





Crisis reports

Somalia



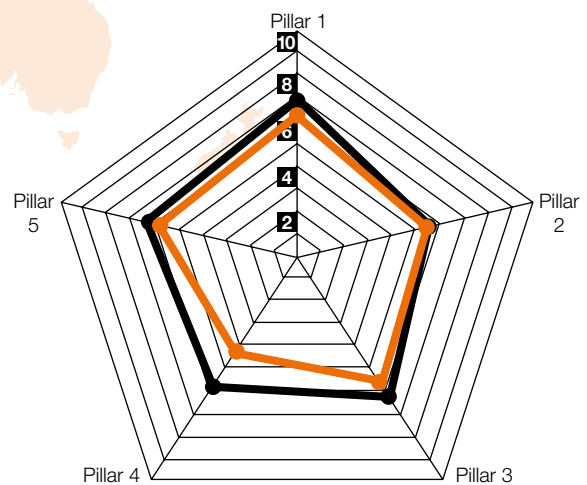
Somalia at a glance

The crisis and the response

- Prolonged drought, increased insecurity, further displacement, worsening restrictions on humanitarian access and high food prices have resulted in the worst food security situation since 1992.
- US restrictions on funding operations in al-Shabab-controlled areas – and an overall cut in US humanitarian funds for Somalia – caused operational cutbacks in south and central Somalia.
- The operational environment worsened: extortion and insecurity led a further reduction in international staffing, forcing more INGOs to operate remotely from Nairobi through Somali partners.
- Approximately two-thirds of those in need of food were reached in the first half of 2009, but only 44 percent in the second half.
- The humanitarian response is generally insufficient, ineffective in most sectors, often provided too late, based on inaccurate data and not provided uniformly and impartially to vulnerable populations.

Donor performance

- By October 2010, the 2010 CAP is 60 percent covered.
- Frustrated at politicisation of the response and uncritical donor support of the transitional government, many humanitarians want an end to UN ‘double-hatting’ and a separate HC post to advocate for more impartial addressing of humanitarian needs.
- Humanitarians criticised donors for not robustly advocating for humanitarian access and *GHD Principles*.
- Some donors are commended for understanding the need for programme flexibility in a volatile environment.
- There are concerns about OCHA’s role as both coordinator and allocator of funding



— Somalia
— All Crisis Average

HRI 2010 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

Key challenges and areas for improvement

- Donors should heed calls to support internally-driven reconciliation processes, rather than those which reflect regional and international political interests.
- More donors should fund preparedness, maintenance of contingency stocks and building capacity of Somalis.
- There is a need to clarify whether UN Security Council resolutions targeting terrorism are – as the US argues – applicable to humanitarian aid.

Somalia

Humanitarian needs unmet as counter-terrorism focus constrains response

Nearly two decades after the collapse of Somalia as a unified state, the humanitarian situation further deteriorated in 2009. Prolonged drought was accompanied by increased insecurity, displacement and worsening restrictions on humanitarian access. By mid 2009, the overall food security situation was the worst since 1992, with 3.64 million people (49 percent of the population) in need of assistance (OCHA 2009a). Ongoing conflict between Somalia's internationally-supported Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and al-Shabaab, a designated terrorist group, has further complicated the provision of emergency assistance. The warring parties continue to perpetrate grave human rights abuses, subjecting civilians to murder, rape and other forms of gender-based violence, assaults, theft, illegal arrests and child recruitment.

None of the many protagonists in the myriad conflicts engulfing Somalia, including the TFG, has made serious efforts to hold those responsible accountable, or to end the climate of impunity. Donors' political interests – shaped by the War on Terror – have influenced aid decisions and have had serious implications for the provision of neutral, impartial humanitarian assistance. As a result, the response continues to be too little, too late, mostly ineffective in many parts of the country, not provided impartially and not based on the needs of vulnerable populations.

