Caucasus region, Georgia is surrounded by politically important neighbours, including Russia, Turkey and Iran. It also provides alluring access to the rich oil and natural gas reserves in the Caspian Sea (Levine 2008).
- Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili, who was brought to power in the non-violent Rose Revolution of 2003, had a great deal of support. Western countries saw hope in Saakashvili, who promised to restore democracy and eliminate corruption in Georgia (BBC 2005). To the surprise of many, however, in 2007, Saakashvili used violence to repress protests and has concentrated political power in the executive, decreasing the role of parliament.
- The involvement of Russia in the conflict galvanised support for Georgia. The stability of a country that played an important geo-strategic role was at risk, and donors sought to counterbalance the power of the regional hegemon. Therefore the largest donor, the US, channelled its aid through the Department of Defense.

The breakdown of the aid package to Georgia reveals the political, economic and security focus of the response. As one interviewee expressed: "Donors ran away from the humanitarian and social approach to budgetary support, infrastructures, investments and supporting the banking system." This clear political and economic emphasis is shown by the fact that the banking sector received the most support, with US$853 million, followed by transport with US$682 million, budget and macro-financial support with US$586 million, and energy with US$381 million. In comparison, US$350 million was allocated for IDPs (European Commission External Relations 2008). Of the US$4.536 billion donated, approximately US$1 billion is allocated for humanitarian assistance.

Underlying interests aside, donors generally did well funding the initial emergency response, especially food and shelter. However, many sectors such as health, water and sanitation were underfunded, and needs remain related to restoring the livelihoods of IDPs and the recovery phase. This can be seen in the budgetary support provided, as well as in the funding of the Flash Appeal. Several interviewees mentioned the slower response to the revised Flash Appeal. Released in October, 64 percent of the required amount had been committed as of May 2009. After the generous response at the donor conference, humanitarian agencies probably expected more, yet the average coverage of appeals between 1999 and 2006 has been 59.9 percent, according to OCHA Financial Tracking Service (2009).

Generous, yet disproportionate funding

The real problem lies in disproportionate funding. "Donors have put too many eggs in the same basket," explained an interviewee. For example, 99 percent of the food requirements have been met, compared to only 14 percent for health requirements, 17 percent for education and 25 percent for economic recovery and infrastructure. As one interviewee said: "There is a missing link from relief to rehabilitation... There are no funding tools for rehabilitation... and recovery work has not started." Many interviewees stressed concern that if longer-term approaches are not adopted soon, IDP housing areas could become slums. A Transparency International study on the situation of IDPs reported that "people often cited lack of employment, income and simply 'things to do' as major problems," (2009, p5). Donors need to do more to support a more holistic, longer-term approach.

A major failure of the response has been the lack of safe access to South Ossetia. Donors should have dedicated equal effort to diplomatic efforts to achieve access, as they did to providing monetary support. The ICRC was the only humanitarian organisation able to access the buffer zone until November, and the only body able to access the population in need in South Ossetia (via North Ossetia in Russia). "Not having attained safe humanitarian access is a failure of the whole international community," said one interviewee.

The quality of the response could have been improved if donors had made a greater effort to cultivate good working relationships with the government. Coordination was challenging between humanitarian agencies and the government – and even within the government due to the high turnover. Each ministry was eager to prove its worth to the president, even acting in areas that were not its responsibility. Many interviewees cited the unilateral decision of the Ministry of the Interior to privatise the collective centres for the IDPs from the 1992 Abkhazia war, and to build houses for the IDPs from the August war. Neither humanitarian organisations addressing IDP shelter or the Ministry of Rehabilitation and Shelter, which oversees IDP issues, knew about this. Furthermore, the government officials assigned to each sector were constantly changing, leaving agencies never sure how long individuals would be in situ and if it was worth the effort to build their capacity.

As a result of this poor coordination, the government ended up acting alone. Much to the surprise of the humanitarian agencies, the state began building housing for the IDPs. Some interviewees complained that the government-built accommodations did not meet international standards. Had donors tried to build a better relationship with the government and improve coordination, humanitarian agencies could have provided expert advice to guide their interventions. The government should be commended for fulfilling its "primary duty and responsibility to provide protection and humanitarian assistance to internally displaced persons" (UN Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights (UNHCHR 1998), but while the displaced now have housing, they still need livelihoods and ways to generate income.

An unexpected positive outcome of the crisis has been the increased attention towards almost a quarter of a million IDPs from the 1992 Abkhazia war. The vast majority continue living in deplorable conditions in former hotels or Soviet administrative buildings. The government is currently privatising their housing, or providing alternative accommodation. Many humanitarian organisations are collaborating on this front, repairing the buildings and preparing them for the winter.

"This is more than a humanitarian crisis. During one month, Georgia was the capital of the world for diplomacy."

© Vasily Fedosenko / Reuters / Corbis

Safe access and co-ordination

According to our field survey, donors performed well in several areas, but need to devote greater attention in other directions to meet the commitments of the *Principles and Good Practice of Humanitarian Donorship.*

Agencies largely agreed that donor support was consistent throughout their involvement in the crisis. Funding was provided in a timely manner (Principle five), with flexibility in the use of funds. Both USAID and Norway were reported to be especially flexible in modifying funds to changing needs. Donors were also highly rated for their support for the implementation of relevant laws and guidelines related to IDPs (Principle four), as well as for their support for coordination mechanisms (Principle ten). Many praised the effective use of the cluster system in Georgia and donor participation in coordination and information-sharing meetings. Most donors were considered to be impartial, although the US scored lower in this area.

Agencies considered that donors could better their performance in several areas:

- Donors should improve their support for agencies' organisational capacity in areas such as preparedness, response and contingency planning (Principle 18). The outbreak of the conflict in August shows that organisations must be prepared for emergency situations – many humanitarian organisations reported that their donors do not contribute to this.[3]
- Donors need to build local capacity and early recovery. This can also be seen in disproportionate donor support of the revised Flash Appeal – sectors such as agriculture, economic recovery and infrastructure, education and health were significantly underfunded, while food received 99 percent of the requirement.
- Donors need to respect Principle two, which addresses the independence expected of them. The survey suggests that funding for Georgia was influenced by political, economic and security interests.
- Donors should consider the appropriateness of in-kind aid. The US military reportedly flew in bottled water, even though water from the Caucasus Mountains flows throughout the country. The same party brought in ready-to-eat military rations, which the Georgians refused to eat. Poland, a new donor, wanted to fly in cows because they are culturally important to the Polish – the implementing agency rejected them. Estonia and Korea, also new donors, wanted to send clothes to South Ossetia, but the local government rejected them as they would damage the national market. Germany wanted to send 80 beds left over from the German military in a flight that would have cost more than $100,000. Georgia, with its established pharmacy network, also had no need for the massive donation of medicines several donors hoped to provide.
- Donors should think carefully about using the military to distribute humanitarian aid. While the humanitarian community welcomed the logistical support from US Disaster Assistance Response Teams (DARTs), channelling humanitarian aid through the military compromises the independence, impartiality and neutrality of humanitarian action. Perception of the US' independence as a donor suffered in the survey.

The *GHD Principles* in practice

As the largest donor in Georgia, the performance of the US is central to the overall quality of the response.

The political, economic and security interests at play may explain the involvement of so many US agencies: OFDA, United States Agency for International Development (USAID), DART, Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (BPRM), the Department of Defense, the State Department and Food for Peace all supported the response. Perceptions are different for each agency.

OFDA, DART and BPRM were deemed the best US donor agencies, for their independence, neutrality, impartiality and effectiveness in addressing the needs of the population and coordination efforts. USAID and the military were not rated highly in these areas. Implementing agencies criticised them for not sharing sufficient information with other stakeholders, especially the military, which conducted its own needs assessment. However, humanitarian organisations considered that all US donor agencies were quick to respond and flexible as a whole.

The EC is the second largest donor in Georgia. Interviewees rated the EC higher than the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) average in most areas. Implementing agencies found the EC to be neutral and impartial, making informed decisions based on needs assessments and supporting coordination efforts. There are four areas where the EC scores lower than average: supporting linking-relief-rehabilitation-and-development (LRRD), flexibility of funding, timeliness of response and longer-term funding arrangements. Reflecting criticism of the limited "conditionalities" in the EC's budget support to the Georgian government, it was felt that the EC should demand greater accountability (Transparency International 2009).

Many new donors helped finance the response to the conflict, especially neighbouring countries and states with historical ties to Georgia. Humanitarian organisations felt Turkey acted with neutrality, channelling funds from the Turkish Red Crescent to the Georgian Red Cross. Other Eastern European countries, however, did not perform as well. One interviewee explained that "either they did not have the experience or lacked capacity". It was felt that more experienced donors should work with new donors to help them provide aid respecting the spirit of the GHD.

Interviewees felt donors should be commended for mobilising funding rapidly, and implementing agencies for assisting accessible populations quickly. The affected population received assistance in a matter of days. This swift response, however, was felt to be due to the political, economic and security interests at play. As one interviewee expressed: "This is more than a humanitarian crisis. During one month, Georgia was the capital of the world for diplomacy." Donors need to be accountable to their commitment in the GHD to provide independent humanitarian assistance.

Lessons learnt and recommendations for the future

1. Donors need to support longer-term solutions and link the emergency response to early recovery and rehabilitation by focusing more on needs assessments. If donors continue to provide disproportionate funding, the conditions of the affected population could deteriorate.

2. Donors must pay greater attention to the expertise of their field staff. Too much in-kind aid was provided in Georgia, which was completely inappropriate for a middle-income society. Many items that were brought in were already available in the country, and the money spent would have been better used to support underfunded sectors. Donor staff members who are working in Georgia were familiar with the realities of the country, and donor headquarters would have done well to trust their advice.

3. Donors should focus on using their leverage to gain safe access to South Ossetia. Donors have a responsibility to ensure that international humanitarian law is respected, and that the parties to the conflict ensure safe access to those in South Ossetia in need of assistance and protection (UNHCR, no date) Donors should increase their diplomatic efforts to guarantee this safe access. As one interviewee said, "it is crucial to preserve humanitarian space in order to respond only on the basis of need".

4. Donors need to invest in conflict prevention and preparedness. Considering the history of the autonomous regions, the war in August could have been predicted – and it may not be the last. Donors need to do more to support emergency preparedness, especially among local governments and communities.

5. There is a great need for accountability and learning. Governments need to be accountable for all the money they receive through budget support, just as donors need to conduct evaluations of the aid they provide. A great deal of funding has been committed in Georgia, and evaluations are important to ensure it is used in the most effective and efficient way.

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Notes

1 Information based on field interviews with key humanitarian agencies in Georgia from 1 March 2009 to 7 March 2009, and 102 questionnaires on donor performance (including 72 OECD-DAC donors).

The HRI team, composed of Marta Marañón, Marybeth Redheffer and Dolores Sánchez, expresses its gratitude to all those interviewed in Georgia. The opinions expressed here are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of DARA.

2 The joint needs assessment was conducted simultaneously with a revised Flash Appeal. The revised Flash Appeal was extended to 7.5 months to correspond with the first six months of the joint needs assessment. (UN and World Bank 2008).

3 One of the main findings in the HRI 2008 was the need for donors to invest more in preparedness and prevention.

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Haiti at a Glance

Country data

- Population (2007): 10 million
- Under five mortality rate (2006) 80 per 1,000
- Human Development Index Ranking (2008): 148
- Life expectancy (2006): 60 years
- Official Development Assistance (2007): US$701 million

The crisis

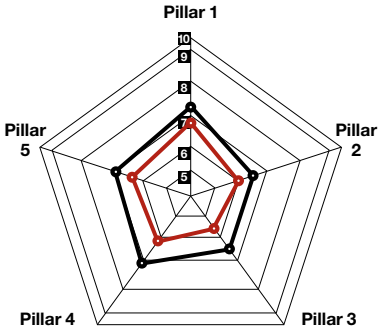
- Four hurricanes hit Haiti in August and September 2008, killing nearly 800 people and affecting more than 800,000 others;
- Storms followed sharp rise in food prices and political upheaval, causing nearly US$1 billion in damage and contracting Haitian economy by 15 percent;
- Hurricanes paralysed Haitian rice production, heightened food insecurity and left thousands homeless, without prospects for reconstruction or rehabilitation;
- Cycle of poverty and environmental degradation worsened the impact, leaving the population vulnerable to future disasters.

The response

- UN Flash Appeal was the third largest of 2008, but only 40 percent covered by donors two months after the storms. It remains only 59 percent covered;
- Donors blamed financial crisis and difficult operating conditions for delays and underfunding;
- Clusters were implemented, but agencies inhibited by poor donor support and resulting limited capacity, with basic needs often going unmet;
- In April 2009, renewed concern for Haiti's humanitarian situation led donors to pledge US$324 million, but funding still falls short of government's requested US$900 million.

Donor performance

- Overall, donors rated below average, with claims of donor disinterest and fatigue;
- Donors rated marginally better in questions around support for Learning and accountability (Pillar 5), and questions related to finding long-term funding for programming;
- Donors rated poorly in questions around responding to needs and commitment to neutral, impartial humanitarian action;
- Donors also criticised for lack of awareness of *GHD Principles* and for poor support for preparedness and the transition from recovery to development.



HRI 2009 scores by pillar

Pillar 1 Responding to needs
Pillar 2 Prevention, risk reduction and recovery
Pillar 3 Working with humanitarian partners
Pillar 4 Protection and International Law
Pillar 5 Learning and accountability

Haiti
All crisis average

Source: World Bank 2009, UNICEF 2008, UNDP 2008, OECD 2007 Sheridan 2009, OCHA FTS 2009, CNSA/MARNDR 2009, UNiFEED 2009, Goldberg 2008, Caritas Internationalis 2008, ICRC 2009.

Haiti

Skimpy Living Swept Away by Storms[1]

Gilles Gasser

Between 26 August and 8 September 2008, hurricanes Fay, Gustav, Hannah and Ike smashed the Artibonite, south and south-east regions of Haiti, killing nearly 800 people and affecting more than 800,000 others (Caritas Internationalis 2008). The disasters hit during a difficult year for the Caribbean country, marked by rising food prices, deadly riots and political instability. Damaging Haiti's already impoverished economy, the storms compounded the pre-existing lack of access to food, water and medical care faced by large segments of the population, intensifying this vulnerable nation's ongoing humanitarian crisis.

The mobilisation of funds by the international community did allow humanitarian agencies to prevent an even greater tragedy. Yet donors adopted a low profile in dealing with the crisis, and their response was slow, partial and not always based on proper evaluation of needs. This raised doubts within the aid community about its effectiveness and ability to manage the transition from relief to recovery and development.

Most worryingly, donors largely failed to respect fundamental *Principles and Good Practice of Humanitarian Donorship (GHD)*, in particular Principles six, seven, nine, 18 and 21, and many demonstrated insufficient knowledge of the GHD initiative itself.

The *GHD Principles* are poorly disseminated among humanitarian agencies at present. However, they could become a critical instrument for improving the humanitarian response in Haiti, a vital step in promoting the country's future stability and development.

A vicious circle

The origins of Haiti's complex political and social crisis date back to its independence. Decades of violence, instability, dictatorship, international sanctions,[2] unmanageable debt[3] and forced privatisation have left Haiti the poorest nation in the Western hemisphere. Though it was a self-sufficient rice producer until the 1980s, International Monetary Fund (IMF)-supported trade liberalisation slashed national production levels and exacerbated rural poverty. This provoked migration to urban slums and emigration to neighbouring countries, and made Haiti dependent on United States rice imports (Georges 2004). According to humanitarian, political and economic indicators, the people of Haiti continue to live in conditions of extreme poverty that deny them access to both basic necessities and the right to live with dignity (OCHA 2008a).

Some progress had been made prior to the hurricanes. For example, since 2007, joint operations against gangs by the UN peacekeeping mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and the Haitian National Police had improved security and reduced kidnapping rates.[4] Inflation dropped to single digits in early 2008 (Fasano 2007), and the US Congress created 7,500 new jobs for Haiti by approving a new Textile Trade Bill the same year (Charles 2009). Yet crime and violence, mainly centred in Cité Soleil and other Port-au-Prince slums, have continued to undermine Haiti's development. Furthermore, the recent world food crisis caused the prices of food staples to spike in the country by 65 percent between August 2007 and March 2008, triggering food insecurity and popular unrest (USAID 2008a).

The Haitian Government does not provide basic public services to its population, and the state lacks the political will and ability to address the country's environmental problems. Poverty and environmental degradation feed on each other, producing a cycle of unsustainable agriculture, deforestation, erosion and landslides. This in turn leads to flooding and increases the population's vulnerability to natural disasters (World Bank 2007). What is more, the 2008 storms hit the country at a particularly difficult time, after a spell of social and political upheaval that culminated in the fall of Prime Minister Jacques-Edouard Alexis' government. The new prime minister, Michele Pierre-Louis, was approved as Hurricane Fay was bearing down upon the island.

Fay, Gustav, Hannah and Ike brought heavy rains that flooded Artibonite, Haiti's rice bowl and the location of its third-largest city, Gonaives. The damage was worsened by the absence of an operational sewage system, while widespread deforestation sparked landslides that inundated streets and buildings with mud. As the storms hit during the harvest season, they decimated the agricultural sector in some regions and left others without seeds or reserves for the coming year; this situation could worsen the nation's grave food insecurity.

Estimates indicate that the hurricanes damaged or destroyed 100,000 houses countrywide, with no prospect for reconstruction or rehabilitation in the near future (ICRC 2009). Those people displaced by the storms – 70 percent from Artibonite – took refuge in temporary shelters, mainly churches and schools. In Gonaives alone, 80 percent of the city's 300,000 residents were directly affected by flooding (Taft-Morales and Sullivan 2008).

In the aftermath, the Haitian Government credited efforts by its Office for Disaster Preparedness with reducing the death toll in Gonaives compared to previous storms. Though it is true that 2008 proved less deadly for the city than 2004 – the year tropical storm Jeanne killed 3,000 residents (NASA 2007) – evidence suggests that preparedness campaigns had more limited effectiveness. In fact, Gonaives lacked any kind of prevention or evacuation plan, and people had to flee to surrounding hills when the heavy rains began. The continued absence of official prevention and preparedness policies in Haiti was highlighted by subsequent disasters, including the deadly collapse of two Port-au-Prince schools in November 2008.

Humanitarian response fails to meet expectations

Perception in the field is that the scope of the humanitarian response failed to reach the expected level. The initial response was hampered by a lack of financial resources and by the challenging conditions on the ground. Delivering relief was complex: roads and bridges were destroyed, first-aid workers were themselves victims of the disaster (some lost family members and property) and the government was caught unawares. Humanitarian agencies already present in the country, mainly for mid- or long-term development programmes, redeployed their teams to the affected areas but acknowledged that they were not adequately prepared. They lacked experienced emergency teams, and pre-positioned response stocks.

MINUSTAH and US Army helicopters and carriers supported humanitarian workers in the relief effort. They protected deliveries, prevented looting and landed food, water, relief supplies and medical personnel in hard-hit and inaccessible communities. Still, there were no amphibian vehicles, and World Food Programme (WFP) helicopters arrived late. One of the first challenges of the Humanitarian Coordinator was to 'demilitarise' the operation and assume leadership of the response.

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) organised cooperation and deployed teams on the ground but was obviously understaffed. Cross-cluster assessments were carried out, but workers in the field deplored the absence of analysis and policy design at coordination level.[5] Furthermore, despite a series of improvements in cluster coordination, targeting failed in certain areas due to a lack of information and restricted access to affected areas. For example, too little attention was paid to the villages around Bay d'Orange, in the south-east of the country, where severe malnutrition combined with poor access to food, drinking water and health care claimed the lives of 16 children and two adults (FEWS NET 2008).

A few early recovery activities, such as the cleaning of streets and clearing of irrigation ditches and drainage systems, began while emergency operations were still running. In the meantime, the Haitian Ministry of Education urged the evacuation of survivors using schools as emergency shelters, allowing the schools to reopen. Even though damage to schools delayed the start of the academic year, the WFP resumed school feeding programmes throughout most of the country (USAID 2008b).

These efforts, however, were insufficient to reverse the deteriorating situation in Haiti, and the country is now facing a critical socio-economic crisis. Causing nearly US$1 billion worth of damage and contracting the national economy by 15 percent (UNiFEED 2009), the storms pushed Haiti's suffering from chronic to acute.

Donor funding falls short

The international community did not provide enough support to Haiti in the wake of the hurricanes. Donations came in slowly, and were not proportional to the scale of the damage. The World Bank Group's president expressed strong support for Haiti in an attempt to raise awareness of the situation and rally donors, but his message did not generate an adequate response.

On 27 October 2008, almost two months after the hurricanes, UN Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator John Holmes announced that only 40 percent of US$107 million had been pledged in response to the UN's relatively modest request for emergency aid to the affected population (Goldberg 2008). The revised appeal of US$121 million remains less than 60 percent covered, with only US$71 million pledged – a level of coverage that leaves some three million people in need of food support (OCHA FTS 2009, CNSA/MARNDR 2009). This percentage matches the response to tropical storm Jeanne in 2004, revealing a lack of progress and a failure to respect *GHD* Principle six by matching donor response with assessed needs.

Not surprisingly, the largest donor was the US, a country with a large Haitian diaspora and a strong desire to prevent crime and drug trafficking in Haiti. To this end, several members of Congress asked the US administration to concede temporary protected status (TPS) to Haitians residing in the US in order to allow them to work legally and send money home to their families. Though the Bush administration temporarily suspended Haitian deportation, the president refused to concede TPS.

The UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) was also a key donor. On 29 September, one month after Hurricane Fay, the fund allocated US$4.3 million to three UN agencies and the International Organisation for Migration (UN News Centre 2008). This went to fund the logistics, coordination and telecommunication needs of the humanitarian community.

France, on the other hand, displayed disappointingly poor involvement. Though continuing to claim a political role in Haitian affairs as the nation's former colonial power, France was far slower to disburse funds or express concrete solidarity. It did, however, send the military ship Francis Garnier from the French Antilles with emergency first-aid supplies. Canada, another key player in Haiti, didn't mobilise important funds for the emergency crisis as expected, but is more involved in longer-term healthcare, community recovery and capacity-building programmes (see Table 1). It also deployed relief supplies to more than 2,000 families in affected communities and urged the Canadian public to support online fundraising appeals.

It is also interesting to note the growing influence of the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID) in Haiti. A relatively new player there, AECID has provided both emergency and long-term support (vaccinations, agricultural inputs, etc.) (DARA 2009). Regional donors such as Brazil, Mexico, Argentina and Venezuela sent in-kind donations.

Although private donations represented only 3.23 percent of the total response, they highlight the generosity of the Haitian diaspora and the success of rallies organised in Canada and the US. Remittance flows to Haiti, which rose from US$108 million in 1995 to US$1.83 billion in 2007, provide an estimated 1.1 million Haitians with crucial financial support (Lee et al 2009 and IADB 2007). In fact, remittances to the country exceed foreign aid, providing up to US$4.5 per person per day. Rising fuel and commodity prices, however, penalised the Haitian diaspora and led to a fall in the average monthly remittance, bringing a 13 percent reduction in February 2009 (Sheridan 2009). The financial crisis also weakened the value of money received by Haitian families. Experts anticipate the decline in remittances to continue.[6]

The underfunding of the UN Flash Appeal weakened the humanitarian response in Haiti. The WFP, for instance, received only US$33 million, or 35 percent, of its funding requirements[7] – too little to support its November 2008 caseload of 600,000 people. In Gonaives, despite cleaning and reconstruction initiatives, the roads remain in a very poor state, the water system is not working and thousands are living in critical conditions in tents or with host families.

Donor fatigue takes its toll

Donors surveyed cited the global financial crisis to explain their inability to raise more funds. There is also a confessed donor fatigue. Some believe that a very significant amount of money has already been invested in Haiti, but that their programmes are still not moving as quickly as they would like. This statement could lead us to the conclusion that the lack of results on high-impact and high-visibility projects has negatively influenced donor response to emergency and recovery programmes.

OCHA's FTS currently records a total of US$118 million in humanitarian aid spent for hurricane response in 2008. Of this amount, however, only US$69 million (58 percent) was pledged in response to the UN appeal, which means that many donors followed their own strategy. Out of line with *GHD* Principle ten, this behaviour caused the humanitarian coordinator and OCHA difficulties in collecting information on donors' bilateral actions and in coordinating their responses within a global framework.

Table 1: Main donors' response to the UN Flash Appeal and bilateral aid

Donor	% inside and outside the appeal	Pledges flash appeal	Outside the appeal
United States	30.38%	10,985,208	25,055,775
UN Central Emergency Response Fund	8.58%	10,183,168	
United Kingdom	9.96%	7,152,260	4,663,166
Sweden	7.07%	6,985,223	1,406,538
European Commission	6.65%	4,943,938	2,950,850
Germany	6.65%	5,291,005	2,597,854
Canada	4.30%	3,867,523	1,237,612
Netherlands	3.79%	4,054,054	439,239
Spain	3.75%	3,570,407	874,745
France	3.59%	3,234,990	1,027,722
Private donations from individuals and organisations	3.23%	2,095,395	1,740,296

Source: OCHA Financial Tracking Service (FTS)

Problems of donor dissatisfaction, however, changed drastically after the March 2009 visits to Haiti of UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, former US President Bill Clinton, and Security Council ambassadors. The April donors' conference followed, confirming their commitment to support the Haitian Government in its plan to alleviate poverty and promote economic growth. US Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton underlined that Haiti was at a "critical juncture" and donors pledged US$324 million (Sheridan 2009). However, it remains to be seen whether they will honour this pledge, given that their 2004 agreement to give US$1 billion went largely unfulfilled.

The GHD in Haiti: work remains

Several elements must be considered when analysing donors' support with regard to the *GHD Principles*. First, Haiti is the location of a UN integrated mission and a long-term crisis in which humanitarian aid is often subordinated to the priorities of powerful regional states. Issues such as politics, reconstruction and good governance have often come before the *GHD Principles* of saving lives and alleviating suffering.

Furthermore, the Haitian Government is insistent on moving donors out of the emergency phase and mobilising resources for reconstruction and infrastructure (GoH 2009 and World Bank 2009). Despite disagreement expressed by humanitarian agencies, including the Humanitarian Coordinator, many donors are following this strategy and neglecting the remaining emergency and recovery needs. There is a lack of leadership, comprehension and financial support from donors when it comes to recovery projects and linking relief, rehabilation and development (LRRD) phases as mentioned in Principle nine of the *GHD*. As one interview respondent from a UN agency summarised: "In Haiti we miss donors with humanitarian fibre." This observation applies well to those implementing agencies most committed to development projects, which seemed unprepared and inexperienced in the emergency operation. At best, donor representatives on the ground had a confused understanding of the *GHD* and therefore did not integrate it consciously as guidance in their operations.

This series of factors created breaches of the *GHD Principles* by donors and led to poor practice. As explained previously, donors did not respond in a timely manner – a basic and essential responsibility. They also failed adequately to cover identified needs. The gaps in the response not only harmed affected communities but further jeopardised the reestablishment of stability in Haiti. As World Bank President Robert Zoellick explained in the wake of the storms: "We have to deal with the immediate needs to deal with the social instabilities. We need to work with donors to… make sure we ameliorate the terrible difficulties people have suffered" (Charles 2009). Yet donors continued to drag their feet.

For example, as happens too often in humanitarian crises, there was insufficient support for host families that welcomed internally displaced persons (IDPs). In the city of Gonaives, households living in precarious situations since the 2004 flooding had to support relatives and neighbours. Consequently, poverty and conflict in these communities increased. Many organisations interviewed in the field believed there would be a need for a second and even a third wave of donor funding.

There is also a general understanding that donors gave priority to solving the humanitarian situation in Gonaives and Jacmel, when the hurricanes hit nine out of ten provinces. Though this behaviour was primarily motivated by the scale of needs, it also had to do with media coverage and the opportunity for publicity in those areas. Agencies claimed they had difficulty drawing donor attention to other, less publicised, critical situations in remote and southern areas.

Donor support needed

The disaster preparedness and prevention policies of donors were also flawed. Donor engagement in strengthening local capacity was insufficient, leaving the most vulnerable individuals unprepared to cope with future natural disasters. Significant financial and technical assistance from donors is needed to build competency and capacity, and the Haitian Government has yet to establish budgetary priorities, focal points, or decentralised laws. Meanwhile, local civil society initiatives lack donor support which, according to local agencies and international NGOs in the field, hampers the implementation of a necessary culture of risk reduction. This absence of local NGO recognition also limits the legitimacy and impact of aid from the international community. Finally, it confines the involvement of local agencies, because they do not feel projects reflect their wishes. In short, civil society in Haiti is too often marginalised from the consultation process.

