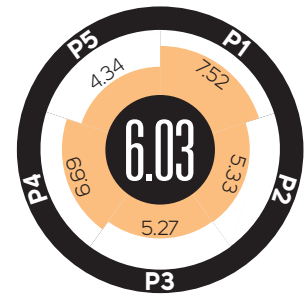


# FINLAND

HRI 2011  
Ranking  
**9th**

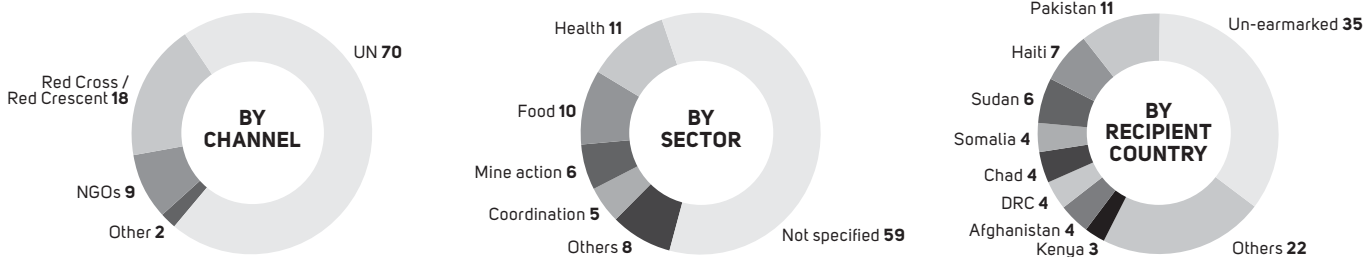


Group **1**  
PRINCIPLED  
PARTNERS

OFFICIAL  
DEVELOPMENT  
ASSISTANCE **0.55%**  
of GNI

HUMANITARIAN  
AID **19.6%**  
of ODA **US \$49**  
Per person

## HUMANITARIAN AID DISTRIBUTION (%)



## GENDER RATING

POLICY

FUNDING

FIELD PERCEPTION

### STRENGTHS

Pillar	Type	Indicator	Score	% above OECD/DAC average
2	QT	Funding reconstruction and prevention	7.17	+60.0%
4	QT	Refugee law	8.74	+55.5%
5	QL	Accountability towards beneficiaries	5.62	+29.7%
1	QT	Funding vulnerable and forgotten emergencies	8.47	+22.6%
4	QL	Advocacy for protection of civilians	6.58	+18.3%

### AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Pillar	Type	Indicator	Score	% below OECD/DAC average
5	QT	Participating in accountability initiatives	1.67	-62.8%
2	QL	Prevention and risk reduction	2.99	-33.8%
1	QT	Timely funding to complex emergencies	5.82	-26.4%
1	QL	Adapting to changing needs	4.76	-24.2%
2	QL	Strengthening local capacity	4.68	-19.0%

## OVERALL PERFORMANCE

Finland ranked 9<sup>th</sup> in the HRI 2011, improving two positions from 2010. Based on the pattern of its scores, Finland is classified as a Group 1 donor, “Principled Partners”. This group is characterised by its commitment to humanitarian principles and strong support for multilateral partners, and generally good overall performance in all areas. Other Group 1 donors include Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland.

Overall, Finland scored above the OECD/DAC average, yet below the Group 1 average. Compared to OECD/DAC donors, Finland scored above average in all pillars, with the exception of Pillar 3 (Working

with humanitarian partners) and Pillar 5 (Learning and accountability). It was below the Group 1 average in all pillars, except for Pillar 4 (Protection and international law), where it was above average.

Finland did best compared to its OECD/DAC peers in the indicators on *Funding reconstruction and prevention*, *Refugee law*, *Accountability towards beneficiaries*, *Funding vulnerable and forgotten emergencies* and *Advocacy for protection of civilians*. Its scores were relatively the lowest in the indicators on *Participating in accountability initiatives*, *Prevention and risk reduction*, *Timely funding to complex emergencies*, *Adapting to changing needs* and *Strengthening local capacity*.

# AID DISTRIBUTION

Finnish Official Development Assistance (ODA) increased slightly from 2010 as a proportion of its Gross National Income (GNI): rising from 0.54% in 2009 to 0.55% in 2010. Humanitarian assistance represented 19.6% of its 2010 ODA, or 0.061% of its GNI.

According to data reported to the United Nations (UN) Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs' (OCHA) Financial Tracking Service (FTS) (2011), Finland channelled 70.4% of its 2010 humanitarian aid to United

Nations (UN) agencies, 18.0% to the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement and 9.2% to non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Finland also supported the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and Common Humanitarian Fund (CHF). In 2010, Finland supported 31 crises with humanitarian assistance: 15 in Africa, 12 in Asia and four in the Americas. Pakistan, Haiti and Sudan received the largest percentages of Finland's humanitarian aid in 2010.

