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HUMANITARIAN SYNTHESIS REPORT

This final version of the Humanitarian Synthesis Report for peer reviews conducted in 2008-09 incorporates feedback from DAC members on the original draft of 30 October 20009 and the revised draft circulated on 11 December 2009. It was declassified through the written procedure under DCD/DIR(2009)18.

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Executive Summary

This is the third in a series of synthesis reports on the humanitarian elements of DAC peer reviews. It summarises the findings and observations from nine peer reviews conducted over the 2008-2009 biennium. It presented against the backdrop of protracted and new crises that continue to drive the levels of humanitarian need and vulnerability upwards even as the level of global humanitarian financing continues to increase. Conflict and political instability continue unabated in many parts of the world while the incidence of natural disasters appears to be increasing – in part driven by accelerating climate change. In a single week in early October 2009, consecutive cyclones drenched the Philippines and Mekong region, a major earthquake devastated communities in West Sumatra; another offshore earthquake triggered a series of tsunamis that flooded coastal communities in the south Pacific and flooding in southern India reportedly killed up to 226 people. This sequence of events reiterated the importance of disaster risk reduction measures in mitigating the consequences of natural phenomenon over which there is no control.

DAC peer reviews suggest a discernible – although variable – trend towards improved donor practice. The four second generation peer reviews conducted during the biennium revealed that of the fourteen humanitarian-related recommendations contained in the earlier peer review reports, nine were found to have been fully or substantially met and the remaining five recommendations were, at least, partially met. While it is not possible to directly attribute these improvements to the DAC peer review process, they are an encouraging sign that commitments to good humanitarian donorship remain steadfast and that the *Principles and Good Practice of Humanitarian Donorship* appear to have been widely adopted as the nexus for harmonising donor support to the international humanitarian system. Nevertheless, DAC peer reviews revealed scant evidence that national commitments to humanitarian principles have been firmly embedded in the policies and guidelines of non-aid counterparts.

An estimated USD 15 billion was allocated to humanitarian assistance in 2007. This continues a steady upward trend in global humanitarian financing although, as noted at the outset, increasing humanitarian need and rising costs temper the impact of these increases. Several non-DAC donors from Gulf States (Saudi Arabia, UAE and Qatar) have emerged as significant financiers of international humanitarian action. DAC members provided USD 7.8 million in multi-bi funding and USD 913 million in unearmarked contributions to multilateral agencies. The vast majority of support provided by DAC members to the international humanitarian system is in the form of financial grants – or, to a lesser extent, commodities. Several DAC members have entered into multi-year framework agreements with multilateral partners to facilitate an appropriate and timely transfer of these resources to match needs. In some cases, pre-positioned funds provide for additional predictability in funding streams.

Despite the resolute efforts of humanitarian units within DAC member agencies, civil-military co-operation remains one of the most contentious issues confronting the humanitarian sector. The practice of embedding civilian aid personnel within PRTs in Afghanistan and Iraq has fuelled greatest criticism. Five of the nine reviewed countries participate in PRTs in Afghanistan. Success in insulating humanitarian action from other policy objectives has usually been the subject to continuous negotiation in these circumstances and DAC members with embedded personnel have argued that this is the most effective way to ensure that humanitarian principles are indeed protected.

Peer reviews have tended to confirm previous observations that learning and accountability practices in the humanitarian domain are an area of weakness for many DAC members. Evaluations of humanitarian activities that have occurred have been largely focussed on processual issues with correspondingly less attention being paid to impact assessment at either activity or programme levels. The onset of results-based

management practices in donor administrations will demand greater attention to impact assessments in the future and several DAC members have already taken tentative steps in this direction.

Division of responsibilities for humanitarian action varies between DAC members but in most cases is more closely associated with institutional responsibilities for foreign policy and diplomacy than other components of development co-operation programming. The divergent organisational models within individual donor administrations for humanitarian action and development assistance appears to have had significant implications for attempts to forge better linkages between the two types of assistance. Furthermore, the decentralisation processes being pursued by development co-operation programmes in line with the commitments under Paris Declaration and Accra Action Agenda often appear at odds with humanitarian decision-making processes which remain rather centralised, i.e. predominantly based in donor capitals, in accordance with GHD good practice of minimal earmarking.

