

FOCUS ON





INTRODUCTION

Over the past five years, the Humanitarian Response Index (HRI) asked humanitarian staff in the field whether they considered the crisis where they were working was unique or different. The answer was almost unanimously yes. Of course, some answers were better informed than others, but the consensus was clear.

In 2010, fifteen Consolidated Appeals, four Flash Appeals, and several other appeals were funded and implemented in diverse contexts like Sudan, the occupied Palestinian territories, Colombia or Pakistan. Millions of vulnerable people received assistance from hundreds of humanitarian organisations – ranging from large United Nations agencies to small non-governmental organisations -- in charge of managing around sixteen billion dollars donated by dozens of governments as well as corporate and private sources. The numbers in 2011 were very similar.

So, if the idea of the uniqueness of every humanitarian crisis were true, the Humanitarian Response Index's field research would be an unrealistic endeavour. Undeniably, each humanitarian crisis has a certain degree of uniqueness, as every other social process. Nevertheless, beyond relevant context-specific traits, our challenge is to identify, study and infer common factors and trends in the overall humanitarian response from a range of crises.

Since 2007, the first year of the HRI, DARA has been sending research teams to the field to collect comparable information about the overall humanitarian response, with a specific focus on the OECD/DAC donors' performance. The responses to a questionnaire in hundreds of face-to-face interviews feed the construction of the annual donor ranking, the main analysis and individual donor assessments. Examples of relevant good and poor donor practice are extracted from the internal reports our field teams elaborate after each field mission and aggregated into the overall picture.

In this section, readers will find a group of case studies of the crises included in the HRI 2011 field research while the comparative analysis mentioned above can be found in the main chapter. During 2011, our field research teams spent 54 days interviewing 328 humanitarian organisations in Chad, Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Kenya, the occupied Palestinian territories, Pakistan, Somalia and Sudan. While the HRI field research visits are of

short duration (one to two weeks), the scope of the research and the variety of organisations interviewed allow our teams to gather invaluable information about each crisis and response. Much of the work of the field teams feeds into the larger process of analysis of donor performance and trends in how the humanitarian sector is working. Much of this information never goes public. Nevertheless, the opportunity to share what we were told by humanitarian partners in the field is an opportunity too good to be missed.

For us, these crisis analyses are a token of gratitude to all those humanitarian workers and organisations that thought meeting the HRI teams – in some cases, for the second or third time - was worthwhile. We hope they find the crisis analysis a fair reflection of the difficult contexts where they work, their not-always acknowledged efforts to help those in need and their ideas for the common effort of improving the quality of humanitarian aid.

FERNANDO ESPADA, HRI FIELD RESEARCH MANAGER

CRISIS AT A GLANCE

CHAD

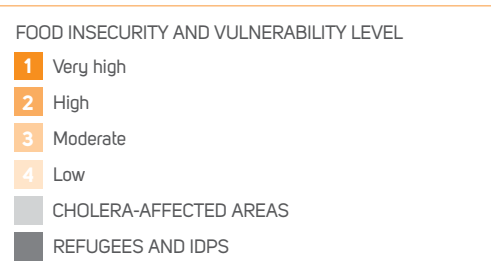
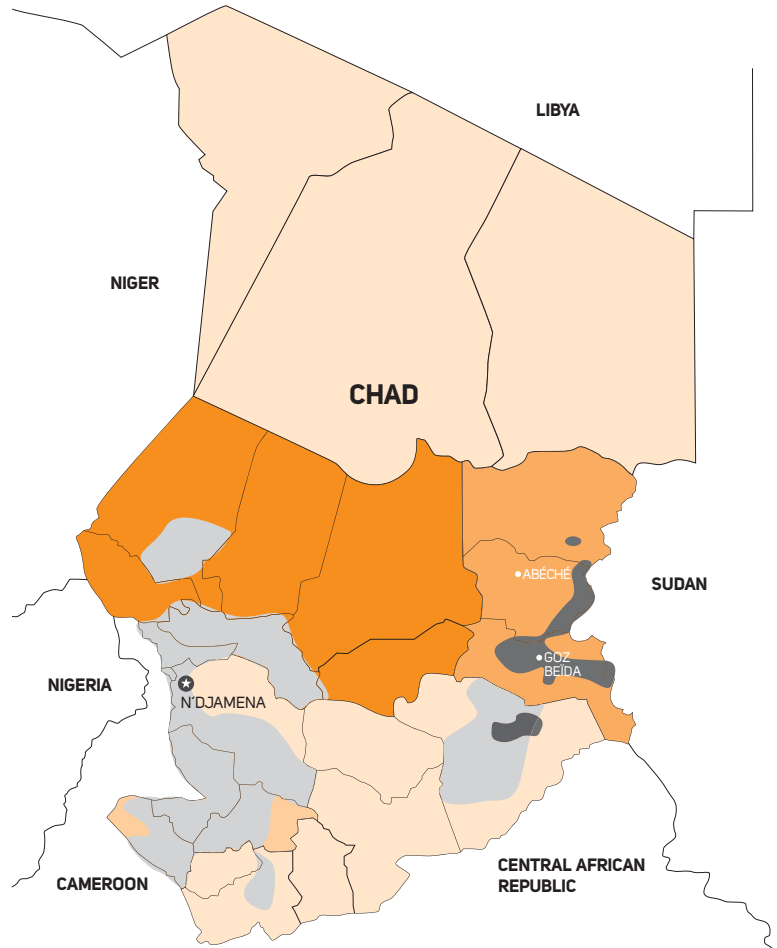
TOTAL FUNDING TO CHAD IN 2010:

US\$ **365.4** MILLION

89% INSIDE THE CAP

THE CRISIS AND THE RESPONSE

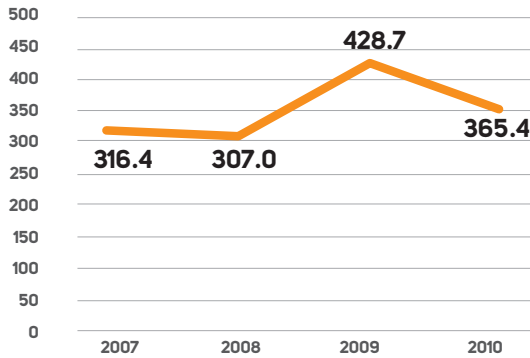
- Improved security in East Chad in spite the end of the United Nations Mission in Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT). Nevertheless, there are still 332,878 refugees and 131,000 IDPs and only 50,000 returnees. Banditry and lack of basic infrastructures and services in their places of origin make return still difficult.
- The number of vulnerable people increased from 500,000 in 2009 to almost 4 million in 2011 due to floods, drought, cholera, and the malnutrition crisis in the Sahel.
- By year's end, 69 percent of the \$544 million requested in the 2010 Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP) had been funded. The UN's Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) allocated \$15 million to the 2010 CAP to respond to the food and malnutrition crisis. The CAP 2011, \$535 million, is financed up to 56 percent as of November 2011.
- The response prioritised assistance to refugees and IDPs in the East camps. Little financial support to address other emergencies (floods, cholera outbreak or malnutrition in the Sahel) or transitional projects.



Source: OCHA

TOTAL HUMANITARIAN FUNDING TO CHAD

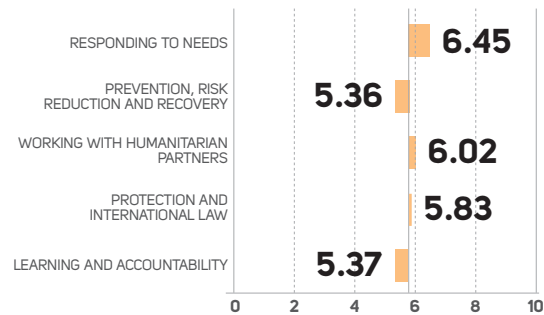
US\$ MILLION



Total funding committed and/or contributed inside and outside the appeal

HRI DONOR PERFORMANCE BY PILLAR

FIELD PERCEPTION SCORES



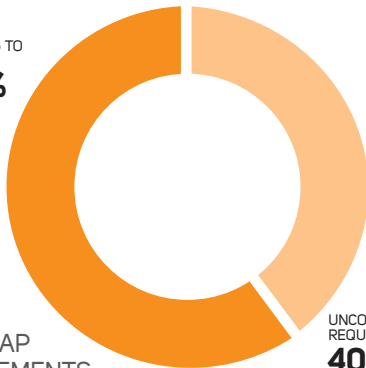
Source: DARA

Colours represent OECD/DAC donors' performance compared to overall average pillar score:

● Good ● Mid-range ● Could improve

2010 CHAD CAP COVERAGE

FUNDING TO THE CAP
60%



UNCOVERED REQUIREMENTS
40%

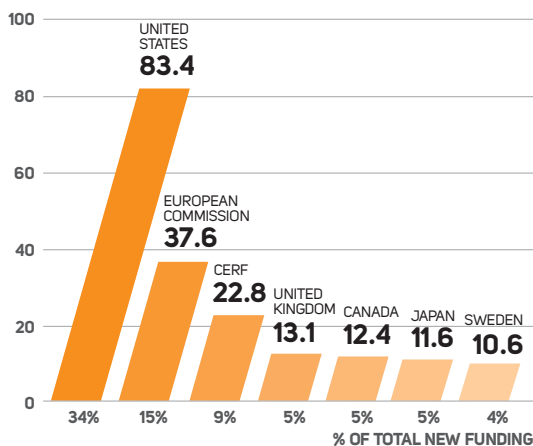
TOTAL CAP REQUIREMENTS
US\$ 544.1 MILLION

DONOR PERFORMANCE AND AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Deficient prioritisation as a result of a poor understanding of the context and limited assessment and monitoring of the situation.
- Ensure appropriate coverage of all humanitarian needs, ending the de-facto exclusion of early recovery projects from funding and prioritising prevention, preparedness and risk reduction measures in close coordination with local authorities.
- The UN Resident Coordinator / Humanitarian Coordinator must assume his leading role in facilitating the common work of international aid organisations and national authorities.

MAIN HUMANITARIAN DONORS IN 2010

US\$ MILLION



Total funding inside and outside the appeal. Total new funding excludes carry-over.

OLD REMEDIES NO LONGER EFFECTIVE

For many years, Chad was a development environment for international aid. Humanitarian issues were under the radar, mainly focused on refugees as a spin-off effect of Darfur. However, this changed in April 2006 when a major rebel offensive expelled government forces from large areas in the East of Chad and directly threatened the capital. Factional and inter-ethnic violence triggered the displacement of more than 140,000 Chadians in addition to hundreds of thousands of Sudanese refugees.

In February 2008, another rebel attempt to oust President Idriss Déby turned N'Djamena into a battlefield during three days, killing hundreds, expelling thousands from their homes and making

■ THE NUMBER OF VULNERABLE PEOPLE IN CHAD HAS INCREASED FROM 500,000 IN 2009 TO ALMOST 4 MILLION PEOPLE IN 2011

foreigners seek refuge or evacuation with the help of the French Army. In May 2009, the second time the Humanitarian Response Index (HRI) travelled to Chad (the first one in 2008), thousands of rebels

crossed the Sudanese border, though this time they were disbanded on their way to the capital. Once again, the armed conflict behind the humanitarian crisis in the East bared its teeth.

In February 2011, almost two years later, the HRI found quite a different scenario in Chad, with no more rebel offensives or significant population displacements in the East. A peaceful start of the rainy season –the yearly deadline for any military or rebel operation– and the creation of joint Chad-Sudan border patrols, with good results in terms of controlling rebel movements, can be seen as a

major milestone and a token of improved relations between two long-time enemies (Sudan Tribune, 2010). This seemed to confirm an improved security situation in the East, even for the more sceptical observers. In fact, one main humanitarian actor in N'Djamena told the HRI: “There is no longer a conflict neither in the East nor in Chad.”

Perhaps this is too much to say about such an ethnically complex and historically unstable country, but the truth is that security improvements are real and, therefore, the threat to civilians in East Chad has decreased. Beyond discrepancies of opinions over the end of the armed conflict in the East and the subsequent security improvement, most of the humanitarian actors the HRI interviewed agreed that it is time to start the transition to recovery and development, and also pay more attention to different humanitarian needs in other parts of Chad. In fact, according to the Consolidated Appeal Process 2011 Mid-Year Review for Chad, the number of vulnerable people in Chad has increased from 500,000 in 2009 to almost 4 million people in 2011 due to the compounded effects of flooding, water-borne diseases such as cholera, and the malnutrition crisis in the Sahel (OCHA, 2011). Nevertheless, many interviewees in N'Djamena denounced the reluctance of some key humanitarian actors, including donors, to adapt to the new scenario and needs.

ADAPTING THE RESPONSE TO A POST-EMERGENCY SCENARIO

With the attention of the international humanitarian actors focused on the assistance to the 249,000 Sudanese refugees and 131,000 IDPs in the eastern camps, it was almost impossible to

receive additional donor support to address other emergencies in other parts of Chad such as the floods, the cholera outbreak and the malnutrition crisis in the Sahelian belt. Even less successful were the attempts to secure funding for linking relief, rehabilitation and development projects.

Looking at the projects financed in the Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP) 2010 by geographical area, around 55% of the total funds went to the East. So, in spite of already identified humanitarian needs in

the West and the North affecting around 2,000,000 people, the geographical distribution of the response continued to prioritise the assistance to refugees and IDPs in the East, leading to “a huge coverage problem in 2010”. In terms of

■ MOST HUMANITARIAN ACTORS THINK IT IS TIME TO START THE TRANSITION TO RECOVERY AND DEVELOPMENT

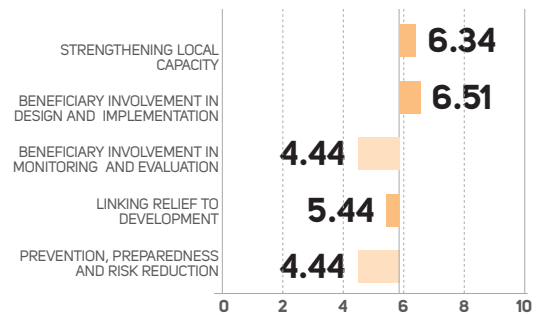
coverage by sector, the projects in the early recovery cluster were completely neglected by the donor community with no funding received in 2010 and zero funding committed as of October 2011 (OCHA, 2010). Meanwhile, the Government of Chad continues to delay the implementation of the long-expected Recovery Programme of Eastern Chad (OCHA, 2011).

According to different sources, this deficient prioritisation was the result of a poor understanding of the crisis and limited assessment and monitoring of the situation in a country that, until very recently, has remained indecipherable for most humanitarian organisations. One interviewee mentioned the malnutrition crisis in the Sahel, “which humanitarian organisations find confusing” because they did not have previous experience in the region. Although even if they decided to intervene “nothing guarantees the sustainability and durability of projects, because of minimum donor support.”

Many NGOs and UN agencies complained about donors’ unwillingness to fund transition programs: “LRRD is a big problem in Chad. We want to stay in

DONOR PERFORMANCE ON PREVENTION RISK REDUCTION AND RECOVERY

FIELD PERCEPTION SCORES



Source: DARA

OECD/DAC average question score 5.85

Colours represent OECD/DAC donors' performance compared to overall average pillar score:

● Good ● Mid-range ● Could improve

our intervention areas to start doing developmental activities but our donors don't support us on this". One interviewee was especially clear in his view: "The international community needs to be aligned with the national strategy to end poverty. There is a clear separation between those donors that understand that the transition phase has already begun and those that keep focusing on the refugee issue. There is a development plan agreed upon by the Chadian government, but with neither a clear strategy nor donor engagement to fund the plan". Not surprisingly, the CAP 2011 does not effectively focus on transition and, therefore, prevention and risk reduction activities receive limited attention if any, not to mention other crises in Chad.

Predictably, considering the unbalanced humanitarian approach, most interviewees agreed that gender was not a priority in Chad for any of the humanitarian donors: "The only thing some of them [donors] do is ensure we incorporate the gender approach in the projects, but they don't even know what that means. Some are more gender sensitive, and others just check on paper. That's all." Although some efforts were made, as trainings on the Gender Marker tool by OCHA, it is clear that much more needs to be done in a

context where Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) and discrimination of women is a huge problem, not only in the camps in the East.

COORDINATION OF THE HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

Our interviews with humanitarian agencies in N'Djamena (February 2011) showed a combination of organisations in the process of rethinking their role in the new post-emergency scenario, some of them closing operations, and others keeping one foot in the past. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was, according to several interviewees, an example of the latter.

Until 2006, development organisations were the norm in Chad, but after the refugee influx and big displacements, Chad progressively became a humanitarian destination. With Chad considered a refugee, and later an IDP crisis, UNHCR –one of the first to arrive– played a natural leading role in the response. With the biggest budget and human resources, an operational hub in the Eastern town of Abéché and its own coordination system, UNHCR was much more than the leading agency in Chad. According to several sources, UNHCR tried to control –and still does– the what, where and how of humanitarian assistance in Chad, artificially keeping the refugee and IDP crisis label in donor's minds. Interestingly, several respondents complained about UNHCR, the main donor for many NGOs, placing many administrative conditions that did not necessarily respond to accountability concerns or operational needs but to the UN agency's "natural tendency to assure its hegemonic position in every crisis". In fact, some NGOs decided to break their relationship with UNHCR due to the conditions they imposed and their management style.

Until 2010, there was a double-hub in N'Djamena and Abéché in the East. The alleged reason for the decentralised model was that N'Djamena was too far from the humanitarian scenario. Beyond the benefits of this decentralisation, the fact was that Abéché progressively gained autonomy from

the capital and complaints of inefficiency, lack of coordination, and duplicity of functions, which were more and more common on both sides. Finally, after UNHCR's decision to close its office in Abéché, the rest of the agencies followed their example. During the HRI mission, the end of Abéché as humanitarian hub was not perceived as something negative by the interviewees.

In 2010, another leader appeared on scene: the MINURCAT. With a mandate of protecting civilians, promoting human rights and the rule of law, and promoting regional peace, MINURCAT went too far by interfering with the mandate and work of some humanitarian actors. According to several sources, "DPKO's [the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations] interference damaged the humanitarian space. They used a cold war rationale, with mistrust and secrets". Maybe because of this, many interviewees referred to civil-military coordination as the Achilles heel of the international intervention in Chad in 2010.

Meanwhile, the two main actors in the coordination of humanitarian response had difficulties playing their roles for different reasons. The Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator (RC/HC) until early 2011 was virtually unknown by many interviewees. In fact, the former RC/HC was not mentioned by respondents until directly asked by the HRI team. There is no clear explanation of the absence of the RC/HC in the different coordination meetings during 2010, although many interviewees deduced a lack of interest of the RC/HC in humanitarian affairs. The new RC/HC, in the position since early 2011, has a good opportunity to fill a leadership void.

An understaffed OCHA office in N'Djamena struggled to find its place but it "couldn't do its work because of MINURCAT's manipulation" and UNHCR resistance to coordinate. Paradoxically, even though the office in Chad was fully financed by ECHO, Ireland, Spain, Sweden and the US, OCHA headquarters did not allow them to hire more staff and, therefore, increase their capacity and leverage in N'Djamena.

Chad IDPs spend the night outside Goz Beida hospital due to insufficient beds.
 @UNHCR/H.Caux



Beyond the reasons behind the apparent indifference of the former RC/HC and a weak OCHA presence, the humanitarian community in Chad had to adapt to this lack of leadership, one example being the Comité de Coordination des ONG (NGO Coordination Committee, CCO). With 25 member organisations and 23 observers, and financed by ECHO, the CCO is the only international NGO forum in Chad. Initially focused on security issues, the CCO saw the opportunity to adopt a more comprehensive strategic role positioning itself as an informal NGO spokesperson vis à vis the UN system, especially UNHCR.

SECURITY IS NEEDED BUT NOT ENOUGH

The end of the MINURCAT in December 2010 did not bring with it the feared deterioration of security in the East. On the contrary, the role of the Détachement Intégré de Sécurité (Integrated Security Deployment, DIS), the Chadian unit responsible for the security of refugee and IDP camps and of aid delivery, was generally praised as crucial and positive after the

end of the UN peacekeeping mission: “Paradoxically, once MINURCAT finished their mandate, security increased in the East”. Nevertheless, many respondents were concerned about the financial sustainability of the DIS, a “monster” with extremely high operational costs (US\$21 million budget for 2011) and logistics and administrative demands well beyond national capacities. In fact, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) finances the DIS through the Multi-Partner Trust Fund and helps in administrative issues, while the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) takes care of logistical

issues, such as car fleet maintenance. The Chadian government commands the forces and pays the high salaries of around 2,000 personnel.

The DIS is under the umbrella of the newly created Coordination Nationale de Soutien aux Activités Humanitaires et au Détachement Intégré de Sécurité (National Coordination of Humanitarian Activities and Integrated Security Deployment, CONSAHDIS), the Chadian government’s interface with the international community for the response to the humanitarian crisis in the East. The CONSAHDIS sees itself as facilitator of the work and relations of the humanitarian organisations, participates in cluster meetings and has regular contact with embassies, United Nations agencies and international NGOs. The CONSAHDIS receives the financial support of the European Commission, the Agence Française de Développement (French Development Agency, AFD) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Obviously, security improvements also benefitted aid workers’ safety. The descending trend of security incidents involving humanitarian staff has been significant, from 9 in 2007 to 2 in 2010

(The Aid Worker Security Data Base, 2011). Of course, humanitarian organisations learned to be extremely cautious in their movements in the East, but the role of the MINURCAT as a deterrent force, and especially the efforts of the Chadian authorities, made delivery of humanitarian assistance safer. Nevertheless, while security in the East has improved, there are concerns about the sustainability of the present model if the situation evolves –the conflict in Darfur being the main concern– and if the international financial support to the Chadian authorities declines. This, for many

interviewees, is more than a hypothesis.

In fact, the end of rebel activity wasn't followed by disarmament and reintegration processes. The so-called rebels are just bandits and, therefore, still threaten civilians, although in a less systematic manner. Besides, there is growing insecurity in the

South due to the conflict in the North of the Central African Republic as well as prospects of enlarged Al Qaeda presence in the North of Chad, both areas far from the DIS theatre of operations. Fortunately, the Libyan crisis did not affect Chad as much as it was feared, although it made the work of some UN agencies, notably the World Food Programme, more cumbersome (IRIN, 2011).

In summary, a police force –even if capable and efficient as the DIS– is necessary but not enough, as the small return figures demonstrate –no more than 50,000 IDPs and 5,000 refugees by the end of 2011 according to UNHCR. The need to guarantee stability and peace in the East, prioritising the investment in an efficient judiciary system and basic infrastructures, was mentioned several times as the main challenge ahead during our interviews with humanitarian organisations in N'Djamena. People

need security but much more than security to decide to return to their homes. As one interviewee said: “There is a big problem with returnees, since life conditions are better in camps than in villages. There is a big need to invest in infrastructures,” something international donors should prioritise in coordination with the Chadian authorities.

DONOR RESPONSE

Donors are a rare animal in Chad, with ECHO as the only humanitarian donor with permanent presence and first-hand knowledge of the situation in the country. The US has a long-experienced official at the Embassy in N'Djamena and a State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (BPRM) commuting official, with an excellent reputation among humanitarian actors, who regularly travels to Chad and participates in meetings. The question is whether a combination of a commuting official and *antenna* is coherent with a quality-based response of the biggest donor in Chad (\$84,116,812 or 22.5% of grand total in 2010). As an interviewee said: “With only one person in N'Djamena, the Americans can't do a proper follow-up.” Switzerland and France have a more development profile, although the Swiss seem more humanitarian sensitive than the French, and do some field visits to monitor the situation and interact with their partner organisations according to many of the interviewees.

So, with only one of the top 10 donor countries in Chad having dedicated humanitarian staff in N'Djamena it shouldn't be a surprise that most of them still have a *refugee/IDP mindset* towards Chad. Moreover, we were told that most of the donors had an *either we fund the emergency in the East or we cut the funds* approach. On a positive note, presence in the field could also explain why ECHO stands as the donor with a more comprehensive approach to the humanitarian needs in Chad. ECHO's Plan Sahel, as the main instrument to respond to the malnutrition crisis in the Sahelian belt, is good evidence of that.

■ A COMMON UNDERSTANDING OF THE GENDER APPROACH AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR HUMANITARIAN ACTION IS STILL NEEDED

HOW COULD THE RESPONSE IN CHAD BE IMPROVED?

The priority, and also the opportunity, in Chad should be to cover all humanitarian needs and take the appropriate steps to assure the transition to development. For that to happen, the different humanitarian actors, including the Government of Chad, must assume their roles and responsibilities.

Donors need to commit funding to cover all humanitarian needs, ending the de-facto exclusion of early recovery projects from funding and

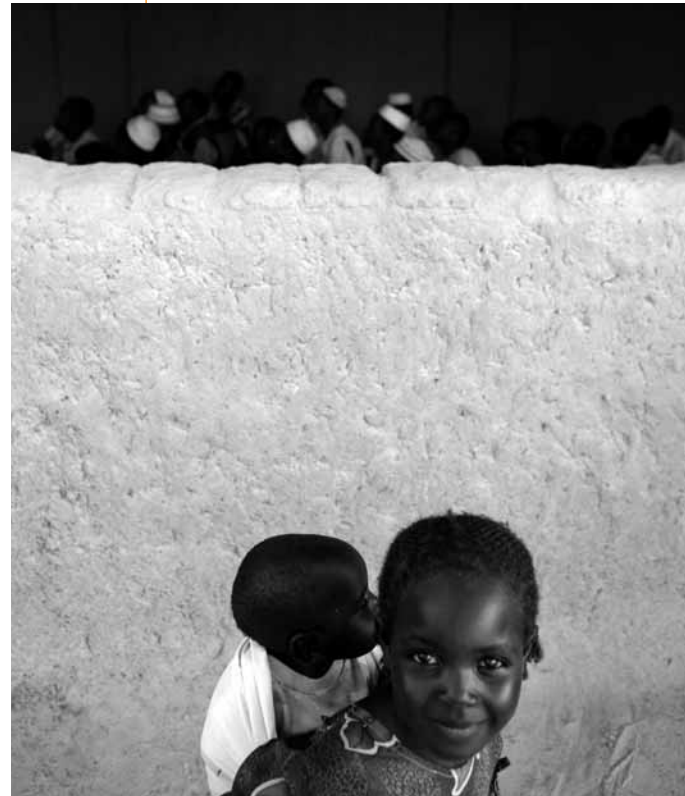
■ DONORS NEED TO COMMIT FUNDING TO COVER ALL HUMANITARIAN NEEDS AND ALLOW THE TRANSITION TO DEVELOPMENT

prioritising prevention, preparedness and risk reduction measures in close coordination with local authorities. The Recovery Programme of Eastern Chad cannot be delayed any further, and although the Government of Chad is responsible for its completion, this is not an excuse for

international donors and the UN not to provide their support in a more decisive manner.

The RC/HC must assume his leading role in facilitating the common work of international aid organisations and national authorities, and helping OCHA to play a stronger coordination role in the humanitarian response. At the same time, UNHCR must adapt its activities and projects to the present needs, respecting other UN agencies' mandates.

Sudanese refugees from Darfur. A young girl takes care of her brother while boys and young men study at school.
©UNHCR/H.Caux



International NGOs must move on to the new challenge of a transition scenario, for which their commitment to higher quality and capacity is just as important as appropriate donor funding.

Finally, local communities and development organisations should deploy all of their efforts to regain the ground they lost after the refugee and IDP emergency began in the East.

Only then Chad will have the opportunity to build its own future.



INFORMATION BASED ON 46 FIELD INTERVIEWS WITH KEY HUMANITARIAN ACTORS IN CHAD FROM 7 TO 12 FEBRUARY 2011, AND 145 QUESTIONNAIRES ON DONOR PERFORMANCE (INCLUDING 83 QUESTIONNAIRES OF OECD/DAC DONORS). THE HRI TEAM WAS COMPOSED OF COVADONGA CANTELI, FERNANDO ESPADA (TEAM LEADER) AND SOLEDAD POSADA. THEY EXPRESS THEIR GRATITUDE TO ALL THOSE INTERVIEWED IN CHAD.