Operational environment

Al-Shabaab, which emerged following the Ethiopian military intervention against the Islamic Courts Union in 2006, and Hizbul Islam are the main Islamist groups engaged in combat against the TFG and the African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM) which supports it. Despite the election of a moderate, former member of the Islamic Courts as President in January 2009, fighting between the TFG and Islamist fundamentalists has continued unabated. Since early 2009, the balance of power, particularly in southern and central areas, has shifted. By the end of 2009, al-Shabaab controlled most southern regions and most of Mogadishu, except for northern areas and the international airport (International Crisis Group 2010). Some analysts fear that as long as the TFG remains indecisive, an effective presence only in parts of Mogadishu, al-Shabaab will continue to gain ground.

As in previous years, the situation in the north (the de-facto state of Somaliland) and the north-east (the de-facto state of Puntland) was far better than in southern and central Somalia. In Somaliland, successes in conflict resolution, peace-building and creation of governance structures have resulted in an environment conducive to longer-term development. Despite Puntland's relative stability, it is increasingly difficult to carry out development work. Piracy continued, with 29 ships seized in 2009 (OCHA 2009b). There is evidence that al-Shabaab has coerced pirates into sharing their profits. In southern and central Somalia, conflict severely limited humanitarian access and response.

Increasing humanitarian needs

The Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit (FSNAU) – which is funded by the United States (US) and the European Commission Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO) and given managerial support by the United Nations (UN) Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) – worked with the Famine Early Warning Systems Network to assess conditions after the April-June 2009 rains (the *gu*). The results confirmed that Somalia faced its worst humanitarian crisis in 18 years.

The 2010 Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP) launched by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in December 2009 called for assistance for 3.64 million people, noting that 1.1 million were facing an acute food and livelihood crisis (OCHA 2009). In many areas, 20 percent of under-fives were malnourished – more than 75 percent of those in need were concentrated in southern and central Somalia (FSNAU 2009a). In addition, 25 percent of under-fives assessed had suffered from acute respiratory infections and 21 percent from diarrhoea during the two weeks preceding assessment. Acute malnutrition levels in Somalia are among the highest in the world. The under-five crude death rate is nearly 30 percent higher than in the rest of sub-Saharan Africa. Half of all deaths of under-fives are attributable to malnutrition. FSNAU reported that 19 percent of the population was acutely malnourished and 4.5 severely malnourished in mid-2009. There are only 0.3 medical doctors and 1.7 nurses or midwives for every 10,000 people (FSNAU 2009b).

Displacement has assumed massive proportions. Data is unreliable but it is thought that since early 2008, the number of Somali refugees in neighbouring countries has increased by nearly 40 percent. In January 2010, some 678,000 Somali refugees were officially registered by governments and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Kenya, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Yemen, Eritrea, Uganda and Tanzania (UNHCR 2010). Actual numbers are undoubtedly higher. In early 2009, 524,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) were thought to be settled in the Afgooye Corridor – the strip of land between Mogadishu and the town of Afgooye – one of the world's largest IDP concentrations (OCHA 2010a). In the final quarter of 2009, drought, flooding and/or lack of livelihood opportunities accounted for approximately 40 percent of new displacement. Fighting in southern Somalia caused a new wave of internal displacement and movement across the Kenyan border in December 2009. The 2010 CAP reported 1.55 million IDPs at the end of 2009 (OCHA 2009b). Displacement is still continuing, with more IDPs fleeing to already congested areas where they do not have the right to own land.

Declining donor response

The overall level of funding was less in 2009 than in 2008, with 64 percent of the CAP funded in 2009 as compared to 72 percent in 2008 (OCHA 2010b). This was mainly due to a sharp decrease in funding of food, which is by far the largest sector and absorbs more than two thirds of the total available amount. There was considerable differentiation in donor response per sector.