Donors could have done more to harmonise and coordinate their efforts when working with weak, sometimes corrupt, and disorganised local authorities. They did not deal well, for instance, with the mandatory evacuation of shelters – mainly schools in Gonaives. Authorities were resolute on this issue and evacuation started at a very early stage, but no alternative accommodation was offered. NGOs, worried about the prospect of forced expulsions, had no alternative other than to witness evacuation operations, in order to prevent protection problems, and to provide assistance to the displaced in their new temporary shelters. Returnee kits and economic aid to rent houses were distributed to the returnees, but these were clearly insufficient (OCHA 2008c). Weeks after the evacuation, spontaneous small tent villages started to spring up, in which people lived in deplorable conditions. Agencies witnessing the forced evacuation expressed frustration that they had to deal with this 'dirty job' without donors' backup or reaction, and regretted donors' silence on human rights and protection issues (MSF 2008).

Lessons learnt and recommendations for the future

1 According to one NGO's Country Director, human rights is "a word that seems to make donors afraid in Haiti". Yet, in a country where diplomatic immunity prevails, donors could be more proactive and decisive on protection and human rights issues.

2 The lack of involvement of local agencies in Haiti has created frustration and dissatisfaction. The affected population perceives humanitarian aid as a basic and limited tool that does not respond to their needs or expectations. Agencies in the field pressed for a greater integration of Principle seven, as well as for the creation of mechanisms to more directly engage local organisations in the design and programming of projects. There is also a need for greater public scrutiny and dissemination of information about the implementation and progress of humanitarian assistance projects.

3 A more sophisticated humanitarian response is required – one that includes firmer financial support from donors, greater consideration for local communities, and support for recovery activities. Donors should also proactively encourage evaluations in order to identify and respond to existing emergency needs. This will smooth a timely transition to development programmes.

4 A more significant effort is expected from donors to reinforce the role of the humanitarian coordinator and of OCHA, which implies complete sharing of information on their commitments, spending and activities. Donors should reduce their tendency to develop individual strategies influenced by political priorities that jeopardise the humanitarian agenda. Issues of disaster preparedness and risk reduction, including local capacity-building and strategy, also need to be addressed urgently, before the next cyclone season.

5 The Haitian Government has asked that funds be directly channelled to the Haitian public sector, rather than exclusively to international NGOs – and the new US administration has complied by providing, for the first time, US$20 million of direct budgetary support (Schaaf 2009). Still, it will be a challenge for donors to reverse the practice of channelling assistance through NGOs, to benchmark their funding by clarifying structural performance and public financial management, and to avoid inept or corrupt official institutions. The largest challenge for the Haitian Government will be to prove its capacity to manage donated funds, as well as to impose law and security while fighting against corruption and clientelism.

6 The mobilisation of funds by the international community in response to the hurricane crisis in Haiti allowed humanitarian actors to prevent a greater tragedy there. Yet donors adopted a low profile in dealing with the crisis, and their responses have been slow and partial. Most worryingly, donors largely failed to respect fundamental Principles 6, 7, 9, 18 and 21, and many demonstrated insufficient knowledge of the GHD initiative itself.

In cases such as Haiti, where a fluctuation between emergency and chronic humanitarian operations exists, humanitarian actors are expected to do more than respond to the population's immediate needs. So far, despite long-term donor presence, the international community has fallen short in designing strategies that address both challenges.

"In Haiti we miss donors with humanitarian fibre."

© ICRC / Marko Kokie

7 Poverty reduction efforts require the reinforcement of state institutions, the development of a secure environment, and greater dialogue among stakeholders. In their latest meetings, President Preval's government, donors, and international institutions have seemed willing to learn from past mistakes and reinforce dialogue to ensure continuous progress. Despite the uncertain global climate of recent months, President Obama's interest in Haiti and Bill Clinton's recent involvement there[8] could bring renewed hope and optimism to the hemisphere's poorest nation.

About the Author

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Gilles Gasser is a journalist and independent consultant specialising in humanitarian aid issues and communication. He was Head of Mission of the NGO Équilibre in Bosnia and Herzegovina from 1993 to 1996 and later worked as an expert from 1997 to 2000 in the humanitarian offices of the European Commission in Sarajevo, Tirana and Pristina. He has undertaken studies for the Tsunami Evaluation Coalition, 'Conversations on Democracy' for the Club of Madrid, and various projects with the think-tank FRIDE. As a journalist, he has travelled to Belfast, New Caledonia, Israel, the Palestinian Territories, El Salvador, Guatemala, Brazil and the Dominican Republic.

Notes

1 Information based on field interviews with key humanitarian agencies in Haiti from 8 February 2009 to 18 February 2009, and 180 questionnaires on donor performance (including 148 OECD-DAC donors).

The HRI team, composed of Gilles Gasser, Philippe Benassi and Soledad Posada, expresses its gratitude to all those interviewed in Haiti. The opinions expressed here are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of DARA.

2 In July 2006 Haiti was readmitted as a full participating member of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) after more than two years of suspension (Arthur 2006). Argentina, Brazil and Chile offered a joint development strategy and Venezuela added Haiti to its PetroCaribe marketing programme (ABN 2007). The Obama administration announced its commitment to work with Haiti's new government.

3 Haiti's external debt is US$1.4 billion, nearly half of which was accumulated under the Duvalier dictatorship. Haiti has recently been added to the highly indebted poor country initiative (HIPC), but so far the country has not qualified for debt cancellation. Over a third of Haiti's debt, moreover, is owed to the Inter-American Development Bank, which is not involved in debt relief (Schuller 2006).

4 In February 2009, "only" seven people were kidnapped. A year earlier the number of such kidnappings averaged one a day (IRBC 2008).

5 In the health sector there were no clear guidelines on medicine distribution, or to what extent it had to remain free of charge.

6 According to Dr. Manuel Orozco (2009), of the Inter-American Dialogue, Georgetown University, annual remittances from the EU and the US to developing countries will decline by US$32 billion.

7 As of 30 September 2008, the appeal was only four percent funded with variation between clusters: 0 percent of the requirements for food, agriculture and education, 23 percent for shelter, 20 percent for health and 15 percent for water and sanitation (OCHA 2008b).

8 UN Secretary Ban Ki-moon named him Special UN Envoy to Haiti.

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Crisis Reports

Myanmar

Myanmar at a Glance

Country data

- Population (2007): 49 million
- Under five mortality rate (2006): 104 per 1,000
- Human Devopment Index Ranking (2008): 135
- Life expectancy (2006): 61 years
- Official Development Assistance (2007): US$197 million

The crisis

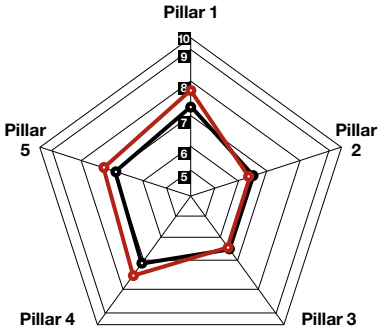
- Cyclone Nargis hit southern Irrawaddy Delta and triggered a storm surge of 3.5m that flooded low-lying delta;
- Approximately 140,000 people left dead or missing;
- Myanmar Government initially refused international humanitarian assistance for almost a month;
- Sensitive political relations between Myanmar and several western governments was a factor, but concerted diplomacy from ASEAN countries helped ease tensions with Myanmar authorities and opened the door for international assistance.

The response

- US$447 million called for in UN Flash Appeal; donors covered 67 percent;
- Myanmar Flash Appeal by far the largest of 2008, more than double the size of second-largest Flash Appeal;
- Donors nearly covered needs for coordination and food – yet significant gaps remain for agriculture, safety of staff and operations, and economic recovery and infrastructure;
- Delays in international aid, together with minimal national experience managing large-scale disasters, slowed response and interfered with needs-based geographic coverage.

Donor performance

- Overall, donor response in Myanmar rated highest in Responding to needs (Pillar 1) and Protection and International Law (Pillar 4), and lowest in Working with humanitarian partners (Pillar 3);
- Donors rated highly in survey questions related to providing impartial assistance, but poorly in supporting governments and local authorities' capacity to coordinate with humanitarian actors;
- Donors criticised for not making greater efforts to support national capacity and provide funding for recovery.



HRI 2009 scores by pillar

Pillar 1 Responding to needs
Pillar 2 Prevention, risk reduction and recovery
Pillar 3 Working with humanitarian partners
Pillar 4 Protection and International Law
Pillar 5 Learning and accountability

Myanmar
All crisis average

Sources: World Bank 2009, UNICEF 2008, UNDP 2008, OECD 2007 World Meteorological Organisation 2008; Turner et al 2008; OCHA 2009.

Myanmar
Humanitarian Needs Continue After Humanitarian Funding Ends[1]

John Cosgrave

The response to Cyclone Nargis demonstrated that, despite all the progress the humanitarian aid system has made since the end of the Cold War, disaster survivors may still be denied assistance for political reasons.

In Myanmar, the affected population got little assistance from their own government in the acute emergency phase. The government also restricted access of international aid workers and prohibited the use of foreign military assets, provoking condemnation from some donor governments.

Now in the recovery phase, survivors are again being denied effective assistance, this time by the international donor community. This is because many donors have taken the position that humanitarian funding is only for the immediate aftermath of a disaster, rather than for reconstruction efforts – in a distinct departure from *GHD Principles*.

Unprepared for the cyclone

Cyclone Nargis swept across the southern end of the Irrawaddy Delta on the night of 2 May and the morning of 3 May 2008. It triggered a storm surge of at least 3.5m, inundating the low-lying delta and leaving nearly 140,000 dead and missing. The population was unprepared for Nargis, the first tropical cyclone to make landfall in Myanmar in 40 years (World Meteorological Organisation 2008).

Myanmar, classified as a least developed country (LDC) by the UN, is something of an international pariah. It is of little strategic interest to the West. Regionally, its main strategic importance stems from competition between India and China, both of which border Myanmar.

The military has ruled Myanmar since 1962, when the government of what was then Burma was toppled in a coup. The National League for Democracy (NLD) won parliamentary elections in 1990, but the junta refused to allow the new parliament to convene and arrested many activists, including Nobel Peace Prize-winner Aung San Suu Kyi.

Sins that might be overlooked in the Middle East are considered unforgivable in the case of Myanmar. International concern about the suppression of the elections has led to sanctions against the country. Furthermore, Myanmar is not popular among donors, attracting less official development assistance per capita than other LDCs. Annually, it averaged only US$3.15 per capita from 2000 to 2007 – less than one tenth the average per-capita support for all LDCs over this period.

Almost everything about Myanmar is disputed, even the name. The United States and United Kingdom continue to use the colonial name of Burma, arguing that the junta is not a legitimate government and has no authority to change the country's name.[2]

There is a strong international grouping – the Burma lobby – ranged against the junta. This campaigns against any easing of sanctions and discourages tourism or economic links with the country. However, some parts of the lobby have campaigned for increased aid to Myanmar (The Burma Campaign UK 2006) leading to support from MPs (International Development Committee 2007) and an eventual increase in UK assistance (The Burma Campaign UK 2008).

In the immediate aftermath of the cyclone, the Myanmar Government seemed to consider its planned referendum on a new constitution a greater priority than the needs of survivors. It limited the entry of international staff, of humanitarian organisations that did not already have a national presence, and of international humanitarian response staff. Some international aid workers entered as tourists under the 'visa on arrival' procedure,[3] but the government soon stopped issuing such visas as well as halting the issuing of tourist visas from most of its consulates overseas.

The responsibility to protect

Such constraints were met by international condemnation and bluster from Western leaders, tactics which many interviewees considered only stiffened the government's resolve. The French Foreign Minister proposed that the UN Security Council pass a resolution which "authorises the delivery [of aid] and imposes this on the Burmese Government" under the principle of the 'responsibility to protect'. This proposal was immediately rejected by China and Russia, while the UK and others argued that such a stance would alienate Myanmar's generals.

The 'responsibility to protect' principle derives from a 2001 report from the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (Sahnoun et al. 2001). It stemmed from debate as to whether sovereignty could be used by sovereign states to prevent international action within their borders in the case of genocide and similar crimes. However, the principle was conceived as a response to complex emergencies rather than natural ones, although it could be argued that the failure by the government to respond more vigorously after Nargis did constitute grounds for intervention (Evans 2008).

The major obstacles to aid were effectively only loosened after the formation of the Tripartite Core Group (TCG), which provided a way for the government to yield to international pressure without losing face. The TCG was formed after discussions between the government, the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the UN. It is a unique body which sets a possible precedent for other situations where there are difficult relations between a national government and the donor community. Having now adopted a humanitarian role, ASEAN can be expected to play an increased part in future humanitarian response in the region.

The TCG started by conducting a post-Nargis joint needs assessment (PONJA). This was an example of good practice, with a thorough and methodologically-sound needs assessment. The PONJA delivered its preliminary findings in late June (Tripartite Core Group 2008a), followed by a full report on 21 July (Tripartite Core Group 2008b). The joint needs assessment was followed by the post-Nargis periodic review in late 2008, which examined progress against the needs identified in the assessment (Tripartite Core Group 2008c). This review of progress against earlier assessed needs is a further example of good practice that could be used in other humanitarian responses.

No longer in the media spotlight

The barriers erected before the TCG's formation significantly limited the response. Myanmar was no longer in the media spotlight and without the 'oxygen of publicity' fewer agencies established programmes than might otherwise have done so.[4]

Such barriers were a particular problem because there was little national experience of managing large-scale disasters. It was not possible to send experienced international humanitarian staff into the delta area in the initial critical period and agencies' national staff resources were limited. While agencies on the ground did a good job within the very real constraints on logistics, materials and access, "assistance was not as timely as it should have been" and "geographic coverage was not always consistent with needs," (Turner et al. 2008 p1).

The effects of delay on mortality rates

No reliable information is available on the impact of delayed or limited assistance on mortality rates but conclusions can be drawn from the ratio of killed-to-injured. This can vary greatly for storm surges and similar flooding events, and is influenced by both the severity of the event and the speed of assistance.

The severity of the event can lead to lower ratios of injuries per fatality. In the case of the tsunami, the TEC Synthesis report cites (inverted) ratios of dead to injured of 1:0.395 for Aceh, 1:654 for Sri Lanka and 1:3.571 for Tamil Nadu, showing how the ratio of injuries to deaths increased as the run-up height reduced (Telford et al. 2006, p36).

Injured people who are not evacuated quickly may die of their injuries, therefore inadequate assistance is likely to lead to a low ratio of injuries per death. The cyclone destroyed many boats, and fallen trees made navigation of small creeks difficult, severely hampering survivors' ability to rescue and support each other. The destruction of local health facilities also meant there were no obvious places to take the injured.

Helicopters are invaluable in such circumstances. However, while the government made some available, it did not permit the operation of foreign military helicopters, despite their ready availability on ships in the Bay of Bengal.

The ratio of dead to injured for Cyclone Nargis was 1:0.140 (Tripartite Core Group 2008b, p1), similar to Aceh in the tsunami. The storm surge height for Nargis was only 3.5m whereas the tsunami run-up was over 30m in parts of Sumatra (USGS 2005). While the tsunami and the storm surge are not directly comparable, the low ratio of injured survivors for Cyclone Nargis suggests that many of the injured may have died through a lack of timely assistance or evacuation. There were no serious epidemics after the cyclone, but past experience shows that such outbreaks are rare after sudden-impact natural disasters (Toole and Waldman 1997).

Although we do know there were deaths after Cyclone Nargis (Turner et al. 2008), presumably of the injured, the exact number is unknown.

It must be concluded that the constraints on the response did cost lives, but a mortality study[5] will probably be needed to determine just how many.

Funding of the response

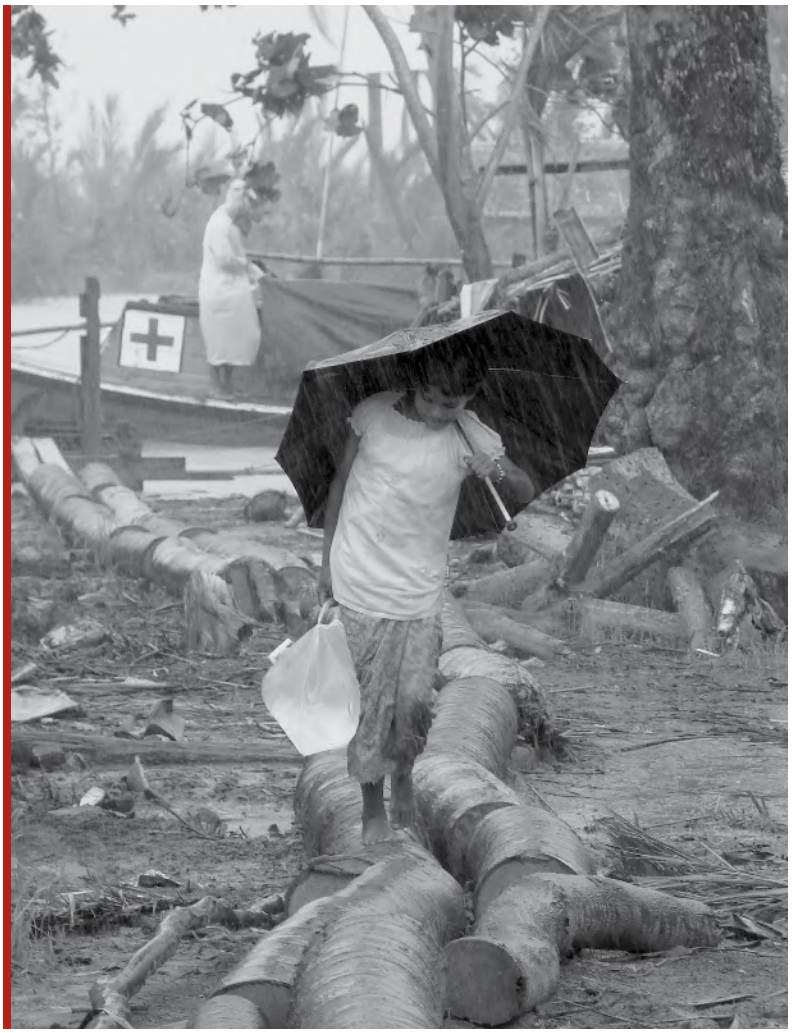
Interviewees generally rated donor performance quite highly. However, some noted that the access difficulties during the initial response caused a time lag, so that there was no real pressure on donors to act quickly.

The limited scale of the response also meant agencies' demands for resources were constrained by what they could do in the initial period. Even so, the UN Flash Appeal was only 67 percent funded. This is less than that for the 2004 Tsunami (88 percent) but is comparable to the 2005 Pakistan earthquake appeal (66 percent) (OCHA 2009).

However, there were very large amounts of private donations for the tsunami response and several tsunami-affected countries had very significant internal resources (e.g. Thailand, India and Indonesia). In the case of the 2005 earthquake, Pakistan deployed a significant internal capacity, and made extensive use of World Bank and other international finance for its response.

As noted below in the discussion on the application of the *GHD Principles*, the main problem with donor performance in Nargis has been the lack of funding for recovery. At the time of the fieldwork only two donors, the UK and Australia, had committed to significant funding for recovery. The lack of recovery funding means that many of those affected by the cyclone are living in far worse conditions than before the cyclone, and are hampered by both inadequate shelter and large debts.

"Now in a recovery phase, survivors are again being denied effective assistance, this time by the international donor community."



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Recovery is part of humanitarian action

Nargis highlighted the contrast between the GHD definitions of humanitarian action and the distinctions made by aid administrations between acute humanitarian response and other types of assistance.

The *GHD Principles* (Good Humanitarian Donorship 2003) list the objectives and definition of humanitarian action. Principle three's reference to facilitating the return to 'normal lives and livelihoods' suggests that humanitarian action includes what is often called 'recovery' – helping affected communities to return to their former level of livelihood.

In sudden-onset disasters, recovery is usually the whole issue. The acute phase lasts a relatively short time. After the disaster, the critical need is often to re-establish livelihoods so populations can maintain their dignity, without being reliant on continuing relief. This was clearly understood by the Chinese Government after the Sichuan earthquake, with its pledge to provide approximately US$150 billion of funding for recovery.

However, in the case of Nargis, many donors took the position that humanitarian funding is only for the immediate aftermath of the disaster. This has led to a situation where the majority of those who lost their houses in the cyclone are still without adequate shelter, and without the restoration of their livelihoods.

Shelter and livelihoods

Shelter was an area of poor performance, contrasting hugely with performance after the tsunami and the Pakistan and Sichuan earthquakes.[6] The first periodic review found that only 10 percent of communities had adequate shelter comparable to their situation prior to the cyclone. In five percent of the surveyed communities, more than half of the population were still living under plastic, and at least five percent of the population were still living under plastic in 45 percent of the communities surveyed at the time of the first post-Nargis periodic review in late 2008 (Tripartite Core Group 2008c, pp1,36).

In the area of livelihoods, another telling contrast with the tsunami response is that three-quarters of households that lost boats in Cyclone Nargis have not been able to replace them, either from their own means or from donations (Tripartite Core Group 2008c, p1). In the tsunami response, more boats were 'replaced' than were originally lost (Balachandran and Sowmya 2006, p10; de Ville de Goyet and Morinière 2006, p109; Marulanda and Rizal 2006, p16).

A further complication for many families is the extent to which credit is used for agriculture in Myanmar. Farmers borrow to plant, and repay after harvest. However, Nargis destroyed the crops in the fields, leaving many unable to pay their debts. The debt burden was further increased as people borrowed to rebuild their houses in the face of limited international assistance. All this now leaves many families with a crushing debt burden (Oxfam 2009).

Good – and bad – practice

Interviewees cited a number of good practices, including the provision of funding for cluster coordination and funding for an accountability initiative.

Putting personnel on the ground was seen as good practice by interviewees, who argued that donor personnel in Yangon were far better placed to understand the complexities and realities of working in Myanmar.

The UK's Department for International Development (DFID) was the highest-rated donor of those surveyed in Myanmar. A reason often given for this was what one interviewee referred to as its "committed and well-informed staff on the ground". The strong local team in Yangon was also cited as the reason for the positive ratings for AusAID, the second highest-rated donor.

However, presence on the ground is not enough to guarantee a good rating. The second lowest-rated donor, the European Commission Humanitarian Office (ECHO), has a team on the ground but was often rated as the worst donor. While ECHO was said to be great in terms of funding, it was criticised because of its inflexibility, arrogance and the high numbers of people involved in proposal review. However, these opinions were not universal, with some interviewees citing ECHO as a flexible donor.

As Nargis predominantly involved a national response, our examples of good and bad operational practice largely relate to the government. Good examples include the joint needs assessment and the periodic review, both of which the government took full part in. These processes were a radical departure from the normally secretive style of the state regarding information on its citizens.

However, the government was also responsible for examples of bad practice. Policy inconsistency is always a problem and this was the case in the Nargis response. The destruction of the standing crop and of stored food meant there was a large food deficit in the affected area. The government bans the import of rice (because Myanmar is normally a net exporter of rice). The World Food Programme (WFP) bought rice on the local market until the government, concerned about the market impact, banned WFP from making such purchases – while maintaining the rice import ban. WFP got around the problem in part by providing funds to NGOs to purchase rice on the local market, thereby passing the risk of breaching the spirit of the government's ban onto them.

Lessons learnt and recommendations for the future

The main lessons from Nargis are the need for donors to sustain funding long enough for people to recover their livelihoods and the need for countries at risk to develop their disaster response capacity.

1 The Nargis response highlights the critical importance of investment in, and development of, national capacity in all contexts. Local and national capacities are always the first line of response to emergencies. The response was even more reliant on these capacities in the case of Cyclone Nargis, as assistance during the first three weeks depended on national structures and on the staff of NGOs working within Myanmar. This highlights the need for such staff to have the skills to meet humanitarian needs and for donors to support the development of such capacity.

2 Developing national response capacity can create a more disaster-aware national culture, in turn leading to more investment in risk reduction. Unfortunately, this is not the case in Myanmar, where there is relatively little attention to reducing the risks from future cyclones. Flooding and windstorms are the most rapidly growing type of disaster (Parker et al. 2007) and Myanmar is vulnerable to these.

3 The Tripartite Core Group provides a model for humanitarian response in such complex environments as Nargis. It demonstrates that where a national government is distrustful of the broader international community, the international community should extend every effort to find an 'honest broker' acceptable to the government so that humanitarian action can occur.

4 The tailing-off of funding after the initial phase in Myanmar illustrates the difference between the narrow definition of humanitarian action that donors use for allocation of humanitarian assistance, and the definition contained in the GHD initiative. Donors need to align their humanitarian aid allocation processes behind the GHD initiative, and not just concentrate on the more 'publicity-oxygenated' acute phase. Donors often treat recovery funding like development funding. While decisions about levels of Overseas Development Assistance may be politically motivated, decisions about humanitarian assistance should not be. Unless donors honour Principle two of the *GHD* by providing recovery funding regardless of their political objections to the Myanmar regime, those affected by the cyclone will continue to suffer. Many still live far worse lives than they did before the cyclone, as they huddle in inadequate temporary housing under mountains of debt.

About the Author

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John Cosgrave is an independent consultant with more than 30 years' experience of humanitarian action and development in nearly 60 countries. He has worked as an independent consultant in the humanitarian sector since 1997, having spent most of his previous professional life managing NGO projects and programmes in complex emergencies or in the aftermath of natural disasters. His work for NGOs, governments and the UN is focused on humanitarian action, evaluation, training and operations. He combines broad experience with theoretical concepts to produce a coherent world-view of humanitarian action which he communicates through writing and training. Trained initially as a problem-solver (in civil, military, mechanical and agricultural engineering), and later as a manager and social scientist, he holds two Master's degrees, and is currently studying for his third. His current interest is in social research methods and epistemology.

Notes

1 Information based on field interviews with key humanitarian agencies in Myanmar from 2 May 2009 to 14 May 2009, and 181 questionnaires on donor performance (including 134 OECD-DAC donors).

The HRI team, composed of John Cosgrave, Lucía Fernández, Dolores Sánchez, Nicolai Steen, expresses its gratitude to all those interviewed in Myanmar. The opinions expressed here are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of DARA.

2 The use of the name Myanmar in this report follows the UN usage rather than taking a particular position.

3 It should be noted that several agencies decided against using this procedure to bring in staff, because of concern about the potential long-term consequences for their programme if they were seen to be abusing the immigration law.

4 A few interviewees commented that the government's restrictions led to the avoidance of the chaos that was seen in, for example, the tsunami response, where hundreds of agencies and thousands of personnel descended on the affected areas in the initial stages. However, it should be clear that the limited resources available for the response had a real cost in terms of the speed and extent of assistance delivered.

5 Two examples of such studies are the controversial estimates of the mortality from the Iraq Conflict (Roberts et al. 2004, Burnham 2006 #3085) and the uncontroversial estimate of mortality in the 1970 Bay of Bengal (Sommer and Mosley 1972).

6 While there were performance issues with shelter after the tsunami, the quality of temporary shelter was superior to that provided after Nargis (typically tents after the tsunami as opposed to just a plastic tarpaulin after Nargis), and a higher proportion of the population was in transitional or even permanent shelter at the same stage of the response.

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Crisis Reports

Occupied Palestinian Territories

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Occupied Palestinian Territories at a Glance

Country data

- Population (2006): 2.6 million
- Under five mortality rate (2006): 22 per 1,000
- Human Development Index Ranking (2008): 106
- Life expectancy (2006): 73 years
- Official Development Assistance (2007): $1.875 billion

The crisis

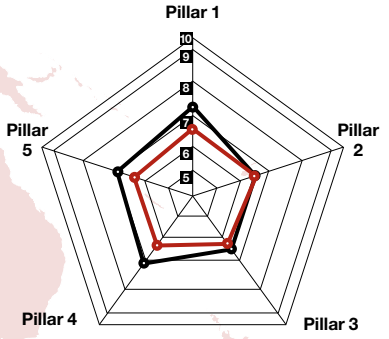
- December 2008 Israeli offensive against Gaza Strip sparked a humanitarian disaster, compounding an already difficult situation for Palestinians;
- Israeli bombardments killed 1,440 people, injured 5,380 and made 100,000 homeless; fighting ruined factories, workshops and agricultural land, destroying livelihoods;
- Crisis marked by human rights violations, politicisation, limitation of access to affected populations and targeting of UN facilities;
- 1.5 million Palestinians remain trapped in Gaza, extremely vulnerable and dependent on heavily restricted aid flows for basic necessities.