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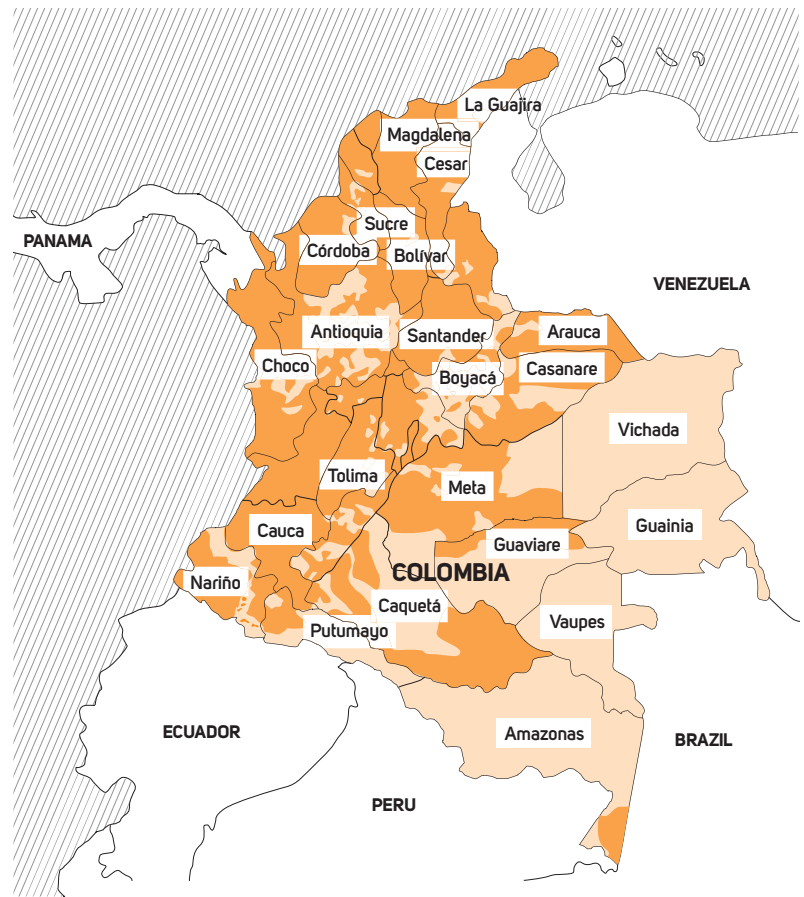


CRISIS AT A GLANCE

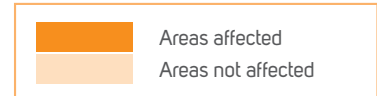
COLOMBIA

THE CRISIS AND THE RESPONSE

- President Juan Manuel Santos, elected in 2010, approved the Law of Victims and Land Restoration. Among other things, this new law acknowledges a long-denied humanitarian crisis, yet the problem is far from resolved.
- The exact number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Colombia remains unknown, with figures ranging from 3,700,381 to 5,200,000. 2010 records indicate that around 280,000 people were displaced and many more were subject to confinement. In the first semester of 2011, almost 90,000 people were forced to flee their homes.
- It is estimated that 98.6 % of IDPs live below the poverty line - 82.6 % of which are considered extremely poor.
- La Niña caused the worst floods in Colombia's recent history, affecting 3,120,628 people, including displaced and already vulnerable populations.
- In response to the floods, the Colombian government created Colombia Humanitaria, a response and reconstruction fund. Nevertheless, the crisis still exceeded national capacities.
- Although the floods overshadowed the IDP crisis, the armed conflict remains the country's most pressing humanitarian concern.



AREAS AFFECTED BY NATURAL DISASTERS
(APRIL 2010 - FEBRUARY 2011)

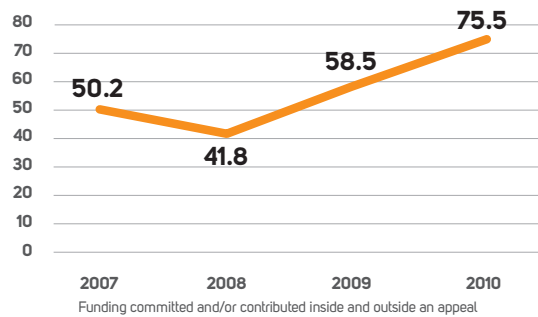


Source: IMMAP

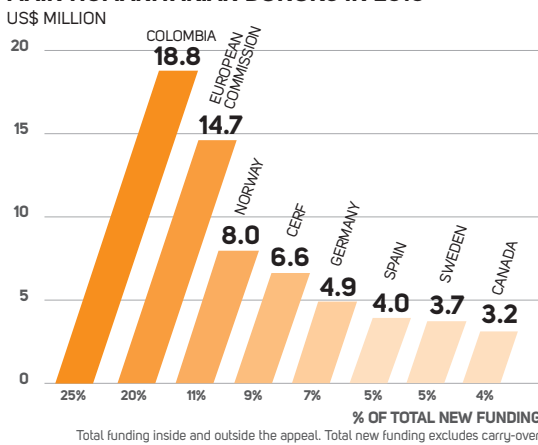
TOTAL HUMANITARIAN
FUNDING TO COLOMBIA IN 2010:

US\$ **75.5** MILLION

TOTAL HUMANITARIAN FUNDING TO COLOMBIA US\$ MILLION

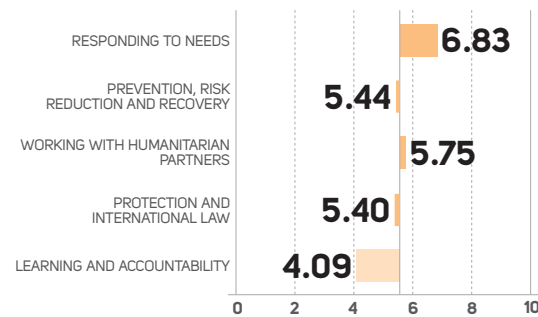


MAIN HUMANITARIAN DONORS IN 2010 US\$ MILLION



Source: UN OCHA FTS, accessed in December 2011.

HRI DONOR PERFORMANCE BY PILLAR FIELD PERCEPTION SCORES



Source: DARA

Colours represent OECD/DAC donors' performance compared to overall average pillar score:
 ● Good ● Mid-range ● Could improve

DONOR PERFORMANCE AND AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT

- Humanitarian aid has improved in the urban areas of Colombia, while attention to populations in more remote/rural areas continues to be insufficient. Donors need to step up their efforts in rural and conflict areas, where access to humanitarian aid and basic services is very limited.
- An overly cautious attitude on behalf of donor governments to avoid damaging their relationship with the Colombian government still limits the ability of the humanitarian system to respond appropriately.
- The new government's approach and acknowledgment of the armed conflict offers an unprecedented opportunity for the humanitarian community, in particular donor governments, to provide a more straightforward and coherent response.
- Donor governments and the Colombian government have yet to agree on a long-term plan to address the high rate of annual displacement.
- Donors and the Colombian government should prioritise disaster risk reduction and building local response capacities, as more natural disasters are expected to affect the country.

CHANGES AND EXPECTATIONS

In 2010, the newly elected Colombian government created unprecedented expectations with the approval of the Law of Victims and Land Restoration. The new law on land restitution put an end to eight years of official denial of the existence of an armed conflict in the country – and therefore of its victims as well– and was evidence of a more constructive attitude toward one of the longest lasting armed conflicts in the world.

Former President Uribe's intransigent position towards the existence of a conflict with humanitarian consequences infringed international humanitarian law and drastically reduced humanitarian space, aid independence and access to vulnerable groups. On the contrary, the new Law of Victims recognises land dispossession as a key factor of the armed conflict and displacement and allows key issues such as protection of civilians to be addressed openly.

2010 also brought the worst floods in Colombia's history. By the end of the year, more than two million people across the country were hit by La Niña storms. Although the Colombian government responded with enormous willingness, gathering citizens and corporations around Colombia Humanitaria – a national public-private response and reconstruction pooled fund – a disaster of such unprecedented scale exceeded national capacities.

The new government's unexpected stance still needs to translate into concrete policies, especially after some doubts were raised regarding the limited definition of "victim" in the new law, and how it combines with existing laws that offer a better legal framework in protection of civilians and humanitarian assistance issues. Nevertheless, it is evident that the humanitarian system is faced with a new window of opportunity in Colombia. It is yet to be seen whether donor governments understand this new scenario and will fully take advantage of it by providing a more coherent and principled response.

THE HUMANITARIAN REALITY

Inequity and lack of a state presence and investment remain the root causes of the humanitarian crisis in Colombia. In recent years, Uribe's military successes prioritised the recovery of guerrilla-controlled territories, but failed to acknowledge existing humanitarian needs. As a result, peace was not reached, not to mention development, whilst, paradoxically, Colombia proudly presented positive macroeconomic indicators.

In fact, Colombia's annual income grew at an average rate of 4.1% between 2000 and 2009 and its risk rating rose to Investment-Grade, allowing Colombia to join Indonesia, Vietnam, Egypt, Turkey and South Africa (CIVETS) – a group of countries considered attractive for foreign investment thanks to "wise policies and a solid economic ground" (Semana 2010). Moreover, in October 2011, the US signed the implementation legislation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) with Colombia, after years of blockade in Capitol Hill due to concerns of human rights violations.

President Álvaro Uribe (2002-2010) proved to be an intelligent propagandist, sparing no efforts to present Colombia as a safe, stable and prosperous country, while hiding human rights violations and turning a blind eye to the needs of the victims of the armed conflict. For that purpose, Colombia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs managed to keep international attention far from the humanitarian crisis, while welcoming bilateral aid agreements and partnerships. Thanks to this successful strategy, the Colombian government avoided uncomfortable questions and most Western embassies in Bogotá seemed to accept the official statement which claimed that there was "no armed conflict but terrorism" in Colombia, to

the detriment of a principled humanitarian response. As one interviewee told the Humanitarian Response Index (HRI): "Many diplomats mistake humanitarian dialogue with peace talks, and therefore consider it an improper interference."

The facts speak for themselves and even in the misleading official reports, figures on internally displaced persons (IDPs) – 3,875,987 people, according to the Colombian government (Acción

Social 2011), and 5,200,000, according to independent sources (CODHES 2011) – remain extremely high. Although individual and family displacements continue to be the norm, massive displacements are on the rise, with approximately 280,000 recorded

displacements in 2010, evidencing an ever-increasing precarious security situation.

The transformation of former paramilitary groups into criminal gangs, as well as the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia's (FARC) new strategy from territory-control to guerrilla-warfare, against a backdrop of drug-trafficking, all present major challenges to the government of Juan Manuel Santos. For instance, departments like Córdoba, in the North, are again scenarios of threats, killings and displacement, despite being officially tagged as "pacified territories," which calls into question the alleged security improvements in recent years. In other departments, especially in the South, fighting between the Colombian Army and armed groups never ceased. The land restitution process is also proving to be a complicated process, with threats and killings of returnees, making evident the need for effective protection of civilians.

While it may appear to be a contradiction at first, fighting, mine fields, direct threats or simply

fear continue to both displace and confine large numbers of people in rural areas, placing thousands of Colombians in a position of extreme vulnerability. In fact, population confinement by legal or illegal armed actors constitutes the most acute problem of the humanitarian crisis in Colombia. Confinement is a twofold reality that isolates entire communities, hindering the free movement of civilians as well as their access to basic services, rights and even humanitarian assistance.

This humanitarian reality was aggravated in 2010 by La Niña, the worst floods in Colombia's recent history, affecting 3,120,628 people or 6.78% of the total population. With 93% of municipalities hit, and four out of ten flood-affected Colombians being IDPs, the magnitude and complexity of the disaster was unprecedented and a challenge well beyond national capacities.

THE HUMANITARIAN AID CHALLENGE

In 2010 most of the public and private resources and efforts went to the flood response. The responsibility to assist the affected population by the heavy rains relied on the Government's Directorate General for Risk and, notably, Colombia Humanitaria, a private-public initiative inspired by the experience of the 1999 earthquake response.

While recognising a huge effort and political willingness – around US\$83 million in cash and in-kind donations were made available – national capacity did not match the scale of the disaster. Mismanagement and a deficient prioritisation limited Colombia Humanitaria's performance by not making use of already available resources, partner networks and knowledge. Moreover, different legal frameworks for the assistance of those affected by the floods and by the conflict, led to parallel operations, which did not fully benefit from Acción Social's experience in the registry and humanitarian assistance of displaced population. As a result, unnecessary inefficiencies and delays occurred, lowering the quality of the assistance provided.

POPULATION CONFINEMENT BY LEGAL OR ILLEGAL ARMED ACTORS CONSTITUTES THE MOST ACUTE PROBLEM OF THE HUMANITARIAN CRISIS IN COLOMBIA

There are, however, other recurrent factors that account for the shortcomings in the response. Firstly, from the number of people affected by the floods and the widespread damage, it is easy to conclude that neither disaster risk reduction nor building local capacity have been a priority in Colombia, which is combined with deep-rooted deficient land planning to render people more vulnerable each time a disaster struck. Finally, good intentions and well-meant efforts are not enough to build a working response system overnight, especially given that Colombia is both a disaster-prone country and has endured several decades of one of the world's most protracted conflicts.

In an attempt to minimise foreign involvement and funding to United Nations agencies and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) through the usual multilateral channels, the Colombian government has contended that it has sufficient capacity and experience to meet humanitarian needs. Although many donor governments have been willing to consider bilateral agreements as the best option, experience has repeatedly shown that

this is not the case. As one interviewee told the HRI in Bogotá: "Budget support should no longer be an option for developing Colombia. Needs are still humanitarian."

In the face of this reality, the main international humanitarian NGOs in Colombia agreed to call for a more consistent international aid

approach, to allow for a more independent, neutral, impartial and efficient response (Consejo Noruego de Refugiados et al. 2011).

International humanitarian assistance in Colombia has traditionally been in a danger zone in its

INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE IN COLOMBIA HAS TRADITIONALLY BEEN IN A DANGER ZONE IN ITS OBJECTIVE OF HELPING VICTIMS OF THE ARMED CONFLICT

The first time Henry had ever been out of his home region was when he was displaced by fighting at age 44 and had to find safety in Soacha, on the southern edge of Bogotá. His older brother, displaced ahead of him, helped Henry find a job recycling garbage. /UNHCR/ Zalmáí



objective of helping victims of the armed conflict. The Colombian government has never allowed the United Nations to launch an international appeal for fear of foreign interference in what they consider internal affairs. This position also affected the recent response to the floods, as the Colombian government called for bilateral funding and blocked the launch of a UN Flash Appeal.

Therefore, in spite of signs of a more constructive attitude to allow humanitarian assistance in places where the state is absent or not sufficiently effective, thanks to President Santos' acknowledgement of the extent and the reality behind the humanitarian crisis unfolded by the armed conflict, Colombian authorities continue to hamper, in one form or another, the activities of international humanitarian organisations.

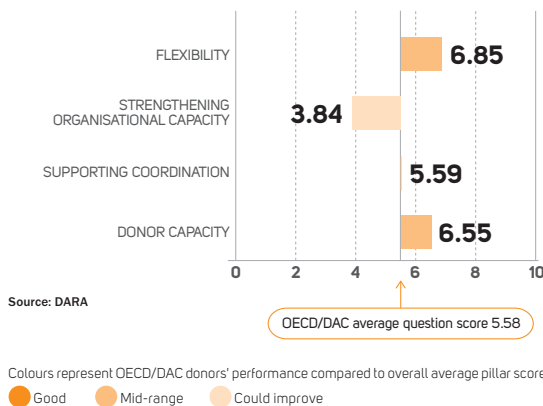
In Colombia, the international community faces a multifaceted challenge as to how to provide humanitarian assistance in a middle-income country, with a strong state, a highly politicised environment and an unstable security context. Humanitarian actors need to deliver aid and protect IDPs and confined populations in remote areas where there is no permanent state presence and humanitarian space is at stake.

Even if only moderately successful, the the efforts of international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) and the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, to maintain activities in the most

affected communities constitute their highest added value. This success is possible thanks to their respect of humanitarian principles, whose importance are not always understood by the Colombian authorities, and the financial support of some key donor governments.

DONOR PERFORMANCE ON WORKING WITH HUMANITARIAN PARTNERS

FIELD PERCEPTION SCORES



Complicating matters further, the already small donor support and presence is decreasing, as most of the humanitarian actors the HRI met in Bogotá confirmed. In fact, one could argue that the Colombian government might end up being successful in its efforts to present the donor community with an excessively positive image of the country. Humanitarian donors with little interest in signing a bilateral agreement and a shrivelling humanitarian budget may be wondering if they should continue in Colombia. In fact, according to the EU's new financial framework 2014-2020, development aid to Colombia, as well as to 18 other emerging economies, will end in 2014, allowing the European Commission to "help the poorest in the world" (EuropeAid 2011).

Occupying the lower ranks of the humanitarian donors' priority list, countries like Norway are closing their embassies in Bogotá, few (notably Switzerland and ECHO) have sufficient resources for field presence or a proper monitoring of the humanitarian needs and the projects they finance, and most feel

frustrated by an inability to transmit the gravity of the situation to their capitals. In sum, there is a perceived risk of donor abandonment, with the lure of more "attractive" humanitarian crises.

HUMANITARIAN COORDINATION AND THE NEED FOR EFFICIENT AID

Many NGOs interviewed by the HRI were highly critical of humanitarian coordination, which they considered inefficient, although they recognised the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs' (OCHA) efforts. This criticism is mainly based on what they see as a UN-driven system, where more than twenty UN actors compete for scarce funds, forcing a complicated balance between them and leaving even the main international NGOs little leverage. As a result, not all UN agencies on the receiving end are the most suited for the job.

Clusters, one of the key elements for effective coordination, are seen by many humanitarian actors as disconnected from the field and, again, too UN-driven. The criticism is not limited to the way funds

■ NO ONE DOUBTS COLOMBIA IS A COMPLICATED ENVIRONMENT FOR HUMANITARIAN ORGANISATIONS, BUT WHAT CRISIS IS EASY?

are allocated among organisations, but to the performance of some UN agencies as cluster leads, namely the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which "hasn't understood what cluster lead responsibility means yet", and the

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), which "has not understood its role in WASH."

Many interviewees extended their criticism to the Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator (RC/HC), who they perceived as more focused on balancing UN agencies' interests, and the relationship with the Colombian government and embassies, than on humanitarian advocacy and coordination.

As a result, international NGOs sought alternative ways to raise attention to what they considered the failures and the priorities of the humanitarian response in Colombia and were even taking steps towards a parallel coordination. In June 2011, after continuous delays in the release of a position paper as part of a Common Humanitarian Framework, 14 international NGOs signed the report *Humanitarian Crisis in Colombia caused by the internal armed conflict*, stressing the need for the international humanitarian system to fully acknowledge and respond to the humanitarian needs in a principled, efficient and coordinated manner (Norwegian Refugee Council, Plan International, et al. 2011). Even some donors were unsatisfied with the self-complacent attitude of UN agencies and, especially, of the RC/HC, the lack of positive results and a slow response.

ECHO is the only donor attending the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) meetings as an observer and is one of the few donors pushing for more and better coordination. Other donors are not invited to attend HCT meetings – not by decision but as a result of inertia. Donor coordination, suffering from the same setback, would be especially welcome in places with a high density of humanitarian organisations and funds, like Nariño, and to avoid situations where most donors stopped funding assistance in places like Córdoba just because they accepted the Colombian government's politically-motivated positive assessment.

The HRI found a common agreement among the humanitarian community on the need to advocate for and address the gaps in the response. No one doubts Colombia is a complicated environment for humanitarian organisations, but what crisis is easy?

NEXT STEPS

Colombia cannot continue to be a humanitarian exception where responding to a crisis that has displaced almost 10 percent of the population is not considered the utmost priority.

At a point when the Colombian government has finally admitted the existence of an armed conflict,

and indirectly to the suffering of millions of civilians, the international humanitarian system has the obligation, and a valuable chance, to meet the

government halfway.

This new scenario leaves little room for past excuses and a great deal of space for a principled response centered on the protection of civilians and prevention of further displacement. The humanitarian response must be comprehensive and also lead to

■ DONOR FATIGUE IS UNDERSTANDABLE AFTER SO MANY YEARS OF HUMANITARIAN CRISIS, BUT IT IS ALSO THE RESULT OF AN INCONSISTENT APPROACH

sustainable solutions to the population. Donor fatigue is understandable after so many years of humanitarian crisis, but it is also the result of an inconsistent approach, with donors trying to work in the development of areas of Colombia where the armed conflict was still alive and then complaining about the lack of positive impact. While the need to prioritise humanitarian aid is unquestionable, the transition phase can no longer be neglected. For this endeavour, all humanitarian actors are important, but the donor community (and not only those already present in Colombia) and the United Nations have a fundamental role to play.



INFORMATION BASED ON 24 FIELD INTERVIEWS WITH KEY HUMANITARIAN ACTORS IN BOGOTÁ FROM THE 15TH TO THE 24TH OF JUNE 2011, AND 70 QUESTIONNAIRES ON DONOR PERFORMANCE (INCLUDING 58 QUESTIONNAIRES OF OECD/DAC DONORS). FIELD RESEARCH CONDUCTED BY IGNACIO MARTÍN-ERESTA. DARA EXPRESSES ITS GRATITUDE TO ALL THOSE INTERVIEWED IN COLOMBIA.

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CRISIS AT A GLANCE

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

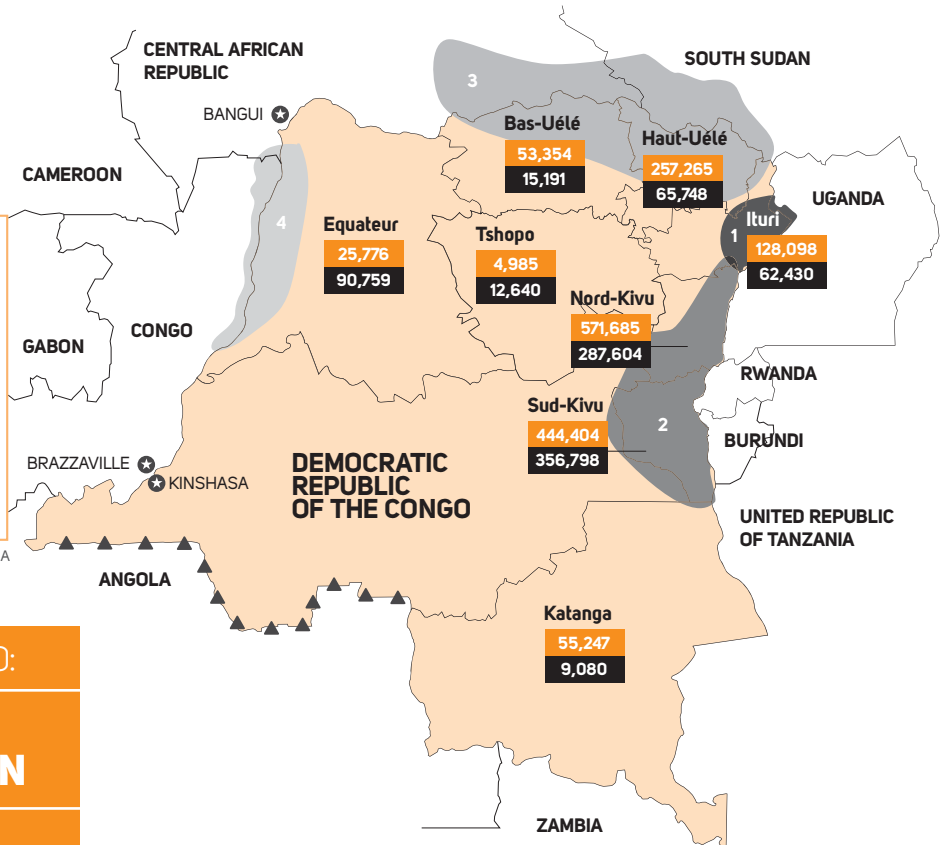
TOTAL

1.5 million IDPs (as of 30 June 2011)

887,610 returnees (as of 30 June 2011)

000	Number of IDPs (as of 30 June 2011)
000	Number of returnees (as of 30 June 2011)
▲	Border with expulsions
1	Area with Front de Résistance Patriotique (FRPI) and Front Populaire pour la Justice au Congo (FPJC)
2	Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda (FDLR) and other armed groups
3	Area with Lord's Resistance Army
4	Area with Enyele communities

Source: OCHA



TOTAL FUNDING TO DRC IN 2010:

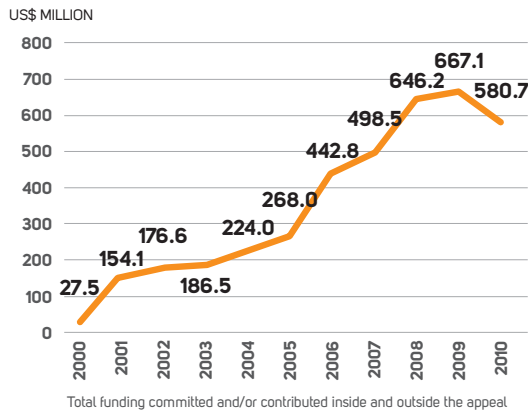
US\$ 580.7 MILLION

91% INSIDE THE HAP

THE CRISIS AND THE RESPONSE

- The deadliest armed conflict since the end of the Second World War, with over 1.7 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) and nearly 200,000 refugees.
- The DRC has been among the top ten aid recipients over the past decade. Donors provided over US\$3.3 billion in humanitarian assistance and US\$6.7 billion in peacekeeping during this period.
- Despite this, widespread violence, lack of protection of civilians and pervasive sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), combined with health epidemics, malnutrition, and natural disasters continue to affect millions of people.
- The world's largest UN peacekeeping force, MONUSCO, and a government stabilisation initiative, STAREC, have been unable to stem armed violence in the North and East.
- Elections in November 2011 are unlikely to resolve years of conflict, weak state institutions and a lack of capacity to address basic needs.
- Humanitarian funding has decreased since 2009. In 2010, the Humanitarian Action Plan (HAP) was 64% funded. By the 21st of October 2011, the HAP (the equivalent of a CAP) was only 58% covered.

TOTAL HUMANITARIAN FUNDING TO DRC

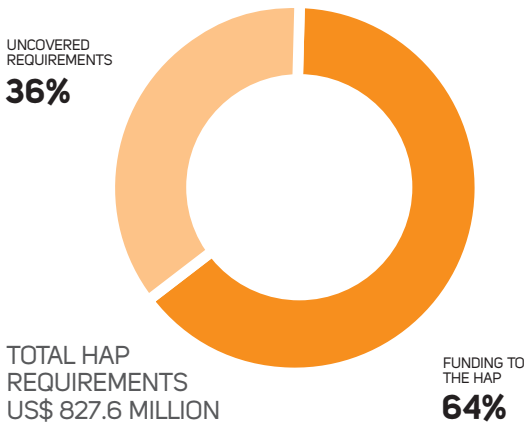


HRI DONOR PERFORMANCE BY PILLAR



Colours represent OECD/DAC donors' performance compared to overall average pillar score:
 ● Good ● Mid-range ● Could improve

2010 DRC HAP COVERAGE

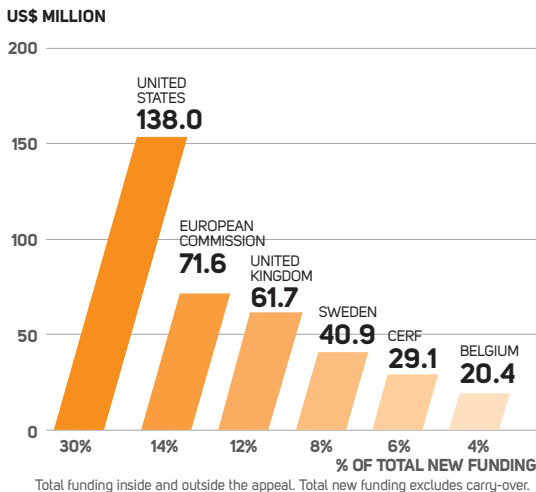


Source: UN OCHA FTS, accessed in October 2011

DONOR PERFORMANCE

- Donor governments have been strong supporters of humanitarian reform efforts in the DRC and have established a Good Humanitarian Donorship (GHD) group in-country.
- Donors are generally appreciated for their support for critical humanitarian assistance and for more flexibility to address changing needs, but less so for their support for transition, recovery and linking relief to development (LRRD).
- There are concerns about the poor linkages between humanitarian funding and support provided by donor governments for other areas of assistance, such as development, state-building and security.
- Donors are encouraged to strengthen monitoring and evaluation, particularly for protection and gender issues, and to measure impact to ensure the gains in humanitarian reform can be consolidated.

MAIN HUMANITARIAN DONORS IN 2010



LEVERAGING DONOR SUPPORT FOR LONG-TERM IMPACT

INTRODUCTION

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has consistently been among the top ten recipients of humanitarian assistance in the last decade, with over US\$3.3 billion in aid provided during this period. The country has also received significant international support in the form of development assistance

and peacekeeping. Since 2004, the international community spent over US\$6.7 billion on peacekeeping operations alone (GHA 2011). The HRI field research to the DRC in April 2011, which included extensive interviews and a

■ NOVEMBER ELECTIONS ARE A GOOD OPPORTUNITY TO REFLECT ON THE IMPACT OF MASSIVE INTERNATIONAL AID TO DRC

survey of key humanitarian actors in the country, suggests there has been steady but uneven progress towards more coordinated and effective responses – with of course great room for improvement.

Humanitarian needs in the DRC are far from over. However, the gains made so far, particularly in the area of gender and protection, may be at risk if donor governments do not provide sustained support to meet humanitarian needs, better efforts to support transition, recovery and capacity-building, and a more coordinated and integrated strategy to link humanitarian, development and security agendas. With national elections scheduled for late November 2011, this is a good opportunity for the international community to reflect on the impact of this massive amount of support, and how to best achieve a transition from a series of chronic humanitarian crises to long-term stability and recovery.

THE CRISIS

While it is common to speak about the humanitarian crisis in the DRC, in reality, the country is simultaneously confronting several different crises – not all of them humanitarian – across all parts of this vast territory. Each crisis has its own unique context and dynamics, making it difficult to plan and implement programmes, much less assess the effectiveness of the overall humanitarian response in a concise manner, or come to firm conclusions about long-term solutions to respond to chronic humanitarian needs.