# POLICY FRAMEWORK

The Unit for Humanitarian Assistance, within the Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA), manages Finland's humanitarian assistance. In April 2007, the government published a revised humanitarian policy based on the *Principles of Good Humanitarian Donorship* (GHD). These *Humanitarian Assistance Guidelines* strongly emphasize the need to focus on the most vulnerable communities in both disasters and armed conflicts (MFA 2007). Humanitarian assistance falls within the development budget and is allocated

by the Department for Development Policy. Finland intends to allocate 70% of its humanitarian funding early in the year, and the remaining funds in the final quarter to respond to humanitarian needs assessed by field representatives or humanitarian agencies in respective countries of crisis. Aid decisions are based on individual proposals from partner organisations, which state the target groups, plans and estimated costs for providing aid. The MFA also retains a small reserve to respond to sudden onset emergencies.

## HOW DOES FINLAND'S POLICY ADDRESS GHD CONCEPTS?

## GENDER

Finland's humanitarian policy recognizes the importance of a comprehensive inclusion of gender awareness in all of its humanitarian activities. It particularly points out that women's special needs must be addressed in crises situations and that women must be guaranteed the right to participate actively in humanitarian decision-making. Finland also supports the active implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security in all humanitarian operations, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs recently announced that it will triple its funding to UN Women (MFA 2011).

## PILLAR 1 RESPONDING TO NEEDS

Finland's humanitarian policy, *Humanitarian Assistance Guidelines*, states that it will adhere to the humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence when administering humanitarian aid (MFA 2007). It also emphasises the need to focus on least developed

countries and the poorest and most vulnerable within these countries. The policy also promotes ways in which Finnish NGOs and experts can participate in programmes funded by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO) that focus on forgotten and underfunded crises. Finland seeks to improve the timeliness of its funding by supporting pooled funding mechanisms, such as the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF).

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## PILLAR 2

# PREVENTION, RISK REDUCTION AND RECOVERY

According to its humanitarian policy, Finland aims to promote disaster prediction and preparedness by supporting international initiatives for disaster risk reduction such as the *Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015*. Finland's policy stresses that local communities have the right to participate in every phase of humanitarian action, especially in sudden-onset disasters. The *Humanitarian Assistance Guidelines* state that Finland will link relief to rehabilitation and development (LRRD) within its humanitarian initiatives and that beneficiary participation in programming will be essential to this process (MFA 2007). Both Finnish humanitarian and development policies recognise the dangers of climate change, especially in already vulnerable countries, and call for greater international attention to the issue (MFA 2007).

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## PILLAR 3

# WORKING WITH HUMANITARIAN PARTNERS

Finland's *Humanitarian Assistance Guidelines* express support for coordination among humanitarian actors (MFA 2007). Given Finland's relatively small field presence and limited capacities, the Finnish MFA supports the UN's central role in coordination efforts and strongly encourages its partners to participate in sectors or clusters to avoid gaps or duplication of efforts. *Humanitarian Assistance Guidelines* also emphasise the importance of flexibility of humanitarian aid (MFA 2007). Finland bases its decision making on recommendations from humanitarian agencies in the field and states that it will enhance dialogue and exchange of information with UN agencies and other donors, and increase visits to headquarters and field offices to consult with workers in crisis areas.

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## PILLAR 4

# PROTECTION AND INTERNATIONAL LAW

Finland bases the legal framework of its humanitarian policy on the fundamentals of international humanitarian, human rights and refugee law. It cites the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and its protocols as the most important source for international humanitarian law. The *Humanitarian Assistance Guidelines* state that Finland is currently working to promote coordination between European Union (EU) civil protection mechanism and the UN in humanitarian operations in developing countries; however, no specific steps are mentioned (MFA 2007). Finland also expresses its support for OCHA's approach in the use of military and civilian defence assets in disaster relief, as well as the Oslo Guidelines for the use of military assets in humanitarian action. It is not clear from Finland's humanitarian policy if it engages in advocacy toward local authorities, or delegates this to the EU.