The response

- Donor response was rapid and generous: 70 percent of 2009 CAP appeal were pledged by February; donors have already pledged US$530 million of US$615 million for a 2009 Flash Appeal;
- US$74 million were pledged outside CAP and large amounts of in-kind donations also reached Gaza – but fragmentation and rapid cluster-rollout complicated coordination and limited overall effectiveness;
- Israel blocked and impeded aid flows, restricting the amount and variety of aid to reach affected population and creating severe access problems;
- Humanitarian organisations also affected by donor conditions placed on aid funding, particularly on working with Hamas.

Donor performance

- Donors rated below average on commitment to promoting human rights, refugee and IDP laws, and neutrality (HRI Pillar 4);
- Donors scored fairly well on responding to needs, but response quality compromised by political, military and security objectives;
- Explicit aid conditionality and overall lack of preparedness by donors and humanitarian actors worsened impact of crisis.



HRI 2009 scores by pillar

Pillar 1 Responding to needs
Pillar 2 Prevention, risk reduction and recovery
Pillar 3 Working with humanitarian partners
Pillar 4 Protection and International Law
Pillar 5 Learning and accountability

Occupied Palestinian Territories
All crisis average

Sources: UNICEF 2008, UNDP 2008, OECD 2007, ICG 2009, UNICEF 2009, OCHA oPT 2009, Logistics Cluster 2009, DARA 2009, OCHA FTS 2009.

Occupied Palestinian Territories

A Disaster Waiting to Happen[1]

Ricardo Solé-Arqués

In the HRI 2008, the situation in the Palestinian territories was described as a political crisis with humanitarian consequences. This description remains fitting for the current paradigm. If anything, the blockade to the Gaza Strip has been intensified both by Israeli policies and by the ruling Palestinian Authority in Ramallah in the context of the internal conflict. In consequence, there has been a documented depletion of basic supplies in the Strip, and the vulnerability and aid dependency of the population have increased.

The Israeli offensive against the Gaza Strip in December 2008 triggered a humanitarian disaster, involving many deaths and injuries and massive destruction. The crisis caught donors and humanitarian agencies unprepared – despite it having been essentially 'announced in advance'. It worsened an already dire humanitarian situation, and the highly politicised international response jeopardised the flow of essential aid to civilians.

Overall, this crisis revealed an alarming shrinkage of the humanitarian space in the occupied Palestinian Territory (oPT) (Berger 2009).

Conditions worsen

The World Bank (2006, 2008), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) (2006), and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) (oPT 2007) have blamed the humanitarian consequences of the protracted crisis in the oPT on the occupation and the deprivation of civil rights. The situation in the West Bank has not improved significantly, despite support for development and reconstruction programmes and the revitalisation of funding to the Palestinian Authority (PA) after the Annapolis summit in late 2007. GDP is one third lower than in 1999 and low investment is eroding the limited Palestinian productive base, leading to increased aid dependency.

Significant improvements in living conditions have been stalled by the progression of the separation wall, continued blockades, limits on movement, the extension of Israeli settlements and inequitable access to water (World Bank 2009). These factors have led to the *de facto* segregation of the Palestinian population. In a 'de-development' paradigm, even refugees covered by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) in the territories and in the region show declining indicators in health, education and social development – something never seen before (UNRWA 2005).

While the situation in the West Bank is troubling, conditions are worse in Gaza. Although unemployment rose to 20 percent in the West Bank in 2008, it is around 37 percent in Gaza (PCBS 2009). Poverty rates fell from 22 percent to 19 percent in the West Bank, yet in Gaza remain at 52 percent. When remittances and food aid are excluded, this increases to 22 percent in the West Bank and 58 percent in Gaza (PCBS 2007). In all, 80 percent of the population in Gaza receives some aid (OCHA oPT 2009b).

The global rise in food prices has affected Palestinian living conditions. In 2008, the consumer price index rose by 14 percent in Gaza and ten percent in the West Bank (PCBS 2008). Before the December conflict, food insecurity already affected 56 percent of households in Gaza, due mainly to the blockade and the decline in economic activity. (WFP/FAO 2008).

The December conflict

Conditions deteriorated even further when conflict suddenly escalated on 28 December 2008. After the end of the ceasefire between Israel and Hamas, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) initiated a heavy military operation within Gaza, citing the launch of homemade Palestinian mortars over Israeli territories and the breach of the ceasefire.

Three weeks of Israeli aerial bombardments, shelling and ground operations left 1,440 dead (including 431 children and 112 women) and 5,380 injured (including 1,872 children and 800 women) (UNICEF 2009). In all, 14,800 homes were destroyed or damaged and around 100,000 people forced to abandon their homes – at the peak of the offensive, 50,000 took refuge in collective shelters. (OCHA oPT 2009a, WHO 2009). UN facilities were also targeted, and violations of international humanitarian law and Geneva Conventions were documented, including Israel's use of white phosphorus in populated areas (HRW 2009). On the Israeli side, three civilians were killed and 183 injured when 1,200 homemade rockets were fired over Israeli civilian areas. (UNICEF 2009, OCHA oPT 2009a). Eleven Israeli soldiers were killed and 339 wounded.

The conflict destroyed factories, workshops and agricultural land, leaving much of the population without means to earn a living. Already in a dire situation after 18 months of strict blockade, the 1.5 million inhabitants of the Strip were left vulnerable and trapped in a war zone. Meanwhile, Israel's refusal to allow equipment to detect and destroy unexploded ordnance into Gaza left at least seven people dead and 23 injured (ICG 2009).

Donors renew support

Donors had frozen aid to the Palestinian Authority for 18 months after the landslide Hamas electoral victory in early 2006. At the December 2007 donors' conference in Paris, they renewed their support, pledging US$7.7 billion.

Most HRI survey respondents agreed that donors' allocations for humanitarian aid were sufficiently generous. Donors gave US$481 million in 2008, up from US$359 million in 2007. Following the trends of previous years, UNRWA received 69 percent (US$181 million) of the US$262 million requested.

Analysis of the donor response to oPT this year cannot ignore the impressively rapid and generous response to the devastation in Gaza between the end of December 2008 and mid-January 2009. As early as 15 January, the UN released an emergency appeal, the Initial Response Plan and Immediate Funding Needs, which combined new, revised and existing projects from the CAP 2009, launched at the end of 2008. This emergency appeal requested US$117 million, 70 percent of which was granted by 31 January, including US$7 million from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF). OCHA estimates that an additional US$74 million was mobilised during January for actions outside the CAP (OCHA FTS, June 2009). In addition, huge amounts of in-kind donations were made by both informal and formal associations, private individuals and non-traditional donors (logistics cluster 2009). Some of these in-kind donations are included in the FTS, but much of what entered the Strip through the southern city of Rafah is probably not properly accounted for.

Joint needs assessments were launched on 22 January by the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) and a high-level team of UN officials and NGO representatives. This resulted in the Gaza Flash Appeal (2009) for US$615 million, launched on 2 February, to meet immediate humanitarian needs. UNRWA, which is responsible for 65 percent of assistance in Gaza, appealed for US$325 million of this. As of June 2009, more than US$530 million had been granted, with private sources as the primary source of funding for the first time (US$75 million), followed by the US (US$70 million) and ECHO (US$59 million).

Donors pledged US$5 billion at a donor conference in Egypt on 2 March, in the wake of the crisis. However, some of the pledges carried over from previous conferences, and are not explicit or specific commitments. The PA had requested that donors cover the US$1.8 billion deficit, but it is not clear if this occurred. How funds for reconstruction and restoring livelihoods will be distributed is also unclear, although the Gulf countries have said they will create a US$1 billion reconstruction fund through an office in Gaza.

New donors are conspicuous, particularly Kuwait, the Gulf states, Saudi Arabia and private funds. Respondents to the survey find these more flexible than traditional donors, but less strategic. They focus on relief and sometimes have cumbersome visibility requirements for recipient agencies. They tend to behave autonomously from Western-led platforms and have their own agents in the field, often trying to avoid alignments with any one Palestinian side.

Humanitarian aid contributions

Humanitarian funding	CAP requirements		CAP contributions		Total HA contributions
	original	revised	amount	%	
2007	454,691	426,324	277,353	65%	359,845
2008	462,121	452,223	338,039	75%	481,944

Main humanitarian donors 2008

Total contibutions (top five)		CAP 2008 contributions (top five)	
ECHO	87	USA	64
Kuwait	80	ECHO	62
US	64	Private	23
Norway	31	Sweden	19
Private	24	Canada	17

Source: OCHA FTS, June 2009

The politicisation of aid

Despite Israeli restrictions on access, external aid managed to reach the Strip through Rafah and the Israeli crossing points. Warehouses in Gaza filled quickly with food aid and medicines, but the amount of unsolicited donations underlined the need for a common, coordinated system to control the provision of in-kind aid. The Logistics Cluster (2009), for instance, reports that 4,000 tons of medical supplies and more than 100 ambulances entered the Strip through Rafah between 28 December and 1 February, though only 29 of Gaza's 148 ambulances had been destroyed. Similarly, WHO reports that there are currently 35 warehouses of medical supplies and medicines, with no capacity for sorting them and with many drugs close to expiry. Conversely, there is a shortage of some medicines (WHO 2009).

The situation in Gaza highlights the politicisation of aid. Hamas's ability to deliver aid efficiently is critical to its reputation as a provider of good governance, through which it won the recent elections. The PA, meanwhile, seeks to slow aid to Hamas to prevent it gaining a political advantage. In Israel's eyes, the blockade is justified as long as Hamas remains a threat. This leads to disputes over what type of aid can enter Gaza, who delivers it, and who receives it.

Many agencies reported that the amount and variety of aid allowed to reach Gaza's population was unsatisfactory. Israel would allow only a fraction of the required basic supplies into the Strip, specifically banning construction materials and thereby preventing any reconstruction programme. An arbitrary system was established to define, on a variable basis, what could be allowed into Gaza (Logistics Cluster 2009).

"The crisis caught donors and humanitarian agencies unprepared – despite it having been essentially 'announced in advance'."

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As coordination with Hamas was unavoidable, independent distribution of aid also became an issue for international agencies. Conflicts erupted in the short-term between UNRWA and Hamas officials, but they have since been resolved. Referring to efforts to sideline Hamas through the delivery of aid, a Hamas leader commented: "Whatever they did not get from Hamas by siege and war, they won't get now with a sack of flour," (ICG 2009).

On top of basic supplies, cash is also in short supply. It is estimated that at least NIS 400 million each month is needed to restart economic activity (WFP/FAO 2009). Hamas has only been able to pay 20 percent of the salaries of its civil servants, though the PA initially managed to compensate for damaged houses and deaths by diverting funds away from wages. UNRWA is not able to extend its usual hardship caseload, reconstruction is on hold, and a general disappointment has taken hold among citizens of Gaza. This may cause mounting pressures on Hamas, potentially leading to new conflict. As the ICG (2009) reports, "The status quo is unsustainable and Gaza, once again, is an explosion waiting to happen."

As of May 2009, restrictions on importing building materials and cash into Gaza remain in force. (Logistics Cluster 2009). This is preventing significant rehabilitation and is jeopardising the disbursement of pledged funds.

The barriers to effective aid delivery

The humanitarian coordinator (HC) in the oPT operates through the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process (UNSCO), a UN body that takes part in the political process. This probably hampers the independence of the HC. Nevertheless, OCHA is strongly rooted in the territories and has an acknowledged capacity for monitoring and information. Its advocacy role has been instrumental in raising awareness of the humanitarian implications of political developments in the oPT. Since it is seen as a key and independent actor, OCHA is generously funded by donors.

The coordination mechanisms in oPT are many and varied (DARA 2009). The framework stemming from the Oslo Accords remains in place, and was revitalised somewhat after the 2007 donor conference in Paris. The PA in Ramallah organises donor coordination through the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan, and sectoral coordination is in place. The cluster approach was initially rolled out during the second half of 2008. The need to swiftly activate clusters during the Israeli strike probably disrupted implementation and complicated their links with existing coordination mechanisms.

Many respondents questioned the roll-out of the clusters during the crisis, noting the difficulties of participation from Gaza given that most clusters were in Jerusalem. The UN Development Programme (UNDP) early recovery network poses specific challenges for NGOs in Hamas-controlled Gaza, as it is a partner of the PA in Ramallah and therefore creates a political determinant for aid programming and implementing in the Strip. In some cases, the clusters benefited the humanitarian community. For example, the logistics cluster provided updated information and facilitated clearance and delivery inside Gaza for many agencies.

In spite of the significant funding received, the UN-coordinated Humanitarian Emergency Response Fund (HERF) had to address gaps in the response. All HERF projects are short (two to five months), cost below US$200,000 (excluding overheads and indirect operational costs), and are meant to focus on specific needs (HERF 2009). Eighty percent of HERF funds are allocated to NGOs, while the rest are chanelled through the UN (OCHA oPT 2009c).

In 2008, most HERF projects addressed the vulnerability of communities in Areas C (the 70 percent of the land surface of the occupied territories under Israeli control according to the Oslo Accords) and weather shocks (heat or cold waves, droughts, or floods). The fund is included in the appeal process, and financed 18 projects in Gaza in response to identified needs during the first eight weeks of 2009 (OCHA 2009). Respondents to the HRI survey praised the flexibility and timeliness of the fund.

In turn, CERF mobilised around US$5 million during 2008 for rapid food assistance (UN CERF 2008). In the first half of 2009 alone, it allocated more than US$9 million as a rapid response to the crisis, covering health, water and sanitation, logistics, shelter and food.

Independence compromised

Since the Oslo Accords in 1998, the donor community has supported Palestinian development and addressed humanitarian needs according to an established set of criteria that prioritises commitment to the peace process, the recognition of Israel, and the adoption of orthodox economic practices (DARA 2009). This conditionality reflects an alignment of policies of the main Western donors and Israel, and led donors to cut off funds to the Islamic Palestinian administration elected in 2006.

The humanitarian community surveyed complained that this political situation has led to ambiguous diplomacy on the part of Western powers. They tend to accept the facts according to Israel regarding the situation on the ground, in spite of the radicalisation of both sides. The main Western donors have not offered a clear position on the factors leading to the humanitarian situation, though they continue paying the costs of the occupation.

Following Israeli strikes on UN compounds, the UN holds Israel responsible for the damage to civilians and UN premises and has requested US$10 million in compensation (United Nations Secretary General 2009). Donors have not made claims for Israeli compensation for damages to their investments. Israeli destruction of power plants, sewage dams, roads and airport facilities in Gaza was repeatedly noted during the survey, and documentary evidence exists. However, donors commonly pledge more funds at conferences that follow episodes of acute violence. Many survey respondents expressed frustration at donors' failure to hold Israel accountable or even to express indignation at inappropriate attacks.

The recent Gaza crisis highlighted the limitations placed on the humanitarian space by such conditionality. Access to those in need was hampered, relief items limited, and protection and compensation for violations of international humanitarian law not properly addressed. Both new and traditional donors have their own agendas and employ conditionality, though new donors are generally less exposed to scrutiny. Respondents to the survey gave a low grade to the independence of OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) donors' humanitarian assistance from political, economic or security interests, but rated non-DAC donors even lower.

Good and bad practice

There were significant examples of bad practice. Donors were inconsistent when requesting access. According to the Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action (ALNAP) (2009), they failed to develop a strategy with which to negotiate access for delivery of assistance and protection. As mentioned above, the logistics cluster did facilitate the delivery of goods into Gaza by humanitarian agencies; direct contacts with the IDF and coordinated efforts by the European Commission and the Israeli Government also improved access. Yet many donors undermined collective efforts by attempting to obtain independent access. For instance, the US created independent access mechanisms for its preferred aid agencies. Similarly, some diplomats lobbied strenuously for the clearance of specific agencies' trucks.

Many respondents were concerned by the apparent drying-up of funds to West Bank projects in favour of Gaza. Moreover, the existence of institutional and bilateral lines for funding to the 'friendly' administration of the West Bank seems to justify this donor behaviour. But many respondents could not see a coherent strategy as many projects were under-funded in the West Bank and had no mechanisms for a transition from relief to development. In other cases, donors gave funding for projects although Israeli restrictions prevented agencies from implementing them.

The systemic conditionality of aid finds explicit expression within the policies of certain donors. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and Canada strictly applied the 'anti-terrorist' act, making demands that many agencies find operationally limiting and unacceptable.

Respondents also felt many donor agencies failed in terms of preparedness and contingency planning. The situation in Gaza was already critical at the onset of the offensive, and coping mechanisms were stretched to their limits.

The general outcry of the humanitarian community was widely ignored by Western donors. Careful to preserve their relationship with Israel, they failed to exercise pressure on Israel despite reports of violations of international humanitarian law, high civilian casualties and the use of restricted or forbidden ammunition (HRW 2009). That said, all parties to the conflict may have committed serious breaches of protection, which are currently being investigated.

Even Western media stations such as the BBC and Sky News, professing a desire to remain neutral, refused to broadcast a Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) aid appeal for Gaza. (The appeal eventually raised UK£1 million after its broadcast through ITV, Channel Four and Channel Five.)

Several examples of good practice do stand out, as there are some donors with a genuine interest in addressing GHD practice in the oPT. The ERC's swift launch of a high-profile joint needs assessment, in particular, spurred a focus on needs and rapid donor response to the first Gaza appeal. Some donors did try to address the issue of access, even if their non-strategic efforts were inadequate and at times detrimental.

The roles of OCHA and HERF, and the CAP elaboration were seen to have demonstrated good practice. Some clusters were also considered to have been usefully tested in the crisis.

Lessons learnt and recommendations for the future

Some donors have questioned the applicability of *GHD Principles* in the oPT context. A working group is likely to address this question, and a better understanding of the key challenges could result. Nevertheless, our analysis shows there are specific fields where donorship could be improved.

1. The *GHD Principles* offer a framework for good donorship across the broader international community, incorporating relevant non-OECD donors. Proactive policies should be defined in order to engage new donors in the process.
2. The Gaza conflict exposed the need for better strategic negotiation for access to victims, in which donors can play a pivotal role.
3. Donors should do more to support early recovery (currently jeopardised in Gaza by the limitations of goods into the Strip).
4. Prevention strategies and preparedness are crucial, and should be integrated across the board as mandatory components of the humanitarian response.
5. The unsolicited donations for Gaza reaffirm the need to define a common system to manage in-kind aid.

Conclusion

Looking to the future, the main challenge in the region is to preserve humanitarian action from political conditionality. The complexity of this conflict precludes optimism: this will not be the last humanitarian disaster experienced by civilians in the oPT. Thus, an appropriate humanitarian strategy – one grounded in humanitarian principles and free of conditionality or politicisation – becomes more vital than ever. Yet it remains to be seen how successfully donors can – or will – disengage their political agendas and humanitarian action to effectively provide relief, protection, and recovery to the victims of this conflict.

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Dr. Solé-Arqués is a specialist in internal medicine and public health, a Senior Evaluator in DARA and an international consultant on public health and humanitarian aid. He has been involved in complex emergencies since the early 1990s, serving as an ECHO expert in Bosnia, Kosovo, Angola and Colombia. He was WHO Coordinator for the West Bank and Gaza in 2003 and for the ECHO regional health sector; and Head of the Regional Support Office in Amman in 2006, covering humanitarian operations for Central Asia, the Middle East and North Africa. He has carried out extensive consultancy and evaluation work in the Middle East, Southeast Asia, Africa and Latin America for multiple international organisations, including Médecins Sans Frontières, Médecins du Monde, WHO, ECHO and the EC. He has collaborated with DARA on the TEC and a number of evaluations and has served as Team Leader for several HRI missions; he is also a former member of the HRI's Peer Review Committee.

Notes

1 Information based on field interviews with key humanitarian agencies in the occupied Palestinian Territories (oPT) from 22 March 2009 to 1 April 2009, and 295 questionnaires on donor performance (including 219 OECD-DAC donors).

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Crisis Reports

Somalia

Somalia at a Glance

Country data

- Population (2007): 9 million
- Under five mortality rate (2006): 145 per 1,000
- Human Development Index Ranking (2001): 161
- Life expectancy (2007): 48 years
- Official Development Assistance (2007): US$384 million

The crisis

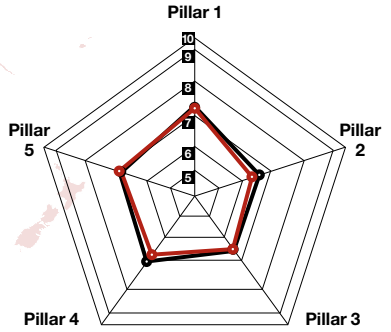
- Humanitarian situation has worsened since 2006 due to acute malnutrition, droughts, floods, insecurity and rising food prices;
- Two-thirds of all aid workers killed worldwide in 2008 died in Somalia;
- Access to affected populations is increasingly dangerous and difficult;
- Somali refugees currently number half a million, with 1.2 million internally displaced;
- Humanitarian efforts hindered by political fragmentation and the absence of a stable central government.

The response

- Humanitarian operations managed through "remote control" outside the country, creating aid accountability and effectiveness issues;
- Donors have provided US$ 1.7 billion since 2000, ranking repeatedly among the top ten aid recipients. It also stands at highest number of UN CAP appeals: 8;
- CERF funds and Humanitarian Response Fund (HRF) introduced but pooled funding reportedly caused confusion among NGOs and donors;
- Humanitarian space in Somalia has shrunk, but innovative projects such as the Food Security Analysis Unit for Somalia (part of the UNFAO) have proved effective in identifying and meeting needs.

Donor performance

- In general, donors rated poorly in all Pillars of the HRI, particularly Responding to needs (Pillar 1), and Prevention, risk reduction and recovery (Pillar 2);
- Donors scored highest in survey questions on respecting neutral and impartial humanitarian action, but lowest in questions around the timeliness and transparency on funding decisions;
- Donors' mixing of humanitarian and political/security objectives has complicated aid delivery and aid security in Somalia;
- Donors should focus on addressing issues around access, humanitarian space and remote-control management of operations.



HRI 2009 scores by pillar

Pillar 1 Responding to needs
Pillar 2 Prevention, risk reduction and recovery
Pillar 3 Working with humanitarian partners
Pillar 4 Protection and International Law
Pillar 5 Learning and accountability

Somalia
All crisis average

Sources: World Bank 2009, UNICEF 2008, UNDP 2001, OECD 2007 ICG 2009, UNICEF 2009, OCHA FTS 2009, OCHA FTS 2009.

Somalia
In Search of a Way In[1]

Steven Hansch

The decades-long protracted emergency in Somalia grew considerably worse from 2006 to 2008, with a convergence of floods, droughts, increased food prices and an ongoing situation of insecurity. While the volume of humanitarian aid to Somalia increased in 2008 – and the country now receives the most per capita in the world – almost all aid had to be delivered at arm's length as Somalia became the most dangerous location in the world for aid workers. Thirty-seven aid workers were killed in Somalia in 2008,[2] two-thirds of the total killed worldwide.

Most humanitarian organisations say the worst problem in Somalia is not shortage of food or water, but the disappearance of 'humanitarian space' – that is, the social, political and security opportunities for implementing aid operations. While donors have been generous with unconditional aid, particularly food, they have also contributed aid inappropriately, through what many regard as a heavy-handed political agenda.

Governmental donors in particular have compromised the humanitarian space of operational agencies by bombing Somalis intermittently, supporting invasions by Ethiopian troops, focusing their attention on nation-building funds for Western-allied (anti-Islamic) governments and pushing the United Nations to act as a political actor, taking sides in a complex conflict. UN agencies are now perceived by Somalis as just extensions of political interests of the US Government.

By the end of 2008, an all-time low had been reached in the direct management, supervision, monitoring and accountability of aid programmes within the country – and most aid agencies said that access topped the list of challenges in 2008, and into 2009.

A complex emergency with grave humanitarian consequences

In 2008, a complicated group of hazards joined to further increase the vulnerability and needs of Somalis. After disastrous floods in 2006, poor rainfall and Gu harvests in 2007, and early 2008 led to one of the worst food shortfalls in recent memory.[3] Food prices grew as a result of hyperinflation from the over-printing of money, and Somalia's economic stress was heightened by closed borders with Kenya and Ethiopia and a continuing ban on livestock exports.[4] The country also suffered a cholera epidemic, Rift Valley fever and unknown camel diseases.

Al Shabaab, an Islamic military group which formed following the 2006 invasion by the Ethiopian army, now controls much of Somalia's south-central regions, and there has been new violent conflict between Al Shabaab and the recently deployed international peacekeeping forces, the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). Al Shabaab also forced two leading NGOs to depart, in one case shutting down a decades-long food pipeline.[5] Since January 2007 at least 16,000 civilians have been killed in the violence between Ethiopian troops and Islamic militia. Though aiming for suspected Al Qaeda affiliates, US air and missile strikes also hit and killed Somali civilians in 2008, spreading lasting paranoia.

A growing boldness and desperation among some Somalis, who have seen their fishing grounds depleted (in part due to international fishing fleets), has seen them turning to piracy. Meanwhile, increasing arms shipments and access to small-arms weaponry increased the number of roadblocks and incidents of criminal violence, kidnappings and attacks on aid workers.[6]

As a result of all these factors, the Somali population faces crisis levels of acute malnutrition in all the country's south-central regions. Increased food insecurity led to thousands of deaths from severe malnutrition. Roughly half the population, or 3.2 million people, were estimated by the UN and the European Commission's Humanitarian Office (ECHO) to require emergency assistance, of whom 180,000 are malnourished children. World Food Programme (WFP) operations reached 2.4 million in 2008.

Almost half a million Somalis have fled the country and 1.2 million are internally displaced, with large new displacements in 2006 and 2008. The Dadaab refugee camp, along Kenya's desolate Somali border, has continued to grow since the large outflow during the 1992 famine, with a population of more than 280,000 in 2009.

Furthermore, because of the politicisation of aid and the deep suspicions Somalis harbour towards external actors, no aid agency wishes to be seen as affiliated with any other agency, hampering coordination in the field. Meanwhile, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) donors have been preoccupied with creating a strong central government since the surge of intervention during and after the 1992 famine.

A fragmented failed state

And yet, in the years since, Somalia has fragmented into three political states, each asserting their own primacy: Somaliland in the north-west (population one million), which has been remarkably peaceful and received some aid, though it has not achieved international recognition as a sovereign state; Puntland in the north-east (population two million), from where most piracy emanates; and the bulk of old Somalia, increasingly now referred to as 'South-Central' (population five million), where most current humanitarian aid gaps occur.

Today, Somalia remains a fragmentation of several states. Indeed, a sizeable portion of Somalis live abroad.[7] Most of the urgency expressed by aid agencies and of the narrative about humanitarian aid to Somalia that follows focuses on the large 'South-Central' region, hereafter simply referred to as 'Somalia'. This is nominally governed by the Transitional Federal Government (TFG), which rose out of the 2004 Inter-governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) process. However, it has few resources, little presence or control of the capital, Mogadishu, and has been accused by many rights groups as being responsible for police and military abuses against civilians. Somalia remains perhaps the world's most extreme 'failed state'.

Consistently important donor funding

Somalia donor offices are based primarily in Nairobi, Kenya, and there are inter-agency working-group meetings every day in the city.[8] Somalia has been one of the top ten recipient countries for humanitarian aid three times between 2000 and 2008, and it has been the subject of the greatest number of UN consolidated appeals (CAPs) – eight in all. Known donors provided US$1.7 billion in donor contributions from 2000 to 2008.[9] Indeed, with the exception of a single year, 1991, when the government collapsed and aid agencies fled the country en masse, levels of aid to Somalia since the late 1970s[10] have remained consistently high compared with other emergencies. While Médecins sans Frontières (MSF) claims that Somalia is one of the 'forgotten crises' (in terms of major media attention), other NGOs find that it is easier to get funding for Somalia from larger institutional donors.

Weariness, disputes and frustrations

Donor weariness has exhibited itself not through a lack of funding, but in the diligence in tracking it. Many donors ask little from their grantees about the performance or impact of programmes they fund. Many NGOs have also become absorbed in a specific dispute with the US Government which, at the time of writing, was pausing most of its aid to Somalia over worries about aid reaching the Islamic Al Shabaab group.[11] And humanitarian aid organisations expressed consistent frustration with the competing donor agenda focused on uncritical support for the TFG, which obstructs and taxes NGOs. One NGO manager claimed: "No question, the donor involvement has caused the crisis," referring to donor fuelling of the ongoing violent conflict.