The decrease in funding in 2009 was primarily the result of significantly reduced US funding. While US funding was US\$237 million in 2008, it declined to US\$99 million in 2009 and only US\$27 million had been allocated in the first five months of 2010. The United Kingdom (UK) has followed suit, its contribution of US\$40 million in 2008, declining to US\$18 million in 2009. Other donors who provided less included Norway, Italy and France. By contrast, Spain's contribution has risen from US\$4 million in 2008 to US\$36 million in 2010. As of mid-October 2010, 60 percent of requirements set out in CAP had been met, much of it a late funding carry-over from 2009.

Enormous difficulties were encountered in the attempt to assist the severely malnourished under-five population in 2009. The objective to stabilise the level of malnutrition was not achieved in many areas, particularly where fighting was intense. The World Food Programme (WFP) was unable to meet monthly distribution in terms of quantities and numbers of beneficiaries. In the second half of the year, distribution targets were reduced due to pressure from local authorities to reduce general food distributions during harvests, incomplete access and weak food pipelines. The WFP monthly average case-load of food aid beneficiaries was 1.74 million in 2009, an increase of more than 50 percent from 2008. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) (2009) provided food to 464,118 beneficiaries. Some two thirds of those in need of food were reached during the first half of the year, but a mere 44 percent were reached in the second.

Due to funding limitations, health sector objectives were also not met. However, more than 50 outbreaks of communicable diseases were investigated, and in most cases, an appropriate response was provided. An innovative new approach – called “child health days” – allowed more than two million children and an estimated 380,000 women of child-bearing age to be aided (Morooka 2009).

Education needs also remained unmet. Only 20 percent of IDP children in the Afgooye Corridor received any education. In the South, only 100,000 people were provided with formal or informal schooling. School-feeding was largely discontinued and school attendance decreased dramatically. The level of funding earmarked for education in 2009 was a mere US\$4.5 million, half the allocation for 2008 (OCHA 2010b).

Funding to strengthen local service delivery, preparedness and response capacity continued to be insufficient. Humanitarians interviewed by the Humanitarian Response Index (HRI) team generally expressed disappointment at donor failure to adopt a holistic approach to building local capacity, some arguing that this played into the hands of the Islamists. There was also considerable disappointment in donor prioritisation of life-saving activities over addressing long-term needs. One respondent to the HRI noted that “funding goes to emergency relief first... and last to food security”.

In regard to livelihoods support, funding increased by 16 percent in 2009, but the US\$19.7 million was only 34 percent of the sum required. There is a general regret that, in the words of one respondent: “donors are only interested in saving lives, not in saving livelihoods”. Another wryly observed that for donors “the sexiest term is emergency”.

Over a third of humanitarians who were interviewed noted that the 2009 donor response was negatively affected by the global financial crisis. Rising global food prices, particularly in the first half of 2009, seriously impacted food delivery agencies. Fluctuation in the value of sterling and the US dollar affected funding availability. Some respondents noted that withdrawal of international staff generated doubts among donors as to whether programmes could be implemented.

Impact of War on Terror

Nearly all agencies interviewed during the HRI mission said that non-humanitarian interests and political criteria were influencing donor decisions. A key event in 2009 was the decision of the Office for Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), a US agency implementing global counter-terrorism measures, to follow up the US State Department's designation of al-Shabaab as an international terrorist group by refusing to issue a waiver for the provision of humanitarian aid in areas under its control. Previous waivers have been issued for humanitarian assistance provided in Sudan, Iran and the Gaza Strip as well as for areas controlled by US-designated terrorist groups such as Hezbollah in Lebanon (Scribner 2009). The US Agency for International Development (USAID) cited the OFAC approval process as grounds for not funding partners working in non-TFG areas. The OFAC ruling has led to a total freeze of US humanitarian funds for Somalia in areas controlled by al-Shabaab. Some humanitarians interviewed by the HRI team described USAID's stance as "cowardly", arguing it should do more to advocate within the US Administration for a more nuanced stance. One noted that efforts by USAID to meet with OFAC to explain operational realities in Somalia had been rebuffed.