On the political front, the international community continues to support state-building programmes in the lead-up to November's national elections. But these efforts have been undermined by a long history of corruption, kleptocratic rule and unaccountable elites. The current government under Joseph Kabila has requested international assistance for the elections, and several donor governments have pledged support for the process. Surprisingly, so far only a few violent incidents have marred the process. Yet, there are strong fears that further instability may result if the elections are not perceived as fair and impartial. At the same time, many actors raise concerns about the need to check the increasingly authoritarian tendencies of the Kabila regime (ICG 2011).

The macro-economic situation has improved in the country recently. However, any benefits are bypassing vulnerable and crisis-affected populations, and chronic poverty continues to accentuate humanitarian needs. Epidemics from preventable diseases like cholera, measles and meningitis have ravaged parts of the country, an indicator of the general weak state of the health system. Volatile and high food prices worldwide are

also contributing to food insecurity in parts of the country. As a result, displacement, malnutrition, morbidity and mortality remain high. Finally, natural disasters, ranging from floods, landslides and drought continue to affect the country frequently.

However, the greatest concern continues to be protection of civilians. Violence and conflict are still widespread across many parts of the country.

■ THE GREATEST CONCERN CONTINUES TO BE THE PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS, ESPECIALLY WOMEN AND GIRLS

Poor transportation infrastructure, bureaucratic procedures and corruption make it costly and difficult to regularly access large parts of the country. At the same time, the security situation remains critical, with over

142 attacks on aid workers recorded in 2010 in North and South Kivu alone (OCHA 2011a). The most obvious manifestation of the difficulties of providing adequate protection lies in the horrific and widespread problem of sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) in the DRC. SGBV has been closely linked to issues of protection, access and insecurity in the past, though it now appears prevalent throughout society at the domestic level.

Several peace agreements, an ambitious stabilisation plan (STAREC), the presence of the largest peacekeeping force in the world, the UN Organization Stabilisation Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO), and considerable international efforts to build the professional capacity of national security forces have been unable to stem severe violence and the related humanitarian consequences. Years of conflict, combined with weak state institutions and limited economic opportunities, means that violence has become entrenched as a means to gain power and wealth for many actors, or simply to make a living, underlining the challenge of finding any lasting solutions to the conflict.

In the sparsely populated North-East, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) kills, abducts, and plunders local people. Military campaigns against the LRA have so far had limited effect. In the eastern part of the country, military operations by the national army, the FARDC (Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo)¹ against the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda (FDLR), a Rwandan Hutu rebel group, seem to have stabilised the security situation somewhat, but the situation may be short-lived, as many of the underlying tensions have not been resolved. At the same time, Burundian and Ugandan rebels, as well as various local Mai-Mai groups, are also wreaking havoc in the region. There are numerous disturbing reports that badly trained and under-paid FARDC personnel and the national police are themselves responsible for many human rights violations, including organised group rape. According to some analysts interviewed, the STAREC plan is not yet achieving lasting results, and the military operations may actually be undermining governance and the rule of law.

On the country's South-Western border, the DRC and Angola have carried out violent expulsions of each other's nationals, with refugees from both claiming they have been "forcibly expelled and subjected to degrading treatment, including torture and over 1,357 confirmed cases of sexual assault". Officially, the government has taken steps to prevent and halt human rights violations but several reports rate these measures as insufficient at best (Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect 2011). Against

DONOR PERFORMANCE

this complex backdrop, the international community faces many concurrent and competing demands and priorities, including supporting international diplomacy and policy initiatives in the Great Lakes region, state-building efforts and the electoral process, along with the multiple humanitarian crises facing the country. Part of the challenge is that donors differ considerably among each other on their structural set-up and funding patterns for security, development, human rights, and humanitarian activities.

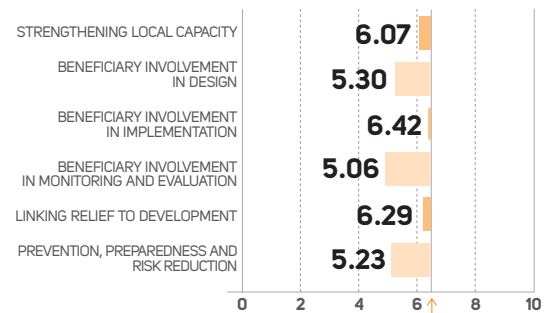
The DRC has been a pilot country for implementing the humanitarian reform process, including the Humanitarian Country Team, the cluster approach, and common funds like the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and the country-level Pooled Fund (PF). All these initiatives would not have prospered without the support and leadership of donor agencies, who embraced the reform agenda and have actively attempted to apply *Good Humanitarian Donorship (GHD) Principles* in the country. Under the lead of the three main donors to the DRC, the United States (US), European Commission (EC) and the United Kingdom (UK), an in-country GHD group has been a useful platform to promote reform efforts, exchange information and analysis, prevent duplication, and coordinate actions.

— A slow decline in funding

However, despite strong political commitment to supporting humanitarian actions, since 2009 humanitarian funding to the DRC has been declining, potentially placing at risk many of the positive gains made over the past five years. The 2010 Humanitarian Action Plan (HAP), which appealed for US\$827 million in humanitarian aid, was 64% covered, at US\$580 million (OCHA 2011b). Nearly half of this was provided by three donors, the US, the EC and the UK. By mid-October, the 2011 HAP had raised slightly over US\$481 million, 58.3% of the US\$721 million requested (OCHA 2011c). US funding dropped significantly, from US\$154 million in 2010 to US\$89 million in 2011. Many of the

DONOR PERFORMANCE ON PREVENTION, RISK REDUCTION AND RECOVERY

FIELD PERCEPTION SCORES



Source: DARA

Colours represent OECD/DAC donors' performance compared to overall average pillar score:

● Good ● Mid-range ● Could improve

other main donors in the DRC have also reduced their humanitarian funding support, notably Belgium, Spain, the Netherlands and Germany, although additional funding may be allocated to the DRC by donors before the end of this year.

This is somewhat compensated by increases in the EC's funding from US\$72 million to US\$87 million, as well as increases by the UK, Japan and Canada. To their credit, many donors have continued and strengthened their support to the CERF and the PF, which have grown in size and importance in the DRC. However, CERF allocations have decreased in 2011, with only US\$4 million allocated to the DRC, compared to a maximum of US\$29 million in 2010 (CERF 2011).

Part of the explanation for the drop in humanitarian funding may be the shifting priorities of donors towards post-conflict and state-building efforts, despite continued large-scale humanitarian needs. Donors also indicated that it was sometimes hard to find solid local or international partners. They are sceptical about high staff turnover in many humanitarian organisations and the associated lack of capacity to deliver. Maintaining the focus on humanitarian issues is a concern for many actors. As noted by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA 2011a), "humanitarian action is at risk of being

Vehicles stuck on a flooded road close to Lake Albert. The poor quality of roads in North Eastern DRC make it difficult to transport humanitarian aid to remote areas. © Zahra Moloo/IRIN

crowded out by other initiatives, such as the Government stabilisation plan, the International Security and Stabilisation Support Strategy, and other regional United Nations peace-consolidation programmes taking centre stage.”

— Gaps in support for transition and recovery

In HRI field interviews and a survey on donor practices among humanitarian actors in the country, respondents consistently rated donor governments poorly on questions around their support for prevention, preparedness, capacity building, recovery and linking relief to rehabilitation and development (LRRD). Yet, from the perspective of many respondents interviewed, this is precisely where donors need to ensure flexible bridge funding between humanitarian activities and other non-humanitarian recovery and development programmes in order to avoid gaps in support.

In the words of one respondent, "In certain parts of the country, the situation has started to evolve into a post-conflict scenario, where organisations

might initiate development projects," but donor recognition and support for this was difficult to obtain. This was echoed by other interview respondents: "In general, there is a lack of thematic balance by the donors. They support nutrition, but not subsequent food security." In other instances, there was a sense that donor focus on regions undergoing

or emerging from conflicts was at the expense of addressing needs in other parts of the country. For example, according to one respondent, Congolese in



the relatively stable West are asking, "whether they should start using arms to receive aid".

Not all humanitarian actors share the perception that they should assume responsibility for transition and recovery. Some donors and humanitarian organisations see these issues first and foremost as development issues. One respondent stated, for example, that LRRD projects should preferably take place when the state presence is strong or has become consolidated sufficiently to guarantee the sustainability of projects.

As the early recovery cluster lead, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has attempted to integrate early recovery as both a cross-cutting issue and specific theme, but this has yet to be translated into an effective approach in other programmes. Several people interviewed considered the limited donor funding for the early recovery cluster as an indication of the lack of donor interest, or confidence, in incorporating more transitional or development activities into

■ DONORS MUST REINFORCE INTEGRATED APPROACHES TO TRANSITION AND RECOVERY AND ENCOURAGE LOCALLY-OWNED INTERVENTIONS

humanitarian action. At the same time, there is an expectation from many donors and other actors that UNDP must do a better job of defining a more nuanced, longer-term recovery and development strategy with approaches adapted to the different contexts coexisting in the country.

For their part, several donors interviewed cautioned against setting high expectations for humanitarian action: “The HAP cannot make up for years and years of neglect and lack of investments in social infrastructure such as health centres, wells, etc. That must be the objective of development interventions focusing on alleviating poverty in general.” In this respect, many humanitarian donor representatives – similar to some of the humanitarian organisations interviewed – expressed concerns that development and security actors must also take their responsibility in building ties, and that humanitarian funding and activities should not be used as a stop-gap measure to cover longer term needs. However, the practical reality for many humanitarian organisations is that funding options are limited, and few more developmentally-oriented organisations are ready to step in to address transition and recovery needs, so inevitably, they are left to fill the gaps.

THE GENDER CHALLENGE

Gender is a crucial cross-cutting issue. The high incidence and media profile of gender-based violence in the DRC has led to greater efforts to address gender needs in programming. The implementation of the GenCap gender marker, which assesses the extent to which programmes incorporate gender equality into programme objectives, was piloted in the DRC. Most respondents, especially UN agency staff, indicated that the gender marker had been used successfully in the selection criteria for allocations of the PF. With nearly 37% of PF projects deemed as contributing to gender equality and 2% specifically for addressing SGBV, sufficient donor funding for gender-related programming appears to

be available (IASC 2011). Nevertheless, it seems clear from the HRI interviews and survey responses that a common understanding of the gender approach and its implications for humanitarian action is still needed.

Many respondents conceded that the gender marker was a good starting point for raising awareness of the issues, but felt that the gender approach was not understood correctly by donors and other humanitarian organisations, and called for more policy guidance on gender issues. As an example, ECHO, one of the major donors in the

DRC, was criticised because it has still not released a long-announced new policy on gender. Other respondents felt that a more qualitative approach based on an in-depth analysis of the field context was needed: “The gender marker is about minimal requirements. It's not about making a

■ A COMMON UNDERSTANDING OF THE GENDER APPROACH AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR HUMANITARIAN ACTION IS STILL NEEDED

qualitative analysis of the real situation,” said one respondent. Other respondents criticised donor-imposed quotas for women staff and participation in programming: “They demand quotas despite the difficulty of finding qualified women in the province. They want quotas for women's participation despite the great workloads that women already have.”

Underlying all this was the sense by several people interviewed, particularly international non-governmental organisations (INGOs), that too many actors, donors and humanitarian agencies alike, still missed the basic point that a gender-sensitive analysis is not just about programming specifically targeting women and girls, but of ensuring programming is sensitive and appropriate to the needs of all different actors. “It is about the quality of aid,” said one interviewee. This point was reinforced in a recent World Health

Organisation report on SGBV in the DRC, which notes that the needs of men and boys, many of whom are themselves victims of rape and sexual assault, are often overlooked when dealing with issues of SGBV: "Certain donors have myopia about helping only women. We visited a programme where a donor had prioritised handing out sexually transmitted infection (STI) treatment to conflict rape survivors. So, the husbands couldn't get STI treatment, which is clearly counterproductive because you're just allowing the STI to be passed back and forth between partners," (IRIN 2011). Finally, humanitarian gender initiatives can benefit considerably from action by development and security actors to achieve better protection, better education, democratic representation, and equal economic opportunities for women.

— Looking forward: An agenda for donors

Regardless of whether the situation in the DRC is classified as a humanitarian emergency, a transition situation, post-conflict or development context, the country illustrates the difficulties of finding ways to simultaneously meet humanitarian, development, security and protection needs. The relationships among different actors remain a conundrum. No actor has a complete overview. So it would be a huge achievement if activities within and among these three areas would be coordinated. Given that state and civil society in the DRC are at best only very slowly and haphazardly recovering from decades of decline, insecurity, and corruption, it is simply not clear whether and in which ways international actors can ensure such mutual coordination.

One place to start would be greater coherence and coordination within donor governments on the different initiatives they fund and support and to show how they are working towards addressing immediate needs while working towards building the capacity and resilience of the Congolese people. Here, the positive experience of the GHD group in the DRC could be consolidated and expanded so that it does not simply look at strictly humanitarian issues, but also considers where and when the context may require more support for transition and

recovery, and facilitate the appropriate linkages with development funding and actors.

Donor support for more flexible and long-term funding arrangements would also be a positive move. One suggestion is to build on the experience of the CERF and the PF, and consider whether donors could contribute to a similar mechanism specifically targeting activities that may fall between the boundaries of humanitarian and development funding, yet are essential to bridge gaps in needs. Longer term funding arrangements would also help address the high turnover of staff in smaller NGOs, and ensure continuity of programming and cluster coordination.

A second area where donor governments could contribute is on improving monitoring, evaluation and measuring impact of interventions. Within the wider donor community, there is great concern on showing value for money, and the DRC is no exception, especially considering the massive funding provided there. It is not yet possible to fully explain or measure the impact of years of humanitarian assistance for the Congolese population in crisis areas. As one respondent asked, "Are we really assisting those people in terms of potable water, rape prevention, preventing child recruitment, etc.?"

The HAP is a valuable stepping stone towards better evaluation and impact assessment because it focuses on general objectives over individual project outputs. Nevertheless, both donors and humanitarian organisations still focus more on outputs than on outcomes, and any support by donors to change this dynamic would be welcome. This should include support to OCHA to continue to develop and implement a more robust impact assessment framework for humanitarian actions. However, if such a framework does not adequately assess and integrate the impact of interventions in other areas, such as more development-oriented governance, community capacity building, conflict prevention, or preparedness activities, the exercise will miss an opportunity to show how donors' overall funding to the DRC is being leveraged effectively. This

Bulengo IDP Camp: North Kivu, DRC: Children play outside their homes in Bulengo IDP camp near Goma, DRC © Aubrey Graham/IRIN



would also serve to rationalise the use of resources by showing how funding in one area complements and enhances funding provided in another.

On a more practical level, donors could work more closely together and with their operational partners to monitor the context at the field level. This is particularly the case of gender, where donors could go beyond the gender marker exercise to consider funding allocations based on how well gender is integrated into plans, and then follow-up with more field-level verification of how their partners are addressing gender in practice – which is hardly the case today in the DRC – and how donors could contribute to improving their partners' work.

While larger donors like the US, ECHO and the UK have more capacity to monitor the situation – certainly appreciated by most actors interviewed – smaller donors have more difficulties in adequately monitoring and following up with their partners. Joint monitoring and evaluation would reduce the amount of reporting and field visits. Another possibility is to divide tasks so that some donors take the lead on coordinating approaches to specific issues such as transition, recovery or LRRD.

Regardless of whether the DRC stabilises further following the elections – and this is not at all clear – donors must reinforce more integrated approaches to transition and recovery, and in particular encourage locally-owned interventions. In the meantime, they must continue to push for better access and protection to affected populations, and be ready to ensure rapid and flexible support for more transitional activities when and if the situation permits.



INFORMATION BASED ON 62 FIELD INTERVIEWS WITH KEY HUMANITARIAN ACTORS IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO (KINSASHA AND GOMA) FROM 6 TO 14 APRIL 2011, AND 189 QUESTIONNAIRES ON DONOR PERFORMANCE (INCLUDING 126 QUESTIONNAIRES OF OECD/DAC DONORS).

THE HRI TEAM WAS COMPOSED OF COVADONGA CANTELI, BELÉN DÍAZ, DENNIS DIJKZEUL (TEAM LEADER) AND ALBA MARCELLÁN. THEY EXPRESS THEIR GRATITUDE TO ALL THOSE INTERVIEWED IN THE DRC.

NOTES

¹ The FARDC is an amalgamation of the state's original armed forces with various demobilized armed rebel groups and militias, poorly trained, insufficiently funded and often not under clear central command.

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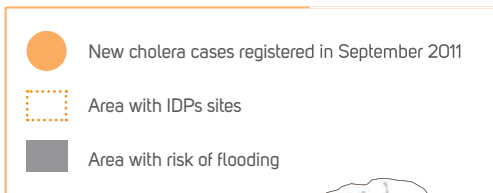
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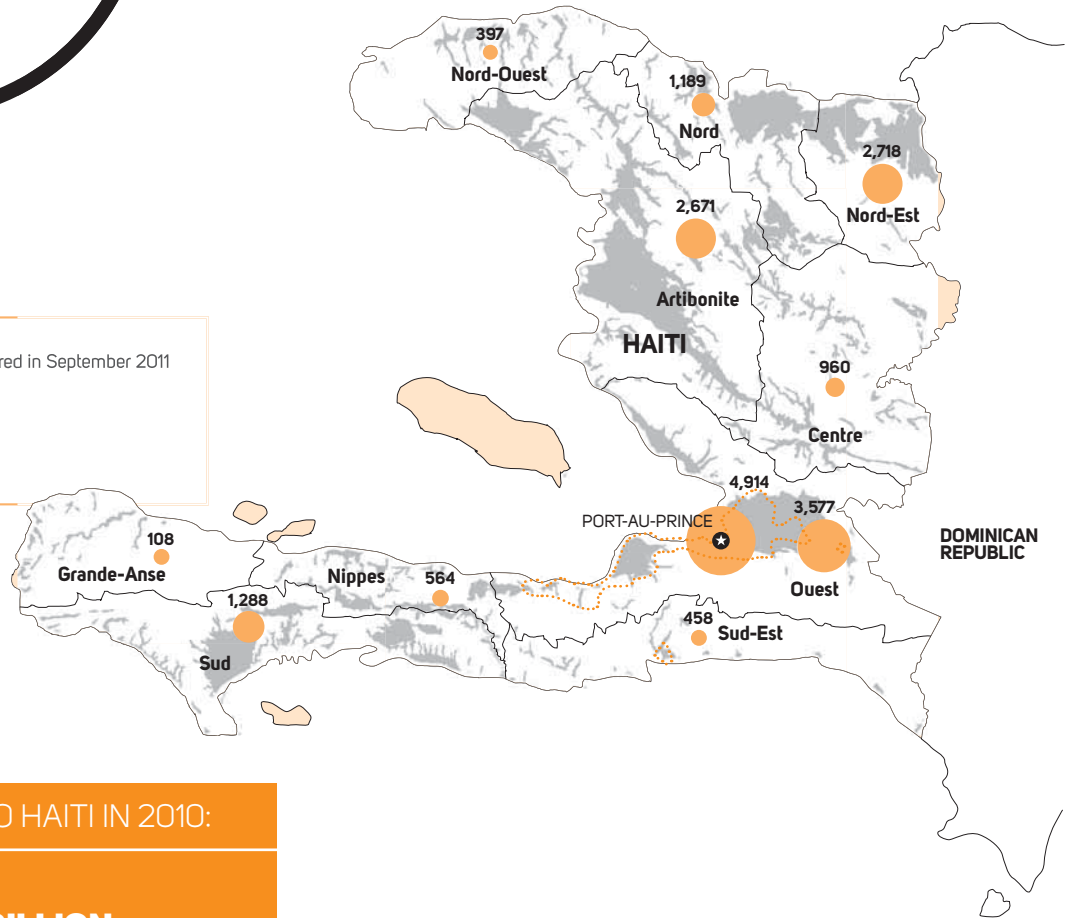
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CRISIS AT A GLANCE

HAITI



Source: OCHA



TOTAL FUNDING TO HAITI IN 2010:

US\$ **3.6** BILLION

31% INSIDE THE FLASH APPEAL

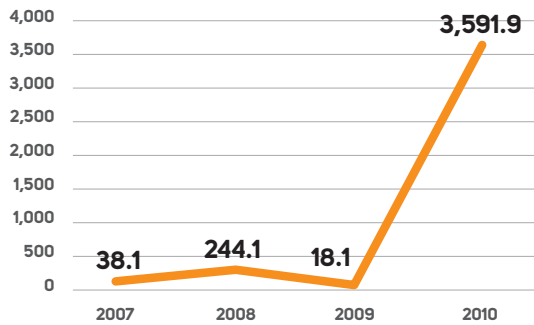
THE CRISIS AND THE RESPONSE

- On January 12th a devastating earthquake struck Haiti, one of the poorest countries in the world, wracked by chronic poverty, weak infrastructures and governance, and subject to frequent disasters.
- The earthquake causing massive destruction of the capital Port-au-Prince and surrounding areas. Between 70,000 to 230,000 people were killed, millions were left without homes or shelter. Two subsequent cholera epidemics added to Haitians' misery.

- The earthquake mobilised a massive international response, triggered partly by the close proximity to the United States and Canada and high media attention. Billions of dollars of aid were pledged to help Haiti recover and *build back better*. Hundreds of new, inexperienced donors and organisations flooded the country, causing huge challenges in coordination.
- Initial relief efforts were partially successful, but hampered by a lack of experience among humanitarian organisations to deal with major disasters in urban setting, poor planning and coordination, and a lack of integration with Haitian authorities and civil society organisations.
- Two years after the disaster, long-term recovery efforts are still inadequate. Hundreds of thousands of Haitians still live in temporary shelters, and the country is ill-prepared to face future crises.

TOTAL HUMANITARIAN FUNDING TO HAITI

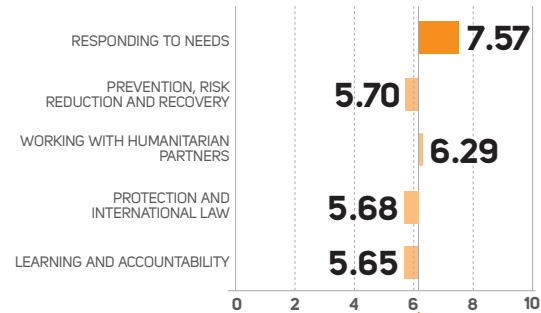
US\$ MILLION



Total funding committed and/or contributed inside and outside the appeal

HRI DONOR PERFORMANCE BY PILLAR

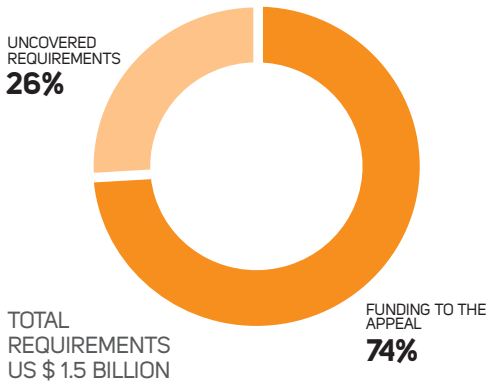
FIELD PERCEPTION SCORES



Source: DARA

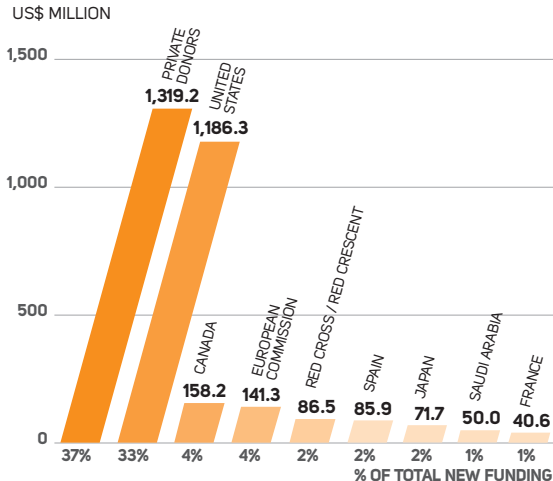
Colours represent OECD/DAC donors' performance compared to overall average pillar score:
 ● Good (Dark Orange) ● Mid-range (Light Orange) ● Could improve (Very Light Orange)

2010 HAITI FLASH APPEAL COVERAGE



MAIN HUMANITARIAN DONORS IN 2010

US\$ MILLION



Source: UN OCHA FTS, accessed in February 2012

Total funding inside and outside the appeal. Total new funding excludes carry-over.

DONOR PERFORMANCE

- Western donor governments pledged massive amounts of aid to Haiti, but much of that aid has still not been delivered, raising questions about donor accountability and transparency.
- The crisis also saw the emergence of new, non-traditional donors, such as Brazil, Venezuela and Cuba, the "Red Cross/Red Crescent", NGOs and private sector donations, supplanting the role and importance of traditional donors to a certain extent, but also increasing coordination challenges.
- Many of the lessons from previous major disasters were not applied. Donors should have done more to ensure Haitian authorities and civil society organisations were better integrated into the response and recovery.
- Donors have largely missed the opportunity to integrate the response to previous disasters in the country to build local response and preparedness capacity, and have neglected longer term disaster risk reduction and longer-term recovery and resilience measures in the current recovery efforts.

BUILDING BACK BETTER?

On January 12, 2010, a massive earthquake devastated much of Port-au-Prince and Haiti. The earthquake struck one of the poorest countries in the world, highly vulnerable to natural disasters, and with a long legacy of poor governance and weak institutions. Unlike previous disasters, such as four back-to-back hurricanes in 2008, the international community responded quickly and generously to the earthquake. Governmental and private donors offered US\$4 billion of aid to Haiti, promising to *build back better*. Two years later, however, Haiti is as poor today as before and not sufficiently prepared should another major disaster occur.

The Haitian earthquake and the cholera epidemics that followed highlighted the inadequacy of the international humanitarian system to respond to disasters in large, urban settings. Many of the lessons from other major disasters, such as Hurricane Mitch in 1998, were not considered or applied in the response. More than anything, though, the earthquake and the response exposed the failure of the international community to help Haiti build preparedness capacity to face disasters, or link emergency relief efforts to a long-term recovery strategy that reduce vulnerability and strengthen the resilience of the Haitian people.

OVERVIEW OF THE CRISIS

The earthquake – which hit just southwest of the capital city, Port-au-Prince, killed between 70,000 and 230,000 people, depending on the source (Grunewald 2010). The earthquake's extraordinary lethality and destructiveness resulted from Haiti's failure to enforce even minimal building standards, itself a reflection of government neglect and corruption. Almost all of the deaths were due to immediate crushing and suffocation from

construction collapse. In addition, thousands of Haitians required immediate, life-saving amputations, with many more performed over the months that followed. These amputees and thousands of others required psychosocial support (Kelly 2010; Handicap International 2010).

Since January 2010, the challenge of massive homelessness and displacement has declined from 2.3 million persons to around 500,000

■ THE EARTHQUAKE RESPONSE EXPOSED THE FAILURE OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TO HELP HAITI BUILD BACK BETTER

today, although no distinction was made between those affected by the earthquake and those who were homeless prior to the earthquake (Davidson 2011). Concerns remain about the potential

for gender-based violence in approximately 750 camps that still exist. By the end of 2011, reports indicated that incidence of rapes increased several-fold in some Port-au-Prince camps. An early survey found that in the weeks after the earthquake, 11,000 people were sexually assaulted and 8,000 physically assaulted in Port-au-Prince. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) repeatedly appealed to donors to focus on gender-based violence, including transactional sex workers (Kolbe 2010; Center for Human Rights and Global Justice 2011). Meanwhile, Haiti continues to have the highest maternal mortality in western hemisphere. Furthermore, rising food prices have pushed poor Haitians, who already have the lowest per capita income and purchasing power in the Western Hemisphere, to remain dependent on aid.

COMPACTED CRISES: THE SECONDARY DISASTER OF CHOLERA

On top of the earthquake, two waves of cholera epidemic shook the nation beginning from mid-October 2010. Cholera spread quickly during the third quarter of 2010, with an unusually high fatality rate, particularly among the rural poor, who were unfamiliar with the basic treatment: simple, oral rehydration. The epidemic continued to resurge with dramatic increases with each new month until late August to early September 2011. The second wave hit in the second and third quarter of 2011 when donors and aid organisations had become complacent about their success in bringing cholera cases down. By the end of 2011, there were close to 500,000 cases identified, with over 6,500 deaths (OCHA 2012). The cholera epidemics temporarily brought humanitarian organisations together around a common strategy, though cooperation fell apart after only a few months.

At the time, there were fears that the epidemic would ravage the population in Port-au-Prince due to the high number of displaced there, between 1 and 2 million people. However, the opposite proved true: there was close to zero mortality in the internally displaced person (IDP) camps, a remarkable testament to the aid community's focused attention on this population and a complete reversal from the patterns of vulnerability seen in almost all other emergencies, where refugees and camp-based populations have exhibited the highest death rates from basic health problems (Tappero 2011). The worst case-fatality rate was not seen in IDP camps, as many feared, but in prisons, where 24% case-fatality was recorded, particularly among male prisoners, partly due to the lack of adequate gender analysis leading to incorrect targeting of women for cholera prevention and treatment. As one interview respondent reflected, "The fact that there is less cholera in camps than in neighbourhoods means that we must have done something right in the earthquake response." Nevertheless, the difficulties of containing the outbreak despite the massive international presence and resources was a source of outrage for many organisations consulted.