In 2008, donor funding became increasingly complicated by the rise of pooled funds, such as the Humanitarian Response Fund (HRF). More centralised UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) funding is also being channelled for Somalia (though few could explain where and how). Interviews with NGOs found much confusion about what the relative roles are, or are meant to be, of the different pooled funds through which the local HRF provides many small grants to NGOs. Also now part of the donor tapestry from the point of view of indigenous Somali NGOs are the international NGOs (INGOs), such as Oxfam Novib, which blend funds from different sources to grants they give to local NGOs.[12] NGOs have raised at least US$34 million of funds from non-governmental sources (Global Humanitarian Assistance Report 2009).

Shrinking humanitarian space

"The definition of humanitarian is not understood in Somalia," says one NGO spokesperson. Somalia may be the first and only emergency in modern times where access, defined as the ability of expatriates to be based in the areas of assistance, is reduced to zero. The number of full-time expatriates working with NGOs, UN agencies, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) or donors dropped from several hundred in 2007 to none at all in 2009. In addition, aid routes for local staff and supply lines are hampered by an unusually large number of roadblocks and checkpoints, compelling aid agencies to track and map Somalia with a new 'access coefficient,' which refers to denial of access. In general, the further south the location, the more difficult the access for aid.

There are a number of factors behind this shrinkage of humanitarian space. First, million-dollar ransoms paid by donor governments for the release of their nationals taken hostage created a market incentive for future hostage taking. Subsequently, the trend towards targeting aid staff continued in 2009.[13]

Second, donor intermingling of political objectives with extensive aid operations has forced the UN system to try to reach all parts of the country while sacrificing its neutrality.

Third, donors are turning a blind eye to abuses and killings the TFG perpetrates, according to many NGOs – thereby creating an 'accountability free zone'. (Though, since the replacement of the president[14] of the TFG in 2009 these abuses appear to have declined.)

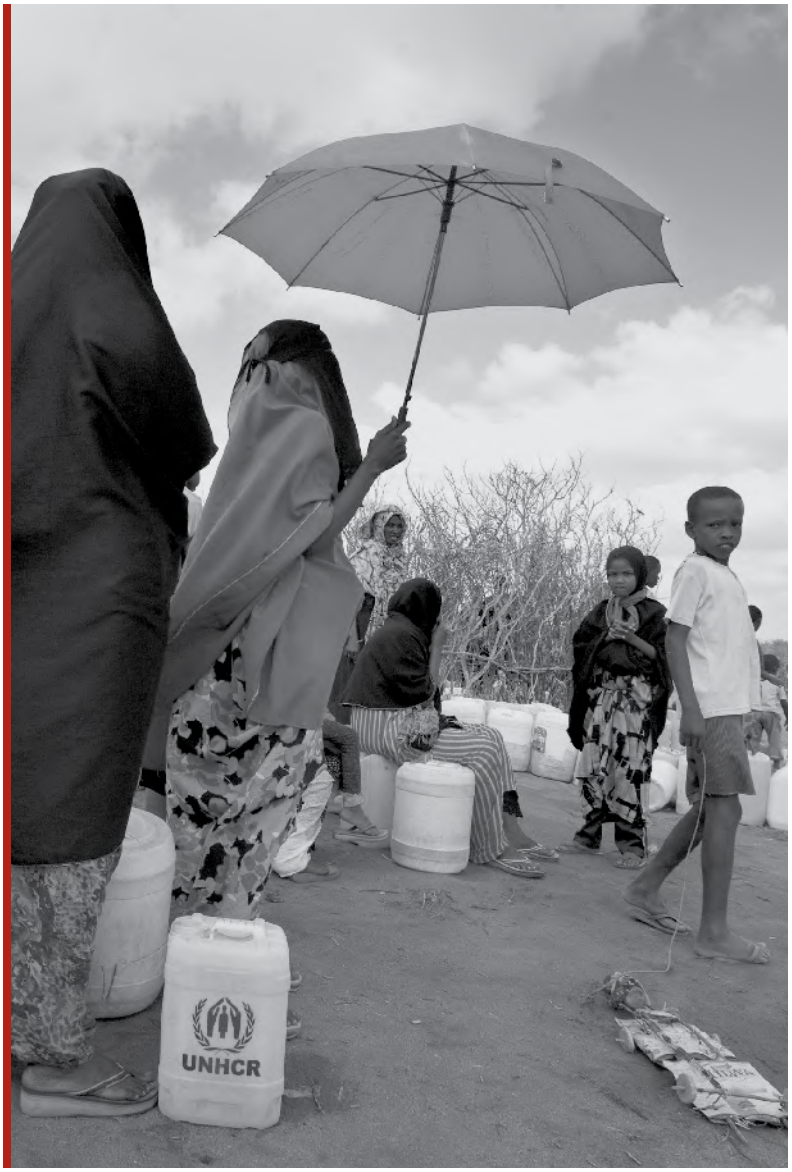
Fourth, the international community feels a perpetual itch to respond to Somalia with military intervention. By and large, Somalis suspect the 2006 Ethiopian military invasion was at the behest of Western powers, and principally the US. More certain were three episodes of US missile attacks on Somali villages during 2007 and 2008. Somalis are now suspicious of anyone carrying global positioning system (GPS) devices. Hence, the work of NGOs has retrogressed with the loss of the IT tools necessary for their own planning, targeting and monitoring.

Remote control

The response to the collapse of humanitarian space has been a dramatic reliance on local partners and the use of management techniques that minimise direct observation or supervision, referred to as 'remote control'.[15] In other words, local staff work alone, management and implementation occurring without international staff physically present. For example, the ICRC, in Nairobi, contracts the procurement and distribution of food through Somali merchants who agree to bring the food in from international markets and deliver to inland internally displaced person (IDP) sites – a novel method of food distribution designed specifically for Somalia.

The result of remote control is that international agencies lose fundamental control and knowledge of their projects. It also results in less reliable data about programme performance, monitoring and the success or failure of targeting. Aid agencies routinely expressed concern about this.

"The definition of humanitarian is not understood in Somalia."



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Threats to expatriates have also led to the abandonment of best practices and advances in field work, including the use of place codes, the use of GPS to specify beneficiary locations, and contingency planning. In addition, the lack of field presence has decreased direct witnessing or protection of persecuted populations, making protection difficult.

A reliance on partnerships

Alongside the trend toward remote management, is an increasing reliance on partnerships between international agencies and local Somali organisations. This was originally about building local capacities, but is now more about international dependence on these partners and it takes advantage of the growing number of indigenous Somali NGOs, from whose perspective many INGOs are 'the donor'.[16] Often this takes the form of sub-grants to Somali NGOs. For the ICRC, this means extensive work with and through the national Somali Red Crescent Society. Other times it takes the form of sub-contracting. The WFP works through dozens of sub contracted partners.

Further upstream, more and more money for Somalia is coming through pooled fund mechanisms and the UN. The consequence is that the aid pathway, which used to be as simple as 'donor to NGO' (two steps), is now many more steps, e.g. 'donor to pooled fund to UN to INGO to local NGO' (four steps) – with a consequent increase in costs as well as bidding and uncertainty between agencies. Many of the humanitarian aid agencies interviewed found this lengthening chain of intermediaries uses up too many resources without achieving better presence or operational quality. In addition, it favours the UN rather than NGOs when giving resources, and many worry that the stratification further dilutes accountability.

The combination of remote control, lack of field monitoring, over-reliance on local agencies, pooling of funds (between donors) and layers of funding have the overall consequence that it is impossible to track physical milestones accomplished in Somalia against donors' commitments.

Operational innovation

In response to these extraordinary challenges, aid agencies undertook innovative approaches to the evolving crisis, delivering in 2008 a broadening mix of programmes. Areas covered included micro-enterprise and micro-credit;[17] cash for work and other livelihood support to help build markets; veterinary care for the huge camel and cattle livestock population; food rations and therapeutic care, particularly community-managed (CMAM);[18] borehole rehabilitation and trucking of water to IDP camps; and primary health care, principally control of measles and cholera epidemics and the few newly occurring cases of polio (though – some donors have cut back on decades-old funding for health).[19]

There have also been lessons about what to avoid. For example, NGOs have learnt to avoid drilling new boreholes as each new water-point can become a source of violent conflict; and aid agencies have worked assiduously not to create camps, as the management of IDP camps can lead to perpetual dependence and long-term displacement well beyond the aid agencies' capabilities in the field.

NGOs, UN agencies and donors have come together in one impressive programme, the Food Security Analysis Unit (FSAU) for Somalia, managed by the UN Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO), which provides the best information on famine vulnerabilities, and nutrition and mortality patterns in Somalia. No other humanitarian aid information system matches it. Furthermore, during recent years they have pioneered a novel Integrated Phase Classification system which synthesises food security and health issues into one composite tool that maps vulnerability by geographic zone.

Food needs in Somalia are also being met through a push by WFP to distribute specialty ready-to-eat foods for supplementary feeding programmes for the large numbers of moderate-acute malnourished children.[20]

Meanwhile, in the absence of government or formal banks in Somalia, NGOs have successfully put to good use the informal 'Hawala' money-transfer system that is common in many Islamic countries.

Lessons learnt and recommendations for the future

With only a few exceptions, almost all aid experts, NGO representatives and even donor staff agree that donors should stop trying to orchestrate the political or military solution to Somalia's government. Aid agencies would prefer that donors hold the TFG and Ethiopian forces accountable for their actions.[21]

UN agencies should also not be pressured to act as the arms of OECD donors trying to create a Western-style vision of democracy in Somalia. And those UN agencies that are not involved in governance should be allowed to operate separately. As one aid agency representative put it: "The UN Resident Representative – who is funding an army – should not be the same person as the humanitarian coordinator."[22]

Donors should recognise that *GHD Principles* imply that each donor should think for itself. One complaint is that too often donors act as a group. With regard to project monitoring and sectoral interests, though, donors do vary considerably. Many were seen as too hands-off and indiscriminate in their approach to working with their partners and Somali organisations. Others, such as ECHO, were seen as extremely engaged. But donors do not appear to share, or even collectively require, accountability in order to learn 'what works' within Somalia.

In recent years, new large funding sources have become relevant to Somalia, including European foundations, the Global Fund for AIDS, TB and Malaria (GFATM), the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Saudi Government. These new donors should become engaged with and understand *GHD Principles*.

Aid agencies should also increase their regional communication. Agencies working on Somalia from Nairobi rarely have communications with their offices in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, despite the commonalities of programmes between eastern Ethiopia and Somalia, the porous borders and the extensive involvement of Ethiopia in Somalia.

Conclusions

Part of Somalia's problem, many say, is that the country's economy has been conditioned by several decades of food aid, so that now it is addicted to aid. One of Somalia's greatest disaster risks would be the withdrawal of aid itself. Donors should convene open forums of creative visionaries to find solutions for countries such as Somalia where the reliance on food assistance keeps growing.

Long-term Somali watchers recommend addressing the availability of small arms throughout the population, economic stagnation and decline, and social inequality, i.e. the root causes of Somalia's vicious cycle.[23] Few aid agencies are addressing Somalia's poverty trap; the population is producing the same primary products (camel and cattle meat, basic grains) that it has for centuries. NGOs are not yet equipped to analyse and constructively influence the complex dynamics of economic markets.[24]

In a few ways, Somalis have learnt to integrate with the global economy: by spreading out globally. Yet humanitarian aid agencies have not come to grips with the powerful role of the overseas Somali community, which sends US$1 billion each year in remittances to Somalia and Somaliland, many times the value of livestock exports (Ismail 2000).

Donors and humanitarian groups have a particularly hard time framing their interventions for migratory pastoralist populations. New inter-agency livestock guidelines, created by NGOs, should be given attention by donors similar to the Sphere standards.

Finally, donors should convene among themselves and agree on principles for mitigating future hostage taking, which should include individual cases where donors may want to negotiate with hostage takers directly. Many NGOs feel that the best sustainable solution is for donors to agree to allow the NGO, or other employer, to hold the lead role in dealing with hostages.

About the Author

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Steven Hansch works in the Washington, DC office of DARA, promoting humanitarian aid reform in US inter-agency discussions, including the revision of the Foreign Assistance Act. Most of his career has been spent working with non-profits in emergencies in Africa, Latin America and Asia. He has led evaluations of the crises in Rwanda, Uganda, El Salvador, the 2004 Tsunami and the 2003 famine in southern Africa. In 1993, he led a team of epidemiologists to document the mortality impact of the 1992 Somali famine. He teaches classes on complex emergencies at several universities, including the American University and Johns Hopkins School of Public Health, and is a Fellow at the Georgetown Institute for the Study of International Migration. He also works in knowledge management, coordinating the teaching of microfinance management.

Notes

1 Information based on field interviews with key humanitarian agencies in Kenya, from 8 February to 18 February 2009, and 184 questionnaires on donor performance (including 129 OECD-DAC donors).

The HRI team, composed of Steve Hansch, Fernando Espada, Ana Romero and Daniela Ruegenberg, expresses its gratitude to all those interviewed in Somalia. The opinions expressed here are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of DARA.

2 Killings continued in early 2009 as well. As one example, on 21 July 2009, a staff member of the Somali Red Crescent was killed in cross-fire in Mogadishu.

3 See the briefs published by the Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit (FSAU 2008). During 2008, the number of estimated food-insecure grew from 2.6 million to 3.5 million.

4 Private printing presses have stepped up their production of the Somali shilling during the escalation in fighting, flooding the market and causing a depreciation of its value by 165 percent in two years.

5 CARE International shut down its 30-year-old food aid programme. CARE delivered almost all humanitarian aid to Somalia from the late 1970s until the crisis in 1991, and again in 1993 was one of the largest aid providers. In 2008, its emergency food aid programme in Somalia was its largest in the world. With its ousting, CARE loses not only a large presence in Somalia, but possibly also its expertise and commitment for running any similar emergency food programmes.

6 Humanitarian aid agencies monitor the numbers of roadblocks encountered in Somalia, and throughout 2008 the number exceeded 300 for every month, and reached 350 in October and November.

7 Somali merchants are very visible in Dubai, London and parts of the US. Significant Somali communities live in Nairobi, Kenya, as well as the Nordic countries.

8 By the late 1980s, Nairobi had evolved into a hub for regional humanitarian aid offices, as well as a storage and staging point for launching aid to many nearby countries. A large part of the emergency community in Nairobi was responsible for many years for southern Sudan. As the southern Sudan conflict wound down, with the 2005 peace agreement, many of those aid professionals and their offices switched to Somalia. Many career staff members of donors enjoy being based in Nairobi, which is one of the more developed areas of Africa.

9 Extrapolating on data reported by Development Initiatives (2009).

10 Since the Ogadan war in the late 1970s, which first pulled NGOs and UN agencies in to assist some 700,000 refugees from Ethiopia.

11 Which the US has labelled a terrorist organisation.

12 Frequently, the Somali NGO only knows of the INGO as the source of funds, and cannot say where the INGO derived the funds.

13 In July 2009, ten gunmen kidnapped two French Government security consultants.

14 The presidency of Abdullahi Yusuf was characterised by abuse. The newer presidency is more conciliatory.

15 MSF uses the additional term 'shared management', which perhaps sounds more constructive than remote control. Oxfam refers to 'remote monitoring' of resources and partners.

16 Over the years, INGOs and the UN have increasingly partnered with local NGOs, creating a market for the creation of local NGOs.

17 NGOs and remittances pump funding into small women's groups. Sustainable Microfinance Institutions, or MFIs, are not common.

18 New inter-agency protocols for 'community-based management of acute malnutrition'.

19 Famously, Somalia was the location where smallpox was, finally, eradicated.

20 WFP's move in Somalia into therapeutic foods is noteworthy because these foods were primarily procured and moved by the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) in other emergencies.

21 With the withdrawal of Ethiopian troops at the end of 2008, humanitarian groups have pulled back on the urgency of their calls for some sort of truth commission on Ethiopia's activities in Somalia, though not entirely.

22 In other words, the UN Resident Representative should not be 'dual-hatted', wear both hats or labels at once.

23 This is the conclusion and argument of Osman, A. (2007) in his paper "The Somali Internal War and the Role of Inequality, Economic Decline and access to Weapons."

24 The FSAU (2008) publishes gaps in knowledge, detailing how little is known about livelihood trends in Somalia: "There is a lack of data to better analyse trade flows and other macroeconomic indicators such as import-export, volume traded, remittance, cross-border trade flow, etc."

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Crisis Reports

Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka at a Glance

Country data

- Population (2007): 20 million
- Under five morality rate (2006): 13 per 1,000
- Human Development Index Ranking (2008): 104
- Life expectancy (2006): 72 years
- Official Development Assistance (2007): US$801,000,000

The crisis

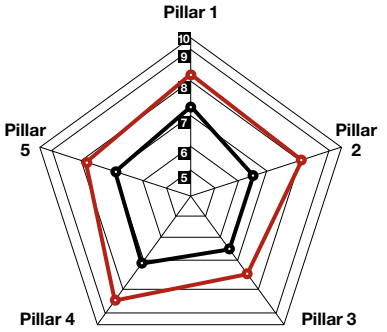
- Decades of conflict between the Sri Lankan Government and Tamil Tigers have killed more than 150,000; from January to mid-May 2009, fighting left 7,500 dead and more than 15,000 injured;
- Final two weeks of fighting before Sri Lankan Government declared victory thought to have caused thousands more deaths, though exact figures are unknown;
- More than 275,000 civilians fleeing the conflict have been placed in overcrowded internment camps;
- Lack of rule of law and need for protection in areas previously held by the LTTE

The response

- Of US$198 million required in 2008, CHAP donors covered 70 percent, or US$139 million. 2009 CHAP calls for more than US$270 million;
- While food requirements 88 percent covered in 2008, significant gaps remain in protection of civilians, access and safety of humanitarian personnel and operations, mine action, and economic recovery and infrastructure;
- Sri Lankan Government was unprepared to handle displaced population, but reluctant to accept international assistance, and has allowed only limited access to camps.

Donor performance

- Donors rated highest in Protection and International Law (Pillar 4), and lowest in Working with humanitarian partners (Pillar 3);
- Donors rated reasonably well in responding to needs and support for neutral, impartial humanitarian action, but poorly in working to find long-term funding arrangements and supporting organisational capacity and preparedness;
- Donors criticised for inadequately advocating protection and safe humanitarian access, as well as not anticipating and preparing for consequences of final stages of conflict.



HRI 2009 scores by pillar

Pillar 1 Responding to needs
Pillar 2 Prevention, risk reduction and recovery
Pillar 3 Working with humanitarian partners
Pillar 4 Protection and International Law
Pillar 5 Learning and accountability

Sri Lanka
All crisis average

Sources: World Bank 2009, UNICEF 2008, UNDP 2008, OECD 2007 ICG, 2009; OCHA, 2009 , ICG (2009).

Sri Lanka

Processing a Slaughter Foretold[1]

Silvia Hidalgo

Sri Lanka is bleeding, suffering from a violent 26-year conflict. With a death toll of more than 150,000 and several hundreds of thousands more affected, the wounds of war are deep. The most recent escalation in fighting in 2009 opened a new chapter of increased – and predictable – suffering as civilian populations were once again caught in the crossfire, unable to flee and subjected to inhumane treatment and an impossible life-threatening situation.

The Sri Lankan Government interned some 280,000 civilians in 2009. Many were injured and traumatised after months of entrapment amid fighting, and, with insufficient access to food and water, significant numbers were later displaced and held in what many Sri Lankans and humanitarian workers define as detention camps. The camps, in the north of the country, are congested and inadequate and present serious access problems for aid agencies. Those accommodated there remain at risk, due to poor conditions and potential disease outbreaks.

Despite the government declaring the end of the conflict in May 2009 and the separatist and terrorist group the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) conceding defeat, the situation in the country remains bleak given the absence of rule of law in many areas and the considerable humanitarian needs of both the displaced and at-risk populations.

Faced with the reality of the bloodshed, the failure of any prevention efforts and the continued suffering and need in Sri Lanka, the role of the international community has been seriously challenged. Questions emerge regarding the current, potential and differing roles of donors at different stages and levels in a country where both public opinion and the government are far from fond of the aid community.

The context of the crisis

From January 2008, when it formally abrogated the 2002 Cease-Fire Accord (CFA) with the LTTE,[2] the Sri Lankan Government's focus was placed exclusively on winning 'the final battle'. A year later, as of mid-January 2009, fighting intensified in the northern Vanni region, creating a major humanitarian crisis. Hundreds of thousands of civilians were trapped in a small – and shrinking – stretch of land under LTTE control.

Brad Adams, Asia Director of Human Rights Watch, declared: "The government and the LTTE appear to be holding a perverse contest to determine who can show the least concern for civilian protection," The Sri Lankan military repeatedly shelled populated areas in its declared 'no-fire zone', while the LTTE hid behind thousands of civilians who were either forced to fight against government troops or used as human shields. Until the very last moment of LTTE resistance, civilians were prevented from escaping the war zone.

Both sides committed grave human-rights abuses. An estimated 7,500 civilians were killed[3] – including more than 1,000 children – and more than 15,000 wounded between mid-January and early May 2009. At the time of the Humanitarian Response Index (HRI) mission, casualty figures were more than twice those of Gaza, yet the crisis in Sri Lanka received almost no attention.

After a final offensive in mid-May, the Sri Lankan Government declared victory. The last two weeks of fierce fighting are thought to have caused thousands more deaths.

The humanitarian situation remains desperate for the 280,000 civilians[4] who escaped the war zone and were placed in camps, as well as the thousands injured. Camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs) were 30,000 to 40,000 people beyond capacity and conditions failed to meet all international standards. Later in August, the camps – guarded by soldiers and surrounded by barbed wire – were flooded after heavy rains. The government claimed it could not release civilians until it finished screening the camps for potential rebel fighters. Unprepared to handle the inflow of IDPs, the Sri Lankan Government requested international assistance, yet also limited the access of international relief organisations to the camps. Weeks after the fighting ended, it still failed to give the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) access to the former conflict zone in the north-east.

Aside from the situation in the camps, significant current and future challenges exist throughout the country. An International Crisis Group (ICG) (2009) report, 'Development Assistance and Conflict in Sri Lanka: Lessons from the Eastern Province', helps shed light and sound alarm bells on a worrying situation in the east that could extend to the 'newly liberated' territories.[5] There is no rule of law in the 'post-conflict' areas of late 2007 and early 2008, and they are marred by violent clashes between political factions and impunity for killings and disappearances, many allegedly committed by government security forces. Insecurity, extortion and fear are undermining the ability of agencies and contractors to implement projects.

The government has yet to devolve power to the Eastern province and take the necessary steps to establish guarantees to restore a sense of trust and security for the population. From a humanitarian perspective, there is an alarming need to step up protection on all fronts.

Sri Lanka is a small country with a population of 20 million people where the bulk of donors have no real vested interests. It is a lower middle-income country that has greatly benefited from aid, yet it is one that is particularly critical of international aid efforts. The country also suffered the impact of the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami.

The problem of access

The Sri Lankan context poses a number of challenges for the international aid community, the main one cited by all humanitarian actors being access to the areas and people in need. As one HRI respondent put it: "The government is judge and party in this conflict and that affects everything."

The attitude of the government towards the aid community – the United Nations, NGOs and most donors – has proved a pervasive problem. Relief agencies are subject to government hostility, heavy taxation, visa constraints and even, in some cases, interference with their programme bank accounts (DARA 2009). With the harassment of national aid workers, agencies resort to using expatriates for an increasing number of tasks. However, although expatriates may not face security problems, they do face restrictions on visas and on travel within Sri Lanka.

The animosity that many Sri Lankans direct towards the aid community is difficult to understand fully. It was exacerbated during the response to the tsunami when the government was very critical of humanitarian agencies' responses, questioning the legitimacy of many organisations which "sold the images of our grieving children to obtain funding for their own benefit" (DARA 2008). In contrast, the Sri Lankan Government values its relationships with Asian donors who offer bilateral support without questioning the government on internal affairs. The diplomatic community reacts with caution and concern, not wanting to become *'persona non grata'*.

Coupled with this are major security concerns, mainly faced by NGOs. At the time of the HRI mission, dozens of humanitarian workers and national staff members of relief agencies were trapped in the LTTE-held areas. They are often also victims of shelling and some even killed. For the security of their staff, reasons of access and continuity of their programmes, humanitarian agencies are inhibited from speaking out publicly on any humanitarian issue. The result is that there are virtually no attempts made at the field level to criticise or change the situation.

The Humanitarian Response: too little, too weak, too late...?

At the time of the HRI mission, which was at the height of the crisis, funding was not cited as a major constraint. As agencies were having trouble accessing those in need, lack of means was not yet a consideration.

Agencies and major NGOs did, however, underline that before January there were few donors willing to fund emergency teams, contingency plans and programmes, despite recognising the imminent need for a full-fledged response. In many cases, the European Commission's Humanitarian Office (ECHO) was cited as the only donor funding organisations for this purpose. Observers felt this was key as, without continued support, emergency teams have to be dismantled

At the end of May, the 2009 UN Consolidated Humanitarian Action Plan (CHAP) for Sri Lanka was almost 40 percent funded, with US$60,776,039 received out of the US$155,112,669 required. With newly pledged amounts, coverage would be 56 percent.

Japan is Sri Lanka's most important development aid donor, although the United States is the country's largest humanitarian donor, giving US$62.8 million from 2008 to mid-2009. Aside from its significant food aid channelled through Food for Peace (US$42.9 million from 2008 to May 2009), the remainder of its humanitarian assistance – focused on IDPs and returnees – is important in absolute terms.

Since September 2008, the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID) has stepped up its aid, allocating £12.5 million of humanitarian assistance to Sri Lanka.

Asian donors include South Korea, which contributed to the World Food Programme (WFP), and Vietnam, which announced US$30,000 to help the Sri Lankan Government solve the IDP problem. China gave US$1 million as emergency relief assistance for IDPs.

After the onslaught of thousands of civilians, what makes this crisis particularly discomforting for the parties involved and the international community in Sri Lanka is that everyone anticipated the outcome. With such a predictable result, one would think that the international community would have the means to alleviate the suffering and avoid the slaughter of innocent civilians.

In April, John Holmes, UN Under-Secretary-General for humanitarian affairs, warned of a "bloodbath". The ICRC in turn described the situation as "nothing short of catastrophic". Calls for the Sri Lankan Government to halt its offensive and accept a humanitarian pause went unheard. The requested halt – to enable two weeks of relief supplies to get in and a humanitarian corridor to be established for civilians to escape – was to no avail. Relief agencies were denied full access to reception points and military screening centres, and so protection was insufficient in areas where either civilians or Tamil Tiger fighters might have surrendered or crossed into government-held areas.

At the time of the HRI mission a year before, donors were working on ensuring the effectiveness of aid work with the government of Sri Lanka and an agreed framework of principles to promote the respect of international humanitarian law (IHL) and human rights. In their working group, donors moved to clarify and promote guiding principles which would counter:

- Difficulties faced by agencies in the field;
- The diminishing humanitarian space;
- Negative media campaigns against agencies;
- Harassment and security threats facing agency staff (Bilateral Donor Group 2007).

Certain donors, mainly the EC, the US and Germany, did take a stance.[6] There is the view, however, that not enough was done either in Colombo or abroad, and that those who did speak out were not the ones who could positively influence the Sri Lanka Government.

With the end of the fighting, the US continued to send strong messages, remaining "deeply concerned for the welfare of the hundreds of thousands of internally displaced persons… the tremendous loss of life and hardship endured by civilians in northern Sri Lanka". It urged the government to "allow humanitarian access to the camps and to work hand in hand with the UN, ICRC, and non-government organisations to ensure all IDPs are accorded rights and care meeting the highest international standards" (Blake 2009).

Significantly, greater credence is given to a US position that states: "To truly defeat terrorism, the government of Sri Lanka needs to begin to heal the wounds of the conflict, and work toward building a democratic, prosperous, tolerant and united Sri Lanka and work toward justice and reconciliation for both sides" (Blake 2009).

Application of the Good Humanitarian Donorship: Lost in translation?

With UN agencies and NGOs undermined, donors have a critical role to play in Sri Lanka. They need to follow developments closely and remain committed to a common stance and principled approach.

For example, there are ethical dilemmas when considering how to support and provide assistance in the state-run camps where those who managed to escape the conflict zone remain interned. In June 2009, control over IDP camps had yet to be transferred from the military to civilian authorities and aid agencies trying to provide assistance faced heavy restrictions. A Sri Lankan doctor, voicing the opinions of many, observed that the packed camps, surrounded by barbed wire, were inhumane and that it was an incongruity to see UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) tents in these camps which are anything but humanitarian. For UNHCR in Colombo, shelter is a right and they will provide this assistance. But is it possible to provide assistance without being able to monitor use?

"What makes this crisis particularly discomforting for the parties involved is that everyone anticipated the outcome."