US counter-terror policies have provoked debate on whether UN Security Council resolutions targeting terrorism (UNSCR 1844 and 1267) are applicable to humanitarian aid, and have also initiated disagreement between many donor states' foreign and aid ministries on how to deal with the issue. According to many agencies interviewed, US policy has not only held up funding but has also further politicised the delivery of humanitarian aid. Many implementing agencies report that OFAC has made them waste time and energy – with very little support from donors who usually firmly uphold humanitarian principles – on demonstrating compliance to anti-terrorism measures which should have been spent on improving and increasing response to humanitarian need. Some interviewees report they fear prosecution for potentially aiding a terrorist group.

“Donors’ political interests have influenced aid decisions and have had serious implications for the provision of neutral, impartial humanitarian assistance.”



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In February 2010, the UN's Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordination (RC/HC) called US aid rules impossible to follow (BBC News 2010). Many aid actors complain that the TFG is manifestly incapable of improving security, delivering basic services, or seeking an agreement with clans and opposition groups that might encourage accountable governance. It has been argued that if the international community is serious about addressing the reality of failed states, it should eschew the polarising rhetoric of the War on Terror and instead begin engaging in earnest with a multitude of “uncomfortable” actors involved in “ugly birth-processes” of re-configurations of political authority (Verhoeven 2009). Yet, most Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development /

Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) donors continue to support the TFG. Some, including Norway and the European Commission (EC), are trying to convince agencies to focus more on TFG-controlled areas.

Another cause of concern is reports that USAID tenders have attracted for-profit contractors and private security companies to operate in Somalia as they have in Iraq and Afghanistan. There are fears that their presence and lack of interest in humanitarian principles could further affect the often negative image of established humanitarian actors (Bradbury 2010).

Security, protection and access

Incidents targeting Somalis and humanitarians included improvised explosive devices, kidnapping, abduction, assassination and piracy. In 2009, 10 aid workers were killed compared to 34 in 2008, a reduction explained both by less targeting of humanitarian workers and their assets and the reduced profile of the humanitarian community in many areas. In the second half of 2009, the number of UN international field staff dropped from 66 to 28 and international staff of international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) from 168 to 67 (OCHA 2009d). The vast majority of remaining in-country UN and INGO international staff are in Somaliland. There is no permanent presence of international staff in southern and central areas.

Agencies remain stymied by extortion and theft from armed groups. A report to the Security Council estimated that 30 percent of all food aid was skimmed by local partners and local staff of WFP, ten percent by ground transporters and between five and ten percent by armed groups (UN 2010). As a result, WFP decided in January 2010 to stop delivering food aid to al-Shabaab-controlled areas, after having tried for months to negotiate access. The Islamist group responded by ordering WFP and its staff to leave Somalia. The largest group of IDPs – those in the Afgooye Corridor – have not received any food from WFP since November 2009. Reports of corruption and pilfering of aid have reinforced US arguments justifying cessation of aid to al-Shabaab areas, but the end result has been failure to meet the needs of a significant proportion of the vulnerable population.

Access problems and insecurity have further increased reliance on Somali national staff and national NGOs. Day-to-day supervision is typically via lengthy calls to Nairobi using Somalia's well-functioning mobile networks. Humanitarian agencies report that access to nutrition and health interventions is barely affected by the absence of international staff. However, response to new crises is highly problematic due to constraints around establishing new logistical mechanisms and staff hiring and firing. An unfortunate consequence of insecurity-driven remote management is that INGOs are effectively becoming donors for national implementing agencies. This inevitably increases overhead – an additional burden which many donors are unwilling to meet.

Agencies that have traditionally relied on national partners – such as the ICRC – have faced fewer problems. OXFAM/NOVIB uses several mechanisms to ensure the high quality of programmes that are implemented by partners. An important element is the involvement of Somali communities in programme design and multi-level monitoring. In 2009, there was increased use of Somali diaspora-based consultants and information technologies to monitor programme implementation.