THE CHALLENGE BALANCING INTERNATIONAL COORDINATION WITH BUILDING LOCAL CAPACITY

Aid agencies working in Haiti prior to the earthquake, including development organisations, scaled up their operations, while the earthquake brought a flood of first-time NGOs arrived, and looked to UN cluster meetings for guidance on how to perform as humanitarians. Due to their proximity, dozens of American and Canadian universities and university hospitals responded with volunteer doctors, nurses and logisticians, which proved critical during the early stages when physical trauma needed attention. A great deal of un-coordinated private aid, particularly by unconventional or



Haiti / Two girls from earthquake zone living in a host family washing and cooking. / UNHCR / J. Björvinsson / March 2010

first-time NGOs, was oriented toward medicine, health, and building hospitals. The Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement played a larger role than in any other emergency in recent memory, with numerous large national societies managing camps and building shelters.

The multiplicity of agencies crowding around Port-au-Prince made the need for effective cluster coordination essential; clusters were highly active

in the capital, as well as in Leogane and some of the provinces. Cluster meetings in Port-au-Prince tended to be held at the central United Nations logistics base, which facilitated good coordination among the multilateral aid agencies and also proved convenient for international NGOs to meet with the UN. Interestingly, as the cluster system worked well and

agencies brought their own funding, OCHA did not play a strong role, and was phased out in 2011.

As an example, according to one respondent, "Coordination was given great importance, especially through the cluster system. Finland distributed aqua-tabs through the wash cluster instead of giving them to a particular agency. It gave them to different organisations in the cluster so they would be distributed in a more efficient manner."

However, the focus on coordinating international actors came at the price of better engagement and ownership of local actors. After the first few months, however, the UN logistics base system excluded local NGOs: there was no mechanism by which the large number of Haitian NGOs could be identified or contacted, and their participation was physically limited by making their entry difficult to the logistics base and by convening cluster meetings in English.

■ THE EXCLUSION OF LOCAL ORGANISATIONS FROM THE INTERNATIONAL COORDINATION SYSTEM WILL DO LITTLE TO BUILD CAPACITY AND RESILIENCE TO FUTURE CRISES

"Donors having meetings in a military base in a humanitarian crisis makes no sense and the fact that they still do it one year and half later is even worse. It hampers participation. Haitians are totally excluded. Many people can't enter because there are strict controls at the entrance. As Haitians it's harder for them to get through," affirmed a respondent interviewed for the Humanitarian Response Index field mission.

The exclusion of locals from the international coordination system will do little to build capacity and resilience to future crises, especially since individual Haitians and Haitian staff of NGOs played such an important role in the response. Despite the personal suffering and trauma experienced by Haitians, they were the first to respond. NGOs interviewed during field research for the HRI reported that their local staff was extremely effective in the initial response, especially when newly arrived international staff took time to adjust to the situation. In the words of one interview respondent, "it is easy to underestimate the extent of the impact on Haiti. There was no functioning government, up to 20% of government and service providers died in the earthquake, others just left. Everybody knows somebody that died, people were traumatised. Our 70 national staff were totally traumatised, and, still, they performed better than NGOs and UN staff that came in later and had to set out." Nevertheless, throughout the entire relief and recovery responses, Haitian civil society was largely marginalised and kept out of sight by the donors and the Haitian government.

SLOW PROGRESS IN SHELTER RECOVERY FOR CAMP POPULATIONS

Camps and shelters were unusually well coordinated by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), which established an unprecedented database to track the hundreds of camps early in the crisis and worked both as an implementer and liaison to donors on behalf of the shelter cluster. Throughout early 2010, the donors drove their agenda on high standards for quality shelters – using the refrain “building back better” (MacDonald 2011). No winner was ever declared, and the model home idea quietly lost attention. However, as an audit by the US Office of Inspector General of USAID’s shelter programme concludes there was inadequate monitoring of application of quality standards in temporary shelters, leading to huge differences in quality and costs (US Office of the Inspector General 2011).

One year after the earthquake, major delays in the construction of permanent housing, and even transitional shelter continued due in part to property claims and poor or destroyed land title registries, but mostly poor planning and coordination. The Haitian government had a short window of opportunity to declare eminent domain and squandered it, in large part because donors did not provide early and strong support for such a controversial and bold action despite similar problems occurring in past natural disasters. Meanwhile, the vast majority of Haitians displaced by the earthquake were previously renters, not owners, many of whom remain displaced, migratory, squatting, or renting on precarious income. One INGO field staff who had worked in Haiti in the 1980s and 1990s, upon returning to Haiti in 2011 observed: “Things are much worse than they were in the 1990s. Nothing is started for rebuilding.”

There did not seem to be a clear strategy to move from transitional shelters to permanent housing.

Few humanitarian NGOs or contractors are adept at resolving deep-rooted land tenure issues, which have complicated reconstruction efforts for decades in other crises. As one respondent explained, “Most of foreseen temporary shelters haven’t been built yet. The approach now, 18 months after the earthquake, should be permanent shelters, but donors still keep on talking about temporary shelter.”

By the end of 2011, few homes had been built and aid agencies realized that donor funding for permanent housing would be limited. One respondent summarised the situation faced by many: “DFID (UK), the US and ECHO were talking about high standards, but they were not willing to pay for them. They wanted to pay only US\$1,500, but the criteria they set would have cost US\$3,500. The DEC [Disasters Emergency Committee] was the only donor who did fund the proper shelters.” As a result, the reality has been that many transitional shelters being built will serve as permanent homes. Meanwhile, donors and the Haitian government have merely a very short-term view of plans for the residents of the IDP camps.

The IDP return process also became political. In late 2010 and 2011, much of the donors and the government’s efforts were focused on how to get IDPs out of camps that occupy public spaces. The Martelly government (elected in 2011) recommended a process that began with moving IDPs out of six large, visible camps back to sixteen communities of origin, hence the reference to it as the *16/6 plan*. Donor governments and UN agencies supported this controversial process, which involved paying IDPs to move, including the cost of their new rent. Many organisations interviewed for the HRI assert that IDPs were not informed of their rights, and note that many IDPs did not receive long-term residence.

Haiti / Earthquake aftermath / Haitian children sitting on a stone by the Peruvian UN MINUSTAH military border base at Cachiman as UNHCR convoy waits for escort. / UNHCR / J. Björgvinsson / March 2010



DONOR RESPONSE

Even prior to the earthquake, Haiti already had one of the largest poverty-oriented aid programs in the world. Haiti received close to US\$1.2 billion the year before the earthquake, complemented by an equally large value of private remittances, largely from Canada and the United States (Fagen 2006). The country also had received international support for the response to crises in the recent past, and was host to a UN peacekeeping force. In other words, there were significant financial and technical resources in the country at the time of the earthquake. The massive destruction caused by the earthquake inspired a flood of publicity and donor support from government and private sources. However, the initial wave of enthusiasm waned under the constant pressure of added challenges that continued to ravage the country, not least the difficulties of a smooth transition to recovery when many state institutions were in shambles.

As with so many high-visibility disasters, donor governments committed millions to support immediate relief and recovery efforts, but pledges were slow to be fulfilled, and were in many cases not reported transparently, making it difficult to monitor. Tracking aid flows was even more complicated by the huge number of private donors,

estimated at over 40% of reported aid, though the actual figures were likely quite higher (OCHA FTS 2011). Donors came together to create the Interim Haiti Recovery Commission (IHRC), a joint Haitian-international entity created in April 2010 and vested with the goal of creating transparent procedures for how reconstruction funding would flow. The Commission was slow in becoming operational, and several donors intentionally held back most of its pledges for longer-term recovery and development programs. Eighteen months after the earthquake, the US had disbursed less than 14 percent of the US\$900 million that were budgeted. Other donors had similarly low disbursement rates.

The UN Secretary General appointed former President Bill Clinton as Special Envoy to Haiti to attempt to bring some order to this chaotic situation. The Office of the Special Envoy (OSE) reported that virtually all the early relief aid right after the earthquake was channelled through international humanitarian agencies, with little to none going towards rebuilding the shattered Haitian government donors, despite donors' claims that they were there to support the government. The OSE declared that by the end of 2011, the majority of donors had not yet released roughly two-thirds of the funds pledged for 2010/2011 for the earthquake response and recovery, and only 12 percent of international aid was channelled through the government (OSE 2011). This represented a huge missed opportunity to strengthen the Haitian government and local authorities. "It would be less expensive and more efficient to give funding through the government of Haiti instead of the UN and the World Bank," asserted one HRI interviewee.

Some of the reasons for the delays were that many donors adopted a wait-and-see attitude for the 2011 election results. Many organisations interviewed for the HRI complained that donors allowed too much time to pass because of uncertainties about the elections and subsequent delays by the incoming Martelly administration to select officials for key ministries and clarify new government policies and priorities. With no functional national government for

much of 2011, this meant little was accomplished for much of 2011.

Several respondents felt that this was a form of politicisation of the crisis: "Donors don't trust the government. It is very difficult to work with them; very slow. Supplies get blocked in customs so donors don't release funding any more. We're trying to engage a government that doesn't exist. Corruption is a very big problem." Rather than tackle the issues, donors were seen to be too passive in advocating for access, transparency and results. As many interview respondents claimed, donors could have made a strategic decision to work through local authorities and civil society organisations while the political process continued, instead of sitting on the sidelines.

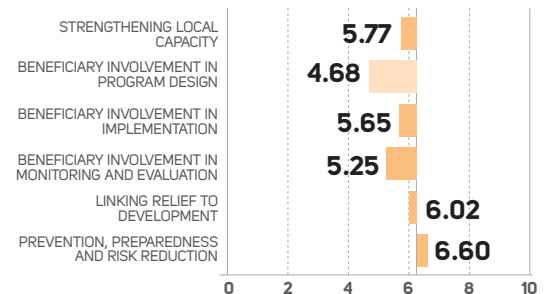
One of the consequences of the change in government was that the mandate of the IHRC expired in October 2011, and despite some expectations, was not renewed by the new Parliament. The effort to provide a mechanism to pool funding and make strategic, transparent decisions on aid allocation failed to be sustainable because it was overtly a part of the political process, according to some respondents, perhaps tainting donor governments at the same time.

One example of the differences between donor governments and the new Martelly administration was on the proposal to reconstitute national army. While the idea of a new army was popular among some Haitians, who resent the pervasive, but inactive UN Stabilisation Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) peacekeeping troops, donors quickly advised the Martelly government that they would oppose spending money on a new army in lieu of an improved police force (Heine 2011). In the end, however, the impasse has not resolved the security situation which remains precarious in many parts of Port-au-Prince, despite the heavy military presence. "The fact that MINUSTAH is in charge of humanitarian security and coordination goes against basic humanitarian principles. We are witnessing the militarisation of aid. Sometimes you think you are in Afghanistan," explained one respondent.

DONOR PERFORMANCE

DONOR PERFORMANCE IN PREVENTION, RISK REDUCTION AND RECOVERY

FIELD PERCEPTION SCORES



Source: DARA

OECD/DAC average question score 6.21

Colours represent OECD/DAC donors' performance compared to overall average question score:

● Good ● Mid-range ● Could improve

Donor governments almost universally claimed that they were committed to integrating disaster risk reduction into recovery and rehabilitation efforts as part of the mantra of *building back better*. Yet few donors followed through to ask implementing agencies how this was being achieved. "Disaster risk reduction is a trendy issue here in Haiti," reported one HRI interviewee, "It's in style." Disaster risk reduction efforts have been oriented toward recurring floods and their associated mortality during rainy and hurricane seasons. However, an example of how limited disaster risk reduction efforts were the struggle to retrofit IDP camps to become resilient to the types of storms that killed many in the past, rather than integrating from the start in the selection of sites, materials and awareness-raising activities around prevention and preparedness. As a result of this poor planning by aid organisations, and poor follow-up by donors, more than 10,000 people were displaced from the flooding of a new hurricanes in 2011 (OCHA 2011b).

In Haiti, donors supported disaster risk reduction with regard to imminent threats of flooding. Ironically, little attention has been given to mitigating the risks associated with future earthquakes. Donors are aware that even after billions have been spent in aid

MINUSTAH soldiers patrolling the streets of Port-au-Prince / DARA / June 2011



to Haiti, the struggling nation is hardly any better prepared to face another disaster like the 2010 earthquake. Unfortunately, Haiti sits on another fault line that runs through the island of Hispaniola. Geologists claim this fault is building pressure for another earthquake, which could potentially bring to light the failures of the aid community to adequately address risk reduction all too soon.

Organisations interviewed reported that support for the transition from relief to early recovery and longer-term development was lacking. Many donors preferred to support the emergency relief phase solely. “Now there is a gap between emergency and rehabilitation,” affirmed one interviewee. “It is very difficult to get funding for Haiti once the emergency has passed. Donors are not interested in funding rehabilitation and reconstruction,” noted another.

This was especially problematic in the second cholera epidemic. The resurgence of cholera in the spring and summer of 2011 became the biggest scandal between NGOs and institutional donors. NGOs vocally criticised the donors for the abrupt termination of cholera funding at a point when the attack rate of cholera was increasing, in the spring and summer of 2011. For example, one interviewee reported, “donors are only willing to pay for cholera for four to five months. Then you have to find more funding. A lot of NGOs are closing cholera units down.”

Donor rationale for cessation of funding was that cholera was not going to disappear and a long-term

orientation toward sustainable primary health care was preferred over short-term operations. However, the donors, collectively and individually, offered no guidance to humanitarian organisation on how to fund the ongoing epidemic. Quietly, the US Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and American Red Cross helped contribute some transitional cholera funding.

Gender was not given the attention it deserved. Many donors and humanitarian organisations seemed to consider the needs so overwhelming that there was no time to address gender. According to one interviewee, “Donors do require a gender approach in other projects, but not here. These are humanitarian projects and target entire populations. Big numbers. They aren’t focused on women.” The misunderstanding that gender-sensitive approaches entail programmes focusing solely on women is prevalent among donors and humanitarian organisations alike. “Did cholera equally affect men and women? We haven’t checked. I just can’t recall any disaggregated data,” noted another. Nevertheless, subsequent epidemiological studies did in fact show that the orientation of cholera prevention and treatment was targeted to woman, when it was men who were the most affected (Mazurana et al 2011). This is just one example of how the lack of attention to gender meant that the specific needs of women, men, boys and girls were not sufficiently taken into account in the response and recovery efforts.

■ EVEN AFTER BILLIONS HAVE BEEN SPENT IN AID TO HAITI, THE STRUGGLING NATION IS HARDLY ANY BETTER PREPARED TO FACE ANOTHER DISASTER LIKE THE 2010 EARTHQUAKE

allocated to strengthening the capacity of local NGOs, and was generally seen as particularly timely and flexible. When coupled with the isolation and exclusion of Haitians from key coordination mechanisms, and the focus on donors on the high-level political issues, it is hardly surprising the response has done little to build and strengthen local capacities and resilience.

Respondents noted that for most of the donors, “personal relationships” were important factors for decision-making, rather than public transparency in their procedures. In the case of the US, many partners complained that relationship was lacking, and criticised the US government for being confusing, non-transparent and inward-looking, despite their large presence. “USAID has had a complete bunker mentality. It’s impossible to have any continuity in conversations with them. OFDA had platoons of consultants rotating in and out.” ECHO, on the other hand, received excellent reviews for its engagement throughout the country, technical expertise, and efforts toward capacity building, including workshops for NGOs. Partners of Sweden also noted that they participated in field visits, asked for detailed information and followed up closely on the response. However, according to one respondent from a multilateral agency, “Most European donors are looking for an exit; they don’t want to be here.”

Few donors funded local NGOs, and international NGOs reported that donors were inflexible in allowing Haitian NGOs to be sub-grantees. Spain was an exception, as it required aid programmes to include Haitian counterparts. Canada also had a fund specifically

NON-DAC DONORS

The scale of needs resulting from the earthquake also brought a range of non-DAC donors, both governmental and non-governmental. The governments of Venezuela, Brazil and Cuba, and AGIRE (Agenzia Italiana Risposta alle Emergenze), the Disaster Emergency Committee (DEC) of NGOs in the UK, the American Red Cross, and the United States’ Center for Disease Control (CDC) all played significant roles in the response to the crisis, supplanting in fact the role and importance of many traditional OECD/DAC donors.

Brazil was an early and liberal donor to the World Food Program and has been a leader in the UN Peacekeeping mission in Haiti. The governments of Spain, Venezuela, and Cuba had an innovative tripartite aid arrangement where each contributed different components to a program. Cuba and Venezuela had an agreement with Haiti’s *Ministre de la Sante Publique et Population* to build hospital facilities, but not in consultation with other donors. Venezuela funded Cuba’s doctors, the Cuban Brigades to work in Haiti.

While the UK’s Department for International Development (DFID) was largely inconspicuous in Haiti, DEC was a very visible donor, with an active system to track and evaluation how the substantial donations raised are being spent. One recipient of funding from DEC admired its evolution: “The DEC asked for ongoing, longitudinal reporting from the beginning of its aid: A good way to report. Sometimes they come and double check our progress.” The newer, DEC-like consortium of Italian NGOs, AGIRE, with twelve NGO members, was also prominent in Haiti as a donor and actively evaluated how donations were spent.

The American Red Cross successfully raised funds passively from a new form of funding: massive numbers of SMS messages that triggered automatic donations, encouraged after the earthquake by the White House. In past emergencies, where the American Red Cross sub-granted to other NGOs, it took them many months to get their legal processes

established in order to disburse funds. In Haiti, however, the American Red Cross had evolved, and acted like a flexible donor from the outset, although their processes of decision-making, awards, and long-term strategy were not transparently evident to the agencies seeking their funds, including the broader movement of Red Cross/Red Crescent national societies.

The United States' CDC, normally important in emergencies for its technical advice, became a major donor in Haiti, re-directing funds allocated through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) programs for HIV/AIDS to cholera control by NGOs. Other donors also re-directed funds nimbly and quickly that had been in the pipeline for earthquake relief.

LESSONS LEARNT AND OPPORTUNITIES

The humanitarian response to the Haitian earthquake and its aftermath exposed the sector's poor capacity and ability to respond to disasters in large, urban populations settings. The sudden and unexpected earthquake and cholera epidemics of 2010 drew the world's attention, compassion and donations at a scale not seen since the 2004 tsunami. But coordination between donors and private aid agencies was poor, each working off their own individual agendas. Politics also got in the way of focusing on results and impact for the Haitian people. The international community cannot claim that it has helped Haiti *build back better*, and missed an opportunity to redress years of neglect and inattention to the issue of building capacity, resilience and strengthening preparedness for future crises.

The cholera crisis demonstrated the typical strength of donors to provide funding while the crisis was in the news, but similarly demonstrated the weakness of donors to be transparent or communicative about their proposed solutions for the transitional phases. While cholera was killing increasing number of Haitians in the

second semester of 2011, donors individually and collectively pulled back without advice other than to encourage integrated health care. The flaw in this expectation was that integrated primary care programmes and referral networks are far from capable of containing the excess deaths that continued to occur due to cholera throughout 2011. The inter-donor committee on health should have given clearer answers earlier on to frontline NGOs. One major health-oriented NGO complained, "The donors don't have a vision about what needs to be done, and an overall strategy should be their responsibility as donors."

When and how aid is spent has a powerful magnet effect on the population. In the case of Haiti, the collective aid community sucked hundreds of thousands of people back into the already over-congested capital of Port-au-Prince, an unintended by-product of the many cash-for-work, other employment, and cash distributions that were focused on the area of destruction, not the areas where people had fled to. The lack of a coherent strategy was a major impediment according to many interviewees. "There should be an integrated, multi-donor funding approach," said one. "It could be led by ECHO, since they fund most projects anyway, and the reporting requirements should be the same for all donors. Unified reporting would save us a big work load." Others commented on the complicated process that stifled innovation, flexibility and risk taking. "Funding mechanisms are not adapted to respond to needs. The process of having an idea, thinking how to implement it, convincing donors it's a good idea, getting funding for it and actually putting it in place takes too long, and needs change every month here."

Donor funding to rebuild Haiti largely missed a window of opportunity. Over 700,000 Haitians fled the capital city of Port au Prince, where deaths from the earthquake, homelessness and historic violence had been the worst, but then migrated again to Port-au-Prince where donors spent the greatest share of their donations. This practice generated jobs there and not elsewhere in Haiti where economic

development has long stalled. “Donor coordination is poor in general among humanitarian donors, but it’s even poorer between humanitarian and development donors. There’s a great disproportion of budgets between humanitarian and development agencies and that means a great disproportion of political power too,” explained one respondent. This was seen as a major factor impeding a more integrated approach to linking relief to recovery and development.

Most donors preferred to support the response in the capital, where their aid was more visible. “Aid is too focused in Port-au-Prince. They need to give aid to rural areas, otherwise you’ll never end the overpopulation in this city,” reported one interviewee. A notable exception was Denmark. According to another interviewee, “We designed a program that targeted a rural area. DANIDA was ready to fund it. You have to have guts to target an area without rubble here in Haiti.” Other donors should have extended their funding much earlier to regional development poles, such as Cap Haitian, and to rural areas around Hinche, the Northwest, and East.

There was a similar failure of donors to support implementing agencies with regard to the massive backlog of relief supplies held up at ports and in customs. The Haitian government failed to observe basic principles of international disaster laws (IDRL) by requiring NGOs to pay large fees for the import of donated relief supplies. As a result of this rent-seeking behaviour, nearly every NGO interviewed complained that a wide range of donated goods, from medicines to vehicles, were never able to enter Haiti during the timeframes of their projects, and certainly not during the worst periods of early 2010. Donors should have taken these concerns to the government of Haiti just as they have resolved customs issues in innumerable other crises. However, from the perspective of some donors interviewed, it is also important for partner organisations to report these difficulties to their donors, so that they are fully aware of the situation and can act accordingly.

While the crisis highlighted once more the inadequacies of the “traditional” humanitarian

Women pumping water at the Camp Hope./
UNHCR / J. Björgvinsson/ March 2010



system on donors, UN agencies and other actors, the response also signalled what may be the wave of the future. The importance of new governmental and private donors was evident in Haiti, and much more needs to be done to assess their contributions and learn from their successes and failures.

Similarly, new technologies, crowd-sourcing with SMS-messaging, software for extended logistic systems, mapping, and aerial imagery, continue to inspire networking and the sense of rapid evolution of how humanitarian aid can be delivered. Much of what was learned about mass migrations in Haiti came from surveys of mobile phone owners with built-in GPS, by the large Haitian telecom, Digicel. Digicel worked with aid agencies to track displacements in a way that provided greater insight and precision than has ever occurred before in any emergency. Since the earthquake, there has been a wave of attention to the application of information technologies to Haiti and future disasters. Haiti catalyzed a wide community of mappers and information technologists to work together, both supporting the search and rescue effort and in creating unprecedented city maps of Port-au-Prince, through crowd sourcing. New technologies and collaborations clearly provided an exciting model for the future of humanitarian aid, but more work is needed to take advantage of it fully in information-sharing mechanisms.

CONCLUSIONS

In future crisis situations like Haiti, where a government itself loses many staff to the disaster, a major goal should be to restore the technical capacities of the government. Given the long-term recovery needs in Haiti, UN agencies and clusters should have been physically based within government ministries, to expedite their re-building and support their efforts. Instead, much of the international aid community was isolated from their natural counterparts. At the same time, donor governments' concerns about the national political process essentially meant that many aid efforts came to a virtual standstill, when much more efforts could have been made to channel aid through local authorities and actors, particularly outside of the Port-au-Prince area.

Given the experience from the past, donors should have actively planned and engaged in creating more space for transition, development and humanitarian planning to be integrated into a long term vision that would have focused on building resilience and capacities of the Haitian people, civil society and government authorities. The Haitian NGO Coordination Committee, for example, repeatedly encouraged donors to integrate – achieve better coherence between their development and emergency funding, a message repeated by virtually all respondents interviewed for the HRI. A clearer focus on how donors would support and facilitate a transition from relief to recovery to development (LRRD) and integrate longer term disaster risk reduction into plans was largely missing, and donors could have done much better at working with their Haitian government counterparts to achieve this.

To be fair, the heavy losses of both human and physical resources of the Haitian government were a key challenge, as was the political uncertainties of the electoral process. And there were a multitude of donors and other actors on the scene, making coordination difficult. But amongst the main OECD/

■ A CLEARER FOCUS ON HOW DONORS WOULD SUPPORT AND FACILITATE A TRANSITION FROM RELIEF TO RECOVERY TO DEVELOPMENT AND INTEGRATE LONGER TERM DISASTER RISK REDUCTION INTO PLANS WAS LARGELY MISSING

DAC donors, much more could have been done to coordinate their own efforts, and to be more transparent and less political about their aid allocations and decision-making processes. The fact that many of the billions of aid promised has still not been delivered and is near impossible to track is scandalous.

While many mistakes have been made, there are still opportunities to set a new course for longer-term recovery and development that

will take these concerns into consideration, and focus on living up to the promises made to Haiti that the international community will not abandon them, but work with them to rebuild and renew.



INFORMATION BASED ON FIELD INTERVIEWS WITH KEY HUMANITARIAN AGENCIES IN HAITI FROM THE 27TH OF JUNE TO THE 4TH OF JULY, AND 133 QUESTIONNAIRES ON DONOR PERFORMANCE (INCLUDING 93 OECD/DAC DONORS). THE HRI TEAM WAS COMPOSED OF COVADONGA CANTELI, FERNANDO ESPADA, STEVE HANSCH AND ANA ROMERO. THEY EXPRESS THEIR GRATITUDE TO ALL THOSE INTERVIEWED IN HAITI.

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CRISIS AT A GLANCE

KENYA

THE CRISIS AND THE RESPONSE

- At the time of the Humanitarian Response Index field mission in February 2011, Kenya was home to more than 300,000 refugees and 30,000 internally displaced persons; drought and flooding left 1.6 million people in need of food assistance.
- Since then, the situation has deteriorated sharply; the drought now affects 3.5 million people, acute malnutrition levels have risen sharply and the influx of refugees from neighbouring Somalia has overwhelmed capacity in existing refugee camps.
- The 2010 Kenya Emergency Humanitarian Response Plan requested US\$ 603 million, of which donors covered 65%; however, the agriculture and livestock, protection and education clusters were severely underfunded.
- United Nations (UN) agencies received 88 percent of all 2010 humanitarian funding in Kenya, despite a large presence of national and international non-governmental organisations (NGOs)
- The first multiyear appeal, the Kenya Emergency Humanitarian Response Plan 2011+ will cover needs in 2011 to 2013, but is under revision given the current drought situation affecting the region.



CAMPS & SETTLEMENTS

- 🏠 Refugee camps
- ★ Major towns

DROUGHT STAGES

- ☐ No data
- ☐ Normal
- ☐ Alert
- ☐ Alarm
- ☐ Emergency

Map data source(s): KFSSG, February 2011

Disclaimers:
The designations employed on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the secretary of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or concerning the delimitation of frontiers or boundaries.

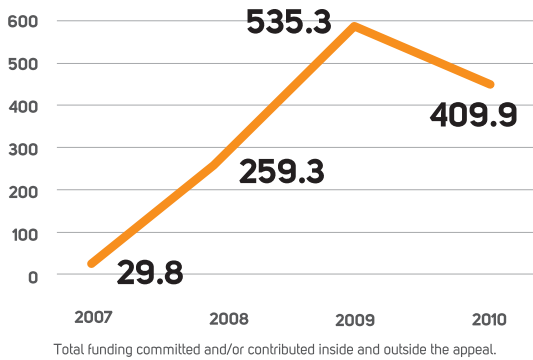
Source: OCHA

TOTAL FUNDING TO KENYA IN 2010:

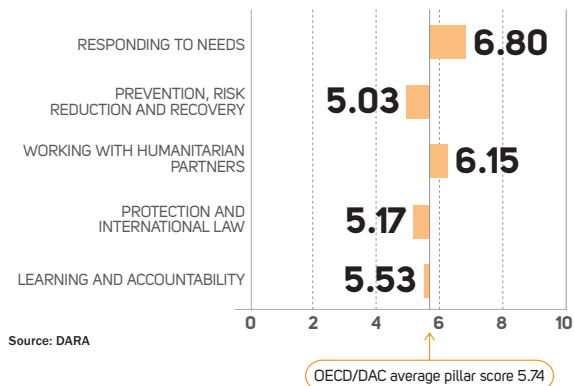
US\$ 409.9 MILLION

96% INSIDE THE CAP

TOTAL HUMANITARIAN FUNDING TO KENYA US\$ MILLION

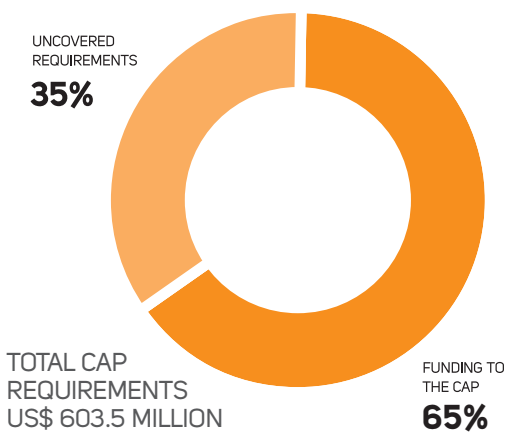


HRI DONOR PERFORMANCE BY PILLAR FIELD PERCEPTION SCORES



Colours represent OECD/DAC donors' performance compared to overall average question score:
● Good ● Mid-range ● Could improve

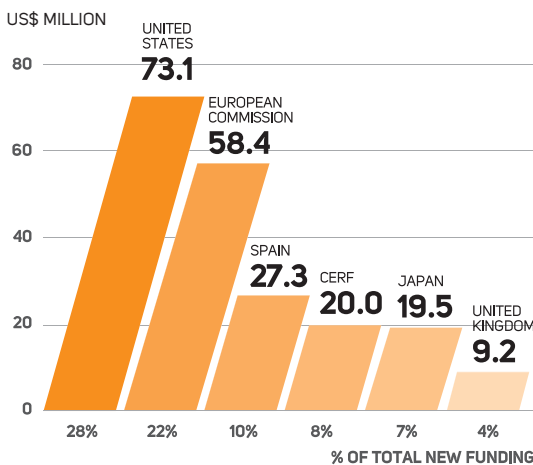
2010 KENYA CAP COVERAGE



DONOR PERFORMANCE AND AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Politicisation of aid and government corruption were widely reported as affecting access in assisting those most in need; there is little consensus among donors and humanitarian actors on the best way to address these issues.
- Many donors only funded emergency responses, leaving important gaps in support for prevention and preparedness efforts to address chronic vulnerability.
- According to many actors, donor support and funding for transitional activities and strengthening organisational capacity are also inadequate.
- Donors need to improve monitoring and follow-ups of the humanitarian situation and advocate to ensure current needs are met.
- Donors should also consider investing more toward strengthening the capacity of local organisations and ensuring knowledge from the field is appropriately integrated into programmes to reduce vulnerability.