© AFP PHOTO / HO / Sri Lankan Army

One NGO said: "We have to explain to the government that the funding that provides the support requires our presence for accountability reasons and that we simply can't not have access to the camps. For donors, it's Parliament and so on..." (DARA 2009). One major donor, expressing a view on the provision of food aid through the WFP but controlled by the government, felt that the humanitarian imperative at certain emergency stages had to supersede the accountability imperative.

Donors unanimously put forth five conditions that had to govern aid efforts:

- Full and unhindered access of aid agencies to camps;
- Freedom of movement of IDPs;[7]
- Demilitarisation of camps, including no uniforms or weapons;
- Early IDP return;
- ICRC access to previous conflict zones and respect for human rights and IHL.

These conditions were designed to shield humanitarian agencies from being used by the Sri Lankan Government or military, and prevent aid from doing harm. Their progress was to be monitored after three months. In August 2009, when the camps were hit by heavy rains, access remained restricted and rights groups continued to urge the government to free civilians from camps that continued to be guarded by soldiers and strung with barbed wire.

Good – and bad – practice

In the Sri Lankan context, relief agencies noted just how important donor understanding, commitment and presence were, given the complex environment. Comprehensive donor support requires a real appreciation for the situation and for humanitarian Principles.

In May 2009, key members of four international organisations – Human Rights Watch, the International Crisis Group, Amnesty International and the Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect – asked Japan, as the largest international donor to Sri Lanka, to "play a more active role" in confronting the worsening humanitarian crisis, saving countless civilian lives and implementing aid policies that ensure recovery. Japan has officially endorsed the *Good Humanitarian Donorship (GHD) Principles* and the guiding humanitarian principles agreed upon by the international community within Sri Lanka. It has also signed up to conditions that should govern humanitarian assistance in favour of IDPs. The overwhelming impression, however, is that Japan is not a staunch or vocal supporter of principled approaches and that perhaps it fails to fully identify with them.

Nonetheless, in June, Japan continued to be an active donor, albeit appearing to stay clear of providing assistance that would compromise the common approach foreseen by donors – funding organisations, for example, in the de-mining field, and focusing on establishing conditions for possible IDP return and recovery.

Vietnam's US$30,000 contribution was accompanied by a welcome for "the recent victory of the government and people of Sri Lanka" (Government of Sri Lanka). China, handing over its US$1 million cheque, stated it was "impressed by the sincere commitment and the efforts of the Sri Lankan Government to do its utmost to assist the large number of civilians who have come over to cleared areas" (The foundation of Co-Existence 2009).

East versus West

The Sri Lankan Government is openly critical of Western donors and in particular of Europeans. The aid community has known since the resumption of hostilities in 2007. Since last September, UN and humanitarian workers were forced by the government to leave LTTE areas.

At the peak of the humanitarian crisis in April 2009, the US and UK governments released statements calling for a pause in hostilities to facilitate humanitarian access and civilian departure from the 'no-fire zone'. To many, the actions of both governments and the UN were too little, too late. Part of the problem seems to be that no one wants to be in the spotlight and risk becoming *persona non grata* in Colombo. Hence, concerted and decisive action was missed.

Finally, Sri Lanka and Sri Lankans were possibly just not high enough on the international or domestic agendas of influential nations.

Behind the scenes, the US tried to exert pressure on the Sri Lankan Government, and the US Ambassador in Colombo is engaged on the humanitarian front. At the height of the crisis, the US Government released statements calling for a humanitarian pause, and its programme planning since at least the beginning of 2009 was very much ahead of other actors in focusing on post-conflict efforts.

The UK, despite its level of funding, was regarded as somewhat absent or distant and detached, with no real presence in Colombo and limited participation in coordinated efforts. Humanitarian personnel felt that the

UK should be more involved and that its potential principled contribution and influence was missed. In contrast to some Asian donors, DFID stresses that none of its assistance goes directly to the Government of Sri Lanka. DFID in fact relies mostly on multilateral partners for its effort.

The EC, through ECHO, was viewed by the vast majority of aid agencies as the best donor in Sri Lanka. Its comprehension of the situation and backing of humanitarian efforts was highly appreciated. In contrast to other crises, where a change in personnel in-country has weakened efforts or modified ECHO's stances or approach, continuity has been maintained. What proved specifically important for key humanitarian agencies is that ECHO was able to provide funding and support early on. Without this support, organisations would have had to shut down programmes and leave the country knowing that escalation of the conflict was imminent and capacity needed.

Other European donors, including Germany, are quick to confirm that the "international community must also expand its humanitarian aid" (German Information Centre 2009). They also warn that preferential trade regulations (Generalised System of Preferences (GSP+)) and an IMF loan can only be granted if the government of Sri Lanka finally acts to safeguard human rights and protect the entire population, and makes a start on a comprehensive political process of reconciliation and peace.

Lessons learnt and recommendations for the future

The case of Sri Lanka is important in the context of assessing donor responses, essentially because donors have such a key role. In the context of Sri Lanka, where the UN and NGOs are so weak, close donor coordination and a joint approach become essential.

For some, Sri Lanka is an example of good donor coordination, with the existence of guiding principles, and efforts to arrive at a common stance that includes Japan. While private funding is valued for its flexibility among other factors, it is recognised that official and governmental donor presence is essential to promote access, enable humanitarian action and safeguard essential principles.

It is those donors that are not active or present that are regarded as poorer donors, especially when they fail to back up common positions. As in other contexts, the issue of 'stray' GHD donors and non-traditional donors such as China surfaced, together with the urgency of bringing them to the table while not compromising existing Principles.

In reference to humanitarian reform, some aspects of the Sri Lankan context fuel the argument against a one-size-fits-all approach to processes and mechanisms related to the humanitarian system. Neither the protection nor shelter sectors led by UNHCR were clustered in Sri Lanka, the argument being that real coordination and information-sharing cannot take place in the presence of a government which has been a party to the conflict. The make-up of clusters and their functioning faces difficulties in crises that are complex emergencies.

Additional attention should be placed on the consequences of withdrawing international monitors from conflict areas, as occurred when the European Union declared the LTTE a terrorist group.

Looking to the future in Sri Lanka, important challenges remain. In addition to the spotlight that is necessarily placed on the need for material assistance and immediate plans, there are other, persisting needs – protection by presence is important and the situation in the north of the country has shifted attention away from the east. The ICRC shutting down its offices in many areas seems premature and to send a wrong message in terms of needs.

Conclusion

Reflections from the field include the fact that it is 'too late' for Sri Lanka. It may indeed be 'too late' in terms of avoiding immediate widespread loss of life and demonstrating how important saving lives and humanitarian action is for the international community. Donors can certainly do more to save lives and push issues of access. There is a continued need for further prioritising humanitarian action at the global level and within the international system. Reactions at the highest levels often come too late for them to make any difference on the ground.

Important rifts exist across donors. The 'Western' donors that were present in Sri Lanka were generally well regarded by the humanitarian community in Sri Lanka primarily because they sought to push forward a common and principled approach. More, however, could have and can still be done in terms of supporting protection efforts throughout the country.

In Sri Lanka, every effort to heal wounds in a divided country must be made, with decisive actions to safeguard the population in previously-held Tamil areas and to establish normalcy. A popular saying from the Hindu Deepavali festival is, "Hatred will never cease by hatred; hatred ceases by love alone." In this, the international community can play a supportive role.

About the Author

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Co-Founder, DARA

Silvia Hidalgo is the Co-Founder of DARA and has directed the organisation since its inception. She was responsible for the creation of the Humanitarian Response Index, which stemmed from her work assessing official donor funding in the Tsunami Evaluation Coalition against Good Humanitarian Donorship Principles. More recently, as a part of a Disaster Risk Reduction Initiative, she is involved in developing the Disaster Risk Management Index that measures countries' efforts in managing natural hazards-related risk. Prior to her involvement with DARA, she acted as Desk Officer for ECHO in Bosnia and Herzegovina, then as Head of the EC's Sarajevo sub-office, and Regional Delegate of the Spanish Red Cross in the wake of Hurricane Mitch, shaping the response in Central America. With over 15 years' experience in the field of humanitarian aid and development, she is an experienced evaluator and has worked for both donor governments and the Red Cross Movement, and assessed the performance of multi-stakeholder country strategies, UN agencies and NGOs. She is a member of the Board of FRIDE and a full member of Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action (ALNAP).

Notes

1 Information based on field interviews with key humanitarian agencies in Sri Lanka from 18 March 2009 to 28 March 2009 and 100 questionnaires on donor performance (including 84 OECD-DAC donors).

The HRI team, composed of Silvia Hidalgo, Nicolai Steen, Fernando Espada, expresses its gratitude to all those interviewed in Sri Lanka. The opinions expressed here are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of DARA.

2 The LTTE, also known as the Tamil Tigers, is a separatist group in Sri Lanka that has been advocating a homeland for ethnic Tamils since the 1980s on the grounds that they feel persecuted by Sri Lanka's ethnic majority, the Sinhalese. The LTTE, listed as a terrorist group by the European Union in 2006, is responsible for many high-level assassinations, and more than 200 suicide attacks. The Tamils are an ethnic group that mostly lives in southern India (mainly in the state of Tamil Nadu), and in northern and eastern Sri Lanka. Tamils comprise approximately ten percent of the island's population, according to a 2001 government census. Their mainly Hindu religion and Tamil language distinguish them from the majority of Sri Lankans who are Sinhalese – members of a largely Buddhist, Sinhala-speaking ethnic group. When Sri Lanka was under British rule, most Sri Lankans regarded the Tamil minority as collaborators and resented the Tamil's perceived preferential treatment. But since Sri Lanka became independent in 1948, the Sinhalese majority has dominated the country.

3 According to South Asia Terrorism Portal (2009), a terrorism database, more than 13,000 people were killed in 2009, including more than 9,000 civilians, the highest number of casualties in a single year since the conflict began.

4 United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) July figure. The number facilitated by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) was 275,000 in June 2009.

5 The Sri Lankan Government took effective control of Sri Lanka's Eastern province in mid-2007.

6 Japan, for its part, also officially signed up to the Principles and the common framework but did not come across as a staunch supporter or advocate.

7 Regarding the issue of freedom of movement for IDPs, ID registration cards were foreseen.

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4

Part 4

Donor Profiles

Donor Profiles

This section includes 23 profiles with the summary of the most prominent characteristics of the performance of each of the OECD-DAC donors assessed in the HRI. The purpose of the donor profiles is to highlight the areas where donors have individually performed well, issues that require greater attention and areas where they have improved their performance. Additional information can be found in Part 1 of the HRI 2009 report.

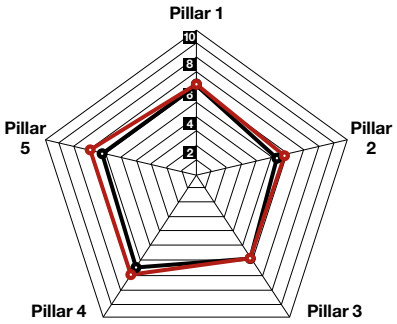
The scores and rankings for each donor are based on the 60 quantitative and qualitative indicators that make up the HRI, grouped in five pillars of practice. The indicators are themselves based on core concepts contained in the 23 principles of Good Humanitarian Donorship declaration, signed by all of the OCED-DAC members. Through an extensive research process, data is collected for each donor and the corresponding scores for each of the indicators are combined to get a global score by pillar. These scores are then compared among all the donors, and a ranking for each pillar results. Data comes from a variety of sources including a survey questionnaire of donor practice and extensive secondary sources such as the OECD-DAC, UN, World Bank and others.

In the profiles that follow, each donor's overall ranking in the HRI 2009 is provided, followed by a summary of its ranking by pillar, highlighting changes from 2008. The next section highlights some of the donor's best and worst rankings in individual indicators, in effect showing a donor's strengths and weaknesses in comparison to its peers in the OECD-DAC group. Many donor profiles also draw attention to the crises where the donor has performed particularly well, or particularly poorly. This data comes from the scores for the qualitative indicators collected in the HRI field survey.

The donor profiles also include a spider web chart that illustrates the donor's overall performance for each pillar in comparison to the average score of its peers. Finally, there is a table with a selection of the donor's highest and lowest scores by indicator, along with its corresponding ranking in comparison to other donors. The table helps to show each donor's strengths and weaknesses, as well as indicating room for improvement against the HRI's ten-point scale.

Australia

HRI 2009 Ranking: 10th



HRI 2009 scores by pillar

Pillar 1 Responding to needs
Pillar 2 Prevention, risk reduction and recovery
Pillar 3 Working with humanitarian partners
Pillar 4 Protection and International Law
Pillar 5 Learning and accountability

Australia
OECD–DAC average

Australia moved up one position in the HRI ranking this year, from 11th to 10th. Overall, Australia's scores in qualitative (survey) indicators fell in comparison to its peers, but it was still among the donors rated above the overall average. Improvements in several of the quantitative indicators were enough to climb one position. It performed best this year on Pillars 4 (Protection and International Law) and 5 (Learning and accountability), in which it ranked 5th and 6th respectively. It received its lowest ranking in Pillar 1 (Responding to needs) and Pillar 3 (Working with humanitarian partners), coming in at 12th and 13th respectively. In terms of generosity and burden sharing, Australia ranks 10th in comparison to its peers, based on volume of humanitarian assistance in proportion to GNI.

Compared with its peers, Australia ranked well in HRI indicators around the timeliness of funding to sudden onset disasters, equitable distribution of funding in accordance to needs and commitment to good practice. Australia also ranked above average in indicators around protection, accountability towards affected populations, implementation of refugee law and coordination. Australia's lowest rankings by indicator were around the provision of long-term funding, where it ranked 20th among the donors, equitable distribution of funding to different crisis countries and funding to NGOs.

In terms of performance by crisis, Australia overall scored slightly above the overall donor average in all crises studied, with slightly above average survey scores in Sri Lanka, Timor Leste and Myanmar, but below average in DRC and the occupied Palestinian Territories.

HRI 2009 results

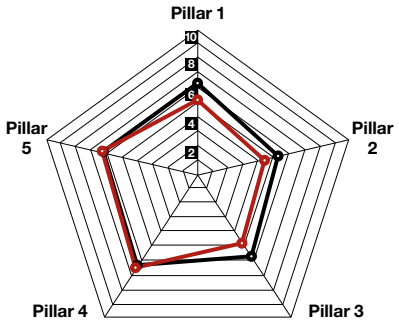
Highest scores	Score*	Rank**
Responding to needs		
Timeliness of funding to sudden onset disasters	10.00	1
Equitable distribution of funding against level of crisis and vulnerability	10.00	1
Equitable distribution of funding in accordance to needs in the crisis	9.04	3
Learning and accountability		
Promotion of good practice and quality standards	8.91	1
Reporting requirements for humanitarian actors	8.24	3

Lowest scores	Score*	Rank**
Responding to needs		
Equitable distribution of funding to different crisis countries	1.00	17
Timeliness of funding to complex emergencies	5.23	18
Working with humanitarian partners		
Funding to NGOs	3.71	18
Longer-term funding arrangements	4.04	20
Learning and accountability		
Use of recommendations from evaluations	5.83	18

* Based on HRI ten-point scale
** Ranking in comparison to peers

Austria

HRI 2009 Ranking: 18th



HRI 2009 scores by pillar

Pillar 1 Responding to needs
Pillar 2 Prevention, risk reduction and recovery
Pillar 3 Working with humanitarian partners
Pillar 4 Protection and International Law
Pillar 5 Learning and accountability

Austria
OECD–DAC average

Austria's ranking in the HRI has improved from 2008 to 2009, moving up three positions from 21st to 18th. The country improved its performance across all five pillars, most dramatically in Pillar 4 (Protection and International Law), moving up nine positions to 10th. It improved by six positions in Pillar 5 (Learning and accountability) to finish in 14th place this year. It also moved up three positions in Pillar 3 (Working with humanitarian partners), and one position in both Pillars 1 (Responding to needs) and 2 (Prevention, risk reduction and recovery). Improvements in Austria's ranking in several quantitative indicators, as well as positive changes in its rankings in the qualitative (survey) indicators in all five pillars of the HRI help explain Austria's climb in the rankings. Austria ranks 19th for generosity and burden sharing, based on volume of humanitarian assistance in proportion to GNI.

Compared with its peers, Austria received its highest rankings for indicators around neutrality and impartiality, non-discrimination, needs-based responses and supporting the needs of refugees, where it ranked first compared with its peers. In the HRI's quantitative indicators, Austria remains, however, among the bottom-ranked donors in terms of funding local capacity and funding UN coordination mechanisms and common services. It also received low rankings for the timeliness of funding to complex emergencies, funding of UN Consolidated Inter-Agency appeals, IFRC and ICRC Appeals, strengthening local communities' capacity for disaster and crisis preparedness and participation in main accountability initiatives.

HRI 2009 results

Highest scores	Score*	Rank**
Responding to needs		
Non-discrimination	9.37	1
Equitable distribution of funding against level of crisis and vulnerability	9.24	13
Neutrality and impartiality	9.00	1
Needs based responses	8.94	1
Protection and International Law		
Supporting needs of refugees	9.05	1

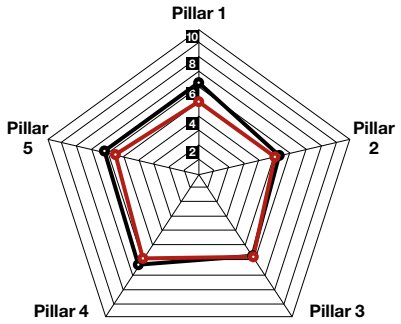
Lowest scores	Score*	Rank**
Responding to needs		
Equitable distribution of funding to different crisis countries	1.00	17
Prevention, risk reduction and recovery		
Funding international disaster risk mitigation mechanisms	1.21	16
Funding local capacity	1.14	21
Working with humanitarian partners		
Funding UN coordination mechanisms and common services	1.01	20
Learning and accountability		
Participation and support for accountability initiatives	1.00	22

* Based on HRI ten-point scale
** Ranking in comparison to peers

Note: Because of the low number of survey responses this year, data for Austria has been pooled with survey responses from 2008 to generate a more adequate sample size.

Belgium

HRI 2009 Ranking: 17th



HRI 2009 scores by pillar

Pillar 1 Responding to needs
Pillar 2 Prevention, risk reduction and recovery
Pillar 3 Working with humanitarian partners
Pillar 4 Protection and International Law
Pillar 5 Learning and accountability

Belgium
OECD–DAC average

Belgium's overall ranking in the HRI this year slid from 14th to 17th. Similarly, its ranking by pillar also decreased across the five pillars – most notably in Pillar 4 (Protection and International Law) where it moved down six positions to 17th place. This year it ranked 19th in Pillars 1 and 5, Responding to needs and Learning and accountability, respectively. The country ranked 15th in Pillar 2 (Prevention, risk reduction and recovery) and received its highest ranking of 12th in Pillar 3 (Working with humanitarian partners). In the indicator on generosity and burden sharing, Belgium ranked 14th in comparison to its peers, based on volume of humanitarian assistance in proportion to GNI.

Belgium's highest rankings compared with its peers were within Pillar 1 for indicators around equitable distribution of funding against the level of crisis and vulnerability (1st), distribution of funding in accordance to the needs in a crisis (4th) and funding local capacity (3rd) in Pillar 2. Belgium also ranked above the donor average in indicators around flexibility of funding and funding for UN appeals. The country was among the lowest ranking donors in many of the indicators of the HRI, such as the perception of neutrality and impartiality (22nd) non-discrimination (22nd) and timeliness of funding to complex emergencies (23rd). It also scored low in terms of strengthening humanitarian response capacity and facilitating safe humanitarian access. In the different crises studied, Belgium performed slightly below the overall donor average.

HRI 2009 results

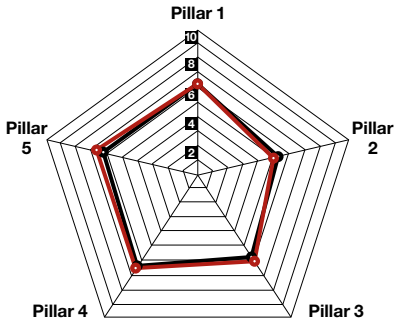
Highest scores	Score*	Rank**
Responding to needs		
Equitable distribution of funding against level of crisis and vulnerability	10.00	1
Equitable distribution of funding in accordance to needs in the crisis	8.46	4
Saving lives and maintaining human dignity	7.99	17
Working with humanitarian partners		
Funding UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeals	9.41	8
Respecting the roles of all components of the humanitarian sector	8.09	9

Lowest scores	Score*	Rank**
Responding to needs		
Timeliness of funding to complex emergencies	1.00	23
Equitable distribution of funding to different crisis countries	1.00	17
Prevention, risk reduction and recovery		
Funding international disaster risk mitigation mechanisms	1.00	18
Learning and accountability		
Participation and support for accountability initiatives	2.24	16
Conducting evaluations	1.11	20

* Based on HRI ten-point scale
** Ranking in comparison to peers

Canada

HRI 2009 Ranking: 13th



HRI 2009 scores by pillar

Pillar 1 Responding to needs
Pillar 2 Prevention, risk reduction and recovery
Pillar 3 Working with humanitarian partners
Pillar 4 Protection and International Law
Pillar 5 Learning and accountability

Canada
OECD-DAC average

Canada dropped three positions in the HRI 2009 ranking, from 10th in 2008 to 13th. The main factors behind the change in overall position are due to several quantitative indicators, but it continued to score well in many qualitative (survey) indicators. By pillar, Canada's best performance was 9th in Pillar 5 (learning and accountability) and 10th in Pillar 3 (working with humanitarian partners). Its lowest ranking was in Pillar 2, prevention, risk reduction and recovery, where it ranked 16th. Overall performance was close to the OECD-DAC average.

The highest rankings by indicator for Canada include funding to IFRC and ICRC appeals, where it ranks 1st compared with its peers, saving lives and maintaining human dignity (3rd), ensuring responses are adapted to changing needs (3rd), support to refugees (4th) and neutrality and impartiality (5th). Its lowest rankings by indicator include a 17th place ranking for support for assessing needs and funding to forgotten emergencies and those with low media coverage, 18th place for support for crisis prevention and preparedness measures, strengthening local capacity for disaster and crisis preparedness (20th). It also ranked poorly in indicators around support for monitoring and evaluations, and implementation of evaluation recommendations.

In the different crises studied in the HRI 2009, Canada scored above the overall donor average in China, Myanmar, Colombia, the occupied Palestinian Territories, around average in Ethiopia, and below average in Sri Lanka, Haiti and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

HRI 2009 results

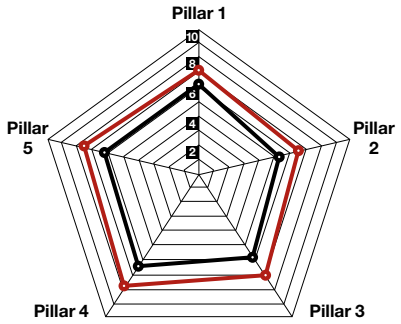
Highest scores	Score*	Rank**
Responding to needs		
Equitable distribution of funding to different crisis countries	9.25	8
Equitable distribution of funding against level of crisis and vulnerability	9.03	16
Saving lives and maintaining human dignity	8.60	3
Working with humanitarian partners		
Funding IFRC and ICRC appeals	10.00	1
Learning and accountability		
Conducting evaluations	8.98	10

Lowest scores	Score*	Rank**
Responding to needs		
Generosity and burden sharing	3.65	11
Prevention, risk reduction and recovery		
Funding international disaster risk mitigation mechanisms	2.89	13
Funding local capacity	2.88	11
Working with humanitarian partners		
Funding UN coordination mechanisms and common services	2.43	11
Un-earmarked funding	2.20	17

* Based on HRI ten-point scale
** Ranking in comparison to peers

Denmark

HRI 2009 Ranking: 4th



HRI 2009 scores by pillar

Pillar 1 Responding to needs
Pillar 2 Prevention, risk reduction and recovery
Pillar 3 Working with humanitarian partners
Pillar 4 Protection and International Law
Pillar 5 Learning and accountability

Denmark
OECD–DAC average

Denmark slipped one position in the HRI ranking, from 3rd to 4th. It ranked consistently well across all pillars, with a first place ranking in Pillar 5 (Learning and accountability), 2nd position in Pillar 2 (Prevention, risk reduction and recovery), and 3rd place in both Pillar 3 (Working with humanitarian partners) and Pillar 4 (Protection and International Law). In Pillar 1 (Responding to needs), it was in 6th place. It ranked 6th among the OECD-DAC group in the indicator for generosity and burden sharing. Its overall performance was above average, compared with its peers.

Denmark ranked 1st in several key indicators: funding to CERF and other quick disbursement mechanisms, funding to UN consolidated appeals and funding to IFRC and ICRC appeals, equitable distribution of funding against the level of crisis and vulnerability, beneficiary involvement and building local capacity to work with humanitarian actors. It also ranked 1st in support for protection, for supporting needs of internally displaced people and for participation and support for accountability initiatives. In terms of overall support for prevention, Denmark also took the top position for funding international disaster risk mitigation mechanisms and mainstreaming risk reduction and prevention in the response, with a 2nd place ranking in strengthening local community capacity for disaster and crisis preparedness. Its lowest rankings were in indicators on support not affected by other crises (17th), timeliness of funding to sudden onset disasters (19th) and equitable distribution of funding in accordance to the needs in the crisis (20th). In the different crises studied, Denmark generally performed above the overall donor average in all crises, helping it to move up one position in the qualitative ranking.

HRI 2009 results

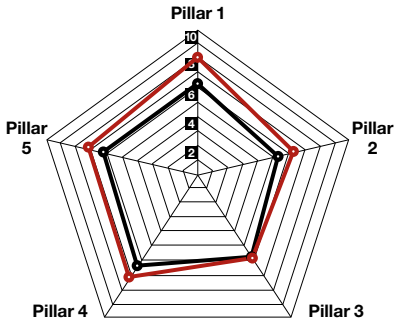
Highest scores	Score*	Rank**
Responding to needs		
Equitable distribution of funding against level of crisis and vulnerability	10.00	1
Prevention, risk reduction and recovery		
Funding international disaster risk mitigation mechanisms	10.00	1
Working with humanitarian partners		
Funding IFRC and ICRC appeals	10.00	1
Funding UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeals	10.00	1
Funding to CERF and other quick disbursement mechanisms	10.00	1

Lowest scores	Score*	Rank**
Responding to needs		
Equitable distribution of funding in accordance to needs in the crisis	4.60	20
Timeliness of funding to sudden onset disasters	3.50	19
Prevention, risk reduction and recovery		
Funding local capacity	2.24	13
Working with humanitarian partners		
Un-earmarked funding	4.06	10
Funding UN coordination mechanisms and common services	3.95	5

* Based on HRI ten-point scale
** Ranking in comparison to peers

European Commission

HRI 2009 Ranking: 5th



HRI 2009 scores by pillar

Pillar 1 Responding to needs
Pillar 2 Prevention, risk reduction and recovery
Pillar 3 Working with humanitarian partners
Pillar 4 Protection and International Law
Pillar 5 Learning and accountability

European Commission
OECD–DAC average

The European Commission maintained its 5th place ranking this year compared with last year. In the rankings by pillar, there was little variation from 2008. The EC scored highest in Pillars 2 (Prevention, risk reduction and recovery) and 5 (Learning and accountability), where it ranked 3rd. Its lowest ranking was in Pillar 3, where it obtained a ranking of 11th amongst the 23 donors assessed.

In terms of specific indicators, the EC ranked highest in several indicators, with 1st place rankings in indicators around timeliness of funding to complex emergencies and, not surprisingly, donor capacity for informed decision-making. The EC also did well in indicators for funding local capacity, support to local and government authorities' coordination capacity, adapting to changing needs, evaluations of programmes, with 2nd place rankings in each, and 3rd place rankings for beneficiary involvement, and transparency of decision-making.

The EC was among the lowest-ranked donors in indicators around flexibility of funding, un-earmarked funding, conditionality of aid, and for its reporting requirements, indicating that this is a consistent set of issues with its operational partners.

The EC's wide geographic coverage of many different crises is reflected in the number of survey responses gathered by the HRI, well above all other donors. However, it had mixed performance in the different crises studied in the HRI, with the best scores in Afghanistan and Georgia, and slightly above the overall donor average in Sri Lanka, Timor Leste, Ethiopia and Somalia. Its survey scores were below the overall donor average in Colombia, Haiti, Myanmar, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Chad.