OCHA and the UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) jointly developed an access coefficient, based on eight indicators such as international staff presence, humanitarian flights and security incidents. Mogadishu scored two out of a possible 100 points, while the averages for southern and northern Somalia were much higher: 25 and 70 respectively. UN agencies and NGOs undertook several initiatives in 2009 to reduce the vulnerability of humanitarian staff. Ground rules developed by the UN provide guidance to humanitarians and beneficiaries. The Somalia NGO Consortium published a position paper on operating principles including thresholds and criteria regarding access, security, and the provision of aid.

A major challenge in 2009 was the lack of field presence and the resultant inability to conduct field missions and assessments. Several strategic towns, which had previously served as significant UN operational hubs, are now in the hands of anti-TFG forces, with which humanitarian access has had to be negotiated anew.

Despite mounting problems in 2009, donors did not generally advocate for access. There were some exceptions. Sweden was very outspoken about the need to facilitate humanitarian access, but was said to have done little. The EC was circumspect, but helped to facilitate access by informally providing medical evacuations. ECHO undertook a considerable amount of political lobbying.

Activities related to security, protection and shelter were only 28 percent funded. Donors who contributed to protection included ECHO, Denmark, Ireland, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, UNHCR and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). Lack of funding led to non-implementation of programmes addressing IDP/child protection and gender-based violence. Australia, Belgium and Ireland contributed to the creation of the UN's Security Information and Operation Centre, which collects data on the access and security situation in the country. Information on security and access is published in OCHA Somalia's *Humanitarian Access Analysis*.

Funding air transport for movement of humanitarian goods and personnel is seen as vital to ensure access to areas in dire need. Donors funding UN/WFP flights included Canada, Denmark, Germany, Ireland and Spain. The Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and WFP also provided funds for air services. Agencies are concerned at the high charges for passengers – currently US\$800 per person – and want to see improvements in air transport logistics.

Coordination

Coordination of interventions in southern and central Somalia was undertaken in Nairobi, primarily through the cluster system. Field coordination further declined in 2009 and is now largely limited to Somaliland and, to a lesser extent, Puntland. Instability has prevented coordination from humanitarian hubs such as Gaalcaayo, Belet Weyne and Baidoa.

Agencies interviewed generally reported that most Nairobi-based clusters effectively coordinated CAP activities and reporting, contingency planning and prioritisation of projects funded by the Humanitarian Response Fund (HRF) – a pooled fund at the disposal of the humanitarian community established in Somalia in 2004. In some clusters, however, coordination was confined to unfocused information exchange. Major contributors to OCHA's coordination in 2009 included ECHO, the Netherlands and Spain; while Canada, Italy and Switzerland made smaller amounts available. Some concerns were expressed at OCHA's role as both coordinator and allocator of funding. There is a perception that cluster effectiveness is reduced as national NGOs seek funds from OCHA. There was little coordination between clusters and within the UN. Agencies operating in central and southern Somalia were said to be reluctant to share information, lest this compromise their capacity to work. Geographical coordination was largely limited to assistance for IDPs in the Afgooye Corridor.

The Somalia NGO consortium, established in 1999, now has over 50 international and 20 national NGOs. It has facilitated information exchange and produced a position paper on operating principles. At a meeting in Naivasha, Kenya in November 2008, the Somali Donor Group (SDG), consisting of seven OECD/DAC donors (including Canada, the US, the UK and several other European countries), the EC, the UN and several multilateral agencies, agreed on a framework for improving coordination, monitoring and accountability and undertook to regularly review progress.

The Coordination of International Support to Somalis Executive Committee (CISS ExCom) brings together representatives from the SDG, the clusters/sectors, the NGO consortium and the UN country team and is co-chaired by the Resident Coordinator (RC) / Humanitarian Coordinator (HR) and the World Bank. Several informants noted that coordination through the NGO consortium and the CISS ExCom was effective. However, agencies were not impressed by coordination among donors in the SDG, particularly their inability to forge a common position on the US-driven ban on funding activities in al-Shabaab-controlled areas. In retrospect, the commitments made in Naivasha were too ambitious, a participant noting “this was presented as a window of opportunity... I have seen many windows, but very little improvement”.