MAIN HUMANITARIAN DONORS IN 2010



Total funding inside and outside the appeal. Total new funding excludes carry-over.

INVEST IN PREVENTION: A RECIPE FOR THE FUTURE

At first glance, Kenya seemed to be a regional success story, with relative stability and the largest GDP in East Africa. In fact, the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Human Development Index reports that human development in Kenya has increased by 0.5 percent annually from 1980 to the present, a score

■ KENYA HAS BECOME TRAPPED IN A CYCLE OF VULNERABILITY AGGRAVATED BY GOVERNMENT CORRUPTION, POLITICISED AID AND A LACK OF POLITICAL WILL

consistently higher than the rest of Sub-Saharan Africa, yet still placing Kenya in the low human development category. Nevertheless, thanks to its reputation for stability, Kenya has developed a booming tourism industry and become the regional hub for embassies and UN agencies. Therefore, many were caught by surprise when violence

erupted following the 2007 elections, revealing real humanitarian needs that Kenya's positive macroeconomic figures had obscured. Since 2007, Kenya has become trapped in a cycle of vulnerability aggravated by government corruption, politicised aid and a lack of political will from both local authorities and donor governments to respond properly to current needs or build resilience to respond to those of the future.

THE CRISIS

It is difficult to avoid comparing Kenya with its neighbors, such as Somalia, where limited access greatly inhibits humanitarian action. In theory, Kenya should benefit from the multitude of international

agencies and donor governments present in Nairobi to be able to respond in a rapid and appropriate manner. However, Kenya does have a lot on its plate. More than 300,000 refugees from Somalia, Sudan, Ethiopia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Burundi live in Kenya. Of the 650,000 people forced to flee their homes as a result of the post-election violence, 30,000 have not yet returned to their homes (IDMC 2010 and OCHA 2011a). The Kenyan government seems to have prioritised 2012 elections and reformed the constitution over growing social issues, such as the problems facing the 50,000 people whose displacement preceded the 2007-2008 violence (IRIN 2011).

Kenya also suffers the consequences of climate change. *The Climate Vulnerability Monitor* (DARA 2010, p. 230) currently categorises Kenya as highly vulnerable and predicts it may become acutely vulnerable by 2030. Though climate change has received substantial attention in Kenya, efforts to address the underlying causes of cyclical humanitarian crises have, ironically, failed to materialise. Home to pastoralist communities who relocate in search of water and pasture for livestock, the arid and semi-arid North and Northeastern regions are among the poorest in Kenya. Historically, they have not received the attention they deserve from Nairobi, which some attribute to their lack of political influence. Drought in these regions and flooding in the Rift Valley left 1.6 million people in need of food assistance in 2010, including 242,000 children under five with moderate acute malnutrition and 39,000 with severe acute malnutrition, according to the humanitarian appeal (OCHA 2010).

THE RESPONSE

The 2010 humanitarian appeal for Kenya was the fourth largest in Africa and among the largest globally, calling for US\$ 603 million to respond to the crises. The funding requirements for the multi-sector assistance for refugees, food aid and nutrition clusters were the highest, and donors covered more than 66 percent of these needs.

Kenya/ A dry river bed in Katuma refugee camp. UNHCR / R. Gangale / July 2010.

On the other hand, the agriculture and livestock, protection and education clusters were severely underfunded, each receiving less than 30 percent of the respective requirements. In particular, this limited funding for agriculture and livestock threatens the ability of North and Northeastern Kenya to recover from the current crisis and help prevent future crises. According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs' (OCHA) Financial Tracking Service (2011b), donors covered 60 percent of the total requirements with 37 percent coming from carry-over from previous years. The United States provided the majority of the remaining amount (30 percent) followed by the European Commission (20 percent), Spain (11 percent), the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and Japan (both with eight percent). Other donors who supported the humanitarian appeal each contributed three percent or less. The World Food Programme (WFP) received the most funding, followed by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and the World Health Organisation (WHO). In fact, United Nations agencies received 88 percent of all funding to Kenya in 2010 (OCHA 2011b).

DONOR PERFORMANCE

Despite the clear need for investment in prevention, preparedness and local capacity, donors are reluctant to fund activities they consider beyond the boundaries of emergency response. The Humanitarian Response Index (HRI) team interviewed humanitarian organisations on donors' application of the *Principles of Good Humanitarian Donorship* (GHD) in their support to the crises in Kenya. In the field survey, team members asked senior humanitarian staff to score their donors – governments, private foundations, pooled funds, UN agencies or NGOs acting as donors – on a series of issues related to the quality of



their aid. Survey questions on donor support for prevention, preparedness, transitional funding, and organisational capacity and contingency planning received some of the lowest scores. "They say their mandate is only emergency. This is our biggest challenge with our donors," explained one interviewee, expressing a concern echoed by many. In fact, some organisations, fearing donors simply were not reliable for funding anything beyond emergencies, reported that the longer term funding commitment required by refugees precluded working with them. This is highly concerning in Kenya, as it is precisely the "humanitarian +" areas that are most in need of support to break the cycle of vulnerability.

— Transitional activities

Donor support for transitional activities needs major improvement, according to humanitarian organisations. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development / Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) donors and

UN agencies were equally weak in this area. “Our donors could do more. Recovery is not funded,” asserted an interviewee. “We tried to propose something for early recovery but our donors were not interested,” reported another. To interrupt the cycle of emergencies affecting Kenya, however, donors must ensure proper transition from humanitarian assistance. The Kenya Emergency Humanitarian Response Plan 2011+¹ is an important step in the right direction. The first appeal to cover multi-year funding, it addresses both emergency and longer-term needs. However, ensuring these needs are met requires a follow-up, as weak monitoring has already produced problems in the current response.

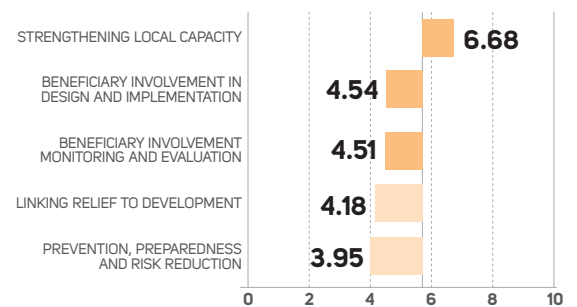
■ Prevention and preparedness

Prevention and preparedness interventions are consistently underfunded, perhaps because they rarely capture the media spotlight. Yet numerous studies have found that investing in prevention and preparedness would actually cost donors significantly less money than emergency response.² “All donors prefer visibility, so they find humanitarian programmes more showy for domestic constituency. It is a grave fault that there is so little investment in disaster preparedness in a region of recurrent drought,” maintained an interviewee.

Humanitarian organisations rated UN agencies slightly lower than OECD/DAC donors for supporting conflict and disaster prevention, preparedness and risk reduction. “We have to beg them,” remarked one respondent with frustration. UN agencies’ obligation to follow the requirements of their own donors does, however, affect the support they provide to NGOs. While most OECD/DAC donors received low scores for these issues, the European Commission placed relatively higher. Respondents reported that it requests that partners incorporate prevention, preparedness and risk reduction measures in funding proposals and subsequent reporting.

DONOR PERFORMANCE ON PREVENTION, RISK REDUCTION AND RECOVERY

FIELD PERCEPTION SCORES



Source: DARA

Colours represent OECD/DAC donors' performance compared to overall average question score:

- Good
- Mid-range
- Could improve

■ Organisational capacity and contingency planning

Though organisational capacity and contingency planning are fundamental to preventing and

■ PREVENTION AND PREPAREDNESS INTERVENTIONS ARE CONSISTENTLY UNDERFUNDED, PERHAPS BECAUSE THEY RARELY CAPTURE THE MEDIA SPOTLIGHT

responding to crises in a better way, humanitarian organisations find securing donor support for this highly challenging. Under pressure for greater efficiency from domestic taxpayers, some donors are increasingly concerned about

the amount of funding that directly reaches each beneficiary. While interviewees understood the need for increased efficiency, they reiterated their frustration over donor hesitance to support other essentials such as training and emergency stocks.

UN agencies were reported to perform significantly worse than OECD/DAC donors in this regard. NGO survey respondents repeated that UN agencies treated them merely as service providers, instead of partners. “If there were a zero for this question, they should get it!” exclaimed an interviewee

■ **THOUGH CAPACITY AND CONTINGENCY PLANNING ARE FUNDAMENTAL TO PREVENTING AND RESPONDING TO CRISES IN A BETTER WAY, HUMANITARIAN ORGANISATIONS FIND SECURING DONOR SUPPORT FOR THIS HIGHLY CHALLENGING**

commenting on his organisation’s relationship with a UN agency. While some agencies are reducing overhead allowance, others are reported to have eliminated it completely and pay only upon project completion. Clearly, this system does not allow NGOs to build their capacity for response. Of the OECD/DAC donors, Sweden received the highest score, followed by Germany and the European Commission. The United Kingdom

and the United States both scored below the OECD/DAC average for this survey question, although some interviewees reported that the United States actively supported their contingency planning for the possible influx of Sudanese refugees due to the January 2011 referendum.

■ **Building local capacity**

Donor failure to invest in organisational capacity is problematic for international NGOs, yet greater still for local NGOs - the last in the chain of funding. The difficulty international NGOs encounter in obtaining donor support of this kind also has direct repercussions for the capacity of subcontracted local NGOs, which find themselves with limited budgets and minimal opportunities to influence project design and implementation. In fact, according to a representative of a local NGO,

“international approaches are often misguided, as they are not fully aware of the reality on the ground.” Although some donors make an effort to build the capacity of the government, they frequently neglect local NGOs. “None of our donors really want us to work with local partners. They see it as a risk. There is a certain fear of working with local NGOs,” reported a representative of an international NGO. Legitimate or not, this donor lack of confidence prevents many from directly funding local NGOs. One interviewee summed up the problem in the following way: “Donors want local NGOs to have more capacity before they fund them, but if donors don’t fund them, they can’t build their capacity.” The Emergency Response Fund, a locally-managed pooled fund intended to provide emergency funding to NGOs, could be used for exactly this purpose. However, several interviewees reported that the funding requirements are especially burdensome and that local NGOs need support to access this funding.

Many interviewees highlighted that building the capacity of local communities and local authorities still requires attention. Overall, humanitarian organisations considered UN agencies to perform significantly worse than OECD/DAC donors.

However, there are mixed opinions regarding the way donor governments and humanitarian organisations work with local authorities. In fact, due to corruption within the Kenyan government, some donor governments like

■ **SHORTSIGHTED EMERGENCY RESPONSES WILL DO LITTLE TO END KENYA'S CHRONIC CRISIS**

the United Kingdom have cut off all bilateral funding (DFID 2011). Some interviewees opposed local politicians’ selection of aid beneficiaries based on political ties. “Don’t leave it to politicians to decide who gets food,” stated a survey respondent. Several interviewees reported that the interference of local politics in aid decision-making sometimes prevents food aid from reaching those most in need. By

contrast, others considered local authorities better placed than humanitarian organisations to determine needs. “Food aid is politicised. Local politicians tend to choose their constituents, which is bad, but is it worse for us to decide the needs for them? We also have to respect their power and empower the community,” countered another. Donors cannot, however, afford to disregard Kenya’s corruption, exemplified by its low ranking in Transparency International’s 2010 Corruption Perception Index.³

INVESTMENT IN PREVENTION AND LONG-TERM STRATEGIES

Shortsighted emergency responses will do little to end Kenya’s chronic crises. To compensate for tightened budgets in the current economic environment, tax dollars must be stretched to ensure maximum efficiency. To accomplish this, donors should ensure that their funding decisions are in line with actual needs and subsequently monitor their implementation. They would also do well to invest sufficiently in prevention, preparedness, local capacity and transitional activities so that local communities are more resilient to the risks they face today and those that climate change poses in the longer term.

The situation in Kenya has deteriorated substantially since the time of DARA’s field research in February 2011, yet the arguments still hold true. Once the current food crisis is eventually surpassed, donors must invest in prevention and preparedness to avoid repeating the same mistakes of the past.



INFORMATION BASED ON FIELD INTERVIEWS WITH KEY HUMANITARIAN AGENCIES IN KENYA FROM 20 TO 25 FEBRUARY, AND 158 QUESTIONNAIRES ON DONOR PERFORMANCE (INCLUDING 103 OECD/DAC DONORS). THE HRI TEAM WAS COMPOSED OF BEATRIZ ASENSIO AND MARYBETH REDHEFFER. THEY EXPRESS THEIR GRATITUDE TO ALL THOSE INTERVIEWED IN KENYA.

NOTES

¹ The Kenya Emergency Humanitarian Response Plan 2011+ appeals for funding to cover needs from 2011 to 2013.

² According to the World Bank (2009), "One dollar invested in prevention saves seven dollars spent to remediate hazard effects."

³ Kenya ranked 154th out of 178 countries in Transparency International's 2010 Corruption Perception Index.

CRISIS AT A GLANCE

OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

THE CRISIS AND THE RESPONSE

- The easing of the blockade of Gaza in 2010 brought limited improvements in the lives of the population, as they continue to depend on foreign aid and smuggled goods. Poverty in the West Bank has quadrupled since 1999.
- Restrictions on movement of people and goods for humanitarian organisations and Palestinians as well as the no-contact policy enforced by many donors make the occupied Palestinian territories (oPt) a difficult and expensive operating environment.
- At mid-year, the United Nations (UN) Consolidated Appeal (CAP) for 2010 was reduced to US\$603.4 million. Donors provided US\$276.3 million (55 percent of the requirements) in new funding to projects within the CAP and US\$73 million to projects outside the CAP (OCHA FTS 2011). The United States (US) continued to be the largest donor, followed by the European Commission.
- The response to cluster needs was uneven, with priority to food security and limited support to agencies for their cluster leadership roles. The nearly full blockade of construction materials to Gaza prevented most 2009 pledges for reconstruction from materialising.

OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES



CAMPS & SETTLEMENTS

- Armistice Demarcation Line
- Boundary of Former Palestinian Mandate

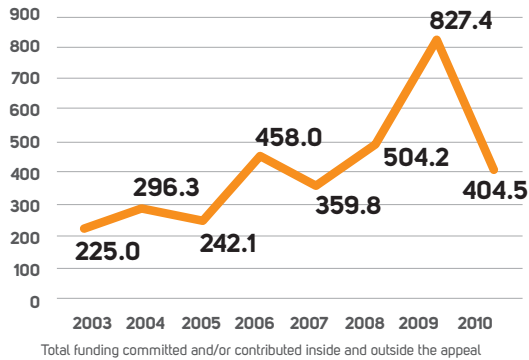
Map Sources: Europa Technologies, OCHA, UNCS
Map created Jun 2010 - www.reliefweb.int

TOTAL FUNDING TO OPT IN 2010:

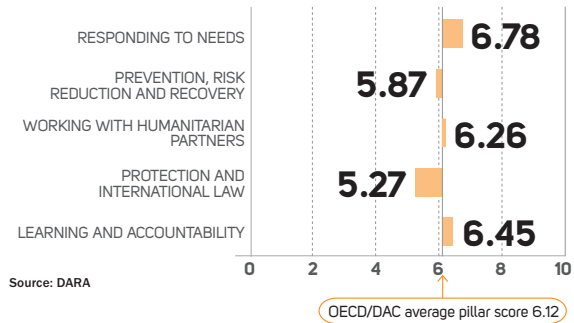
US\$ **404.5** MILLION

82% INSIDE THE CAP

TOTAL HUMANITARIAN FUNDING TO OPT US\$ MILLION

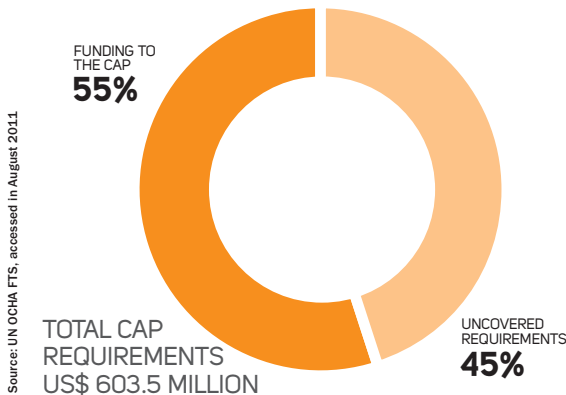


HRI DONOR PERFORMANCE BY PILLAR FIELD PERCEPTION SCORES

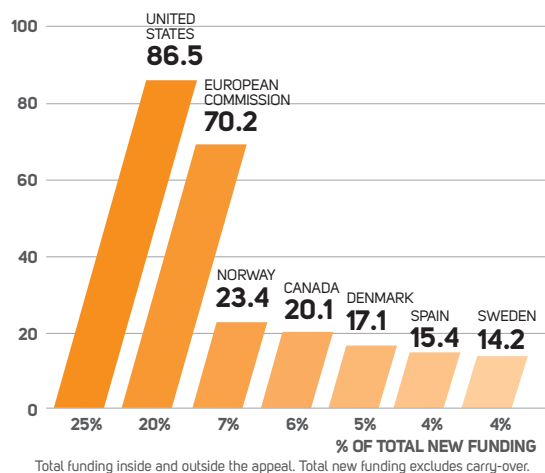


Colours represent OECD/DAC donors' performance compared to overall average pillar score:
 ● Good ● Mid-range ● Could improve

2010 OPT CAP COVERAGE



MAIN HUMANITARIAN DONORS IN 2010 US\$ MILLION



DONOR PERFORMANCE AND AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Humanitarian organisations complained of donor passiveness in advocating for access and their acceptance of additional operational costs.
- At a time when many donor governments are looking to maximise the results and value of their money spent, the situation in oPt shows just how far the response is from achieving efficiency, much less impact.
- A number of key donors' application of anti-terrorism legislation continues to threaten the impartiality and independence of aid based on needs.
- Some donors, like the European Commission's Humanitarian Office (ECHO), Austria and Canada, did stand out for their commitment to gender needs. Other donors seemed satisfied to see gender mentioned in proposals, but did little to prioritise implementation.
- Although donors agree that humanitarian assistance should make links to recovery and rebuilding livelihoods, they continue to provide only short-term funding.
- Donors must continue to deploy all of their means by insisting that all parties work together to create an environment conducive to unconditional peace and stability.

FEW IMPROVEMENTS, FAILING HOPES

The humanitarian crisis in the occupied Palestinian territories (oPt) continues unabatedly, with little sign of progress in the Palestinian peace process and lack of visible improvement in the daily lives of the Palestinian population trapped in the conflict. Field research conducted in early 2011 as part of the Humanitarian Response Index (HRI) found many of the same issues raised in previous HRI reports, revealing a highly politicised crisis with a response characterised by limited respect for humanitarian principles, severe restrictions on access to affected populations, incoherent donor approaches and an excessive focus on short-term needs. If anything, the operating environment has become even more complicated for humanitarian agencies in the last year, underlining the need for donor governments to revise their approaches to be principled and needs-based, while reinforcing efforts to find solutions to this politically-driven crisis.

THE CRISIS

The Israeli government's decision to ease the blockade of Gaza in June 2010, eighteen months after Operation Cast Lead, has brought only limited improvements in the lives of the population. Gazans continue to depend almost entirely on foreign aid and goods smuggled through tunnels. With one of the highest unemployment rates in the world, at 45 percent of the population, only one in five Gazan households can be considered food secure (WFP, FAO and PCBS 2011, p.8), and housing needs as well as access to basic services, such as healthcare, remain largely unmet. Abject poverty in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, has quadrupled since 1999, and food insecurity has

reached 79 percent in Area C, an administrative area under complete Israeli control. The Palestinian Authority (PA) and Israel share control over Area B, and the PA fully manages Area A.

Last year saw some improvement in the overall West Bank economy, although this was largely due foreign aid, investment and, to some extent, to the removal of

several restrictions on access in urban areas east of the barrier. Nonetheless, in addition to the consequences of forced displacement, severe restrictions on movement and access to

■ A HIGHLY POLITICISED CRISIS WITH A RESPONSE CHARACTERISED BY LIMITED RESPECT FOR HUMANITARIAN PRINCIPLES

social services and labour opportunities continued, particularly affecting those living in the "seam" zones and Area C of the West Bank. Facing frequent harassment, evictions, stop work orders and demolitions, the population of East Jerusalem remains cut off from the rest of the West Bank, causing tremendous psychological stress and suffering.

By mid-year, the United Nations (UN) Consolidated Appeal (CAP) for 2010 was reduced to US\$603.4 million. Donors provided US\$276.3 million, or 55 percent of the requirements, in new funding to projects within the CAP and US\$73 million to projects outside it (OCHA FTS, 2011). The United States continued to be the largest donor, providing 26 percent of the total response to the CAP, followed by the European Commission with 17 percent. Arab donors did not repeat the generosity

shown in response to the 2009 Operation Cast Lead. The nearly full blockade of construction materials to Gaza prevented most 2009 pledges for reconstruction from actually materialising. The response to cluster needs was uneven, with priority to the food security cluster and only limited support to agencies for their cluster leadership roles.

OPERATIONAL CHALLENGES

As reported in the HRI 2010 report on oPt, in this highly politicised environment, humanitarian organisations face a number of difficulties in attempting to provide assistance to all in need. Having to work around the oPt's physical and bureaucratic fragmentation is a major obstacle to progress, as agencies struggle with movements between physical zones and the bureaucratic procedures they entail. According to a recent survey, 80 to 90 percent of national and 50 percent of international humanitarian workers with delays or denials when seeking permits for travel between Gaza and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem (AIDA, 2011). Many agencies DARA interviewed reported that they have been forced to hire additional staff to deal with these cumbersome and time-consuming administrative procedures.

At a time when many donor governments are looking to maximise the results and value of their money spent on humanitarian assistance, the situation in oPt shows just how far the response is from achieving efficiency, much less impact. As a result of multiple restrictions, delivery of basic humanitarian goods to Gaza, particularly food items, suffers from significant additional costs, estimated to be at least US\$4 million per year for the World Food Programme (WFP) and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) combined. More importantly, lack of access prevents vulnerable communities from being reached and urgently needed reconstruction from taking place. Many

of the humanitarian organisations interviewed complained of donor passiveness in advocating for access and an apparent willingness to accept these additional operational costs. However, both the implementing agencies and donor representatives interviewed unanimously considered the Israeli blockade and occupation to be the main impediments to achieving a minimally acceptable level of livelihood and human dignity for the Palestinian population. A recently published Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) report on the effects of the barrier additionally supports this view (OCHA, 2011).

To further complicate an already untenable situation, a number of key donors' application of anti-terrorism legislation continues to threaten the impartiality and independence of aid based on needs. This legislation obliges humanitarian organisations to show that no assistance will benefit Hamas, placing unreasonable costs and administrative and legal burdens on organisations

■ HAVING TO WORK AROUND THE OPT'S PHYSICAL AND BUREAUCRATIC FRAGMENTATION IS A MAJOR OBSTACLE TO PROGRESS

to justify fulfilling basic humanitarian objectives. For example, the European Union (EU) policy of no-contact with Hamas and the UN rule forbidding communication beyond the purely technical level further compromise

key humanitarian principles, including those of neutrality and impartiality, which are essential to gain the trust of all parties and access to affected populations. The restrictions put non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in a difficult situation, as they must simultaneously compromise between complying with their own domestic criminal law, international humanitarian law (IHL), Palestinian law and the administrative procedures of Hamas. Several interviewees made reference to the

“criminalisation of humanitarian aid”, and as one interviewee expressed, “identifying Hamas as a terrorist group undermines the whole humanitarian response: creating parallel networks, wasting money, in addition to not using available services and resources.”

NEEDS-BASED RESPONSES

The difficulties of access and the no-contact policy with Hamas, along with a highly fluid and shifting context, make properly assessing needs highly challenging. Most humanitarian programme planning is done around cluster-specific needs assessments, using existing standards. Donors are informed of this process and, in some cases, have participated in cluster needs assessments, but the many donors who have only limited humanitarian capacity on the ground must rely on the agencies’ needs assessments without any verification or follow-up. Although some respondents considered this lack of “interference” to be positive, most would clearly welcome wider donor involvement in the process.

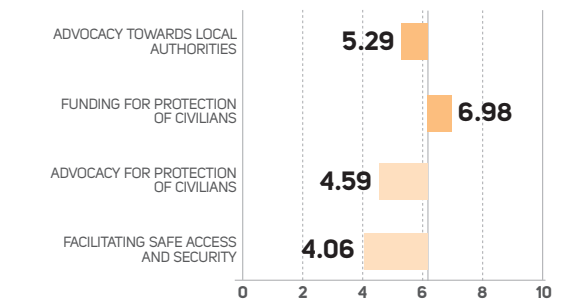
Many donors interviewed stated that they link needs assessments to project design. However, feedback from various humanitarian organisations suggests that needs assessments often do not guide funding decisions, which instead are influenced by national strategic priorities, hearsay and rumours. According to one agency, “the political agenda determines everything at the donors’ headquarter level.” There is also concern that incomplete coverage of needs assessments in the buffer zone and restricted areas of Gaza leaves agencies, the UN and donors with an incomplete picture of needs in these areas.

A number of donors do undertake regular field visits and base their recommendations for funding on what they observe. Several donors participate in consultations on needs analysis initiatives, which are based on cluster specific assessments, monitoring them indirectly through interaction with the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) and the

Humanitarian Donor Group (HDG). Furthermore, a few donors, such as Australia and Canada, require project specific needs assessments to be included in project proposals. Most donors interviewed explained that they analyse the CAP document and submit advice to their capitals, which then forms the basis for financial decisions. Furthermore, the level of delegation at country level for funding decisions ranges considerably among donors; some field delegations have no authority at all, others manage the funding of smaller projects, while others make decisions on funding for projects over US\$15 million. The authority at country level to make funding decisions also influences the timelines of funding upon publication of appeals or in case of additional or changed needs.

DONOR PERFORMANCE ON PROTECTION AND INTERNATIONAL LAW

FIELD PERCEPTION SCORES



Source: DARA

Colours represent OECD/DAC donors' performance compared to overall average pillar score:

● Good ● Mid-range ● Could improve

GENDER ISSUES

Incorporating gender analysis into needs assessments and funding decisions continues to lag behind in the oPt. According to a survey commissioned by the UN Gender Task Force in Gaza in the aftermath of operation Cast Lead (UN Inter-Agency Task Force, 2010), both men and women were highly concerned about the increasingly high level of domestic violence, aggravated by the

People queuing at Qalandia checkpoint / DARA / March 2011.

psychological stress and traumatic effects of war, particularly among the displaced population in the southern part of Gaza (Ma'an News Agency, 2011). Yet, despite both increased attention to gender issues and greater awareness of the prevalence of domestic and gender-based violence tied to traumatic stress in Gaza, humanitarian workers need to improve their knowledge and strategies to address the issue.

Preparation of the 2011 CAP involved integrating a gender dimension and analysis in project proposals to improve gender sensitive programming. Under the guidance of a GenCap advisor (One Response, 2011), all CAP projects were assessed on the extent to

■ DESPITE INCREASED ATTENTION AND AWARENESS, HUMANITARIAN WORKERS NEED TO IMPROVE THEIR KNOWLEDGE AND STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS GENDER

which gender-sensitivity was integrated and sex-disaggregated evidence was included. CAP projects coded "2a" indicate that gender is mainstreamed, and those coded "2b" specifically target gender issues. To date, donors have directed 74 percent of their funding to 2a and 2b projects (OCHA FTS, 2011). Some agencies urged donors to prioritise

funding for CAP 2011 projects with high gender marks. However, obtaining satisfactory access to Sex and Age Disaggregated Data (SADD) appeared to be a major challenge, compounded by the extensive fragmentation of the oPt.