HRI 2009 results

Highest scores	Score*	Rank**
Responding to needs		
Timeliness of funding to complex emergencies	10.00	1
Equitable distribution of funding against level of crisis and vulnerability	9.43	12
Equitable distribution of funding in accordance to needs in the crisis	9.14	2
Saving lives and maintaining human dignity	8.58	4
Learning and accountability		
Conducting evaluations	9.05	7

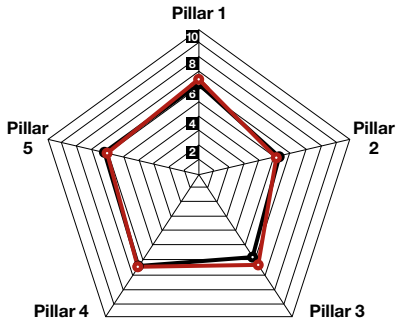
Lowest scores	Score*	Rank**
Responding to needs		
Assessing needs	5.67	18
Working with humanitarian partners		
Flexibility	5.60	22
Strengthening humanitarian response capacity	5.34	13
Longer-term funding arrangements	4.61	15
Un-earmarked funding	1.10	22

* Based on HRI ten-point scale
** Ranking in comparison to peers

Note: as a collective body, the European Commission is not measured against several of the quantitative indicators, such as implementation of IHL or generosity.

Finland

HRI 2009 Ranking: 12th



HRI 2009 scores by pillar

Pillar 1 Responding to needs
Pillar 2 Prevention, risk reduction and recovery
Pillar 3 Working with humanitarian partners
Pillar 4 Protection and International Law
Pillar 5 Learning and accountability

Finland
OECD–DAC average

Finland is ranked 12th in the HRI ranking for the second consecutive year. In Pillar 1 (Responding to needs) it ranked 10th, on Pillar 3 (Working with humanitarian partners) it ranked 8th, while its ranking for Pillar 2 (Prevention, risk reduction, and recovery) moved from 21st to 14th. However, Finland dropped from 9th to 14th on Pillar 4 (Protection and International Law) and from 13th to 16th on Pillar 5 (Learning and accountability). Overall performance is around the OECD-DAC average. It ranked 8th overall in terms of generosity and burden sharing.

Finland was ranked 1st for support to IFRC and ICRC appeals, for equitable distribution of funding to different crisis countries and facilitating safe humanitarian access. It also scored well in indicators for assessing needs, funding decisions based on needs, strengthening humanitarian response capacity and for support not affected by other crises, in all of which it ranked 2nd, compared with its peers. Finland was among the poorest performers in indicators such as supporting the needs of internally displaced persons (22nd), funding international disaster risk mitigation mechanisms (18th), respect for human rights law (19th) and support for monitoring and evaluation (22nd), beneficiary involvement (21st) and equitable distribution of funding in accordance to the needs in the crisis (22nd). Finland's performance in the different crises studied was slightly below the overall donor average, particularly in supporting local and government authorities´ coordination capacity and longer-term funding arrangements.

HRI 2009 results

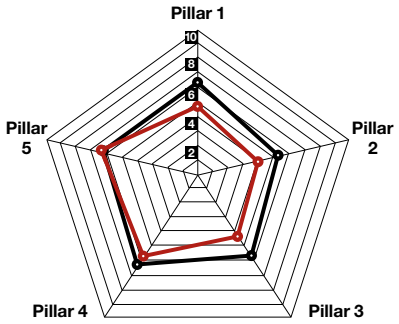
Highest scores	Score*	Rank**
Responding to needs		
Equitable distribution of funding to different crisis countries	10.00	1
Equitable distribution of funding against level of crisis and vulnerability	9.68	10
Working with humanitarian partners		
Funding IFRC and ICRC appeals	10.00	1
Funding to CERF and other quick disbursement mechanisms	8.88	9
Learning and accountability		
Conducting evaluations	9.10	6

Lowest scores	Score*	Rank**
Responding to needs		
Equitable distribution of funding in accordance to needs in the crisis	3.84	22
Prevention, risk reduction and recovery		
Funding local capacity	3.73	7
Funding international disaster risk mitigation mechanisms	1.00	18
Working with humanitarian partners		
Funding UN coordination mechanisms and common services	3.41	8
Learning and accountability		
Participation and support for accountability initiatives	2.09	17

* Based on HRI ten-point scale
** Ranking in comparison to peers

France

HRI 2009 Ranking: 20th



HRI 2009 scores by pillar

Pillar 1 Responding to needs
Pillar 2 Prevention, risk reduction and recovery
Pillar 3 Working with humanitarian partners
Pillar 4 Protection and International Law
Pillar 5 Learning and accountability

France
OECD–DAC average

France ranked 20th among the donors in the HRI 2008 and again in the HRI 2009. France's rankings by pillar were among the lowest in the donor group. Its highest ranking was 13th in Pillar 5 (Learning and accountability), largely due to the indicator on conducting evaluations, where it ranked 1st. This is followed by an 18th place ranking in Pillar 4 (Protection and International Law) and 20th position in Pillar 3 (Working with humanitarian partners). In Pillars 1 (Responding to needs) and 2 (Prevention, risk reduction and recovery), France ranked 22nd. In terms of generosity and burden sharing, France rated 21st compared with the rest of the OECD-DAC group.

France's rankings in nearly all of the HRI's quantitative and qualitative indicators were among the lowest compared with it peers. In key indicators such as neutrality and impartiality, independence from non-humanitarian objectives, assessing needs, timeliness of funding to complex emergencies, supporting the transition between relief, recovery and development, and longer-term funding arrangements, France ranked 21st. It also scored well below average in respect for international humanitarian law (20th), crisis prevention and preparedness (20th), funding local capacity (22nd) and conditionality of aid (20th), funding to CERF and other quick disbursement mechanisms (20th) and funding to UN consolidated appeals (20th). On a positive note, France was the third best donor in terms of timeliness of funding to sudden onset disasters, 7th for un-earmarked funding, and 9th for respect for human rights law and use of recommendations from evaluations. France performed well below the overall donor average in all of the crises studied for this year's HRI, with the exception of Chad, where it rated close to average.

HRI 2009 results

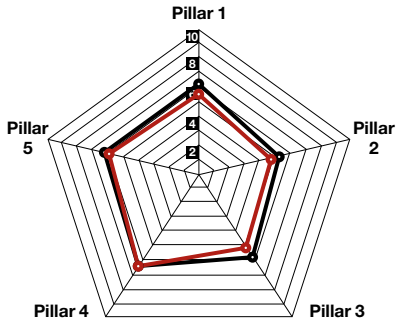
Highest scores	Score*	Rank**
Responding to needs		
Equitable distribution of funding against level of crisis and vulnerability	9.17	15
Non-discrimination	8.11	19
Equitable distribution of funding in accordance to needs in the crisis	8.00	8
Saving lives and maintaining human dignity	7.93	18
Learning and accountability		
Conducting evaluations	10.00	1

Lowest scores	Score*	Rank**
Responding to needs		
Generosity and burden sharing	1.04	21
Equitable distribution of funding to different crisis countries	1.00	17
Prevention, risk reduction and recovery		
Funding local capacity	1.11	22
Funding international disaster risk mitigation mechanisms	1.00	18
Working with humanitarian partners		
Funding UN coordination mechanisms and common services	1.06	19

* Based on HRI ten-point scale
** Ranking in comparison to peers

Germany

HRI 2009 Ranking: 16th



HRI 2009 scores by pillar

Pillar 1 Responding to needs
Pillar 2 Prevention, risk reduction and recovery
Pillar 3 Working with humanitarian partners
Pillar 4 Protection and International Law
Pillar 5 Learning and accountability

Germany
OECD–DAC average

Germany climbed one position in this year's HRI, to 16th position. Its best ranking was in Pillar 4 (Protection and International Law), where it reached 15th place, followed by Pillar 1 (Responding to needs) in 16th position, and 17th position in Pillar 2 (Prevention, risk reduction and recovery), Pillar 3 (Working with humanitarian partners) and Pillar 5 (Learning and accountability). In the indicator for generosity and burden sharing, Germany is ranked 16th in comparison to its peers.

In the HRI's individual indicators Germany has strengths in mainstreaming risk reduction and prevention into the response, and for crisis prevention and preparedness measures, with 3rd place rankings. However, it only ranked 15th for funding international disaster risk mitigation mechanisms. Germany also did well in indicators for funding to NGOs (1st), advocacy for the respect of human rights (2nd), respect for the roles of the different components of the humanitarian sector (2nd) and needs-based responses (4th). It ranked 2nd for supporting the needs of refugees, but only 16th for implementation of refugee law. While it ranked well in support for monitoring and evaluation and promotion of good practice and quality standards (3rd), it was 19th in terms of conducting evaluations. Indicators around funding issues were another area with poor rankings: 17th in timeliness of funding to partners, funding local capacity and longer-term funding arrangements, 18th in conditionality of aid that does not compromise humanitarian action, 19th in timeliness of funding to complex emergencies, 19th in funding UN consolidated appeals, 20th in un-earmarked funding and 21st in flexibility of funding. Germany's performance was around the overall donor average in the crises studied this year, with slightly better than average scores in the occupied Palestinian Territories.

HRI 2009 results

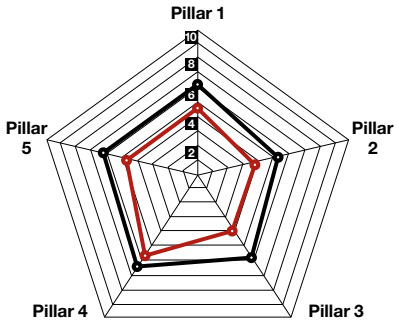
Highest scores	Score*	Rank**
Responding to needs		
Equitable distribution of funding to different crisis countries	9.01	11
Non-discrimination	8.77	8
Working with humanitarian partners		
Funding to NGOs	10.00	1
Respect for the roles of the different components of the humanitarian sector	8.63	2
Learning and accountability		
Promotion of good practice and quality standards	8.66	3

Lowest scores	Score*	Rank**
Prevention, risk reduction and recovery		
Funding to international disaster risk mitigation mechanisms	1.39	15
Funding local capacity	1.35	19
Working with humanitarian partners		
Un-earmarked funding	1.55	20
Funding UN coordination mechanisms and common services	1.10	18
Learning and accountability		
Conducting evaluations	1.21	19

* Based on HRI ten-point scale
** Ranking in comparison to peers

Greece

HRI 2009 Ranking: 22nd



HRI 2009 scores by pillar

Pillar 1 Responding to needs
Pillar 2 Prevention, risk reduction and recovery
Pillar 3 Working with humanitarian partners
Pillar 4 Protection and International Law
Pillar 5 Learning and accountability

Greece
OECD–DAC average

Greece received an overall ranking of 22nd in this year's HRI. It showed slight improvement in its ranking for Pillar 4 (Protection and International Law), moving from 22nd to 19th. Its next best ranking by pillar was for Pillar 1 (Responding to needs) at 21st followed by a ranking of 22nd in Pillar 2 (Prevention, risk reduction and recovery). Performance in Pillar 3 (Working with humanitarian partners) and Pillar 5 (Learning and accountability) remained at the bottom of the donor list (23rd). Greece's ranking for generosity and burden sharing was 17th among the donor group.

By indicator, Greece ranked well for non-discrimination in humanitarian action (5th), along with the indicators for support unaffected by other crises (4th), and for assistance free of conditionality that compromises humanitarian action (7th). It ranked 9th among the donors with regards to maintaining independence from non-humanitarian objectives, for equitable distribution of funding to different crisis countries, and equitable distribution of funding in accordance to the needs in the crisis, but its rankings were consistently low across nearly all other indicators in the HRI. For example, it ranked 22nd for needs assessments, needs-based response and funding based on needs assessments, three critical indicators to ensure that assistance is in accordance to needs. Greece performed well below the overall donor average in all of the crises studied this year.

HRI 2009 results

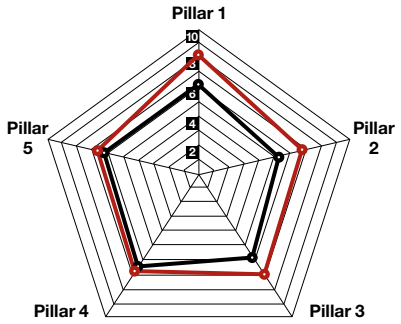
Highest scores	Score*	Rank**
Responding to needs		
Equitable distribution of funding to different crisis countries	9.22	9
Non-discrimination	9.00	5
Neutrality and impartiality	8.00	14
Saving lives and maintaining human dignity	7.92	19
Equitable distribution of funding in accordance to needs in the crisis	7.83	9

Lowest scores	Score*	Rank**
Prevention, risk reduction and recovery		
Funding international disaster risk mitigation mechanisms	1.00	18
Working with humanitarian partners		
Funding UN coordination mechanisms and common services	1.20	17
Funding to CERF and other quick disbursement mechanisms	1.13	19
Learning and accountability		
Participation and support for accountability initiatives	1.20	20
Conducting evaluations	1.00	22

* Based on HRI ten-point scale
** Ranking in comparison to peers

Ireland

HRI 2009 Ranking: 3rd



HRI 2009 scores by pillar

Pillar 1 Responding to needs
Pillar 2 Prevention, risk reduction and recovery
Pillar 3 Working with humanitarian partners
Pillar 4 Protection and International Law
Pillar 5 Learning and accountability

Ireland
OECD–DAC average

Ireland ranked 3rd overall in the 2009 HRI, moving up one place over last year. It took top ranking in Pillar 2 (Prevention, risk reduction and recovery), moving up from 5th place last year. It was among the top donors on Pillar 1 (Responding to needs), shifting from 4th to 3rd, and in Pillar 3 (Working with humanitarian partners), with a 5th place ranking, and Pillar 4 (Protection and International Law), at 7th place. In Pillar 5, however, Ireland slid from 6th place in 2008 to 10th place this year. Ireland ranked 1st among its peers for generosity and burden sharing.

In spite of Ireland's consistently high rankings across most of the pillars, its ranking by indicator vary widely. It ranked highest among the donor group for independence from non-humanitarian objectives, timeliness of funding to complex emergencies, funding local capacity, conditionality that does not compromise humanitarian action and flexibility. It also ranked 1st for funding to UN consolidated appeals, funding IFRC and ICRC appeals, UN coordination mechanisms and CERF and other quick disbursement mechanisms. Ireland also excelled on indicators regarding respect for human rights law (1st), supporting the transition from recovery to development (2nd) and reporting requirements (2nd). In contrast, it was among the lowest donors in rankings for protection (21st), supporting the needs of refugees (21st) and supporting local and government authorities' coordination capacity (22nd). In the different crises studied this year Ireland scored slightly below the overall donor average.

HRI 2009 results

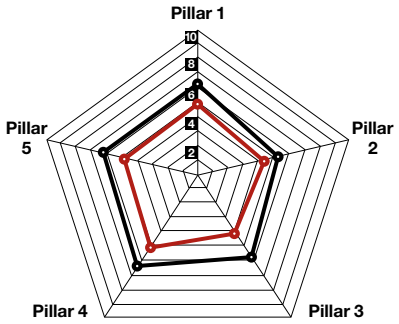
Highest scores	Score*	Rank**
Responding to needs		
Timeliness of funding to complex emergencies	10.00	1
Prevention, risk reduction and recovery		
Funding local capacity	10.00	1
Working with humanitarian partners		
Funding to CERF and other quick disbursement mechanisms	10.00	1
Funding UN coordination mechanisms and common services	10.00	1
Protection and International Law		
Respect of human rights law	10.00	1

Lowest scores	Score*	Rank**
Working with humanitarian partners		
Un-earmarked funding	4.80	6
Longer-term funding arrangements	4.58	16
Support local and government authorities' coordination capacity	4.22	22
Learning and accountability		
Use of recommendations from evaluations	5.10	21
Monitoring adherence to quality standards.	4.97	20

* Based on HRI ten-point scale
** Ranking in comparison to peers

Italy

HRI 2009 Ranking: 21st



HRI 2009 scores by pillar

Pillar 1 Responding to needs
Pillar 2 Prevention, risk reduction and recovery
Pillar 3 Working with humanitarian partners
Pillar 4 Protection and International Law
Pillar 5 Learning and accountability

Italy
OECD–DAC average

Italy's overall ranking dropped from 19th to 21st in the HRI 2009. Its best rankings were 20th in Pillar 1 (Responding to needs) and Pillar 2 (Prevention, risk reduction and recovery), 21st in Pillar 5 (Learning and accountability) and Pillar 4 (Protection and International Law) and 22nd in Pillar 3 (Working with humanitarian partners), demonstrating consistently poor performance in comparison to its peers. Italy ranked 20th among its peers for generosity and burden sharing.

Italy received its highest indicator rankings for the equitable distribution of funds to different crisis countries, ranking 3rd and 4th for the timeliness of its funding to sudden onset disasters. It was 10th among its peers on the indicator regarding funding to forgotten emergencies and, in those with low media coverage.

With the exception of a few indicators, such as beneficiary involvement (11th), strengthening local community capacity for disaster and crisis preparedness, funding local capacity and funding international disaster mitigation mechanisms, where it ranked 14th in each, Italy's performance in all other indicators was within the very bottom of the ranking. For example, it ranked 22nd for saving lives and maintaining human dignity, timeliness of funding to complex emergencies, crisis prevention and preparedness, reliability, funding to NGOs, conditionality that does not compromise humanitarian action and conducting evaluations. These poor rankings are confirmed by its performance in the crises studied this year, where Italy came in well below the overall donor average.

HRI 2009 results

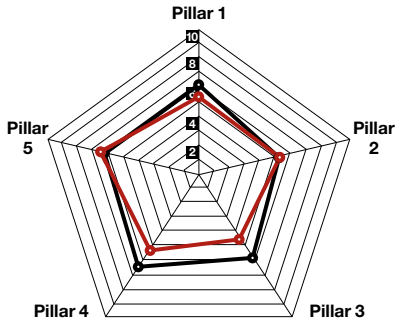
Highest scores	Score*	Rank**
Responding to needs		
Equitable distribution of funding to different crisis countries	9.96	3
Non-discrimination	8.31	18
Timeliness of funding to sudden onset disasters	7.63	4
Working with humanitarian partners		
Respect for the roles of the different components of the humanitarian sector	7.85	13
Learning and accountability		
Promotion of good practice and quality standards	7.86	16

Lowest scores	Score*	Rank**
Responding to needs		
Generosity and burden sharing	1.26	20
Working with humanitarian partners		
Funding to NGOs	1.42	22
Funding to CERF and other quick disbursement mechanisms	1.36	17
Funding UN coordination mechanisms and common services	1.27	16
Learning and accountability		
Conducting evaluations	1.00	22

* Based on HRI ten-point scale
** Ranking in comparison to peers

Japan

HRI 2009 Ranking: 19th



HRI 2009 scores by pillar

Pillar 1 Responding to needs
Pillar 2 Prevention, risk reduction and recovery
Pillar 3 Working with humanitarian partners
Pillar 4 Protection and International Law
Pillar 5 Learning and accountability

Japan
OECD–DAC average

Japan dropped one position in the HRI rankings, to 19th. It best ranking by pillar was in Pillar 5 (Learning and accountability), where it moved from 17th to 12th, followed by a 13th place in Pillar 2 (Prevention, risk reduction and recovery). In Pillar 1 (Responding to needs), Japan ranked 17th, and in Pillar 3 (Working with humanitarian partners) it was placed 19th among its peers. Its worst ranking was in Pillar 4 (Protection and international law), where it ranked 20th. Japan was 18th among donors for generosity and burden sharing.

By indicator, Japan ranked 1st for monitoring adherence to quality standards, equitable distribution of funding against level of crisis and vulnerability, 5th for strengthening humanitarian response capacity, 6th for supporting monitoring and evaluation and for supporting the transition between relief, early recovery and development, and 7th for indicators on adapting to changing needs and respecting the roles of the different components of the humanitarian sector. Japan also scored well for equitable funding across crises and funding to forgotten emergencies and those with low media coverage. For the timeliness of funding to sudden onset disasters, however, Japan ranked lowest of all donors, at 23rd. It scored only slightly higher for the implementation of refugee law (22nd), respect for human rights law (21st), funding UN coordination mechanisms (21st), un-earmarked funding (21st) and funding IFRC and ICRC appeals. For all crises studied, Japan scored below the donor average, with the exception of Afghanistan, where it rated well above the donor average.

HRI 2009 results

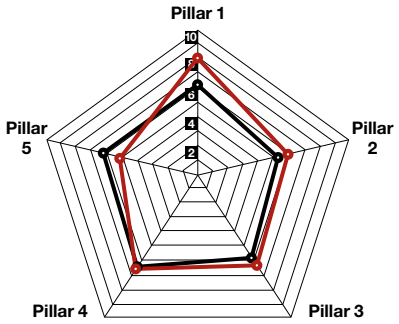
Highest scores	Score*	Rank**
Responding to needs		
Equitable distribution of funding against level of crisis and vulnerability	10.00	1
Equitable distribution of funding to different crisis countries	9.83	5
Funding to forgotten emergencies and those with low media coverage	8.75	4
Equitable distribution of funding through UN appeals in accordance to the needs in the crisis	8.46	5
Learning and accountability		
Conducting evaluations	8.98	11

Lowest scores	Score*	Rank**
Responding to needs		
Timeliness of funding to sudden onset disasters	1.00	23
Working with humanitarian partners		
Funding to CERF and other quick disbursement mechanisms	1.03	21
Funding UN coordination mechanisms and common services	1.01	21
Protection and International Law		
Respect for human rights law	1.04	21
Implementation of refugee law	1.00	22

* Based on HRI ten-point scale
** Ranking in comparison to peers

Luxembourg

HRI 2009 Ranking: 7th



HRI 2009 scores by pillar

Pillar 1 Responding to needs
Pillar 2 Prevention, risk reduction and recovery
Pillar 3 Working with humanitarian partners
Pillar 4 Protection and International Law
Pillar 5 Learning and accountability

Luxembourg
OECD–DAC average

Luxembourg maintained its 7th place ranking in the HRI this year. Its highest ranking was in Pillar 1 (Responding to needs), where it dropped slightly from 2nd to 4th place. In Pillar 2 (Prevention, risk reduction and recovery) Luxembourg moved up to 4th place, from 7th place in 2008. Its ranking in Pillar 3 (Working with humanitarian partners) dropped four positions from 5th to 9th, and in Pillar 4 (Protection and International Law), it moved from 5th to 12th place. Luxembourg's lowest ranking was in Pillar 5 (Learning and accountability), where it came in 20th among all donors. Luxembourg ranked first among the donors for the HRI 2009 on generosity and burden sharing.

Luxembourg ranked very well among its peers in several indicators on funding, with first place rankings for funding IFRC and ICRC appeals, funding UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeals, funding CERF and other quick disbursement mechanisms, and for funding international disaster mitigation mechanisms (2nd). It also did well in assessing needs (3rd) and maintaining independence from non-humanitarian objectives (3rd). However, Luxembourg was among the lowest ranked donors in indicators on donor capacity for informed decision-making (21st), commitment to saving lives (20th), beneficiary involvement (19th), funding to forgotten emergencies and those with low media coverage (20th) and strengthening humanitarian response capacity (20th). It ranked 22nd in several indicators around accountability, including transparency of funding and decision-making, monitoring adherence to quality standards and participation and support for accountability initiatives. Luxembourg's performance in the different crises studied was below the donor average.

HRI 2009 results

Highest scores	Score*	Rank**
Responding to needs		
Generosity and burden sharing	10.00	1
Prevention, risk reduction and recovery		
Funding international disaster risk mitigation mechanisms	9.84	2
Working with humanitarian partners		
Funding UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeals	10.00	1
Funding IFRC and ICRC appeals	10.00	1
Funding to CERF and other quick disbursement mechanisms	10.00	1

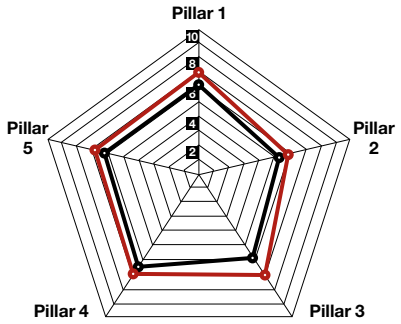
Lowest scores	Score*	Rank**
Prevention, risk reduction and recovery		
Funding local capacity	3.02	10
Working with humanitarian partners		
Un-earmarked funding	2.63	15
Funding UN coordination mechanisms and common services	1.57	15
Learning and accountability		
Conducting evaluations	1.58	18
Participation and support for accountability initiatives	1.00	22

* Based on HRI ten-point scale
** Ranking in comparison to peers

Note: Because of the low number of survey responses this year, data for Luxembourg has been pooled with survey responses from 2008 to generate a more adequate sample size.

Netherlands

HRI 2009 Ranking: 6th



HRI 2009 scores by pillar

Pillar 1 Responding to needs
Pillar 2 Prevention, risk reduction and recovery
Pillar 3 Working with humanitarian partners
Pillar 4 Protection and International Law
Pillar 5 Learning and accountability

Netherlands
OECD–DAC average

The Netherlands maintained its 6th place ranking in the HRI 2009. It ranked 4th in Pillar 3 (Working with humanitarian partners and achieved 5th place in Pillar 2 (Prevention, risk reduction and recovery), up from 16th in 2008, followed by 6th place in Pillar 4 (Protection and International Law), 7th position in Pillar 1 (Responding to needs) and 8th in Pillar 5 (Learning and accountability). The Netherlands was among the top ranked donors in terms of generosity and burden sharing, ranking 5th.

In comparison to its peers, the Netherlands did very well overall in the HRI specific indicators. It ranked 1st in seven indicators: advocacy for the respect for human rights, respect for the roles of the different components of the humanitarian sector, equitable distribution of funding against level of crisis and vulnerability criteria, funding to UN consolidated appeals, funding to IFRC and ICRC appeals, funding to CERF and other quick disbursement mechanisms and support for monitoring and evaluation. It was 2nd for un-earmarked funding and 3rd for funding to forgotten emergencies and those with low media coverage, support for local and government authorities' coordination capacity and strengthening local capacity for disaster and crisis preparedness. It received some of its lowest rankings for indicators related to timeliness, including timely funding to sudden onset disasters and IFRC emergency appeals, where it ranked 22nd, and timely funding to complex emergencies with UN appeals, where it ranked 16th. It also received low marks for accountability towards affected populations, reporting requirements for humanitarian actors (16th) and implementing international humanitarian law (17th). The Netherlands' performance in different crises studied was better than the overall average, particularly in Afghanistan and the occupied Palestinian Territories.

HRI 2009 results

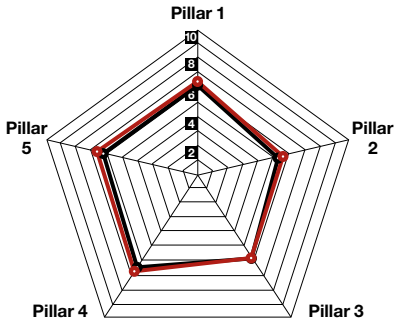
Highest scores	Score*	Rank**
Responding to needs		
Equitable distribution of funding against level of crisis and vulnerability	10.00	1
Equitable distribution of funding to different crisis countries	9.90	4
Working with humanitarian partners		
Funding UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeals	10.00	1
Funding IFRC and ICRC appeals	10.00	1
Funding to CERF and other quick disbursement mechanisms	10.00	1

Lowest scores	Score*	Rank**
Responding to needs		
Timeliness of funding to sudden onset disasters	1.84	22
Prevention, risk reduction and recovery		
Funding local capacity	4.79	5
Working with humanitarian partners		
Funding UN coordination mechanisms and common services	4.74	4
Funding to NGOs	4.10	15
Protection and International Law		
Respect for international humanitarian law	5.17	17

* Based on HRI ten-point scale
** Ranking in comparison to peers

New Zealand

HRI 2009 Ranking: 11th



HRI 2009 scores by pillar

Pillar 1 Responding to needs
Pillar 2 Prevention, risk reduction and recovery
Pillar 3 Working with humanitarian partners
Pillar 4 Protection and International Law
Pillar 5 Learning and accountability

New Zealand
OECD–DAC average

New Zealand moved up two positions this year to rank 11th overall in the HRI 2009. Its best performance was in Pillar 4 (Protection and International Law), where it climbed six positions to 8th, followed by Pillar 2 (Prevention, risk reduction and recovery), where it ranked 10th, and Pillar 1 (Responding to needs) and Pillar 5 (Learning and accountability), where it ranked 11th. New Zealand was 14th in Pillar 3 (Working with humanitarian partners), consistent with its position in the HRI 2008. In terms of generosity and burden sharing, New Zealand ranked 9th in comparison to its peers.