Humanitarian agencies report considerable barriers to effective coordination. NGOs and UN agencies are in competition to be viewed as in charge of coordination, a reality most donors do not address. Some respondents urged donors to be stricter with NGOs at an early stage of relationship-building, specifying who should do what. One noted that “each NGO has its own mandate, and fighting for funding is going on”. It was suggested that donors should set a better example for each other in order to promote coordination, acquire Somalia-specific expertise and improve their technical capacity.

Respondents' reflections on donors

Humanitarians interviewed by the HRI mission noted marked divergences in the capacity of individual donors and UN agencies to make informed decisions. Some cited positive examples of donors – including ECHO, the US Office for Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA), USAID, and the Netherlands – who have staff familiar with field realities in Somalia. Others are reported to have little capacity or expertise. The UK Department for International Development (DFID) and Canada each had only one dedicated regional officer, and most of their time was spent on other countries.

ECHO received more positive remarks than any other donor. Those praised for flexibility included the Netherlands and Sweden. Managers of the HRF were praised for willingness to fill general funding gaps and DFID and ECHO were praised for plugging gaps in food aid funding. Norway had emergency funds available for minor funding gaps. Most interviewees acknowledged greater awareness among donors of the need to operate outside the box. Donors cited as more transparent included DFID, the EC, Sweden and USAID.

Lack of timely provision of funding was frequently mentioned as a poor donor practice. Donors whose funding arrived late in 2009 included ECHO and the US Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA). The HRI team learned through respondents that some donors prefer to fund their own national agencies (e.g. Norway); to focus on particular sectors (e.g. US emphasis on food aid and UK prioritisation of health) and that they prefer particular agencies (e.g. the UK's disproportionate funding for the ICRC and UN agencies).

Humanitarians reported that donors had little way to verify whether flexibility was justified due to limited, and at times completely impossible, scope for field monitoring. Donors rely on reports and feed-back from UN agencies and international NGOs which are sometimes significantly dependent on input from national implementing partners.

Some donors were praised for their attention to maintaining standards, learning lessons from evaluations and promoting beneficiary involvement in programming. These included ECHO, USAID, and DFID. In 2009, there were several examples of donor support of learning and accountability, including a Danish-funded project to improve the quality of humanitarian action. In 2008 and 2009, donors were severely criticised for their failure to work with their humanitarian partners to ensure evaluation-derived recommendations are incorporated into future programming. OECD/DAC donors' 2009 performance was even worse in this regard than in 2008. Some donors who actually visited projects and gathered information included Finland, Japan and DFID.

Humanitarian agency representatives told the HRI mission they were reasonably satisfied with donors' reporting requirements. Some mentioned that donors generally understood their operational constraints, not insisting on unrealistic monitoring and evaluation requirements. Others, including ECHO, were criticised for imposing procurement and tendering standards which are not practical in Somalia.

Many agencies want donors to realise the value of funding for preparedness and contingency planning. They would welcome having the freedom a block grant would provide to preposition and store stocks, fund security measures and allow capacity building, particularly to boost the technical and operational capacity of Somalis. Norway and ECHO were commended for permitting agencies to keep a part of the funding to maintain contingency stocks. Some agencies said that donors should, in general, better analyse strengths and weaknesses of agencies before providing funds for strengthening organisational capacity.

Several agencies expressed concern about an increasing number of donors who, when asked for a quick response, instead referred them to the HRF. They noted that HRF funding was generally restricted to emergency IDP assistance.

Nearly all donors have separate budget-lines and departments for development and humanitarian departments. Hardly any development aid is available for southern and central Somalia. Donor policies regarding flexibility and reallocation of pledged funds vary widely. Larger actors – including UN agencies and bigger INGOs – appeared better informed about these variations and possibilities for flexible funding and reallocation of non-earmarked funding for under-funded activities.