**PILLAR 5**

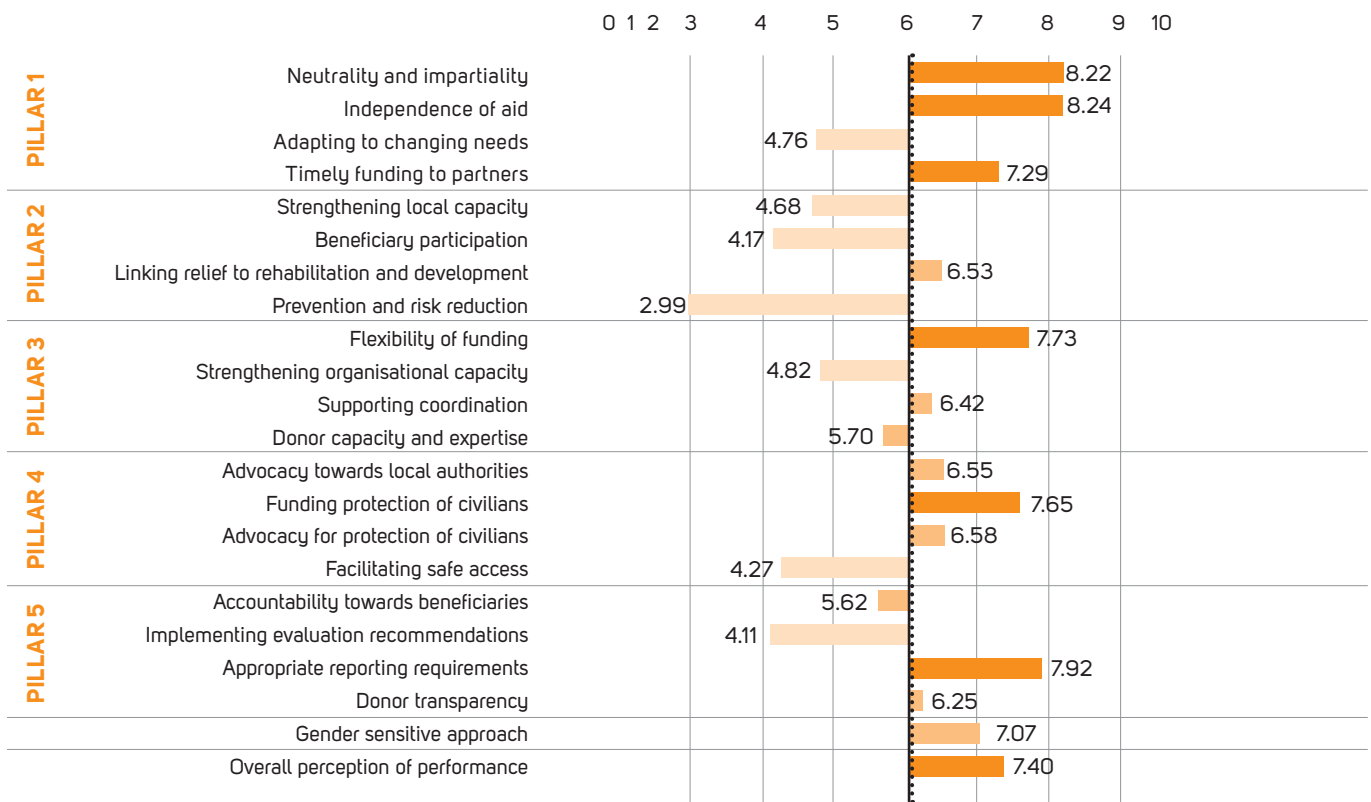
**LEARNING AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

Finland's *The Humanitarian Assistance Guidelines* highlight the need to further develop its monitoring and evaluation capacities (MFA 2007). Harmonising reporting requirements is also a stated objective for Finland, and its policy mentions the need to increase the country's research in humanitarian aid. However, Finland's official policy on transparency of funding and accountability towards beneficiaries is not clear.

**FIELD PARTNERS' PERCEPTIONS**

FINLAND'S FIELD PERCEPTION SCORES

Collected questionnaires: 16



SOURCE: DARA

Finland's average score 6.03 ← OECD/DAC average score 6.05

Colours represent performance compared to donor's average performance rating:

Good (Dark Orange) Mid-range (Light Orange) Could improve (Very Light Orange)

## HOW IS FINLAND PERCEIVED BY ITS PARTNERS?

### GENDER

Finland's partners provided positive feedback regarding the country's support for gender-sensitive approaches. In fact, Finland received the highest score of the OECD/DAC donors for this issue. An interviewee in DRC praised Finland in particular for its support for gender.

#### PILLAR 1

### RESPONDING TO NEEDS

Finland's field partners provided generally positive feedback regarding the neutrality, impartiality and independence of the country's humanitarian assistance. "Given their relative small size they are more interested in their humanitarian investment than other conditions," observed one aid worker. Organisations interviewed also praised the timeliness of Finland's funding: "Finland, especially, provides funding when most needed," stated one interviewee. Another reported that Finland responded rapidly to the 2010 cholera outbreak in Haiti. Partners were more critical of Finland's efforts to ensure the programmes they support adapt to changing needs, although a few pointed to occasional field visits from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and open dialogue as a means of monitoring.