The country received top ranking in indicators for commitment to saving lives and maintaining human dignity, funding decisions based on needs assessments, support not affected by other crises, funding IFRC and ICRC appeals and support for the transition between relief, recovery and development. It also did well in indicators for protection and flexibility of funding, with a 2nd place ranking in flexibility of funding, conducting evaluations, and accountability towards affected populations, 3rd place in un-earmarked funding, 5th place in supporting the needs of internally displaced persons and in implementing human rights law, and 6th position in facilitating safe humanitarian access.

These are in contrast to its 22nd ranking in supporting needs of refugees, its 19th place in terms of reliability, transparency of funding and decision-making processes, supporting government and local authorities' response responsibilities and longer-term funding arrangements, and its 17th place for strengthening humanitarian response capacity. New Zealand rated generally above the overall donor average in all crises studied.

HRI 2009 results

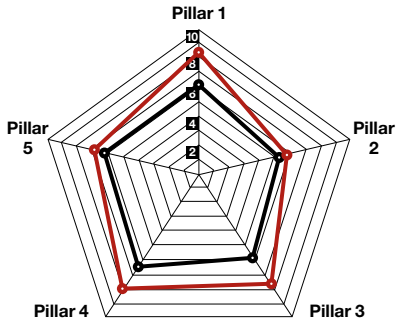
Highest scores	Score*	Rank**
Responding to needs		
Support not affected by other crises	9.23	1
Non-discrimination	9.19	2
Saving lives and maintaining human dignity	8.92	1
Working with humanitarian partners		
Funding IFRC and ICRC appeals	10.00	1
Learning and accountability		
Conducting evaluations	9.52	2

Lowest scores	Score*	Rank**
Prevention, risk reduction and recovery		
Funding international disaster risk mitigation mechanisms	1.00	18
Working with humanitarian partners		
Longer-term funding arrangements	4.23	19
Funding to CERF and other quick disbursement mechanisms	3.40	13
Funding UN coordination mechanisms and common services	1.67	14
Learning and accountability		
Participation and support for accountability initiatives	2.90	13

* Based on HRI ten-point scale
** Ranking in comparison to peers

Norway

HRI 2009 Ranking: 1st



HRI 2009 scores by pillar

Pillar 1 Responding to needs
Pillar 2 Prevention, risk reduction and recovery
Pillar 3 Working with humanitarian partners
Pillar 4 Protection and International Law
Pillar 5 Learning and accountability

Norway
OECD–DAC average

Norway is this year's best donor in the HRI 2009 overall ranking, moving up one position from 2008. It took 1st place in the ranking in Pillar 1 (Responding to needs) and Pillar 3 (Working with humanitarian partners), 2nd place in Pillar 4 (Protection and International Law) and 7th place in Pillar 2 (Prevention, risk reduction and recovery), where it moved up several positions, and in Pillar 5 (Learning and accountability). Norway ranked 1st in terms of generosity and burden sharing.

Some of its top rankings by indicator were 1st place rankings for funding to CERF and other quick disbursement mechanisms, funding IFRC, ICRC and UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeals, and funding UN coordination mechanisms and common services. This was supported by high rankings in qualitative indicators where Norway's partners gave top marks for support for crisis prevention and preparedness measures, coordination, and conditionality of aid that does not compromise humanitarian action, all ranked at 2nd, with 3rd place rankings for protection and funding to NGOs. In the area of legal frameworks, Norway ranked well in terms of respect for international humanitarian law (1st), respect for human rights (2nd) and implementation of refugee law (2nd), confirmed by related qualitative indicators around advocacy for the respect for human rights (2nd), protection (3rd) and supporting needs of internally displaced persons (3rd). Among its lowest marks were equitable in accordance to needs in the crisis (18th), facilitating safe humanitarian access (16th), monitoring the adherence to quality standards (16th), timely funding to sudden onset disasters (15th) and funding to local capacity (15th). Norway ranked better than the overall donor average in the crises studied in the HRI 2009.

HRI 2009 results

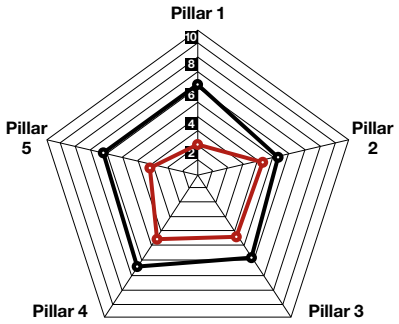
Highest scores	Score*	Rank**
Responding to needs		
Generosity and burden sharing	10.00	1
Working with humanitarian partners		
Funding UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeals	10.00	1
Funding to CERF and other quick disbursement mechanisms	10.00	1
Funding UN coordination mechanisms and common services	10.00	1
Protection and International Law		
Respect for international humanitarian law	10.00	1

Lowest scores	Score*	Rank**
Responding to needs		
Timeliness of funding to sudden onset disasters	4.45	15
Prevention, risk reduction and recovery		
Funding local capacity	2.12	15
Working with humanitarian partners		
Strengthening humanitarian response capacity	5.56	9
Longer-term funding arrangements	5.19	10
Learning and accountability		
Participation and support for accountability initiatives	4.81	11

* Based on HRI ten-point scale
** Ranking in comparison to peers

Portugal

HRI 2009 Ranking: 23rd



HRI 2009 scores by pillar

Pillar 1 Responding to needs
Pillar 2 Prevention, risk reduction and recovery
Pillar 3 Working with humanitarian partners
Pillar 4 Protection and International Law
Pillar 5 Learning and accountability

Portugal
OECD–DAC average

Portugal dropped to last place in the HRI rankings this year, showing consistently poor performance in all pillars and indicators of the HRI. It ranked 21st in Pillar 2 (Prevention, risk reduction and recovery) and Pillar 3 (Working with humanitarian partners), the highest rankings it obtained this year. In the remaining pillars, Portugal ranked 23rd, the lowest ranking donor compared with its peers. It ranked 22nd for generosity and burden sharing.

In the quantitative indicators, Portugal's best rankings were in timeliness of funding to sudden onset disasters and un-earmarked funding, and 10th for respect for human rights law. All of the other indicators were within the bottom third of the donor group, with the majority ranked at either 22nd or 23rd.

However, assessing Portugal's performance against the qualitative indicators of the HRI is particularly challenging as there is little evidence that it funds or engages with humanitarian organisations at the field level. Only one response was collected for Portugal in the HRI survey, which is considered as representative given the very low number of organisations that receive funding from Portugal according to OCHA's FTS and other data sources. Accordingly, scores and rankings for the qualitative indicators of the HRI have been adjusted, and these data have been removed from the tables in order to preserve the confidentiality of the survey respondent.

HRI 2009 results

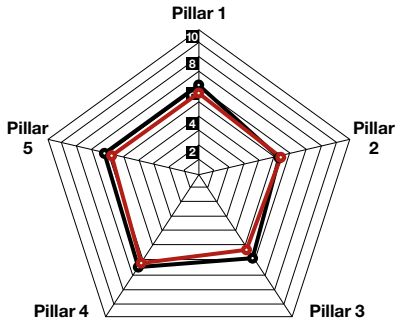
Highest scores	Score*	Rank**
Responding to needs		
Timeliness of funding to complex emergencies	10.00	1
Timeliness of funding to sudden onset disasters	5.31	12
Working with humanitarian partners		
Un-earmarked funding	10.00	1
Protection and International Law		
Respect for human rights law	7.07	10
Learning and accountability		
Conducting evaluations	8.85	15

Lowest scores	Score*	Rank**
Responding to needs		
Funding for forgotten emergences and those with low media coverage	1.00	23
Equitable distribution of funding in accordance to needs in the crisis	1.00	23
Prevention, risk reduction and recovery		
Funding international disaster risk mitigation mechanisms	1.00	18
Funding local capacity	1.00	23
Working with humanitarian partners		
Longer-term funding arrangements	1.00	23

* Based on HRI ten-point scale
** Ranking in comparison to peers

Spain

HRI 2009 Ranking: 15th



HRI 2009 scores by pillar

Pillar 1 Responding to needs
Pillar 2 Prevention, risk reduction and recovery
Pillar 3 Working with humanitarian partners
Pillar 4 Protection and International Law
Pillar 5 Learning and accountability

Spain
OECD–DAC average

Spain ranked 15th overall among all donors on the HRI 2009, moving up one place in the rankings. Spain's best ranking by pillar was in Pillar 2 (Prevention, risk reduction and recovery) where it ranked 12th, followed by 15th place in Pillar 1 (Responding to needs), 16th place in Pillar 3 (Working with humanitarian partners) and Pillar 4 (Protection and International Law). It was among the bottom third of donors in Pillar 5 (Learning and accountability), where it was placed 18th. Spain ranked 15th compared with its peers in terms of generosity and burden sharing.

Spain received its highest scores by indicator around the equitable distribution of funding in accordance to needs in the crisis, the equitable distribution of funding against the level of crisis and vulnerability, and funding to CERF and other quick disbursement mechanisms, ranking 1st among the donors on these issues. Spain also ranked 2nd for building local capacity to work with humanitarian actors. However, the country was among the lowest-rated donors for indicators around funding to forgotten emergencies and those with low media coverage (22nd), saving lives and maintaining human dignity (21st), non-discrimination (21st) and timeliness of funding (22nd). It also performed poorly (22nd) on indicators around supporting the transition between relief, early recovery and development, adapting to changing needs, accountability towards affected populations, evaluation of partners' programmes and promotion of good practice and quality standards. Spain tended to perform below the donor average in the different crises studied. Its performance in Haiti, however, was rated above the overall donor average.

HRI 2009 results

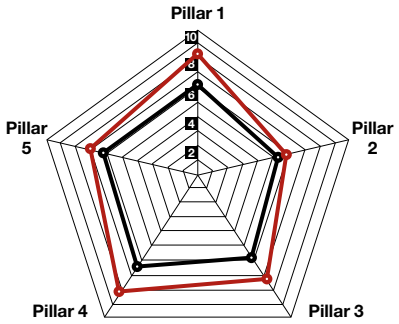
Highest scores	Score*	Rank**
Responding to needs		
Equitable distribution of funding against level of crisis and vulnerability	10.00	1
Equitable distribution of funding in accordance to needs in the crisis	10.00	1
Equitable distribution of funding to different crisis countries	9.05	10
Working with humanitarian partners		
Funding to CERF and other quick disbursement mechanisms	10.00	1
Learning and accountability		
Conducting evaluations	8.85	15

Lowest scores	Score*	Rank**
Responding to needs		
Generosity and burden sharing	3.01	15
Working with humanitarian partners		
Funding UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeals	2.99	17
Funding to NGOs	1.84	21
Funding UN coordination mechanisms and common services	1.82	13
Protection and International Law		
Implementation of refugee law	3.79	15

* Based on HRI ten-point scale
** Ranking in comparison to peers

Sweden

HRI 2009 Ranking: 2nd



HRI 2009 scores by pillar

Pillar 1 Responding to needs
Pillar 2 Prevention, risk reduction and recovery
Pillar 3 Working with humanitarian partners
Pillar 4 Protection and International Law
Pillar 5 Learning and accountability

Sweden
OECD–DAC average

After two years as the top-ranked donor in the HRI, Sweden dropped to 2nd this year. Sweden's best ranking by pillar was in Pillar 4 (Protection and International Law), where it ranked 1st. Sweden ranked 2nd compared with its peers in Pillar 1 (Responding to needs) and Pillar 3 (Working with humanitarian partners), 5th in Pillar 5 (Learning and accountability), and 6th in Pillar 2 (Prevention, risk reduction and recovery). Sweden also ranked 1st in terms of generosity and burden sharing.

In the individual rankings by indicator, Sweden was the top-ranked donor for its support to multilateral institutions, with 1st place rankings for funding UN Consolidated Inter-Agency appeals, IFRC and ICRC appeals, UN coordination mechanisms and common services and funding to CERF and other quick disbursement mechanisms. It was also 1st for implementation of refugee law, and did well for indicators on respect for international humanitarian law (2nd), timeliness of funding (2nd), supporting the needs of internally displaced persons (2nd), participation and support for accountability initiatives (3rd), longer-term funding arrangements (3rd) and funding of international disaster risk mitigation mechanisms (3rd). Sweden rated poorly relative to its peers on indicators around the timeliness of funding to sudden onset disasters (20th), funding local capacity (18th) and facilitating safe humanitarian access (17th). Sweden generally performed above the donor average in the majority of crises studied, but stood out for better than average scores in Colombia, Afghanistan, the occupied Palestinian Territories, Somalia and Georgia.

HRI 2009 results

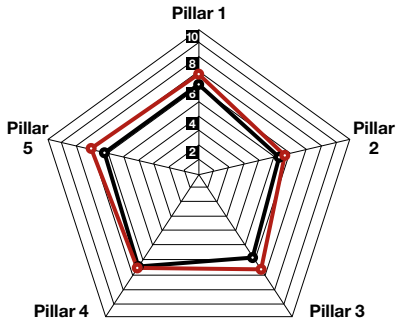
Highest scores	Score*	Rank**
Responding to needs		
Generosity and burden sharing	10.00	1
Working with humanitarian partners		
Funding to CERF and other quick disbursement mechanisms	10.00	1
Funding IFRC and ICRC appeals	10.00	1
Funding UN Consolidated Inter-Agency appeals	10.00	1
Protection and International Law		
Implementation of refugee law	10.00	1

Lowest scores	Score*	Rank**
Responding to needs		
Timeliness of funding to sudden onset disasters	1.93	20
Prevention, risk reduction and recovery		
Funding local capacity	1.65	18
Working with humanitarian partners		
Strengthening humanitarian response capacity	5.28	14
Un-earmarked funding	4.40	8
Funding to NGOs	4.16	14

* Based on HRI ten-point scale
** Ranking in comparison to peers

Switzerland

HRI 2009 Ranking: 8th



HRI 2009 scores by pillar

Pillar 1 Responding to needs
Pillar 2 Prevention, risk reduction and recovery
Pillar 3 Working with humanitarian partners
Pillar 4 Protection and International Law
Pillar 5 Learning and accountability

Switzerland
OECD–DAC average

Switzerland moved up one position to 8th in the HRI ranking. Its highest ranking by pillar was in Pillar 5 (Learning and accountability), where it moved from 9th to 4th place. It had 6th place in Pillar 3 (Working with humanitarian partners), followed by 8th position in Pillar 1 (Responding to needs) and 9th place in Pillar 2 (Prevention, risk reduction and recovery). In Pillar 4 (Protection and International Law), however, Switzerland dropped from 7th place in the HRI 2008 to 13th place. In terms of generosity and burden sharing, Switzerland ranked 7th in the donor group.

By indicator, Switzerland ranked 1st among all donors in assessing needs, timeliness of funding, crisis prevention and preparedness measures, strengthening local community capacity for disaster and crisis preparedness, support for local government and authorities' coordination capacity, longer-term funding, and strengthening humanitarian response capacity, and funding IFRC and ICRC appeals. Other high rankings included neutrality and impartiality (2nd), needs-based responses (2nd), non-discrimination (3rd), reliability (3rd) and coordination (3rd). Its lowest ranking relative to the donor group were the timeliness of its funding for sudden onset disasters (18th), the equitable distribution of funding against level of crisis and vulnerability (19th) and respect for human rights law (18th). Switzerland consistently performed above the donor average in almost all of the crises studied this year.

HRI 2009 results

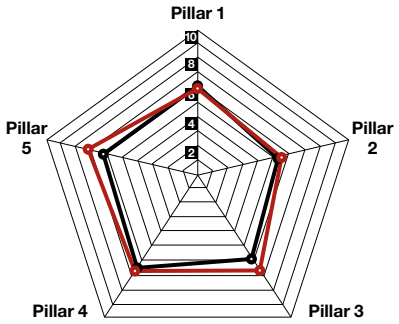
Highest scores	Score*	Rank**
Responding to needs		
Non-discrimination	9.19	3
Neutrality and impartiality	8.95	2
Needs-based response	8.76	2
Working with humanitarian partners		
Funding IFRC and ICRC appeals	10.00	1
Learning and accountability		
Conducting evaluations	9.19	3

Lowest scores	Score*	Rank**
Responding to needs		
Timeliness of funding to sudden onset disasters	3.55	18
Prevention, risk reduction and recovery		
Funding international disaster risk mitigation mechanisms	3.24	12
Funding local capacity	2.42	12
Working with humanitarian partners		
Funding UN coordination mechanisms and common services	3.51	7
Protection and International Law		
Implementation of refugee law	4.34	12

* Based on HRI ten-point scale
** Ranking in comparison to peers

United Kingdom

HRI 2009 Ranking: 9th



HRI 2009 scores by pillar

Pillar 1 Responding to needs
Pillar 2 Prevention, risk reduction and recovery
Pillar 3 Working with humanitarian partners
Pillar 4 Protection and International Law
Pillar 5 Learning and accountability

United Kingdom
OECD–DAC average

The United Kingdom ranked 9th overall in the 2009 HRI, down one position from 2008. The UK's top ranking by pillar was in Pillar 5 (Learning and accountability), where it climbed from 5th place in 2008 to 2nd place in 2009 in comparison to its peers. The next best ranking was in Pillar 3 (Working with humanitarian partners) at 7th, followed by Pillar 4 (Protection and International Law) where its ranking moved from 12th to 9th. Its rank for Pillar 2 (Prevention, risk reduction and recovery) moved from 18th to 11th, while in Pillar 1 (Responding to needs) it dropped from 10th to 14th. The UK ranked 12th among its peers on the specific indicator for generosity and burden sharing.

The UK was 1st among the donors in specific indicators such as coordination, the equitable distribution of funding against level of crisis and vulnerability, funding to CERF and other quick disbursement mechanisms and funding to UN consolidated appeals and IFRC and ICRC appeals. It also ranked well around donor capacity for informed decision-making (2nd) and funding to forgotten emergencies and those with low media coverage (2nd). In contrast, it received its lowest rankings in the equitable distribution of funding to different crisis countries, the timeliness of funding to sudden onset disasters and supporting the needs of refugees, each with rankings of 17th compared with other donors. In terms of performance in the crises studied this year, the UK tended to rate above the donor average, with generally good performance in all crises except Somalia, the occupied Palestinian Territories or Afghanistan – where it scored below the donor average.

HRI 2009 results

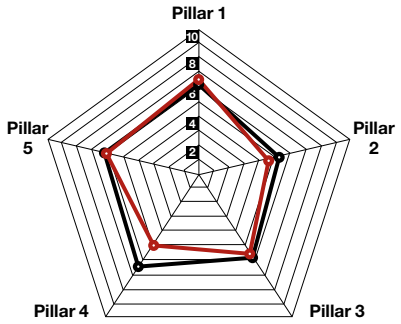
Highest scores	Score*	Rank**
Responding to needs		
Equitable distribution of funding against level of crisis and vulnerability	10.00	1
Funding to forgotten emergencies and those with low media coverage	9.95	2
Working with humanitarian partners		
Funding IFRC and ICRC appeals	10.00	1
Funding UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeals	10.00	1
Funding to CERF and other quick disbursement mechanisms	10.00	1

Lowest scores	Score*	Rank**
Responding to needs		
Generosity and burden sharing	3.63	12
Equitable distribution of funding to different crisis countries	1.00	17
Prevention, risk reduction and recovery		
Funding local capacity	2.08	16
Working with humanitarian partners		
Un-earmarked funding	3.08	13
Funding UN coordination mechanisms and common services	2.90	9

* Based on HRI ten-point scale
** Ranking in comparison to peers

United States

HRI 2009 Ranking: 14th



HRI 2009 scores by pillar

Pillar 1 Responding to needs
Pillar 2 Prevention, risk reduction and recovery
Pillar 3 Working with humanitarian partners
Pillar 4 Protection and International Law
Pillar 5 Learning and accountability

United States
OECD–DAC average

The United States ranked 14th this year, up one position from 2008. It received its highest ranking in Pillar 1 (Responding to needs), at 9th place, an improvement of six positions from 2008. It ranked 15th in both Pillar 3 (Working with humanitarian partners) and in Pillar 5 (Learning and accountability) and 18th in Pillar 3 (Working with humanitarian partners). Its lowest ranking was in Pillar 4 (Protection and International Law), ranking 22nd out of the 23 donors. The US ranked 13th for generosity and burden sharing.

In the specific indicators of the HRI, some of the US' best and worst rankings were within Pillar 1, with a 1st place ranking for funding to forgotten emergencies and those with low media coverage and for equitable distribution of funding against level of crisis and vulnerability, 2nd for timely funding of sudden onset disasters, 3rd for donor capacity for informed decision-making and 4th for beneficiary involvement. In contrast, the US was 19th for neutrality and impartiality, 20th for non-discrimination and 22nd for independence from non-humanitarian objectives. Other notable poor rankings were related to international laws; it ranked 20th in implementing refugee law, 21st for international humanitarian law and 22nd for international human rights law. It also ranked poorly for conditionality that does not comprise humanitarian action (19th), funding to CERF and other quick disbursement mechanisms (22nd) and un-earmarked funding (23rd). On the positive side, the US ranked well for adapting to changing needs (1st), promotion of good practice and quality standards and monitoring adherence to quality standards evaluations of partners programmes (3rd).

Overall, the US performed slightly below the donor average in the crises studied, with above average scores in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Chad and Somalia, and below average scores in Myanmar, Afghanistan, Georgia, Sri Lanka and the occupied Palestinian Territories.

HRI 2009 results

Highest scores	Score*	Rank**
Responding to needs		
Equitable distribution of funding against level of crisis and vulnerability	10.00	1
Funding to forgotten emergencies and those with low media coverage	10.00	1
Timeliness of funding to sudden onset disasters	9.34	2
Equitable distribution of funding in accordance to needs in the crisis	8.44	6
Learning and accountability		
Promotion of good practice and quality standards	8.68	2

Lowest scores	Score*	Rank**
Prevention, risk reduction and recovery		
Funding international disaster risk mitigation mechanisms	1.10	17
Working with humanitarian partners		
Funding to CERF and other quick disbursement mechanisms	1.00	22
Un-earmarked funding	1.00	23
Protection and International Law		
Respect for human rights law	1.00	22
Learning and accountability		
Conducting evaluations	1.03	21

* Based on HRI ten-point scale
** Ranking in comparison to peers

Acronyms

AECID	Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation
ALNAP	Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action
AMISOM	African Union Mission in Somalia
ANSO	Afghanistan NGO Safety Office
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BPRM	Bureau of Population, Refuges and Migration
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
CENTCOM	US Central Command
CAP	UN Consolidated Appeals Process
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CCA	Climate change adaptation
CERF	Central Emergency Response Fund
CFA	Cease-Fire Accord
CFSI	Community and Family Services International
CHAP	Common Humanitarian Action Plan
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CIPCOL	Center for International Policy's Colombia Program
CNSA	Coordination Nationale de la Securite Alimentaire
CODHES	Consultoría para los Derechos Humanos y el Desplazamiento
CSIS	Center for Strategic and International Studies
CSO	Civil society organisation
CWS	Church World Service
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DART	US Disaster Assistance Response Team
DEC	Disasters Emergency Committee
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
DMFSS	Disaster management and food security sector
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
DREF	Disaster Relief Emergency Fund
DRR	Disaster risk reduction
EC	European Commission
ECHO	European Commission Humanitarian Aid Office
ELN	Ejercito de Liberación Nacional de Colombia
ERC	Emergency Relief Coordinator
EU	European Union
FAO	UN Food and Agricultural Organisation
FARC	Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia
FARDC	Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of Congo
FDLR	Democratic Liberation Forces of Rwanda
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FEWS NET	Famine Early Warning System Network
FSAU	Food Security Analysis Unit for Somalia
FTS	Financial Tracking Service
FY	Financial Year
GFATM	Global Fund for AIDS, TB and Malaria
GHD	Good Humanitarian Donorship
GFH	Global Humanitarian Forum
GHI	Gross national income
GNP	Gross national product
GSP	Generalised System of Preferences
HAG	Humanitarian Avocacy Group
HAP	Humanitarian Action Plan
HAP-I	Humanitarian Accountability Partnership
HC	Humanitarian coordinator
HERF	Humanitarian Emergency Response Fund
HRF	Humanitarian Response Fund
HFA	Hyogo Framework for Action
HR	Humanitarian requirements
HRI	Humanitarian Response Index
HRW	Human Rights Watch
IADB	Inter-American Development Bank
IASC	UN Inter Agency Standing Committee
IATI	International Aid Transparency Initiative
ICC	International Criminal Court
ICG	International Crisis Group
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
ICVA	International Council of Voluntary Associations
IDF	Israel Defence Forces
IDMC	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
IDPs	Internally displaced persons
IFRC	The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IGAD	Inter-governmental Authority on Development
IHL	International humanitarian law
IMF	International Monetary Fund

INGO	International non-governmental organisation
IPCC	UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IRBC	Immigration and Refugee Bureau of Canada
IRC	International Rescue Committee
IRIN	Integrated Regional Information Networds
IRSN	International Relations and Security Network
ISN	International Relations and Security Network
LDC	Least developed country
LRRD	linking relief, rehabilitation and development
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
MARNDR	Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Rural Development
MFAN	Modernizing Foreign Assistance Network
MINUSTAH	UN peacekeeping mission in Haiti
MONUC	United Nations Mission in Democratic Republic of the Congo
MSF	Médecins Sans Frontières
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NASA	National Aeronautics and Space Administration
NFI	Non-food item
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NLD	National League for Democracy
NNGO	National Non-governmental organisation
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
NSP	National Solidarity Program
OCHA	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OECD-DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development – Development Assistance Committee
OFDA	Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (US)
OLF	Oromo Liberation Front
oPT	occupied Palestinian Territories
ONLF	Ogaden National Liberation Front
PA	Palestinian Authority
PARINAC	Partnership in Action (UNHCR)
PCBS	Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics
PEAR	Program of Expanded Assistance to Refugees
PF	Pooled Fund
PNC	Congolese National Police
PRRO	Protracted relief and recovery operation
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Team
PSNP	Productive safety net programme
RHC	Resident Humanitarian Coordinator
RRM	Rapid Response Mechanism
RRR	Rapid Response Reserve
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SIGPAD	Sistema Nacional para la Prevención y Atención de Desastres Colombia
SIPRI	Stockholm International Peace Research Institute
TCG	Tripartite Core Group
TEC	Tsunami Evaluation Coalition
TFG	Transitional Federal Government (Somalia)
TPS	Temporary protected status
UNDP	UN Development Programme
UNHCHR	UN Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights
UNHCR	UN High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	UN Children's Fund
UNiFEED	United Nations Internet Feed
UNODC	UN Office on Drugs and Crime
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency
UNSCO	United Nations Special Coordinator
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USGS	United States Geological Survey
VOICE	Voluntary Organisations in Cooperation in Emergencies
WB/IDA	World Bank International Development Association
WFP	UN World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

Glossary

1 **Accountability:** the processes through which an organisation makes a commitment to respond to and balance the needs of stakeholders in its decision-making processes and activities, and delivers against this commitment. Accountability thus becomes a process that manages power imbalances between the organisation and its stakeholders as well as between an organisation's various stakeholder groups.

See: http://www.oneworldtrust.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=75&Itemid=143

2 **Armed conflict:** An international armed conflict means fighting between the armed forces of at least two states. It should be noted that wars of national liberation have been classified as international armed conflicts.

According to IHL, a non-international armed conflict means fighting on the territory of a state between the regular armed forces and identifiable armed groups, or between armed groups fighting one another. To be considered a non-international armed conflict, fighting must reach a certain level of intensity and extend over a certain period of time.

See: http://www.icrc.org/web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/htmlall/5kzf5n?opendocument

3 **Beneficiaries:** Individuals, groups or organisations who have been designated as the intended recipients of humanitarian assistance or protection in an aid intervention.

The term "beneficiary" is concerned with the contractual relationship between the aid agency and the persons whom the agency has undertaken to assist. The term has come under scrutiny as in some cultures or contexts it may be interpreted negatively. Alternative suggestions are: people affected by disaster; the affected population; recipients of aid; claimants; clients.

See: http://www.oxfam.org.uk/resources/downloads/HAP/HAP_book.pdf

4 **Capacity:** A combination of all the strengths and resources available within a community, society or organisation that can reduce the level of risk, or the effects of a disaster. Capacity may include physical, institutional, social or economic means as well as skilled personal or collective attributes, such as leadership and management. Capacity may also be described as capability.

See: http://www.adrc.or.jp/publications/terminology/top.htm

5 **Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF):** A stand-by fund established by the United Nations to enable more timely and reliable humanitarian assistance to those affected by natural disasters and armed conflicts.