Humanitarian organisations generally thought the CAP priority to strengthen the protective environment for civilians was unrealistic. Even the ICRC, despite its extensive protection experience in southern and central Somalia, is now restricted to the promotion of international humanitarian law (ICRC 2010). Services for those who have experienced fundamental human rights violations do not exist. Some of those people interviewed suggested UN agencies stressed protection in order to compete for donor funds. Protection activities focused on improving data collection and mostly depended on Somali UN and INGO staff. Informants reported that there is no evidence that improved data collection has led to more effective UN advocacy.

Some humanitarians criticised donors for not doing more to advocate for humanitarian access. It was noted that while countries like Sweden were very outspoken, they did little to actually promote better humanitarian access. Donors were also criticised for refusing to acknowledge how insecurity greatly increased operational costs and for failure to fund security mitigation measures, communication networks, air transport and war risk insurance.

Lessons learnt and recommendations for the future

So grave are operational constraints in Somalia that one INGO is reported to have changed their approach from “needs-based programming” to “constraints-based programming” – only responding to those needs which can feasibly be addressed (Bradbury 2010). The concerns expressed by many of those interviewed by the HRI team are echoed by the conclusion of a study of the inherent tensions between stabilisation and humanitarian goals in Somalia: “State-building efforts that insist humanitarian relief be channelled through the nascent state in order to build its legitimacy and capacity undermine humanitarian neutrality when the state is a party to a civil war. Counter-terrorism policies that seek to ensure that no aid benefits terrorist groups have the net effect of criminalising relief operations in countries where poor security precludes effective accountability,” (Menkhaus 2010).

There are fundamental differences of opinion among humanitarian agencies and donors on the way forward. Most INGOs would like donors to push for inclusive, internally-driven reconciliation processes, and some wish to bring Islamist groups, including al-Shabaab, into a national reconciliation process. Many humanitarian workers, including some UN staff, criticise donors and the RC/HC for primarily supporting externally-driven mediation efforts reflecting. Some want an end to “double-hatting” and have demanded a separate post for an HC able to act more impartially to meet humanitarian needs. Many are highly critical of donor and UN support to the TFG, particularly the European Union's training of Somali troops in Uganda (ReliefWeb 2010), and find little evidence that the TFG has any interest in assisting those it claims to govern. They argue that the international community should be neutral and acknowledge the transitional nature of the TFG. There was much criticism of the international tolerance for the TFG's shortcomings, one noting that the international community indulgently “treats the TFG as a toddler... and does not hold it accountable”.

Looking ahead, donors could do much more to:

- 1 Advocate for IHL:** Donors must defend the human rights of affected populations and argue for adherence to humanitarian law and guarantees for safe humanitarian access, including with the TFG, al-Shabaab and the authorities in Somaliland and Puntland
- 2 Defend a needs-based approach:** It is essential to protect humanitarian assistance from political and security objectives and challenge pressures on humanitarian organisations to work only in TFG-controlled areas. Donor should foster a common approach towards *all* parties to the many conflicts in Somalia, following the examples of Canada and Sweden – the only donor governments that were consistently praised for being scrupulously non-political.

3 Go beyond lifesaving:

Humanitarian programming must expand to foster capacity-building of Somali communities and civil society, support livelihoods and provide health and education services. The wider donor community should follow Sweden in funding education services, and France in contributing to livelihoods.

4 Defend humanitarians: Donors can provide more support to enable greater protection for humanitarian workers, both international and Somali.**5 Allow flexibility:** The constraints of remote management cannot be overcome, and the challenge of building implementation, monitoring and evaluation capacity of Somali partners cannot be achieved unless donors simply procedures and welcome innovative programming.**References**

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Information based on field interviews with key humanitarian agencies in Nairobi from 14 to 23 February 2010, and 209 questionnaires on donor performance (including 155 OECD/DAC donors).

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