#### PILLAR 2

### PREVENTION, RISK REDUCTION AND RECOVERY

Similar to most donors, field perceptions were poor of Finland's support for local capacity, beneficiary participation and prevention, preparedness and risk reduction. "Finland cannot verify beneficiary participation because they are not in the field. They don't require this in their programming but they know we work with communities to identify specific needs," reported one organisation. Finland scored higher, however, for its efforts to link relief with rehabilitation and development.

#### PILLAR 3

### WORKING WITH HUMANITARIAN PARTNERS

In Pillar 3, Finland stood out for the flexibility of its funding. "Finland is totally flexible," responded one organisation. Partners also appreciated its support for coordination: "Finland stresses coordination, especially through the cluster system," stated another organisation. "They distributed aqua tabs through the WASH [water, sanitation and hygiene] cluster instead of giving them to a particular agency. This allowed them to be distributed more efficiently." Partners were more critical regarding Finland's capacity and expertise and its support for organisational capacity in areas like preparedness, response and contingency planning.

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## PILLAR 4

# PROTECTION AND INTERNATIONAL LAW

Finland's field partners praised the country for its funding and advocacy for protection, and advocacy toward local authorities. One organisation reported that Finland is supportive of programmes with a strong advocacy component. Feedback of Finland's efforts to facilitate safe access and security of humanitarian workers was more negative, although one organisation noted that Finland requires an access strategy in its project proposals.

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## PILLAR 5

# LEARNING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

In Pillar 5, partner organisations largely seem to consider Finland's reporting requirements appropriate. Although it is one of Finland's lower scores, Finland is one of the better donors for ensuring accountability toward affected populations. One partner described Finland's requirements to set-up accountability mechanisms in camps for the displaced. Finland received one of its lowest scores on the qualitative indicators on *Implementing evaluation recommendations*.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

## ● ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE IN HUMANITARIAN ACCOUNTABILITY INITIATIVES

Compared to other donors, Finland does fairly well for ensuring accountability toward beneficiaries in the programmes it supports. It also increased its funding of accountability initiatives<sup>2</sup> from 0.07% in 2009 to 0.3% in 2010. It could improve, however, its participation in international initiatives for humanitarian accountability. The indicator *Participating in accountability initiatives* measures the commitment of OECD/DAC donors to six different humanitarian accountability initiatives.<sup>1</sup> Finland received the lowest score of Group 1, as it is involved in only one initiative, the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI).

## ● CONTINUE PROGRESS UNDERWAY TO IMPROVE TIMELINESS


Finland is the second-fastest donor to respond to sudden onset disasters; representing significant improvement from 2009. It provided 55.1% of its funding in the first six weeks following sudden onset disasters in 2009 and jumped to 94.3% in 2010. It received the second-lowest score of its group, however, for *Timely funding to complex emergencies*, which measures the percentage of funding that arrived within the first three months after the launch of an appeal. Finland provided 43.6% of its funding within this time period, while the OECD/DAC average was 59.4%.

## ● STRENGTHEN SUPPORT FOR PREVENTION, PREPAREDNESS, RISK REDUCTION, BENEFICIARY PARTICIPATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING

With the exception of *Linking relief to rehabilitation and development*, Finland received low scores in the qualitative, survey-based indicators that comprise Pillar 2. Within this pillar, Finland obtained its lowest qualitative score for *Prevention and risk reduction*. It is interesting to note that Finland did fairly well in the related quantitative indicators in this pillar on *Funding reconstruction and prevention*, *Funding risk mitigation* and *Reducing climate-related vulnerability*, perhaps because Finland's policy stresses support for initiatives aimed at disaster risk reduction at the international level. Partners seem to indicate a lack of support in general for prevention, preparedness and risk reduction at the field level, however, and minimal follow-up to verify beneficiary participation and efforts to strengthen local capacity. Finland should engage in dialogue with its partners to discuss their perceptions of its support for these issues.

## ● ENSURE PROGRAMMES ADAPT TO CHANGING NEEDS

Finland performed well in the qualitative indicators of Pillar 1, with the exception of *Adapting to changing needs*. The survey question related to this indicator refers to the donors' efforts to verify that programmes adapt to changing needs, which is likely more difficult for Finland due to its limited field presence. However, a few partners highlighted Finland's efforts to compensate for this in Haiti through field visits and open dialogue. Finland should endeavour to replicate this model in other crises and engage in dialogue with its partners to discuss their perceptions in this regard.

 Please see [www.daraint.org](http://www.daraint.org) for a complete list of references.