According to many respondents, some donors did stand out for their commitment to gender; ECHO, Austria and Canada all insisted that gender sensitive approaches be clearly described in projects submitted for their support. Other donors, however, seemed satisfied to see gender mentioned in proposals, but did little to monitor or follow up on implementation. In some cases, gender-focused projects met with limited success when



implemented. Furthermore, a few donors, including the US, prioritised activities aimed at empowering women through increasing their involvement in the labour market. However, this continues to be a challenge in a country so dependent on foreign assistance, particularly in a time of overall high unemployment and lack of economic options.

Meanwhile, integrating gender into the response presents more pressing problems, especially concerning safety and protection. Many organisations highlighted the importance of ensuring that relief and recovery programming targets the specific needs of affected populations to guarantee the domestic safety of women and children, as well as the public security of men and boys. More attention must also be given to issues disproportionately affecting women, such as displacement by housing demolitions and evictions, especially in East Jerusalem.

LINKING RELIEF, REHABILITATION AND DEVELOPMENT

A lack of longer-term approaches to addressing needs has created another gap in donor responses. As in many crises, the long-standing nature of the Palestinian conflict means that needs are chronic. Although donors agree that humanitarian assistance should make links to recovery and rebuilding livelihoods, they continue to provide only short-term funding, in part due to the annual CAP process and the perception that the situation is not ready for aid addressing long-lasting needs. Some agencies warned that this goes against the principle of 'do no harm'.

Many agencies urged donors to change their approach, in particular by providing more flexibility, with less earmarking in funding. Establishing multi-year frameworks could also increase the predictability of their funding, and allow for more sustainable programming that could be adjusted to changes in the conditions affecting needs

and the implementation of activities. This would allow for slightly more sustainability in projects and inclusion of more recovery activities. The humanitarian community can also play a role in overcoming short-term planning by extending the CAP programming cycle beyond one year.

■ NEEDS ARE CHRONIC BUT DONORS CONTINUE TO PROVIDE ONLY SHORT-TERM FUNDING

With most international attention directed towards Gaza, donors must not abandon the West Bank. The need to hold the Israeli authorities to their obligations as occupying power should not eclipse the need for self-criticism on the Palestinian side. Many acts of violence and retaliation, for example,

cannot be blamed on the occupation. International actors should try to engage in constructive dialogue as well by talking to, rather than isolating, the Hamas leadership in order to create a better understanding of mutual concerns and obligations that could help open the door to a resumption of the peace process.

DONOR TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

In general, donor transparency in sharing information about their funding decisions is rather limited, despite examples of good contact between donors and agencies for countries such as Norway, Sweden and Switzerland. Participation of donors in the clusters ranges from attending meetings to active involvement in consultations on programming and prioritisation. Although most donors do report their contributions to the Financial Tracking Service (FTS) in addition to publishing them on their own websites, this usually happens after the fact. Several agencies mentioned they found out about decisions on funding for their projects only later through the web.

Donors only emphasised the need for projects to include local populations in the design and implementation phases to a highly limited degree. Agencies mentioned that donor requirements for accountability to beneficiaries were quite mixed, and many donors did not specifically require any mention in project proposals of ways in which these would involve local communities in the actual implementation. In addition, because participation is often used as a tool to foster greater accountability (Winters, 2010), true downward accountability is significantly harder to realise as a result of the 'no-contact' policy enforced by many donors. As one organisation noted, "local capacity building is difficult due to [vetting] restrictions and the no-contact policy. [However], if an organisation

Checkpoint leading to
Ibrahimi Mosque, Hebron /
DARA / April 2011.



wants to work with a local partner, this partner needs to be approved by the government in Gaza.”

The majority of agencies interviewed pointed to the need for donor governments to maintain diplomatic pressure on all parties to find a resolution to the crisis as the most critical issue related to accountability. As one agency put it, “donors need political courage to move from the current band-aid [approach] to state-building- recognising the rootcause being occupation.”

DONORS NEED TO DEPLOY ALL OF THEIR MEANS

A number of factors –particularly restrictions on movement of people and goods for both Palestinians and humanitarian organisations as well as the no-contact policy enforced by many donors–make the oPt a difficult operating environment. This is particularly true when it comes to being accountable to beneficiaries, allowing them to participate in projects and finding sustainable solutions to address long-term needs. While donors have made progress in several aspects, they must continue to deploy all of their means by insisting that all parties work together to create an environment conducive to unconditional peace and stability. It is in their own interest to allow their many years of support to have an impact and bring a positive end to this long-lasting crisis.



INFORMATION BASED ON FIELD INTERVIEWS WITH KEY HUMANITARIAN AGENCIES IN THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES (JERUSALEM AND RAMALLAH) FROM 28 MARCH TO 2 APRIL 2011, AND 168 QUESTIONNAIRES ON DONOR PERFORMANCE (INCLUDING 120 OECD/DAC DONORS).

THE HRI TEAM WAS COMPOSED OF MIGUEL GONZÁLEZ, FIONA GUY, LISA HILLEKE AND MAGDA NINABER VAN EYBEN (TEAM LEADER). THEY EXPRESS THEIR GRATITUDE TO ALL THOSE INTERVIEWED IN THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES.

NOTES

¹ Despite the announcement of easing Gaza access, Israel closed the Karni border crossing and promised additional facilities at the Kerem Shalom crossing close to the Egyptian border, which are still under construction. According to field interviews, the cost of transport, storage, handling, additional security checks and arduous “back-to-back” procedures has risen from US\$25/mt to US\$66/mt.

² Including SPHERE, the European Commission Humanitarian Aid department’s (ECHO) Global Needs Assessment and the Humanitarian Accountability Partnership’s Standard in Humanitarian Accountability and Quality Management.

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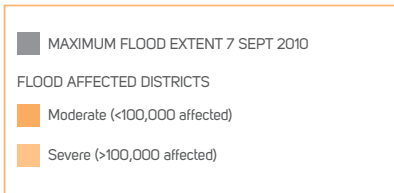
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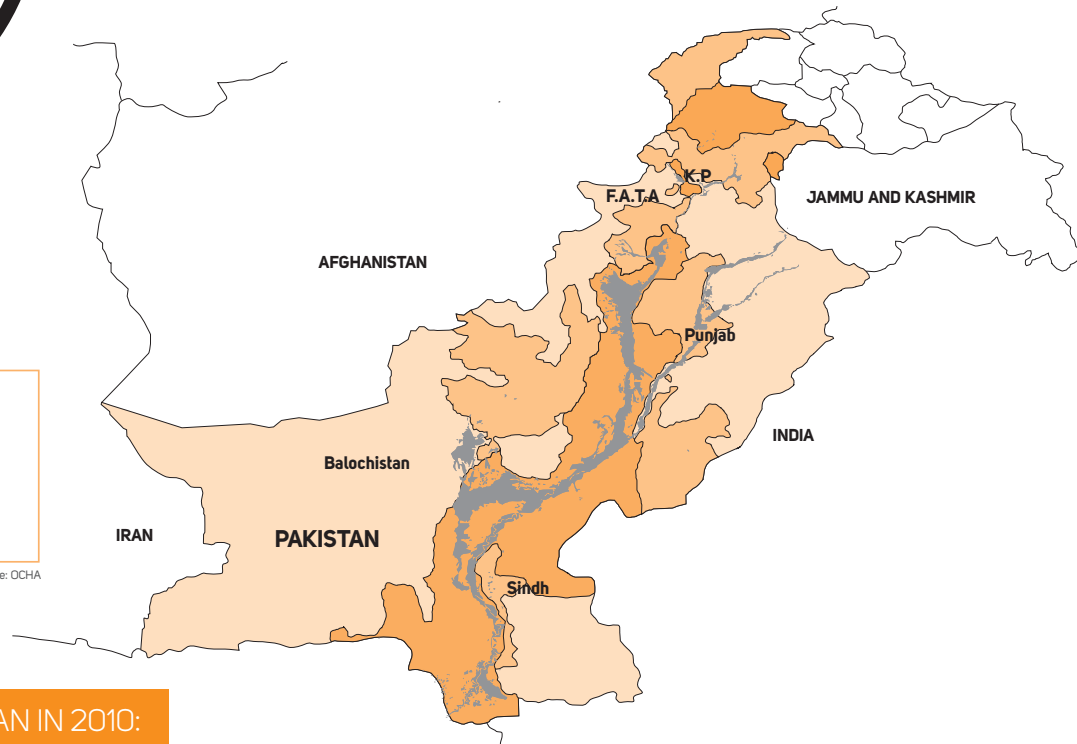
DARA / April 2011.

CRISIS AT A GLANCE

PAKISTAN



Source: OCHA



TOTAL FUNDING TO PAKISTAN IN 2010:

US\$ **3.1** BILLION

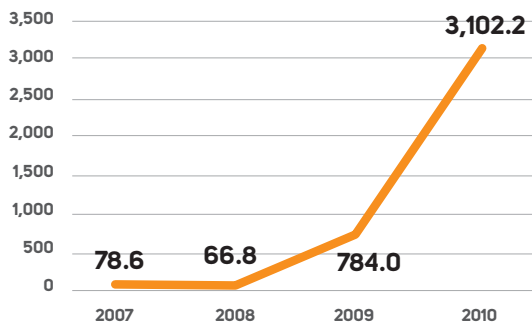
55% INSIDE THE CAP

THE CRISIS AND THE RESPONSE

- A fifth of Pakistan was flooded in July-September 2010 when unprecedented monsoon downpours created a slow-impact complex emergency as rivers broke their banks the length of the nation. Large areas of Sindh remained under water for months.
- Coming atop the ongoing caseload of those displaced as a result of campaigns against Islamic militants, Pakistan was faced with the largest internal displacement crisis the world has experienced this century.

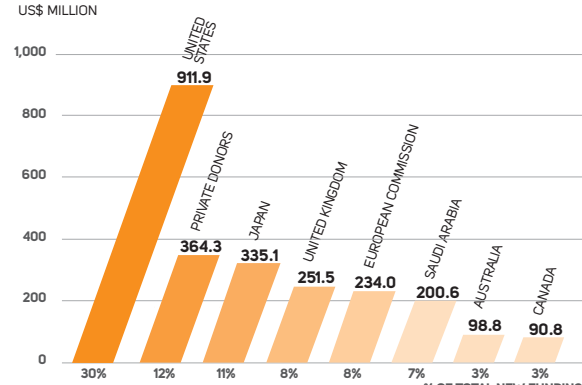
- Some 20 million people – around one in eight Pakistanis – were affected by the floods, many losing houses and livelihoods and suffering from diarrhoeal and skin diseases due to lack of clean water and sanitation.
- The United Nations (UN) appeal was the largest in its history \$1.88 billion.
- The unprecedented humanitarian response prevented a major food crisis and epidemic outbreak.
- Pakistani government and military actors again played a lead response role but were unable to deliver on pledges to provide recovery assistance.
- A principled approach and independent needs-based response was often missing due to interference from politicians, landlords or tribal leaders.
- There was insufficient commitment to the aid effectiveness agenda, particularly around accountability.

TOTAL HUMANITARIAN FUNDING TO PAKISTAN US\$ MILLION



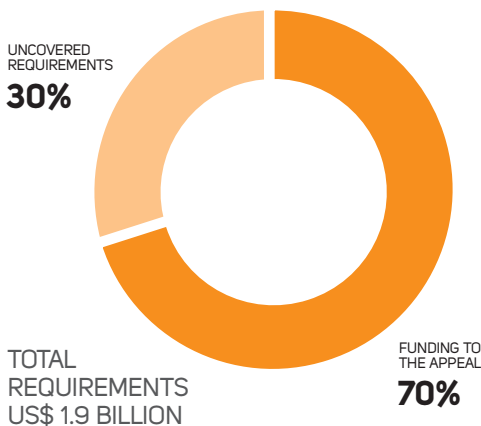
Total funding committed and/or contributed inside and outside the appeal

MAIN HUMANITARIAN DONORS IN 2010 US\$ MILLION



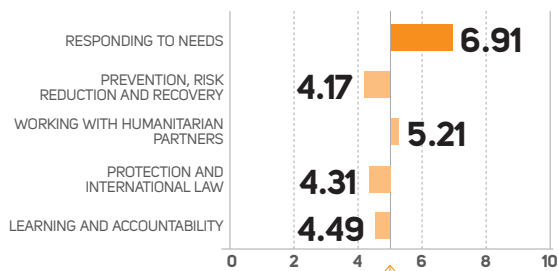
Total funding inside and outside the appeal. Total new funding excludes carry-over.

2010-11 PAKISTAN FLOODS APPEAL COVERAGE



Source: UN OCHA FTS, accessed in December 2011

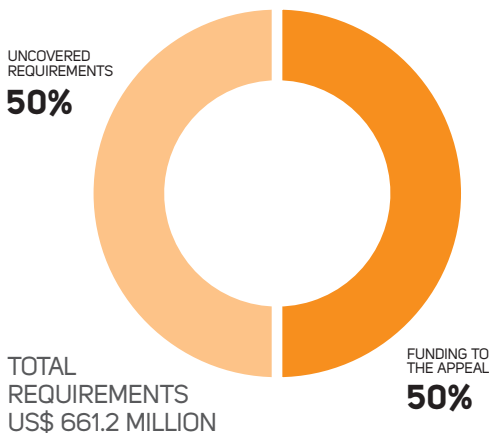
HRI DONOR PERFORMANCE BY PILLAR FIELD PERCEPTION SCORES



Source: DARA

Colours represent OECD/DAC donors' performance compared to overall average pillar score:
 ● Good (Dark Orange) ● Mid-range (Light Orange) ● Could improve (Very Light Orange)

2010 PAKISTAN IDPs APPEAL COVERAGE



DONOR PERFORMANCE AND AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- By December 2011 the UN flood appeal was 70 percent funded, including from a range of new donors.
- Donors could do more to collectively reaffirm the universality of humanitarian principles and the need for greater accountability and coordination.
- Donors should urge the UN to work closely with in-country climate change experts to map at-risk areas and devise preparedness scenarios.
- Donors should provide more funding to national non-governmental organisations (NGOs)

LESSONS FROM THE FLOODS

THE CRISIS

Pakistan is highly vulnerable to earthquakes, avalanches, floods and political conflict. This century it has faced recurrent emergencies characterised by extensive displacement. A major earthquake in 2005 which affected 3.5 million people was followed by military operations against Islamic militants which caused the world's largest displacement in over a decade – some 4.2 million people were affected, and it is thought 1.5 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) are yet to return.

A fifth of the country was inundated after large areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), Sindh, Punjab and Balochistan provinces were deluged with severe monsoon downpours from late July 2010. Areas of KPK received ten times the average annual rainfall in the space of a week. Within hours, flash floods started sweeping away villages and roads, leaving local and national government agencies apparently at a loss what to do. For the next four weeks the ensuing floods progressed the length of the Indus river system before reaching the Arabian Sea, 2,000 kilometers downstream. At the height of the inundation, 20 percent of the country was under water. The slow-moving body of water was equal in dimension to the land mass of the United Kingdom. Pakistan's National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) ranked the floods as the worst natural disaster in the country's history.

Fewer than two thousand people were killed but some 1.74 million houses (particularly those built of mud) were damaged or destroyed. The floods affected 84 of Pakistan's 121 districts and more than 20 million people – approximately an eighth of Pakistan's population. While the death toll was relatively low compared to the other massive natural disaster of 2010 – the Haiti earthquake –

the affected area was vastly greater and 13 times as many were displaced. Around 14 million people were in need of immediate humanitarian aid. The number of seriously affected individuals exceeded

■ AFTER THE FLOODS AROUND 14 MILLION PEOPLE WERE IN NEED OF IMMEDIATE HUMANITARIAN AID

the combined total of individuals affected by the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, the 2005 Kashmir earthquake and the Haiti

earthquake. People already affected by chronic poverty and dependent on feudal landlords were further marginalised as a result of the flood.

The protracted presence of standing water rendered swathes of prime agricultural land uncultivable, led to loss of livelihoods and caused large-scale water-borne and skin diseases. The World Bank and Asian Development Bank assessed the disaster cost at \$9.7 billion (5.8% of GDP), including the loss of livestock, fodder, crops and food stores, damage to housing and infrastructure and the impact on education, water and sanitation services. Damage to the world's largest contiguous irrigation network – already inadequately maintained prior to the floods – is massive.

THE RESPONSE

Once again, Pakistanis rallied in support of those affected by disaster on a crippling scale. The local culture of hospitality and charitable impulse meant that millions were housed with relatives for months, significantly reducing the burden on the thousands of camps established with donor funds.

Considerable support was received from Pakistani philanthropists, charitable organisations, the general public and the Pakistani diaspora.

The new crisis came as the federal government was already fighting an insurgency and being criticised for not responding sufficiently to the related internal displacement. At both federal and provincial levels, and within senior military ranks, many state officials had experience working with the international community, either during previous Pakistani crises or international

peacekeeping operations. It was thus unsurprising that the government of Pakistan immediately called for United Nations (UN) help.

The international response was

relatively quick. On August 11 the UN launched an Initial Floods and Emergency Response Plan (PIFERP) requesting \$459 million. In September a revised plan in excess of \$2 billion was launched, finally endorsed by the Pakistani government in November 2010. The revised PIFERP was the UN's largest ever appeal.

The floods captured world attention as 79 donors contributed to the humanitarian response through in-kind and in-cash contributions. As of December 2011, the PIFERP was 70 percent funded. More than \$600 million is still needed to support early recovery activities and achieve the objectives set out in the plan.

The US has been the largest PIFERP donor (providing \$434 million or 31.5% of the total donated), followed by Japan, the UK, private individuals and organisations, the European Commission, Australia, Canada and the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF). The role of CERF was vital in facilitating the early response: the \$40 million mobilised represents the CERF's largest funding allocation to a disaster. PIFERP donations

have been the largest ever humanitarian response for such key donors as the United Kingdom (UK) Department for International Development (DFID), the European Commission and the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (ODFDA).

Some three quarters of funds allocated for the floods have come from countries involved in the war in Afghanistan, a reminder "there is a high level of dependency among international humanitarian actors on institutional donors directly or indirectly involved in conflict an a regional stabilisation strategy" (Péchéayre 2011).

A separate UN appeal through the CAP, the Pakistan Humanitarian Response Plan (PHRP), revised in July 2010, sought funding for the support of 2.6 million conflict-affected IDPs in north-west Pakistan. It was overshadowed by the PIFERP. As of December 2011 the PHRP was 50% funded.

Despite the volume of funding for the flood appeal it should be noted that it was relatively lower than other recent emergencies with only \$3.2 for every affected person within the first ten days after the appeal, compared to \$495 for the 2010 Haiti earthquake and \$70 for the 2005 Pakistan Kashmir earthquake (Oxfam 2011).

Pakistan now has several years of experience issuing cash cards to those in need. In response to the floods of 2010 it introduced a debit card (the Watan Card) to each household directly affected by the floods. Over a million cards were issued within three months and by the end of January some 1.48 million. The Inter-Agency Real Time Evaluation (IA-RTE) found that injection of cash had been "instrumental in reactivating local markets" but also that many registered recipients had not received a promised second instalment. In Punjab and Sindh, many affected people have not received the cards, especially women in female-headed households and other vulnerable groups (Polastro et al. 2011).

As with the 2008-2009 displacement crisis, UN advice was ignored as a populist decision was made to load each card with a substantial sum. Despite its promise, the programme was marred with administrative difficulties and corruption. The

■ THE FLOODS AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN WAS THE UN'S LARGEST EVER APPEAL

Human Rights Commission of Pakistan reports beneficiaries being forced to sleep in front of banks and that those who are illiterate or who had had no previous exposure to ATMS may have to pay 'helpers' to operate the Watan card, some of whom

steal the cards.

■ THREE QUARTERS OF FUNDS ALLOCATED FOR THE FLOODS HAVE COME FROM COUNTRIES INVOLVED IN THE WAR IN AFGHANISTAN

The NDMA was the lead federal actor. It has no legislated authority to control the activities of any other agency such as a Provincial or District Disaster Management Authority (PDMA/DDMA) yet public perception deemed it to be responsible for everything from

planning to implementation. Given the size of their tasks the NDMA and PDMA were under-resourced. Some UN agencies opted to coordinate through line departments and not through the NDMA, which developed its own early recovery strategies but detached from cluster efforts. The creation of decentralised hubs was welcomed for bringing cluster coordination closer to field level but also meant that provincial government coordination was detached from the international response with PDMA insufficiently informed about what international actors were doing.

The 2010 flood crisis is continuing for many vulnerable families, particularly the landless. A UK parliamentary committee has argued that the UN response to the flooding was "patchy". In November 2011, the Pakistani Red Crescent report that 288,031 people still remain in more than 900 camps in Sindh. UNICEF report that 341,000 people – the majority women, children, the elderly and those with disabilities – are still residing in temporary settlements and that water-related and vector-borne diseases are still on the rise 15 months after the floods began.

With so many homes partially or totally destroyed by the 2010 floods it has not been possible for any agency to meet Sphere Standards on per capita provision of water and latrines. The NDMA targets to provide affected households with a one-room shelter could not be delivered due to funding shortages. The IA-RTE noted that alternative solutions have been implemented – including rebuilding on river banks – without sufficient consideration of future risk. Land rights represent a key constraint for livelihood restoration and permanent residence. Many of those returning home find themselves without land to plant or to build a house. Some landlords have benefitted from a disaster which has removed tenants and squatters more efficaciously than by going to court.



A man in Balochistan digs through the rubble in search of personal belongings to salvage / UNHCR 2010.

A boy makes his way through thick mud and debris carrying belongings he managed to salvage from his family's home, Pir Pai / UNHCR 2010.



TIMELINESS AND CONSTRAINTS

Agencies were able to start the response almost immediately in KPK due to their on-going presence related to the IDP crisis. However, there were delays of up to four weeks in responding to needs elsewhere due to the lack of capacity and pre-occupation with the KPK conflict (Murtaza 2011). The UN was slow to establish new humanitarian hubs in Sindh and Punjab.

As millions of people were stranded on isolated strips of land, access was central to the response. The humanitarian response was especially slow in Sindh, Punjab and Balochistan due to extreme logistical constraints and the fact that few humanitarian organisations had any presence prior to the floods. In mid-August, the government issued a waiver of its strict regulation of humanitarian actors for certain parts of KPK to facilitate access and speed up international efforts. However, the most sensitive districts of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) – the collective name for 13

administrative entities most of which abut the Pakistan-Afghanistan border - and much of KPK remained practically no-go areas for international actors due to national security reasons. The government did not allow the UN Humanitarian Air Services (UNHAS) to deploy helicopters in KPK/FATA, where the use of Pakistani aircraft by humanitarians was problematic in terms of the perceptions of the local population (Péchéayré 2011).

In Punjab and Sindh humanitarian actors used Pakistani military assets at the onset of the emergency invoking the last resort principle of the Oslo guidelines on the use of military assets in disaster relief. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and Médecins sans Frontières (MSF) were strongly opposed to the use of military assets in delivering assistance or any kind of labelling associating them with donors of the UN. They took this to the point of refusing to be mentioned in UN public reporting such as 3W (who, what, where) listing of humanitarian actors so as to control their public image.

COORDINATION

At the beginning of the response, coordination was poor and there were cases of overlapping food distributions. As with the extraordinarily intense national response to the 2005 earthquake, some duplication was inevitable. Affected people received assistance not only from international agencies and federal, provincial and district government agencies, but also from a plethora of local NGOs and uncoordinated private citizen initiatives. At the inception of the emergency, self-appointed committees provided beneficiary lists (Murtaza 2011). The flood response showed, yet again, that links between national and provincial disaster management are generally weak (Polastro et al. 2011).

Coordination remains the Achilles heel of the UN reform process. Many of the observations about the cluster system made by previous Humanitarian Response Index (HRI) missions and IA-RTEs remain

Afghan refugees salvage their belongings from the mud. / UNHCR 2010.



valid. The cluster system has been misused to allocate funds, rather than coordinated, and meetings have been time consuming and often unproductive. Some of the same problems with the cluster approach were identified when it was rolled out in Pakistan's response to the 2005 floods and then when the 2008-2009 conflict recurred (Cosgrave et al. 2010). The IA-RTE of the flood responses concluded that "clusters were operating independently from contextual realities and to a large extent, also to the phases of the operation" (Polastro et al. 2011).

The mission heard of the lack of continuity, how "the UN cluster leaders usually stay only for a maximum of two to three weeks in the country". Many cluster leaders allegedly did not have the appropriate qualifications and experience, one informant telling the mission that "no cluster leader should start to work without having had a preceding one week training". Many meetings were also cumbersome due to the large number of organisations represented. Rather than coordinating, said one informant, "the cluster meetings serve just as information centers". Some cluster leaders were said to have prioritised their own organisations.

A real-time evaluation conducted for the UK Disasters Emergency Committee noted that pricing was never discussed in clusters, a

missed opportunity to promote transparency and competition to improve value for money in early relief interventions (Murtaza 2011). For its part, the federal government has argued that the cluster system needs to be reorganised in order to "achieve greater congruity with relevant tiers of government" (NDMA 2011).

Coordination within the UN family was complicated – as it has been during previous emergencies in Pakistan – by the separate roles played by the UN Special Envoy for Assistance in Pakistan, the Resident Coordinator and the Humanitarian Coordinator. An analyst has noted "the ambiguity the UN apparatus is embedded in... On the one hand, UN agencies belong to the One UN and are therefore expected to support Pakistani institutions. On the other, the UN humanitarian reform gave Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the humanitarian country team (HCT) the responsibility to coordinate the response and in doing so, to uphold principles of neutrality and impartiality. UN officials interviewed have described this as a 'clash between the two reforms'" (Péchéayre 2011).

The mission noted the extent to which donors insisted that their implementing partners coordinate among themselves and with the UN. However, there is also scepticism of donors' increased emphasis on the creation of alliances

and consortia, and a perception that consortia can be time consuming and short-lived.

A Pakistani government assessment noted coordination challenges between centre-province, government-UN and inter-agency, reporting that “a lack of effective coordination was also identified by some stakeholders in relation to the UN’s internal strategic decision-making processes, because of differences amongst the top-tier UN leadership in the country” (NDMA 2011).

The fact that Pakistan was almost entirely dependent on outside help to sustain the massive humanitarian response “created”, suggests a Pakistani academic, “an interesting love-hate working relationship between the two parties” (Malik 2010). Some key response decisions were made in ways which were not conducive to working relations. The PDMA reported the UN “overstepped their mandate” as the Humanitarian Coordinator and OCHA advised North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) not to establish an air bridge after the government had invited it (as NATO and other military forces had after the 2005 earthquake) to assist in the transport of relief goods (NDMA 2011). OCHA insisted on having a dozen clusters when the Pakistani government wanted seven (in accordance with NDMA criteria). The separate UN appeal for conflict-displaced persons was launched initially against the will of the government. In Punjab the UN opened a humanitarian hub in Multan, rather than in the provincial capital, Lahore, thus creating a parallel structure and reducing government engagement. The federal government did not routinely allow access to conflict areas also suffering from flooding. The transition between emergency relief to recovery was substantially impacted by the Pakistani government’s insistence that all recovery programmes come under its purview.

PREVENTION, RISK REDUCTION AND DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

The 2010 floods were probably related to the La Niña phenomenon and can thus be expected to recur. Pakistan’s vulnerability was again apparent as the 2011 monsoon brought well above-average rainfall, resulting in the deaths of some 250 people,

■ DONORS RECOGNISE THE RELEVANCE OF PREVENTION, RISK REDUCTION AND PREPAREDNESS BUT DO NOT ACCORD THEM MUCH PRIORITY

further massive displacement and another UN appeal. In a November 2011 statement, four major INGOs warned that nine million people were at risk of disease and malnutrition. The UN Food and Agriculture Organisation lacks resources to support the hundreds of

thousands of farming households who lost assets during the disastrous back-to-back floods.

In principle, donors recognise the relevance of prevention, risk reduction and preparedness but in reality do not seem to accord them much priority. Disaster risk reduction (DRR) has been discussed by Pakistani authorities and the UN for several years but there is a gap between theory and practice. The World Bank has warned that some responses have relied too heavily on rebuilding infrastructure and not enough on better adaptation and preparedness in complementary investments, such as water and flood management, cropping pattern adjustment, rural finance, enhancing capacities of water users groups and early warning systems (World Bank 2010). The HRI mission, like the IA-RTE team, noted the broad awareness of the need to ensure that communities are better prepared and that DRR activities are supported. The need to invest seriously in DRR has been highlighted by the government, donors, UN and INGOs. Emergency responses to disasters

will continue to be reactive unless there is greater donor commitment, a mapping of stakeholders and pre-defined emergency response mechanisms and stand-by agreements.