The CERF is a tool for pre-positioning funding for humanitarian action. The CERF was established to upgrade the current Central Emergency Revolving Fund by including a grant element based on voluntary contributions by governments and private sectors such as corporations, individuals and NGOs.

See: http://ochaonline.un.org/cerf/WhatIstheCERF/tabid/1706/Default.aspx

6 **Civil-military coordination:** The essential dialogue and interaction between civilian and military actors in humanitarian emergencies that is necessary to protect and promote humanitarian principles, avoid competition, minimise inconsistency and, when appropriate, pursue common goals. Basic strategies range from coexistence to cooperation. Coordination is a shared responsibility facilitated by liaison and common training.

See: http://www.humanitarianinfo.org/iasc/_tools/download.asp?docID=88&type=prod

7 **Civil society:** Conglomerate of individuals and groups active in society, including:

a. NGOs (non-governmental organisations) which bring people together in a common cause, such as environmental, human rights, charitable, educational and training organisations, consumer associations, etc.;

b. CBOs (community-based organisations), i.e., grassroots organisations which pursue member-oriented objectives, such as youth organisations, family associations and all organisations through which citizens participate in local and municipal life;

c. the so-called labour-market players (i.e., trade unions and employer federations, also called the social partners);

d. organisations representing social and economic players, which are not social partners in the strict sense of the term, such as religious communities.

See: http://ec.europa.eu/civil_society/coneccs/question.cfm?CL=en

8 **Civilians and civilian population:** A civilian is any person who is not a member of the armed forces of a party to the conflict, including militias and resistance movements with a leader responsible for subordinates, which have a clear, recognisable sign, carry arms openly and follow the laws and customs of war. Parties to the conflict also include armed forces that profess allegiance to an authority not recognised by the detaining power and those who take up arms to resist invading forces, without having had time to form themselves into regular armed units, provided they carry arms openly and respect the laws and customs of war.

The civilian population comprises all persons who are civilians. The presence within the civilian population of individuals who do not come within the definition of civilians does not deprive the population of its civilian character.

See: http://www.icrc.org/ihl.nsf/WebART/470-750064?OpenDocument

9 **Cluster approach:** Introduced in December 2005, the cluster approach identifies predictable leadership for areas of response and is designed around the concept of "partnership" between UN agencies, NGOs, international organisations and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (except the International Committee of the Red Cross). Eleven clusters were created: agriculture, camp coordination/management, early recovery, education, emergency shelter, emergency telecommunications, health, logistics, nutrition, protection, and water sanitation and hygiene.

Cluster leads are responsible for ensuring that response capacity is in place and that assessment, planning and response activities are carried out in collaboration with partners and in accordance with agreed standards and guidelines.

See: http://www.humanitarianreform.org

10 **Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Response:** Developed and agreed upon by eight of the world's largest disaster response agencies in 1994, it represents a huge leap forward in setting standards for disaster response. The International Federation uses it to monitor its own standards of relief delivery and to encourage other agencies to set similar standards. It has been signed by 447 NGOs.

The Code of Conduct is the expression of a common operational approach for providing help to those in need, based on strongly cherished principles and international humanitarian law.

See: http://www.ifrc.org/publicat/conduct/
and
http://www.icrc.org/web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/html/64ZAHH

11 **Common Humanitarian Action Plan (CHAP):** A strategic plan for humanitarian response in a given country or region. It provides:

a. a common analysis of the context in which humanitarian action takes place;

b. an assessment of needs;

c. best, worst, and most likely scenarios;

d. identification of roles and responsibilities, i.e., who does what and where;

e. a clear statement of longer-term objectives and goals;

f. a framework for monitoring the strategy and revising it if necessary.

The CHAP is the foundation for developing a Consolidated Appeal, and as such is part of the Coordinated Appeals Process (CAP).

See: http://ochaonline.un.org/cap2005/webpage.asp?MenuID=7888&Page=1241

12 **Common Humanitarian Funds (CHFs):** A new humanitarian financing instrument being piloted in Sudan (since 2005) and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (since 2006). It provides a mechanism allowing donors to put money into a central fund to support humanitarian action in a particular country. The UN Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) can then draw on this fund to underwrite strategic priorities quickly and easily. Rather than making bilateral decisions in support of agencies within the CAP, funding decisions are deferred to the Humanitarian Coordinator and his team, using the CHAP as a central strategic tool. A total of seven donors have participated in the funds in DRC and Sudan.

See: http://www.humanitarianreform.org/humanitarianreform/Default.aspx?tabid=204

13 **Complex emergency:** A humanitarian crisis in a country, region or society where there is total or considerable breakdown of authority, resulting from internal or external conflict, which requires an international response that goes beyond the mandate or capacity of any single agency and/or the ongoing United Nations country programme.

Such complex emergencies are typically characterised by: extensive violence and loss of life; massive displacements of people; widespread damage to societies and economies; the need for large-scale, multi-faceted humanitarian assistance; the hindrance or prevention of humanitarian assistance by political and military constraints; and significant security risks for humanitarian relief workers in some areas.

See: http://www.humanitarianinfo.org/iasc/_tools/download.asp?docID=88&type=prod

14 **Consolidated Appeal:** A reference document on the humanitarian strategy, programme and funding requirements in response to a major or complex emergency.

See: http://www.reliefweb.int/cap

15 **Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP)/UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeals Process:** An inclusive and coordinated programming cycle through which national, regional and international relief systems mobilise to respond to selected major or complex emergencies that require a system-wide response to humanitarian crisis. A common humanitarian strategy is elaborated through the CAP along with an action plan to implement this strategy. Projects included in the CAP support the humanitarian strategy. CAP serves to promote a coordinated strategy and a common fundraising platform, and advocate for humanitarian principles.

Its cycle includes: strategic planning leading to a Common Humanitarian Action Plan (CHAP); resource mobilisation (leading to a Consolidated Appeal or a Flash Appeal); coordinated programme implementation; joint monitoring and evaluation; revision, if necessary; and reporting on results.

See: http://www.reliefweb.int/cap

16 **Contingency planning:** Contingency planning is a management tool used to analyse the impact of potential crises and ensure that adequate and appropriate arrangements are made in advance to respond in a timely, effective and appropriate way to the needs of the affected population(s). Contingency planning is a tool to anticipate and solve problems that typically arise during humanitarian response.

See: http://www.humanitarianreform.org/humanitarianreform/Portals/1/cluster%20approach%20page/IA%20CP%20Guidelines%20Publication_%20Final%20version%20Dec%202007.pdf

17 **Coordination:** The systematic use of policy instruments to deliver humanitarian assistance in a cohesive and effective manner. Such instruments include strategic planning, gathering data and managing information, mobilising resources and ensuring accountability, orchestrating a functional division of labour, negotiating and maintaining a serviceable framework with host political authorities, and providing leadership.

See: http://ochaonline.un.org/Coordination/tabid/1085/Default.aspx

18 **Coping capacity:** The means by which people or organisations use available resources and abilities to face adverse consequences that could lead to a disaster. In general, this involves managing resources, both in normal times, as well as during crises or adverse conditions. The strengthening of coping capacities usually builds resilience to withstand the effects of natural and human-induced hazards.

See: http://www.unisdr.org/eng/library/lib-terminology-eng%20home.htm

19 **Crisis (humanitarian):** Any situation in which there is an exceptional and widespread threat to human life, health or subsistence. Such crises tend to occur in situations of vulnerability, in which a number of pre-existing factors (poverty, inequality, lack of access to basic services) are further exacerbated by a natural disaster or armed conflict which vastly increases their destructive effects.

See: http://www.escolapau.org/img/programas/alerta/alerta/alerta07006i.pdf

20 **Development:** Human development is a process of enlarging people's choices. The key or priority parameters of human development can evolve over time and vary both across and within countries. Some of the issues and themes currently considered most central to human development include: social progress, economics, efficiency, equity, participation and freedom, sustainability and human security.

See: http://hdr.undp.org/en/humandev/origins/

21 **Disaster:** A serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society causing widespread human, material, economic or environmental losses which exceed the ability of the affected community or society to cope using its own resources.

It is a function of the risk process, that is, a combination of hazards, conditions of vulnerability and insufficient capacity or measures to reduce the potential negative consequences of risk. Disasters can include natural disasters such as earthquakes and floods, as well as man-made disasters, which can be sudden or long-term.

See: http://www.unisdr.org/eng/library/lib-terminology-eng%20home.htm and http://www.ifrc.org/what/disasters/Types/index.asp

22 **Disaster preparedness:** Activities and measures taken in advance to ensure effective response to the impact of hazards, including the issuance of timely and effective early warnings, and the temporary evacuation of people and property from threatened locations.

See: http://www.unisdr.org/eng/library/lib-terminology-eng%20home.htm

23 **Disaster risk management:** The systematic process of using administrative decisions, organisation, operational skills and capacities to implement policies, strategies and the coping capability of the society and community to lessen the impact of natural hazards and related environmental and technological disasters. This comprises different activities, such as structural and non-structural measures to avoid (prevention) or limit (mitigation and preparedness) the adverse effects of hazards.

See: http://www.unisdr.org/eng/library/lib-terminology-eng%20home.htm

24 **Disaster risk reduction (disaster reduction):** The conceptual framework of elements which minimise vulnerability and disaster risk throughout a society to avoid (prevent) or limit (mitigate and be prepared for) the adverse impacts of hazards, within the broad context of sustainable development.

See: http://www.unisdr.org/eng/library/lib-terminology-eng%20home.htm

25 **Early warning:** The provision of timely and effective information, through identified institutions, that allows individuals exposed to a hazard to take action to avoid or reduce their risk and prepare for effective response.

See: http://www.unisdr.org/eng/library/lib-terminology-eng%20home.htm

26 **Early warning systems:** include a chain of concerns, namely: understanding and mapping the hazard; monitoring and forecasting impending events; processing and disseminating understandable warnings to political authorities and the population; and undertaking appropriate and timely actions in response to the warnings.

See: http://www.unisdr.org/eng/library/lib-terminology-eng%20home.htm

27 **Earmarking:** Earmarking is a device by which a bilateral donor agency specifies the geographic or sectoral areas in which a multilateral agency or NGO may spend its contribution. There are different degrees of earmarking: by agency, by country, by sector, or by project.

See: http://ocha.unog.ch/fts/exception-docs/FTSDocuments/The_Quality_of_Money-Donor_Behavior_in_Humanitarian_Financing.pdf

28 **Effectiveness:** Effectiveness measures the extent to which an activity achieves its purpose, or whether this can be expected to happen on the basis of the outputs. Implicit within the criteria of effectiveness is timeliness.

See: http://www.odi.org.uk/alnap/pdfs/QualityProforma05.pdf

29 **Efficiency:** Efficiency measures the qualitative and quantitative outputs achieved as a result of inputs. This generally requires comparing alternative approaches to achieving an output, to see whether the most efficient approach has been used.

See: http://www.odi.org.uk/alnap/pdfs/QualityProforma05.pdf

30 **Emergency:** An emergency is a crisis which calls for immediate humanitarian response.

See: http://ocha.unog.ch/fts/exception-docs/AboutFTS/Definitions-Glossary.doc

31 **Emergency Response Fund (ERF):** In some countries Emergency Response Funds are used as a mechanism for NGOs and UN agencies to cover unforeseen humanitarian needs, and have been used since 1997. An ERF is often established and administered by the Humanitarian Coordinator's office with an advisory board made up of UN agencies and in some cases NGOs (for example in Somalia and Ethiopia).

See: http://www.humanitarianreform.org/humanitarianreform/Default.aspx?tabid=72

32 **Evaluation of Humanitarian Action (EHA):** A systematic and impartial examination of humanitarian action intended to draw lessons to improve policy and practice and enhance accountability. EHA is:

a. commissioned by or in cooperation with the organisation(s) whose performance is being evaluated;

b. undertaken either by a team of non-employees (external) or by a mixed team of non-employees (external) and employees (internal) from the commissioning organisation and/or the organisation being evaluated;

c. an assessment of policy and/or practice against recognised criteria (e.g., the DAC criteria);

d. a description of findings, conclusions and recommendations.

See: http://www.alnap.org/themes/evaluation.htm

33 **Famine:** A catastrophic food shortage affecting large numbers of people due to climatic, environmental and socio-economic causes. The cause of the famine may produce great migrations to less affected areas.

See: http://www.ifrc.org/what/disasters/Types/drought/

34 **Financial Tracking Service (FTS):** A global, real-time database which records all reported international humanitarian aid including that for NGOs and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, bilateral aid, in-kind aid and private donations. FTS focuses particularly on Consolidated and Flash Appeals, both because they cover the major humanitarian crises, and because their funding requirements are well defined. This allows FTS to indicate to what extent populations in crisis receive humanitarian aid in proportion to needs. FTS is managed by the UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). All FTS data are provided by donors or recipient organisations.

See: http://ocha.unog.ch/fts2/

35 **Flash Appeal (UN):** The Flash Appeal is a tool for structuring a coordinated humanitarian response for the first three to six months of an emergency. The UN Humanitarian Coordinator triggers it in consultation with all stakeholders. The Flash Appeal is issued within one week of an emergency. It provides a concise overview of urgent life-saving needs and may include recovery projects that can be implemented within the time frame of the appeal.

See: http://ochaonline.un.org/cap2005/webpage.asp?MenuID=9196&Page=1483

36 **Fragile states:** States which fail to provide basic services to poor people because they are unwilling or unable to do so. Such states are unable or unwilling to harness domestic and international resources effectively for poverty reduction.

See: http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/30/62/34041714.pdf and *http://stats.oecd.org/glossary/detail.asp?ID=7235*

37 **Food security:** Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs in order to lead an active and healthy life.

See: http://www.rlc.fao.org/en/prioridades/seguridad/

38 **Good Humanitarian Donorship (GHD):** In 2003 a number of donor governments created the Good Humanitarian Donorship (GHD) initiative to work towards achieving efficient and principled humanitarian assistance. Thirty-five donor bodies have now signed up to these principles. The GHD initiative provides a forum for donors to discuss good practice in humanitarian financing and other shared concerns. By defining principles and standards it provides both a framework to guide official humanitarian aid and a mechanism for encouraging greater donor accountability.

See: http://www.goodhumanitariandonorship.org/

39 Good practices: successful approaches adopted by other organisations or individuals and shared within the sector.

See: http://www.oxfam.org.uk/resources/downloads/HAP/HAP_book.pdf

40 Humanitarian access: Where protection is not available from national authorities or controlling non-state actors, vulnerable populations have a right to receive international protection and assistance from an impartial humanitarian relief operation. Such action is subject to the consent of the state or parties concerned and does not prescribe coercive measures in the event of refusal, however unwarranted.

See: http://www.ochaonline.un.org

41 Humanitarian action: Humanitarian action includes the protection of civilians and those no longer taking part in hostilities, and the provision of food, water and sanitation, shelter, health services and other items of assistance, undertaken for the benefit of affected people and to facilitate the return to normal lives and livelihoods.

Humanitarian action should be guided by the humanitarian principles of humanity, meaning the centrality of saving human lives and alleviating suffering wherever it is found; impartiality, meaning the implementation of actions solely on the basis of need, without discrimination between or within affected populations; neutrality, meaning that humanitarian action must not favour any side in an armed conflict or other dispute where such action is carried out; and independence, meaning the autonomy of humanitarian objectives from the political, economic, military or other objectives that any actor may hold with regard to areas where humanitarian action is being implemented. GHD Principles 1, 2, 3.

See: http://www.goodhumanitariandonorship.org

42 Humanitarian aid: Humanitarian aid is assistance designed to save lives, alleviate suffering and maintain and protect human dignity during, and in the aftermath of, emergencies. To be classified as humanitarian, aid should be consistent with the humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence.

See: http://www.globalhumanitarianassistance.org/pdfdownloads/GHA%202007.pdf

43 Human dignity: respect for each and every human being, in a spirit of solidarity, irrespective of their origins, beliefs, religions, status or gender.

See: http://www.ifrc.org/what/values/dignity.asp

44 Human rights: Human rights are rights inherent to all human beings, whatever their nationality, place of residence, sex, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, language or any other status. All are equally entitled to human rights without discrimination. These rights are all interrelated, interdependent and indivisible.

Universal human rights are often expressed and guaranteed by law, in the forms of treaties, customary international law, general principles and other sources of international law. International human rights law lays down obligations of governments to act in certain ways or to refrain from certain acts, in order to promote and protect human rights and the fundamental freedoms of individuals or groups.

See: http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Pages/WhatareHumanRights.aspx

45 Humanitarian reform: Humanitarian reform aims to dramatically enhance humanitarian response capacity, predictability, accountability and partnership. It represents an ambitious effort by the international humanitarian community to reach more beneficiaries with more comprehensive, needs-based relief and protection, in a more effective and timely manner.

The reform has four main objectives:

a. sufficient humanitarian response capacity and enhanced leadership, accountability and predictability in "gap" sectors/areas of response, ensuring trained staff, adequate commonly-accessible stockpiles, surge capacity, agreed standards and guidelines;

b. adequate, timely and flexible humanitarian financing, including through the Central Emergency Response Fund;

c. improved humanitarian coordination and leadership, a more effective HC system, more strategic leadership and coordination at the sectoral and intersectoral level;

d. more effective partnerships between UN and non-UN humanitarian actors.

See: http://www.humanitarianreform.org/humanitarianreform/Default.aspx?tabid=109

46 Humanitarian space: The area in which humanitarian actors operate on the ground to access those in need of assistance without compromising the safety of aid workers. To maintain humanitarian access, humanitarian space must be respected.

See: http://www.ochaonline.un.org

47 Humanitarian system: The formal humanitarian system has a range of operators. It is currently managed mainly by the UN and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. It also relies on a growing number of more or less independent NGO agencies which use both private and government money. All these implementers receive firm policy instructions from the humanitarian departments of their donor governments, although much of this policy is worked out in a continuous policy dialogue between donors and providers. UN agencies are often subcontractors of the system while non-governmental and Red Cross/Crescent organisations operate independently or as semi-independent subcontractors.

See: http://www.odi.org.uk/ALNAP/publications/RHA2005/rha05_Ch1.pdf

48 Humanity: Humanity is one of the seven fundamental principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. It states that respect should be maintained for each and every human being, in a spirit of solidarity, irrespective of their origins, beliefs, religions, status or gender.

See: http://www.ifrc.org/what/values/dignity.asp

49 Hyogo Framework for Action: The Hyogo Framework for Action is the result of negotiations during the World Conference on Disaster Reduction in January 2005. It recognises the interrelated nature of disaster reduction, poverty eradication and sustainable development and agrees to promote a culture of disaster prevention and resilience through risk assessments, early warning systems, etc. The five priorities for action are:

i. ensure that disaster risk reduction is a national and a local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation;

ii. identify, assess and monitor disaster risks and enhance early warning;

iii. use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels;

iv. reduce the underlying risk factors;

v. strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels.

See: http://www.unisdr.org/wcdr/intergover/official-doc/L-docs/Hyogo-framework-for-action-english.pdf

50 Impartiality (non-legal): Impartiality is one of the seven fundamental principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. It states that no discrimination should be made as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavours to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.

See: http://www.ifrc.org/what/values/principles/index.asp

51 Independence: Independence is one of the seven fundamental principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. It states that humanitarian assistance and humanitarian actors, while auxiliaries in the humanitarian services of their governments and subject to the laws of their respective countries, must always be autonomous, so that the assistance may be given in accordance with the principles of impartiality and neutrality.

See: http://www.ifrc.org

52 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs): Persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to leave their homes or habitual residence as a result of, or in order to avoid, the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalised violence, violations of human rights or natural or man-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognised state border. A series of 30 non-binding Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement based on refugee law, human rights law and international humanitarian law articulate standards for protection, assistance and solutions for such internally displaced persons.

See: http://www.ochaonline.un.org

53 International Humanitarian Law (IHL): International humanitarian law is a set of rules which seek, for humanitarian reasons, to limit the effects of armed conflict. It protects those who are not or are no longer participating in the hostilities and restricts the means and methods of warfare. International humanitarian law is also known as the law of war or the law of armed conflict.

See: http://www.icrc.org/web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/htmlall/section_ihl_in_brief

54 International Refugee Law: The body of customary international law and international instruments that establishes standards for refugee protection. The cornerstone of refugee law is the 1951 Convention and its 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees.

See: http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/refworld/rwmain?docid=42ce7d444&page=search

55 Livelihoods: Those capabilities, assets (both material and social resources) and activities required for a means of living. A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks, maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets, and provide net benefits to other livelihoods locally and more widely, both in the present and in the future, while not undermining the natural resource base.

See: http://www.fao.org/sd/pe4_en.htm

56 Local capacity: participation in the programme should reinforce people's sense of dignity and hope in times of crisis, and people should be encouraged to participate in programmes in different ways. Programmes should be designed to build upon local capacity and to avoid undermining people's own coping strategies.

See: http://www.sphereproject.org/component/option,com_docman/task,doc_view/gid,12/Itemid,26/lang,English/

57 Malnutrition: A major health problem, especially in developing countries. A clean water supply, sanitation and hygiene, given their direct impact on the incidence of infectious disease, especially diarrhoea, are important for preventing malnutrition. Both malnutrition and inadequate water supply and sanitation are linked to poverty. The impact of repeated or persistent diarrhoea on nutrition-related poverty and the effect of malnutrition on susceptibility to infectious diarrhoea are reinforcing elements of the same vicious circle, especially among children in developing countries.

See: http://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/diseases/malnutrition/en/

58 Millennium Development Goals (MDG): The eight Millennium Development Goals range from halving extreme poverty to halting the spread of HIV/AIDS and providing universal primary education – all by the target date of 2015 – form a blueprint agreed to by all the world's countries and leading development institutions. They have galvanised unprecedented efforts to meet the needs of the world's poorest people.

The eight MDGs are:

Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education

Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women

Goal 4: Reduce child mortality

Goal 5: Improve maternal health

Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability

Goal 8: Develop a Global Partnership for Development

See: http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/

59 Needs: There are two sets of needs to be met in any disaster, conflict or emergency: immediate life support and longer-term rehabilitation. Although the degree and importance of these basic needs may vary in magnitude and priority from one disaster to another, they are often the same:

- Search and rescue;
- Sufficient shelter (including 'mobile shelter', clothing);
- Adequate food;
- Safe and adequate water supply and disposal;
- Health and social care;
- Protection from violence and harassment.

See: http://www.reliefweb.int/ocha_ol/programs/response/mcdunet/0guidad.html

60 Needs Assessment Framework (NAF): Joint needs assessments, with a view to improving the overall prioritisation of response.

See: http://ochaonline.un.org/cap2005/GetBin.asp?DocID=1540

61 Neutrality: Neutrality is one of the seven fundamental principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. It states that in order to continue to enjoy the confidence of all, humanitarian actors may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

See: http://www.ifrc.org

62 Official Development Assistance (ODA): Official financing flows are administered with the objective of promoting the economic development and welfare of developing countries. ODA is concessional in character – that is, below market rate – with a grant element of at least 25 percent of the total (using a fixed ten percent rate of discount). By convention, ODA flows consist of contributions by donor government agencies to developing countries (bilateral ODA), and also to multilateral institutions. ODA receipts comprise disbursements by bilateral donors and multilateral institutions. Lending by export credit agencies for the sole purpose of export promotion is excluded.

See: http://stats.oecd.org/glossary/detail.asp?ID=6043

63 **Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development-Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC):** is the principal body through which the OECD deals with issues related to cooperation with developing countries.

See: http://www.oecd.org/department/0,2688, en_2649_33721_1_1_1_1_1,00.html

64 **Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness:** The Paris Declaration, endorsed on 2 March 2005, is an international agreement to which over 100 ministers, heads of agencies and other senior officials subscribed and committed their countries and organisations to continue to increase efforts in harmonisation, alignment and managing aid for results with a set of monitorable actions and indicators.

See: http://www.oecd.org/document/18/0,3343, en_2649_3236398_35401554_1_1_1_1,00.html

65 **Participation:** processes of information sharing, consultation, decision-making, implementation and resource control with, of, and by, beneficiaries of humanitarian action. These different facets of participation are often taken to represent increasing gradations of beneficiary involvement in projects, as follows:

- Information sharing: minimally informing affected populations about measures and decisions affecting them;
- Consultation: some level of consultation with beneficiaries within programme guidelines;
- Decision-making: direct involvement of affected populations in decisions made during the project cycle;
- Implementation: engagement in the practical activities related to implementation of the given project;
- Resource control: control over project resources assumed by the beneficiary population; all the major decisions over these resources and over any new initiatives are made by them. (INTRAC 2001)

See: http://www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/PDFs/Childrens%20 Participation%20Synthesis%20Feb%202004.pdf

66 **Pooled Funding:** The objective of Pool Funding a multi-donor initiative is to support the timely allocation and disbursement of donor resources to the most critical humanitarian needs under the overall management of the HC.

Pooled funds are similar to ERFs, often established to ensure flexibility and adequate funding using a needs-based approach aiming for flexible, timely, predictable and adequate funding for areas within the agreed Humanitarian Action Plan.

See: http://www.humanitarianreform.org/humanitarianreform/ Default.aspx?tabid=72

67 **Preparedness:** Activities designed to minimise loss of life and damage, to organise the temporary removal of people and property from a threatened location and to facilitate timely and effective rescue, relief and rehabilitation.

See: http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/lib.nsf/db900sid/LGEL-5EQNZV/$file/dha-glossary-1992.pdf?openelement

68 **Prevention:** Activities to provide outright avoidance of the adverse impact of hazards and means to minimise related environmental, technological and biological disasters.

Depending on social and technical feasibility and cost/benefit considerations, investing in preventive measures is justified in areas frequently affected by disasters. In the context of public awareness and education, related to disaster risk reduction, changing attitudes and behaviour contributes to promoting a culture of prevention.

See: http://www.unisdr.org/eng/library/lib-terminology-eng%20 home.htm

69 **Proportionality:** Allocate humanitarian funding in proportion to needs and on the basis of needs assessments.

See: http://www.goodhumanitariandonorship.org/

70 Protection: A concept that encompasses all activities aimed at obtaining full respect for the rights of the individual in accordance with the letter and spirit of human rights, refugee and international humanitarian law. Protection involves creating an environment conducive to respect for human beings, preventing and/or alleviating the immediate effects of a specific pattern of abuse, and restoring dignified conditions of life through reparation, restitution and rehabilitation.

See: http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/refworld/rwmain?docid=42ce7d444&page=search

71 Quality and accountability initiatives: During the past decade the humanitarian community has initiated a number of inter-agency initiatives to improve accountability, quality and performance in humanitarian action. Four of the most widely known initiatives are the Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action (ALNAP), Humanitarian Accountability Partnership International (HAP-I), People In Aid and the Sphere Project.

All initiatives share a common goal, which is to improve accountability, quality and performance in humanitarian action.

See: http://www.hapinternational.org/pool/files/q-&-a-on-q-&-a.pdf

72 Recovery (early): Recovery focuses on restoring the capacity of national institutions and communities after a crisis. Early recovery is that which begins in a humanitarian relief setting immediately following a natural disaster or armed conflict. Guided by development principles, the early recovery phase aims to generate self-sustaining, nationally-owned processes to stabilise human security and address underlying risks that contributed to the crisis.

See: http://www.undp.org/cpr/we_do/_recovery.shtml

73 Resident Coordinator or Humanitarian Coordinator: The Resident Coordinator (RC) is the head of the UN Country Team. In a complex emergency, the RC or another competent UN official may be designated as the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC). In large-scale complex emergencies, a separate HC is often appointed.

See: http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/lib.nsf/db900sid/KKEE-6DMRTJ/$file/glossary.pdf?openelement

74 Resilience: The capacity of a system, community or society potentially exposed to hazards to adapt, by resisting or changing in order to reach and maintain an acceptable level of functioning and structure. This is determined by the degree to which the social system is capable of organising itself to increase its capacity for learning from past disasters for better future protection and to improve risk reduction measures.

See: http://www.unisdr.org/eng/library/lib-terminology-eng%20home.htm

75 Sustainable Livelihoods: See "Livelihoods"

76 Timeliness: Providing funding, information and analysis in time to respond to crises and inform key decisions about response.

See: http://www.odi.org.uk/HPG/papers/hpgbrief13.pdf

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'The HRI is an enormously innovative tool for preparing for a world of greater humanitarian shock and urgent need. We need to put humanitarian response on a greatly scaled-up basis. The HRI will bring us much closer to this goal. The well-being and even survival of millions are at stake.' – **Jeffrey D. Sachs**, *Director of The Earth Institute, Columbia University*

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