HUMANITARIAN SPACE

Humanitarian space was often compromised. There were cases where aid mainly reached people that were locally well positioned and/or aligned to political parties. Security arguments were used by government authorities to prevent access for a number of experienced humanitarian actors. In areas such as Balochistan and KPK, where the government or regional actors are party to conflict, military assets should not have been used.

PARTNERING WITH GOVERNMENTS

The 2010 floods again remind us that whatever the size of a natural disaster, diplomatic skills are essential when there is a strong government and a powerful and engaged military insistent on maintaining sovereignty. A certain degree of pragmatism in dealing both with civilian and military authorities is unavoidable. In Pakistan everything is politicised and in the end, decisions made with a view of short-term electoral popularity and appeasement of key interest groups will prevail over principles of humanitarianism and international humanitarian law. It is thus imperative for humanitarian agencies to invest time interacting with all the various field actors they come across.

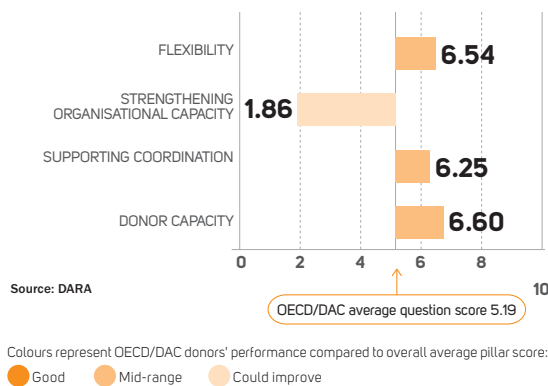
WHAT COULD DONORS DO?

It is important for donors to collectively reaffirm the universality of humanitarian principles and to be more active in promoting coordination. This may be the best recipe for efficiently and securely reaching beneficiaries. Many of the key recommendations in previous HRI assessments of responses to disasters in Pakistan remain unheeded. The flood response IA-RTE suggested that in Pakistan, humanitarian actors continue to suffer from “chronic amnesia” by not taking stock of lessons learned from prior evaluations.

- Donors need to understand how existing vulnerabilities – particularly related to land rights and gender discrimination – contribute to the impact of disasters.
- Donors should more generously support disaster preparedness and early recovery programmes.
- Donors need to consider ways to allow Pakistani NGOs to access funds and play a bigger role in crisis response; strengthening their capacity (together with that of provincial and district state agencies) is vital if future responses are to be more demand-driven and accountability measures generally strengthened.

DONOR PERFORMANCE ON WORKING WITH HUMANITARIAN PARTNERS

FIELD PERCEPTION SCORES



INFORMATION BASED ON 22 FIELD INTERVIEWS WITH KEY HUMANITARIAN ACTORS IN PAKISTAN FROM 2 TO 6 MAY 2011, AND 121 QUESTIONNAIRES ON DONOR PERFORMANCE (INCLUDING 96 QUESTIONNAIRES OF OECD/DAC DONORS). THE HRI TEAM WAS COMPOSED OF WOLFDIETER EBERWEIN (TEAM LEADER), FERNANDO ESPADA AND AATIKA NAGRAH. THEY EXPRESS THEIR GRATITUDE TO ALL THOSE INTERVIEWED IN ISLAMABAD.




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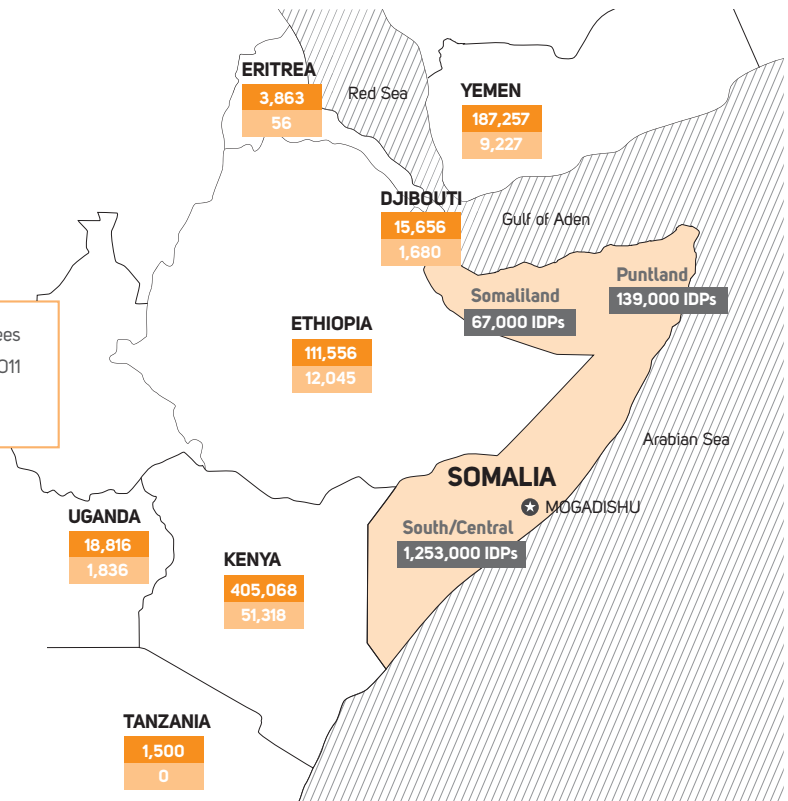
CRISIS AT A GLANCE

SOMALIA

TOTAL
1.46 million IDPs
743,716 refugees

 Total Number of Somali Refugees
 Refugee Influx as of January 2011
 IDPs

Source: UNHCR



TOTAL FUNDING TO SOMALIA IN 2010:

US\$ **489.8** MILLION

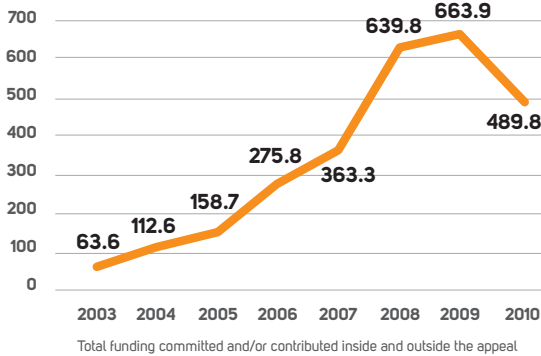
81% INSIDE THE CAP

THE CRISIS AND THE RESPONSE

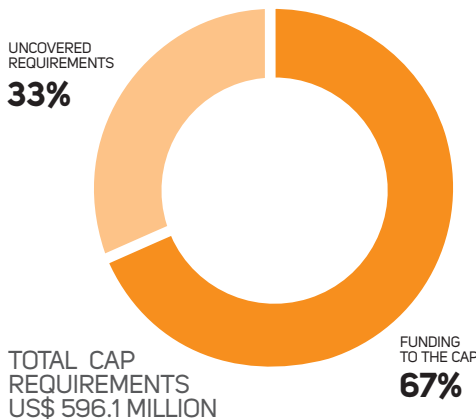
- Somalia has had one of the longest humanitarian crises in the world, with over two decades of conflict and insecurity. It is a highly politicised, complex crisis that brings together extreme vulnerability, a weak and fragile state, complex internal and regional power struggles and the dynamics of the War on Terror.
- There are nearly 1.5 million Somali IDPs (Internally Displaced Persons) and almost 800,000 refugees, mainly in camps in Kenya and Ethiopia.
- At the time of the HRI mission in February, many parts of the country were suffering from a long-term drought, with over 2 million people requiring assistance.

- By June, despite months of warning signs, the situation deteriorated into a full-scale famine, with an estimated 4 million Somalis in need of urgent assistance.
- The radical Islamist group Al-Shabaab has killed, threatened and expelled many humanitarian workers, denying vulnerable populations access to assistance in areas they control.
- Conflict and insecurity in many parts of the country force humanitarian agencies to manage operations remotely from Nairobi, making it difficult to accurately assess needs and monitor and follow-up on actions.
- The UN appealed in June for a record US\$1.5 billion to support famine relief efforts, of which 81% has been covered to date. Since then, good rains in October have eased the situation slightly, but needs persist, and a long-term commitment by donors to build resilience, prevent future famines and resolve the political instability in the country is urgently required.

TOTAL HUMANITARIAN FUNDING TO SOMALIA US\$ MILLION

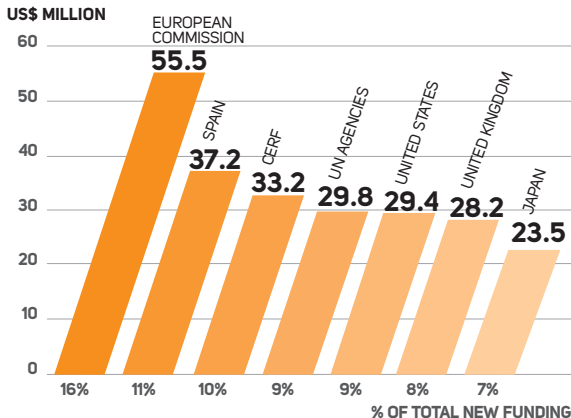


2010 SOMALIA CAP COVERAGE



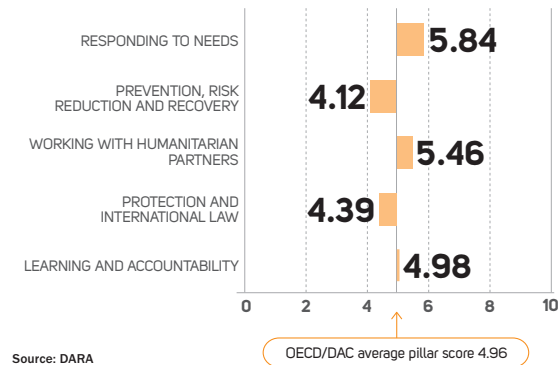
Source: UN OCHA FTS, accessed in December 2011

MAIN HUMANITARIAN DONORS IN 2010



Total funding inside and outside the appeal. Total new funding excludes carry-over.

HRI DONOR PERFORMANCE BY PILLAR FIELD PERCEPTION SCORES



Source: DARA

Colours represent OECD/DAC donors' performance compared to overall average pillar score:
 ● Good (Dark Orange) ● Mid-range (Light Orange) ● Could improve (Very Light Orange)

DONOR PERFORMANCE AND AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Prior to the declaration of a famine, only 67% of the appeal had been covered. In 2010, the US made major cuts in funding to Somalia, only partially compensated by increases by Spain and other donors.
- Despite the magnitude of the crisis, few donors had dedicated humanitarian advisors in the region, and most decisions were perceived to be unduly influenced by domestic political issues and concerns, not driven by humanitarian needs.
- Anti-terrorism legislation from several donor governments was seen by many as undermining the principle of providing aid without discrimination and based on needs alone. This led to a general climate where other donors were reluctant to take risks.
- The situation is also complicated by several donor governments' unconditional support for the Transitional Federal Government (TFG), a party to the conflict and perceived by many as weak and corrupt.
- Donors were also criticised for not responding early enough to the warning signs of the famine, and for not providing longer-term funding and support for activities that focus on building resilience, prevention and preparedness.

A PREDICTABLE CRISIS

On July 20th 2011, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon declared that parts of Somalia and neighbouring countries in the Horn of Africa were officially in a state of famine, with over half of the population, some 4 million people, facing starvation unless the international community could mobilise over US\$1.5 billion in aid (OCHA 2011a). The response to the famine revealed once again the chronic inability of the humanitarian sector to adequately prepare for, prevent and mitigate what was essentially a completely predictable disaster.

So why did it take so long for the world to react? The constraints and challenges expressed by humanitarian actors at the field level in the months leading up to the famine can help shed light on some of the factors behind the slow and inadequate reaction. In the context of Somalia, politicisation of the crisis, severe constraints on access and protection, and structural limitations of a system geared towards emergency relief, not prevention, all conspired against taking more proactive steps to address the famine early on. What's more, the famine and the subsequent response has overshadowed and perhaps even reversed many of the small but positive steps made over the past two years by humanitarian actors to improve the quality and effectiveness of humanitarian action in one of the world's most complicated and long-standing crises.

THE CRISIS

As previous reports and a recent IASC evaluation highlight, Somalia is a highly politicised, complex crisis that brings together extreme vulnerability, a weak and fragile state, complex internal and regional power struggles and the dynamics of the War on Terror (Hansch 2009, Polastro, et al 2011). The competing interests of many of the different

actors—Al-Shabaab, Somalia's Transitional Federal Government (TFG), governments in neighbouring Kenya and Ethiopia and donor governments—has too often meant that political objectives take precedence over meeting humanitarian needs. In this context, the warning signs of the impending famine may have been disregarded in favour of meeting other priorities.

In addition to instability and conflict, Somalia had been facing the effects of a long-term drought in the region for several years. At the time of the HRI mission in February, for months, all indicators

pointed towards a dramatic worsening of the situation. The United States Agency for International Development's (USAID) Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET) and the UN Food

■ THE WARNING SIGNS OF THE IMPENDING FAMINE MAY HAVE BEEN DISREGARDED IN FAVOUR OF MEETING OTHER PRIORITIES

and Agriculture Organisation's (FAO) Somalia Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit (FSNAU)—tools designed precisely to avoid the reoccurrence of famines of the past—were generating warnings that the situation was critical. According to the FSNAU, over 2.4 million Somalis were in need of humanitarian assistance at the time, with one in four children in Southern Somalia acutely malnourished (OCHA 2011a).

During the mission, on a daily basis, the number of Somalis fleeing to camps in Mogadishu or in neighbouring Kenya and Ethiopia were increasing dramatically, an indicator of the growing scale of the crisis. In a two-month period, the number of drought-

related displaced persons increased by 20,000 (OCHA 2011a). All of the representatives of the United Nations (UN), other aid agencies and donor governments interviewed during the HRI field mission unanimously agreed that a major catastrophe was in the making. Following a visit in early February, the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) called for urgent action, but to little effect. Clearly, it was not a lack of information that impeded the international community to take early action.

Prior to the famine, there was steady progress towards improving and scaling up the quality and effectiveness of the response to existing needs, showing that despite the difficulties, humanitarian actors were finding ways around the particular challenges posed by Somalia. However, many of these efforts were undermined by the lack of respect and understanding of the critical need to maintain the neutrality, impartiality and independence of aid in Somalia.

Continued problems of protection, access and security were major factors that hampered the ability of aid organisations to reach people in need of aid. Al-Shabaab, a militant Islamist group linked to Al-Qaeda, has the main share of the blame for creating and accentuating the scale of the crisis. Access by humanitarian organisations to many Al-Shabaab controlled areas of South and Central Somalia is extremely limited, with many agencies expelled, humanitarian workers killed or threatened, and others facing unacceptable conditions on access, including payment of obligatory “taxes” on humanitarian goods. Even worse, Al-Shabaab has targeted civilians in the conflict, and restricted movement of populations desperately seeking relief from the drought, effectively holding them hostage to the crisis.

The situation is only somewhat better in Mogadishu and areas nominally controlled by the TFG and African Union peacekeeping forces, ANISOM. Despite significant Western backing, the TFG has failed to deliver on the promise of providing stability and security for the civilian population, has faced widespread charges of corruption and nepotism,

and according to many, made minimal efforts at facilitating aid organisations' access to people in need. Likewise, the ANISOM peace-keeping mission in Somalia has not done enough to provide much needed protection and security for civilians.

In contrast, the security situation is relatively stable in Puntland and Somaliland, allowing many humanitarian organisations opportunities to expand relief programmes to include more emphasis on agricultural and livelihood activities and to work with local organisations and authorities to integrate capacity building in their programming. In this context, most agencies continued to rely on remote control management arrangements, with operations directed from Nairobi but delivered through local Somali organisations.

THE RESPONSE

Despite these operational challenges, at the time of the HRI mission, humanitarian actors were working in a more coordinated and rigorous manner to assess and prioritise needs. In fact, the decrease in funding requested in the 2009 Consolidated Appeal (CAP), from over US\$850 million to just under US\$600 million in 2010, is partially explained by more accurate and reliable information about the extent of needs. Nevertheless, funding was still only 67% of the stated needs, and substantial cuts in the US' level of aid to Somalia, mainly due to concerns about aid diversion to Al-Shabaab, was only partially compensated by a large carry-over from 2009 and a major increase in funding from Spain and other donors (OCHA 2010a).

With over US\$61 million mobilised, the Common Humanitarian Fund (CHF) and Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) pooled funds became important sources of funding to agencies, and were used to help scale up activities in the areas of water, sanitation, nutrition and health, and to a lesser extent, agriculture and livelihoods programmes (OCHA 2010b). The CHF was well-supported by donors, and generally worked well in offering a rapid, locally managed response

A woman heads back to her makeshift shelter after collecting her UNHCR aid package./ UNHCR 2010.

to covering gaps in needs, according to most interviewees. There were, however, complaints from some non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that the funds were too focused on emergency relief, rather than prevention, transition and recovery activities. Some organisations interviewed felt donors were using the pooled funds as a way to circumvent the complicated aid politics of Somalia and transfer risks to the UN: “Pooled funding is now becoming an easier option for donors to shed their responsibilities to engage with more demanding partners like international NGOs, or confront the issues” according to one respondent. “Donors are risk adverse, and are therefore using pooled funds, but it doesn’t necessarily mean better accountability,” said another.

Many NGOs and some UN agencies seemed to be making progress in engaging local Somali actors in the design, management and implementation of programmes, especially in Puntland and Somaliland.

■ HUMANITARIAN ACTORS WORK IN A MORE COORDINATED AND RIGOROUS MANNER TO ASSESS AND PRIORITISE NEEDS

As an example, many OCHA reports and other documentation on the response are available in Somali, a sign of increasing transparency and engagement with local actors (OCHA 2011). Given international actors’ near absolute dependency on Somali organisations to deliver

aid, this was seen as an important step towards improving the response.

At the time, there was a slow but deliberate shift by the UN in the security paradigm, which previously focused on determining “when do we leave” to a more nuanced stance on “how can we stay”. More heads of UN agencies and international NGOs were making field monitoring visits, which in turn produced better information about needs, and at the same time sent a positive message to other actors, including Somalis, about the UN’s



engagement with the crisis and attempt to move away from the remote control management model.

This was combined with a growing recognition that Al-Shabaab was not a monolithic organisation, but was often fragmented, allowing for some tentative, cautious steps towards engagement with local chiefs to negotiate access based on humanitarian principles. At the same time, many actors interviewed expressed serious reservations about the TFG’s legitimacy and its ability to engage positively with the international community on humanitarian issues, and were looking at alternative means to engage with local authorities on programming issues.

DONOR PERFORMANCE

Despite these positive efforts, nearly every organisation interviewed stressed that donor politics were compromising the ability of humanitarian agencies to respond to the crisis. Many respondents felt donors mixed security and political agendas were compromising a needs-based approach. Respondents distinguished

between donor regional representatives, who were generally viewed positively, versus representatives at the capital level. “In the case of Somalia, it is a case of different levels of awfulness from donors,” exclaimed one respondent. “The dual or triple track approach, where donors are trying to support the TFG, combat terrorism, achieve stability and meet needs, is not working at all.” Another respondent stated that “donors are not very principled. They have focused excessively on Al-Shabaab and they are not driven by responding to needs.”

Donor capacity was a concern for many respondents. Despite the magnitude of the crisis, few donors had dedicated humanitarian advisors. Most donor government representatives, such as Sweden, also covered development portfolios, and many had additional responsibilities for covering several countries in the region. The UK had a regional humanitarian advisor but the post was vacant for a year, leading to delays in programme decisions, according to some respondents. Italy had a project office to specifically support humanitarian action, but the office was shutdown a few months following the HRI mission. Spain, one the largest donors to Somalia in 2010, had no dedicated humanitarian resources in the field. Nevertheless, an informal humanitarian donor support group provided an important forum to discuss issues and share information, and regular briefings were held between donors and the Humanitarian Coordinator. Additionally, donors were also engaged in the CHF in an advisory role and with other coordination mechanisms.

For many respondents, the real issue was that critical decisions were too often taken at the capital level without an understanding of the complexities of Somalia. There was a strong sense of frustration that government donors’ domestic political priorities were getting in the way of humanitarian issues, leading to “mixed signals and little clarity.” One respondent summed up the widespread sentiment: “Donors pay lip service to humanitarian principles, but are beholden to the decisions of their capitals and driven by domestic political agendas.”

Despite a good dialogue at the field level, the US government’s stance was a major concern for many actors. “The US is the worst example of politicisation of aid and has a schizophrenic approach to Somalia,” stated one NGO respondent. US anti-terrorism legislation, in particular, the regulations from the US government’s Office for

Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), imposed severe restrictions on aid agencies trying to work in areas controlled by Al-Shabaab, undermining the principle that aid is provided impartially and without

■ DONOR POLITICS COMPROMISE THE ABILITY OF HUMANITARIAN AGENCIES TO RESPOND TO THE CRISIS

discrimination. While US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and USAID officials subsequently attempted to reassure aid organisations that there would be special exemptions from the OFAC regulations, there was widespread fear that aid agencies and staff could be legally liable for any aid diverted to Al-Shabaab: “You could go to jail! How is it possible to know and control every exact detail about every operation?” exclaimed one respondent.

The US position appeared to be having perverse spin-off effects with other donors. Canada was mentioned by some interviewees as a negative example of following the US’ lead: “Canada has not been neutral, and humanitarian aid funding is heavily conditioned by imposing strict no-engagement rules regarding Al-Shabaab,” remarked one respondent. Other donors were accused of being overly cautious and risk averse, in part for fear that they too might be liable for legal actions, according to some respondents. As one agency representative put it, “at least the US is very clear and explicit in its policy. The rest of donors are ambiguous with regards to Al-Shabaab; everything is fuzzy.” The restrictions, whether explicit or not, have meant humanitarian organisations have lost

precious time and energy that could have been spent to build trust and understanding from all actors and to negotiate unrestricted access to people suffering from the crisis.

The unconditional political and financial support for the TFG by many donors, was also seen as affecting the ability of humanitarian organisations to distinguish themselves as independent from their country of origin or government funders. Some organisations interviewed claimed donor governments had turned a “blind eye” to the corruption and complicity of the TFG. “All donors support the TFG, so donor neutrality is definitely questionable for all of them,” stated one respondent. Several donor field representatives interviewed recognised that supporting the TFG had backfired and not generated stability. “In retrospect, we backed the wrong horse,” said one, “but at this stage, we have very few alternatives.” Many donors interviewed had by then reached the conclusion that working through local authorities and Somali NGOs was a much more conducive approach to building stability and resilience, but this analysis did not appear to lead to a shift in tactics in donors’ capitals.

According to many interviewed, donors had an exaggerated preoccupation about the potential diversion of aid to Al-Shabaab, especially after reports of massive diversion of food aid from the World Food Programme (WFP). For some donors, their concerns reflected anti-terrorism legislation, while other donors like the UK were accused of “an almost obsessive focus on showing value for money” despite the complexities of doing this in a crisis like Somalia. Whatever the arguments from donors, the vast majority of organisations interviewed felt that this had led to delays in programme approvals, restrictive conditions, and time-consuming and costly reporting procedures. There were also serious concerns that some donors’ procedures, such as vetting of all locally-employed staff or sub-contractors and beneficiary lists, were dangerous measures that potentially

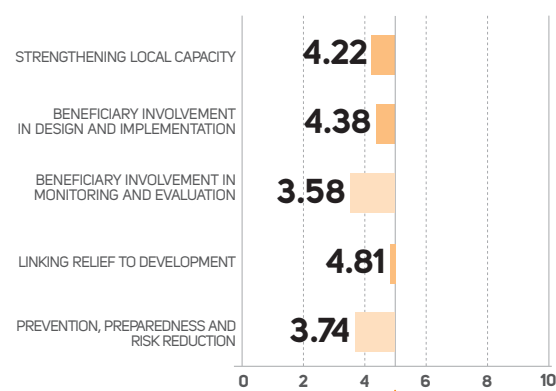
placed staff and beneficiaries at risk of reprisals.

“The burden of proof is on NGOs that we have the capacity, access, controls in place, etc.,” said one respondent, “but there is little recognition or support from donors for what this implies.” For some, this was a clear example of misplaced accountability: “Donors are very constraining and demand that all aid be accounted for. If not, NGOs have to bear the costs. The quality of work is affected, as this requires many audits and extensive staff capacity and resources in order to meet the different requirements.” Donor governments were also criticised by some for their position regarding neighbouring Kenya: “They are doing nothing to address widespread government corruption and delays in opening access to refugee camps.” Politicisation was plainly a major factor limiting the ability of humanitarian organisations to adequately meet existing needs, much less prepare for and respond to the risk of outright famine. Nevertheless,

LACK OF INVESTMENT IN PREVENTION, PREPAREDNESS AND LONGER-TERM LIVELIHOODS PROGRAMS

DONOR PERFORMANCE ON PREVENTION, RISK REDUCTION AND RECOVERY

FIELD PERCEPTION SCORES



Source: DARA

OECD/DAC average question score 5.00

Colours represent OECD/DAC donors' performance compared to overall average pillar score:
 ● Good ● Mid-range ● Could improve

A Somali family in the Al Adala settlement. The wife, Irise, said they had arrived two weeks earlier because there was nothing left back home. The drought destroyed everything. I am so weak because of lack of food that I even find it difficult telling our story to you," she said. / UNHCR / S. Modola



the famine response was also hampered by an overall lack of commitment to prevention, preparedness and risk reduction efforts. Many organisations complained about an inability of some donors to see beyond the labels of a “fragile state” and look for opportunities to build resilience and capacities of communities to cope with the drought,

famine and conflict.

Most donors were criticised for short-term funding cycles and an excessively rigid categorisation of aid into humanitarian only activities, versus other activities that had a component of resilience, capacity-building and transitional funding.

This meant, according to many interviewees, that potential support for programmes in Somaliland and Puntland,

was not provided as it was not classified as a humanitarian emergency. “After twenty years of crisis, it’s impossible to convince donors to fund longer-term programmes. There are many

opportunities for us to work with more prevention and preparedness and livelihoods activities even in South and Central Somalia, but these are not supported,” claimed one respondent.

Another respondent complained of the acrobatics required to “disguise programmes as humanitarian” in order to get funding: “We call this an ‘emergency operation in a protracted crisis’ so technically we can’t use funds for prevention or recovery in the programme. But in practice, on the ground we integrate whenever possible. We have to. If not, what’s the alternative? We might not have access later, when the drought gets worse.”

Many organisations felt donors were unwilling to recognise and support the use of Somali NGOs, private companies, etc. much less building their capacity –even though the reality is that any aid effort depends on them. “Donors don’t understand and don’t care about Somali capacity and especially fail to engage with the very capable and strong Somali diaspora,” said one respondent. “Building community resilience against famines and other stresses is also a key way to prevent conflict,” argued one respondent.

Gender was another area where donors often failed to make the connection between effectiveness of programmes and beneficiary accountability. The Gender Marker was used in Somalia as a

■ DONORS ARE CRITICISED FOR SHORT-TERM FUNDING CYCLES AND AN EXCESSIVELY RIGID CATEGORISATION OF AID INTO HUMANITARIAN ONLY ACTIVITIES

Forty-eight-year-old Marianne, her husband and their eight children fled their home village 40 kilometres away to this IDP camp in search of assistance. With a sick husband, Marianne singlehandedly supports the family by collecting and selling firewood. / UNHCR/ S. Modola



INSUFFICIENT DONOR FOLLOW-UP ON GENDER ISSUES

tool for planning and assessing CHF pooled fund allocations, and sex and age disaggregated data (SADD) collection was slowly making its way in a more consistent manner into agency and cluster reporting, for example. This shows a growing level of commitment to gender issues by organisations in the field. Sweden and Norway stood out as donors with a higher level of awareness and insistence of incorporating gender in programmes and attempting to monitor gender issues in programme implementation. To a lesser extent, the US and the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid office (ECHO) were also mentioned for expressing a commitment to see gender analysis in proposals, but not in terms of monitoring and follow-up.

However, the prevailing sentiment was that donors in general did not prioritise gender. "So-called 'mainstreaming' of gender is not enough. Donors should strongly support more specific

measures, especially against sexual and gender-based violence," said one respondent. Indeed, one donor representative interviewed admitted gender was not their main concern, despite policy declarations to the contrary. "In truth, this is not a priority; it's more of a 'tick the box' approach," arguing that the extent of the humanitarian crisis and the complicated politics of the response was more important. But donors are not the only ones to blame –representatives of several humanitarian organisations expressed similar sentiments, claiming gender was "important, but we have so many other issues and concerns, and in an emergency, this is the last thing on our minds." The announcement of the famine initially triggered a flurry of international media and donor attention. Funding has, in fact, risen dramatically –from

SITUATION TODAY

US\$492 million in 2010 to US\$820 million by December 2011, or 81% of needs– but even so, there are still gaps in important areas like protection and shelter (OCHA 2011). Good seasonal rains in October have also helped to mitigate the worst effects of the drought. The famine has also triggered new collaboration between the UN and other actors with non-traditional donors, such as Turkey and the Gulf States. Meanwhile, the US has restored much of the funding it cut to Somalia in past years, making it one of the top donors to the crisis today. It also recently relaxed some of the restrictions on aid organisations working in Al-Shabaab areas, but so far there have been few concrete assurances that this will be followed through with legal guarantees to protect humanitarians.

However, Al-Shabaab appears to have taken a harder line against international actors, announcing that an additional sixteen aid agencies have been expelled from Al-Shabaab controlled areas. Furthermore, the effects of recent military encroachments by Kenya and Ethiopia and offensives by the TFG and ANISOM remain to be seen in terms of protection of civilians. By any

measure, the crisis in Somalia is likely to drag on for some time, and millions of Somalis will be in dire need of assistance for months if not years, reinforcing the need for a long-term approaches and long-term commitment from the international community.

■ SOMALIA UNDERLINES THE NEED FOR ALL ACTORS, ESPECIALLY DONORS, TO RESPECT AND PROMOTE NEUTRAL, IMPARTIAL AND INDEPENDENT HUMANITARIAN ACTION

So, what is the way forward? Recent evaluations such as the Inter-Agency Steering Committee's review of the impact of the humanitarian response in South and Central Somalia over the past five years have highlighted important areas where the humanitarian sector can make improvements in programming, and efforts are underway to implement recommendations (Polastro et al, 2011). The evaluation report underlines the need for all actors, especially

donor governments, to respect and promote neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian action. This is critical to ensure safe access and protection to affected populations, but donors' positions regarding Al-Shabaab and the TFG have likely exacerbated the situation for humanitarian actors.

Another clear message to donor governments is to recognise and reinforce the efforts of humanitarian actors at the local level to address the challenges posed in Somalia in delivering aid effectively, instead of imposing conditions and demands that undermine those efforts. In particular, donors could have paid attention to the warnings coming from humanitarian actors that a major crisis was in the making. Donors could have also invested in building resilience, and adopted a more flexible and nuanced stance at supporting prevention, preparedness, transition and recovery when the situation allows, as in Puntland and Somaliland. Access to long-term

funding and support for these types of activities would have helped aid organisations and vulnerable communities alike to be better prepared to anticipate and confront the drought, and potentially minimise the scale of the subsequent famine.

The fact that several donors funded the IASC evaluation and are supporting implementation shows a commitment to learning and improving the response to the crisis. The question is whether governments are ready to take steps to implement the recommendations and ensure humanitarian assistance is independent from other aims, and support long term prevention, recovery, and resilience strategies. Or will we yet again need the images of starvation and distress to prompt us into action?



INFORMATION BASED ON 31 FIELD INTERVIEWS WITH KEY HUMANITARIAN ACTORS IN NAIROBI FROM THE 21ST TO 25TH OF FEBRUARY 2011, AND 112 QUESTIONNAIRES ON DONOR PERFORMANCE (INCLUDING 87 QUESTIONNAIRES OF OECD/DAC DONORS). THE HRI TEAM WAS COMPOSED OF BEATRIZ ASENSIO, AMALIA NAVARRO, MARYBETH REDHEFFER AND PHILIP TAMMINGA (TEAM LEADER). THEY EXPRESS THEIR GRATITUDE TO ALL THOSE INTERVIEWED IN NAIROBI. THE HRI MISSION'S MAIN FOCUS WAS ON THE ROLE OF DONORS IN THE SOMALIA CRISIS IN 2010-2011. THE MISSION TOOK PLACE PRIOR TO A MAJOR IASC EVALUATION LED BY DARA. THE EVALUATION REPORT, THAT PROVIDES A MUCH MORE COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT OF THE RESPONSE TO THE CRISIS OVER A FIVE YEAR PERIOD, CAN BE FOUND AT:

http://daraint.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/HCT-Somalia_Evaluation_2005-2010_DARA_Report.pdf

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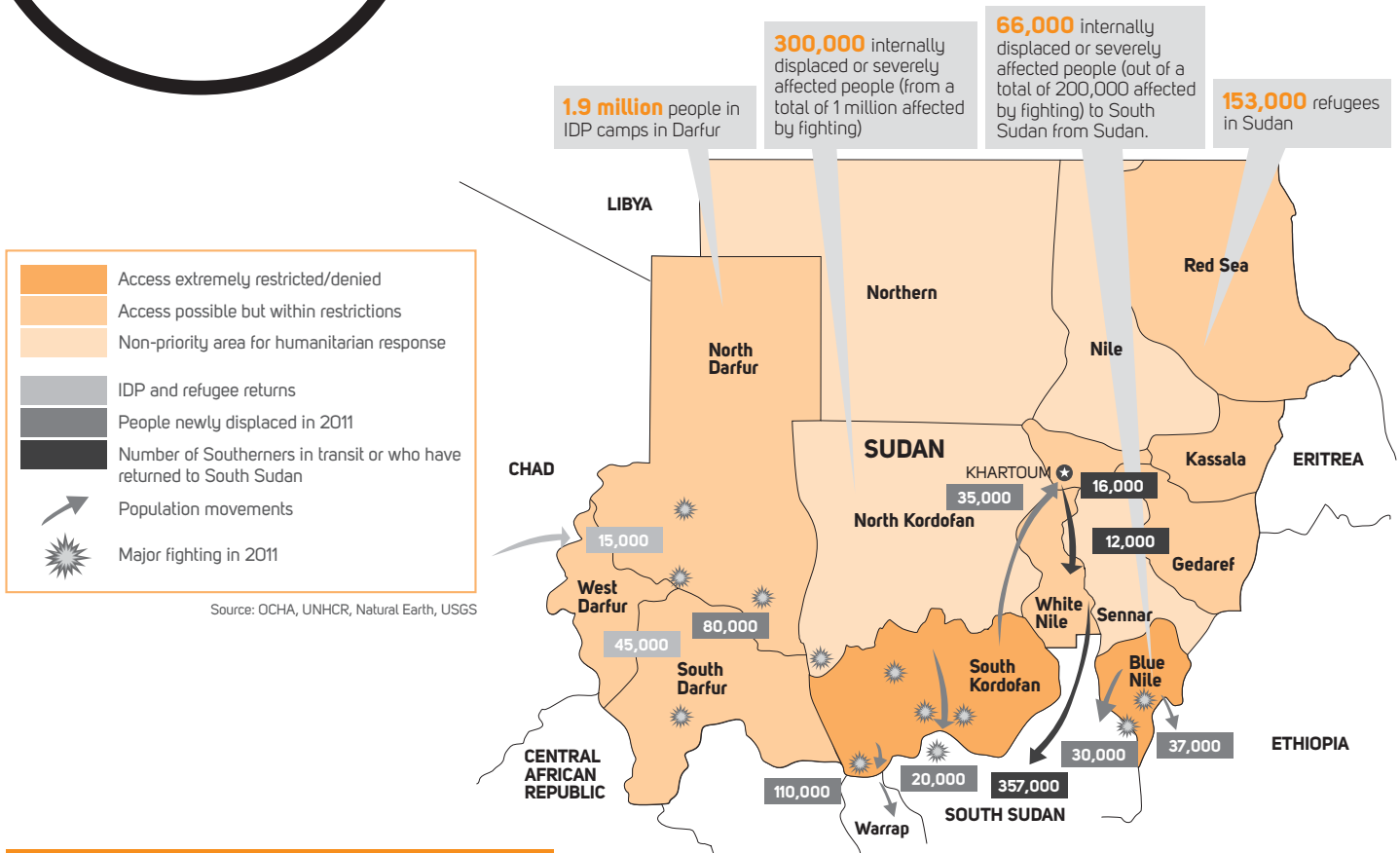
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UNHCR / A. Coseac / January 2011

CRISIS AT A GLANCE

SUDAN



TOTAL FUNDING TO SUDAN IN 2010:

US\$ 1.4 BILLION

74% INSIDE THE CAP

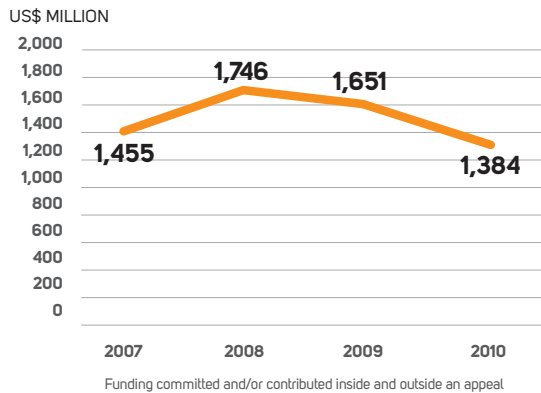
THE CRISIS AND THE RESPONSE

● The Republic of South Sudan was born on 9 July 2011 in a context of instability due to increased fighting between the Sudanese Army and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North rebels in the border region of South Kordofan.

● 468,000 new internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees have been created in the past year due to the ongoing violence in the border states of Blue Nile and South Kordofan. These new IDPs and refugees are supplementary to the 110,000 refugees in South Sudan from the oil-rich region of Abyei. Meanwhile, 1.9 million people still reside in camps in Darfur.

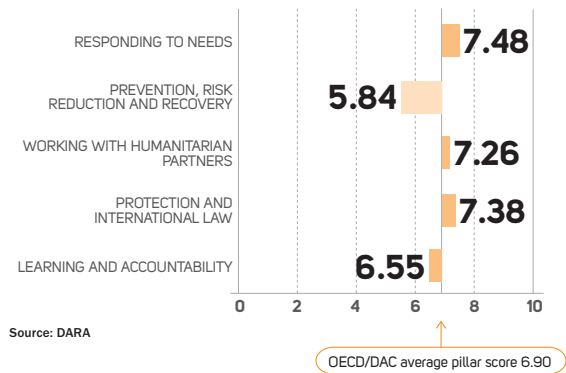
● Humanitarian access in some areas of Darfur and of South Kordofan is denied by the Sudanese Armed Forces, leaving hundreds of thousands of civilians without assistance. Humanitarian actors disagree over how to address the rift and to coordinate assistance in border areas.

TOTAL HUMANITARIAN FUNDING TO SUDAN



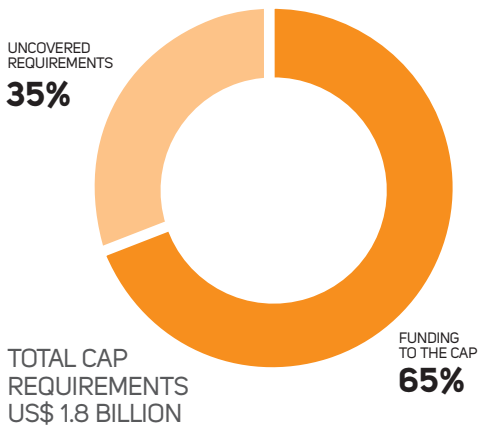
HRI DONOR PERFORMANCE BY PILLAR

FIELD PERCEPTION SCORES



Colours represent OECD/DAC donors' performance compared to overall average pillar score:
 ● Good ● Mid-range ● Could improve

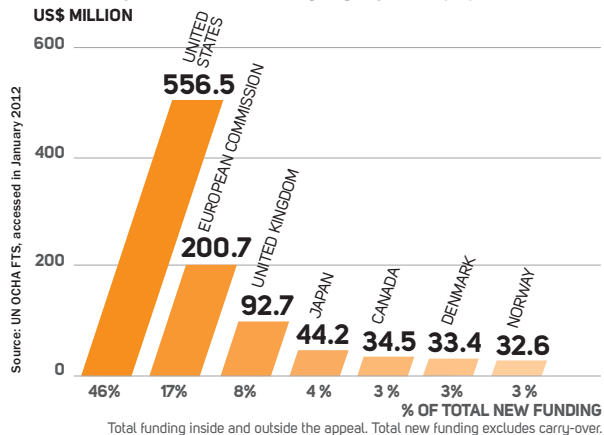
2010 SUDAN CAP COVERAGE



DONOR PERFORMANCE

- The Common Humanitarian Fund (CHF) provided approximately 10% of funding in 2010. Although it has contributed to some improvements in coordination, greater effort is needed to streamline management and improve monitoring.
- Few donors advocate for safe humanitarian access despite agreement over this need. Donors should take advantage of the High-Level Committee for Darfur to advocate towards the Sudanese authorities for access to Darfur, and consider expanding the mechanism for other regions.
- Donors consider protection and gender important issues in programme design, but could do more to advocate to the Sudanese authorities to ensure partners are able to implement these activities.

MAIN HUMANITARIAN DONORS IN 2010



Source: UN OCHA FTS, accessed in January 2012

MUCH OF THE SAME, IF NOT WORSE

2011 will go down in Sudan's history as the year that saw a new independent country emerge: the Republic of South Sudan. Following decades of armed conflict, South Sudan celebrated its Independence Day on 9 July 2011. The founding of the world's newest state was seen as a great step forward in Africa's most recent history. The divorce, however, may turn out to be not so peaceful. Air raids and attacks by the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) against the Sudan's People Liberation Movement-North on South Sudanese villages, and even a refugee camp in November, have dashed hopes that Sudan and its new neighbour would co-exist peacefully.

Meanwhile, the unity of the new state is equally under threat. Tensions within South Sudan among different ethnic groups and communities have existed for a long time. The attacks on villages, burning of homes and cattle raids, however, became increasingly vehement in late 2011 and may be the prelude to future internal, armed conflict. The United Nations (UN) Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC), Valerie Amos, has identified the humanitarian crises in the two Sudans as a priority of the international community.

In 2010, the Humanitarian Response Index (HRI) asked the rhetorical question whether or not Sudan was seeing a humanitarian mission without an end (DARA 2011). Looking at the events of 2011, this question would be answered with a resounding yes. Instead of a reduction in humanitarian needs, Sudan has seen new wars erupting. According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), fighting in the border states of Blue Nile and South Kordofan created 468,000 newly internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees by the end of the year. Prior to this, 110,000 refugees had fled to South Sudan from the disputed oil-rich region of Abyei, where a new UN peacekeeping force was

deployed in July. These new conflicts accompanied an already debilitated environment due to the dire situation in Darfur, where 1.9 million people remain in camps (OCHA, 2011).

Much of the occurrences in Sudan fall under the radar. In 2011, most international attention has

■ INSTEAD OF A REDUCTION IN HUMANITARIAN NEEDS, SUDAN HAS SEEN NEW WARS ERUPTING

been on the monumental changes in North Africa and the Arab world, while humanitarian agencies focused their efforts on the food crisis in the Horn of Africa. Under these circumstances, the HRI field research team found a humanitarian community

that appeared to be addressing the new Sudanese crises as "business as usual" when it should be of pressing importance. The sense of urgency seemed to be lacking, especially on the part of the UN.

Years of painful, almost fruitless negotiations with the Sudanese authorities over humanitarian access may be one reason for this passivity. Humanitarian assistance is not popular in Sudan and the authorities have become highly skilled in restricting the operational environment for international agencies. At best, the Sudanese authorities accept humanitarian response in the form of service-delivery, while limiting visas and work permits for international staff. However, they have gone as far as to seal off a war-torn area and declare it unsafe for humanitarian agencies, a condition currently seen in much of Blue Nile and South Kordofan states. This pattern has been in place for decades and there is little doubt that these limitations to humanitarian assistance will remain in the near future unless the country makes monumental changes similar to those in Northern Africa.

UNHCR's partner agencies register the returnees who stop to rest in Bentiu. / UNHCR / A. Coseac / November 2010

LEADERSHIP

Addressing the restrictive operational environment is a matter that highly depends on effective humanitarian leadership and coordination. Improving leadership and coordination have been the two key priorities for the ERC in 2011. In Sudan, however, many of the people interviewed by the HRI, including donor, UN, and non-governmental organisations (NGO) representatives, noted the lack of leadership from the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC), the UN's top humanitarian official in Sudan. His particular silence on the Sudanese authorities' practices of obstructing humanitarian response is considered highly problematic.

■ A CLOSE ASSOCIATION WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF SUDAN MAY BE TO THE DETRIMENT OF THE HUMANITARIAN AGENDA, WHICH REQUIRES A MORE INDEPENDENT COURSE OF ACTION

In June 2011, aid agencies in the town of Kadugli, the capital of South Kordofan, found their supplies and offices looted and ransacked. Humanitarian officials estimated that rebuilding their presence and programmes would take weeks, if not months. Meanwhile,

violence and mass atrocities leading to the displacement of thousands of civilians continued to be reported. Nonetheless, the HC resisted NGO calls to declare the situation in South Kordofan an emergency, which would raise the level of very much needed attention.

When asked for his strategy, the then HC mentioned his efforts to facilitate a peace-deal for Abyei with the Sudanese government. He felt that by speaking out, he would confirm Khartoum's views of the international humanitarian community. Aware of the rift in humanitarian and governmental collaboration, the HC asserted that "the Sudanese government perceives the international humanitarian agencies as self-serving, interested in perpetuating



the industry, wanting to keep people in camps, having no interest in rebuilding Darfur, and pushing the agenda of regime-change." He felt constructive engagement with the authorities was more effective at delivering results. One example of such a result, he pointed out, was his achievement to reverse the government's decision regarding the expulsion of an American NGO several months earlier.

The approach of the then HC raises the question of whom, and on what basis, is the HC's performance monitored and appraised? In Sudan, the HC had multiple reporting lines, including one to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Administrator. The UN believes that, in principle, humanitarian authority is only appropriate for someone accredited as Resident Coordinator. The latter function is easier to sell to the Sudanese government because it focuses on development aid, requiring close relations with them. Clearly, such a close association with the government may be a detriment to the humanitarian agenda, which at times, may require a more independent course of action.

Instead of the HC, it was the ERC and the United Nation's Children's Fund (UNICEF) Country Representative in Sudan who spoke out for increased humanitarian access. More recently, other voices on the ground have joined them, including the OCHA

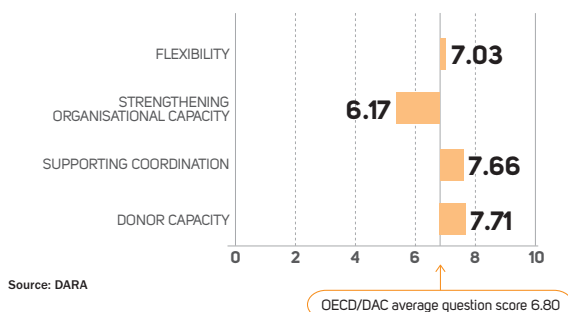
Head of Office and the acting HC, with the end of augmenting humanitarian access to Blue Nile and South Kordofan. OCHA should keep systematic records of repeated denials of humanitarian access in order to build an evidence-based argument for the necessity of action.

Following the transfer of the HC to Tripoli, the UN could not immediately find a candidate to fill the HC function. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Representative in Sudan, who has a long-standing career in humanitarian response, was appointed HC as an interim arrangement with the support of some key humanitarian actors in the country. Nevertheless, it is expected that the new Resident Coordinator, with no humanitarian background, will soon assume the position of Humanitarian Coordinator as well.

COORDINATION

DONOR PERFORMANCE ON WORKING WITH HUMANITARIAN PARTNERS

FIELD PERCEPTION SCORES



Source: DARA

Colours represent OECD/DAC donors' performance compared to overall average pillar score:

● Good ● Mid-range ● Could improve

Closely related to leadership is the system of coordination. At the time of HRI's field research, the meetings of the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) came across as ineffective; the real conversations in Khartoum were happening elsewhere, although the situation seem to have improved with the new HC. The steering committee of the forum of international NGOs is one example, and is well-placed to discuss trends, scenarios, and gaps

in humanitarian response so that they may bring these concerns to the attention of the donors.

Effective coordination, however, cannot only depend on NGOs. It also depends on the clusters,

which in Sudan, have not been fully implemented, as the Sudanese government is not keen on the mechanism and prefer the term, 'sectors'. They also insist on co-chairing the meetings and signing off on every new project proposed by the humanitarian community. Such a level of control may be unhealthy when taking into account the

THE HC HAS THE RESPONSIBILITY TO ADDRESS COMPETITION AMONG UN AGENCIES AND FACILITATE AGREEMENT ON KEY QUESTIONS

basic humanitarian principles of impartiality and independence, but in Sudan, it is the reality for every humanitarian actor involved.

In such a context, division among UN agencies only creates greater difficulty. Clearly, the HC has the responsibility to address such competition, facilitate agreement on key questions, for example the best way to gain humanitarian access, and build humanitarian kinship with the HCT partners.

THE COORDINATION PICTURE IN SOUTH SUDAN

The picture with regards to leadership and coordination is a very different one in South Sudan. Here, the HC is well-known for her bold attitude and robust advocacy. In terms of ensuring the effectiveness of the clusters, she has insisted that only those relevant to the needs would be put in place. She also wanted the clusters to be co-chaired between the UN and NGOs in order to ensure buy-in. The HCT's main function is to decide on strategies and priorities in which NGOs play a key-role, mainly because of their high level of organisation in South Sudan. At the end of 2011, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) recognised the South

Sudanese coordination framework as an example of good practice. The real test for the HC and her colleagues may be yet to come, should South Sudan plunge into war. After its fight for independence, the Government of South Sudan has become less keen on international NGOs. Recently, NGOs in South Sudan also reported increased difficulties for them to work in the country.

DONOR BEHAVIOUR

With humanitarian agencies lacking access to Blue Nile State and South Kordofan, the question must be asked: what kind of support can donor governments provide in the use of diplomatic means to put pressure on the Sudanese authorities? Looking into

■ WHAT KIND OF SUPPORT CAN DONOR GOVERNMENTS PROVIDE IN THE USE OF DIPLOMATIC MEANS TO PUT PRESSURE ON THE SUDANESE GOVERNMENT?

the donors' reactions on the lack of access in South Kordofan, the HRI team witnessed an interesting phenomenon, comparable to a game of ping-pong. In a meeting hosted by NGOs, both the NGOs and donor representatives agreed on the need to address the lack of access to South Kordofan, but both expected each other to be the ones to take action. The donors asked the NGOs to undertake assessments and to share information on

the situation. On their part, the NGOs considered that the donors should address the lack of access with the authorities, especially with the military intelligence.

The responsibility of donors to push for increased access is also a factor in the context of Darfur. Several interviewees reported a reduction in funding due to the lack of access. This lack of access implies that humanitarian agencies cannot sufficiently monitor and verify the distribution of aid. The European Commission's Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO) and the Netherlands were singled out as the donors

who reduced their funding for this reason. Many interviewees also noted the alignment of the policies of the UK, ECHO, and the Netherlands.

The mechanism for donors to promote humanitarian access in Darfur is the High-Level Committee for Darfur. This mechanism was established by the Joint Communiqué on the facilitation of humanitarian activities in 2007. While one interviewee referred to the meetings as 'content-free', the committee is the only mechanism in Sudan that brings together various parts of the Sudanese government, including a number of donor governments and international humanitarian agencies. Participants from the Sudanese government include the Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC), the National Intelligence Services --considered the main obstacle for humanitarian access-- and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. If there is one place the Sudanese authorities could be asked to honour its humanitarian obligations under international law, it is this mechanism. Donor governments should reflect on how they could use this mechanism more effectively, not just for Darfur, but also for other parts of Sudan.

THE COMMON HUMANITARIAN FUND

The financing of humanitarian response in Sudan has changed little over the past several years. According to OCHA's Financial Tracking System, it continues to be among the top recipients of humanitarian funds in the world, with US \$902,293,943 in 2011. One funding mechanism that continues to be the topic of hot debate is the Common Humanitarian Fund (CHF). The CHF is a pooled fund, which has been utilised in Sudan since 2006. In 2010, it funded more than 250 projects for a total of US\$156 million - just over 10% of the total funding (nearly US\$1.4 million) donors allocated to Sudan for the year (OCHA 2011b). In other words, those who claim that the CHF is "all talk" are unaware of the reality.

Bored boys at UNHCR's way station in Torit. Having a safe place to shelter during the journey home helps reduce the risk of violence and exploitation during large-scale population movements. / UNHCR / A. Coseac / November 2010



A March 2011 evaluation of the CHF in Sudan concluded that while the fund “is a work in progress,” it “has served the humanitarian community well in Sudan” (Cosgrave, et al. 2011). It noted that the CHF had been particularly helpful in terms of improved coordination. This conclusion, which is related to the HC determining the allocation of the funds, however needs further qualification. Without exception, interviewees from the NGO community told the HRI team that they viewed the allocation of the CHF funds as a process intended to make everyone happy. One NGO representative qualified it as a “pie-sharing exercise.” Among the larger NGOs, the sense prevails that the fund does not see much return on investment, especially when compared to other donors.

OCHA's office in Sudan, one of the largest in the world, has a significant undertaking in managing the CHF. Every project for which funding is requested must be part of the work plan for Sudan; special forms must be completed, and several layers of decision-making are involved for a fund that is comparable to a medium donor. Moreover, about half of the international staff in the Khartoum office is involved in managing the CHF, while the accountability of its funding in terms of monitoring project implementation has been reported as one of its weaknesses. Clearly, timely funding decisions are critical in ensuring effective response, but further

thought should be given to CHF's management. OCHA's office is largely absorbed by its administration— are these costs worth the benefit? As a CHF is being set up in South Sudan, it is yet to be seen if those involved in the process will learn from the experiences of their northern colleagues.

PROTECTION AND GENDER

Addressing protection concerns is a risky undertaking for humanitarian agencies in a country like Sudan, which year after year receives poor ratings for its human rights record. High on every agency's mind remains the expulsion of a dozen or so international humanitarian NGOs on 4 March 2009, the same day that the International Criminal Court (ICC) issued arrest warrants for the Sudanese President and the Minister for Humanitarian Affairs. At the time, media sources quoted Sudanese officials' statements claiming these organisations had violated “the laws of the humanitarian work” and that “their involvement in cooperation with the so-called International Criminal Court have been proved by evidence,” (UNMIS 2009). While the NGOs denied links with the ICC, the tendency has been for many of them to avoid any association with human rights or protection issues. Advocacy, one of the most important contributions that humanitarian agencies can make toward protection, is probably at its lowest point, as fears for new expulsions continue to dominate the environment. Many humanitarian agencies' operations considered the *Save Darfur* alliance their enemy. In the words of one aid worker: “everything we say will be used by them to support their campaign.” As a result, humanitarian agencies refrain from even the slightest criticism of the Sudanese authorities even though it obstructs humanitarian response. Few countries see international NGOs imposing a similar level of self-censorship as seen in Sudan.

Surprisingly, protection does appear to be high on donors' agendas in Sudan. Many interviewees noted that donors were pushing protection as a humanitarian priority. The HRI team was informed

of donors requesting agencies to collect and report protection concerns in South Kordofan, where the Sudanese Armed Forces have blocked humanitarian access. Nevertheless, putting protection into practice in such a challenging context seems more of a desire than a reality.

The donor community appears to also require their partners to integrate gender concerns, at least on paper. Similar to protection, gender is a sensitive topic in Sudan. Most agencies report that their donors increasingly identify gender as a humanitarian priority in terms of inclusion in programme designs. Unfortunately, it appears that this expectation is no more than paying lip-service to the issue, as little occurs when agencies do not follow up on their intended activities because of the restrictive environment.

TIME FOR RENEWED, PRINCIPLED ENGAGEMENT

The Sudanese government studies the international humanitarian community carefully and knows its inner-workings perhaps even better than the agencies themselves. Counting on the humanitarian agencies' unconditional desire to remain present in the country, it knows exactly how much it can 'squeeze' them and maintain restrictions on them. At the same time, the humanitarian community is unable to draw a common line in the Sudanese sand. Such a line would determine what level of government interference the agencies find unacceptable. Should the Sudanese authorities continue to flout internationally-recognised humanitarian principles, the agencies might reconsider their operations, including the ultimate step of withdrawal. Nevertheless, such a drastic measure would stand in sharp contrast with the humanitarian imperative of alleviating human suffering wherever it may be found.

Seasoned humanitarian workers will remember the days of 'Operation Lifeline Sudan' (OLS), an UN-led arrangement, developed in the late 1980s which

promoted a certain level of unhindered humanitarian access. OLS had its shortcomings, but it still served the humanitarian community by creating

■ AT A TIME WHEN THE RISK OF FURTHER ARMED CONFLICT IS HIGHER THAN THE CHANCES FOR PEACE, HUMANITARIAN AGENCIES NEED TO EXPAND THEIR EFFORTS TO ASSIST AND PROTECT THE SUDANESE POPULATION

an arrangement with the UN, which provided leadership, coordination and logistical support based on a common set of humanitarian principles (Taylor-Robinson 2002). The UN should consider recreating such an arrangement, if it is to escape the daily struggle of negotiations with the authorities of the two Sudans. Especially at a time when the risk of further armed conflict is much higher than

the chances for peace, humanitarian agencies need to expand their efforts to assist and protect the Sudanese population. Operations cannot be considered effective unless Sudanese authorities allow cross-border movements, and humanitarian actors show greater leadership and coordination between Sudan and South Sudan.



INFORMATION BASED ON 39 FIELD INTERVIEWS WITH KEY HUMANITARIAN ACTORS IN KHARTOUM AND JUBA FROM THE 19TH TO THE 27TH OF JUNE 2011, AND 246 QUESTIONNAIRES ON DONOR PERFORMANCE (INCLUDING 147 QUESTIONNAIRES OF OECD/DAC DONORS). THE HRI TEAM WAS COMPOSED OF BEATRIZ ASENSIO, BELÉN CAMACHO, MARYBETH REDHEFFER, ED SCHENKENBERG (TEAM LEADER) AND KERRY SMITH. THEY EXPRESS THEIR GRATITUDE TO ALL THOSE INTERVIEWED IN SUDAN.

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