During crises, some groups are at greater risk than others. Pre-existing, social structures, conditions and vulnerabilities - defined in terms of gender, age, disability or social status - become accentuated during crises, which create conditions that are conducive to abuses, exploitation as well as the rapid transmission of pandemics. The requirement to disaggregate and address the specific needs of these vulnerable groups during crises has been widely acknowledged, although deeper analysis of social and gender issues does not appear to always inform programming decisions. Strengthening policy guidance in the area of humanitarian action and deepening the involvement of women, people living with HIV/AIDS and other marginalised groups in all aspects of humanitarian action is imperative to commitments to good humanitarian donorship. The DAC Gender Network could consider developing guidance for donor support to better integrate gender considerations into humanitarian action, in collaboration with the GHD group, as follow-up to planned work on aid focused on gender equality, which is expected to include analysis of aid in humanitarian situations, and situations of fragility and conflict.

HUMANITARIAN SYNTHESIS REPORT

Background

1. In 2004, the DAC agreed to "road test" the *Principles and Good Practice of Humanitarian Donorship* (Annex A) as the basis for reviewing donor humanitarian action within the peer review process. Subsequently the DAC formally endorsed the Good Humanitarian Donorship (GHD) commitments as the basis for humanitarian action by DAC members[1] as well as a humanitarian assessment framework for incorporation into the DAC peer review process.[2]

2. By the end of 2009, a total of twenty-five peer reviews had been conducted of the humanitarian programmes of twenty-one donors against their commitments to the *Principles and Good Practices of Humanitarian Donorship*. Four DAC members (Australia, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland) had been reviewed twice. Just two DAC members (Japan and New Zealand) had not been peer reviewed at all against their GHD commitments.[3] Two synthesis reports of findings and observations from humanitarian segments of peer reviews have been approved by the DAC in 2006[4] and 2009[5] respectively and presented to the GHD groups in Geneva and Rome for follow-up action. Based on these synthesis reports, the humanitarian assessment framework was updated with assistance from the 2008-2009 GHD co-chairs (EC and Netherlands) and adopted by the DAC for inclusion in the Peer Review Content Guide in May 2009.[6]

3. Over the biennium, nine humanitarian peer reviews and four humanitarian field visits were conducted (see Annex B). The 2008-2009 cluster includes donors with significantly different profiles within the international humanitarian system. Collectively, it accounted for some 37% of humanitarian financial commitments reported to the DAC in 2007. It includes six members of the EU for whom the *European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid*[7] is applicable and serves to extend GHD commitments into a broader framework for coordination, coherence and complementarity between the humanitarian action of EU member states. Two reviewed countries – France and Italy – are also members of the G8, which has continued to issue important statements on specific crisis contexts throughout the biennium humanitarian and at the L'Aquila summit in July 2009, made important commitments to tackle global food insecurity and reduce risk in disaster-prone communities.

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1 The DAC and Good Humanitarian Donorship – DAC Endorsement of the Principles and Good Practice of Humanitarian Donorship (DCD/DAC(2006)13/REV2)

2 Assessment Framework for Coverage of Humanitarian Action in DAC Peer Reviews (DCD/DIR(2004)11)

3 Both Japan and New Zealand are scheduled for peer review in 2010

4 Humanitarian Action Coverage in the DAC Peer Reviews – A Synthesis of Findings and Experiences 2004-2005 (DCD/DAC(2006)3)

5 Humanitarian Action Coverage in the DAC Peer Reviews – A Synthesis of Findings and Experiences 2006-2007 (DCD/DAC(2008)43/REV1)

6 Revised Humanitarian Assessment Framework for DAC Peer Reviews (DCD/DAC92008)48/FINAL)

7 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2008:025:0001:0012:EN:PDF accessed 29th September 2009

4. The 2008-2009 peer reviews led to a total of 26 recommendations for donor humanitarian action in Part One reports. The majority (10) involved clarifications of humanitarian policies and strategies with the remainder spread across the implementation and standards, learning and accountability and human resources and management clusters. This synthesis report highlights the findings of these peer reviews and also draws on secondary sources of information for illustrative purposes. The findings and observations presented in synthesis reports are cumulative and therefore this report should be read in conjunction with the findings contained in the two previous reports. For the first time, however, this report covers second generation peer reviews, which permits some preliminary commentary on changes in donor behavioural changes although attribution to the DAC peer review process is necessarily tentative.

5. A new innovation during this biennium has been the formulation of a consultation process with five key multilateral agencies based in Rome and Geneva in order to supplement the findings of headquarters and field visits. These semi-structured interviews with representatives of donor relations units have proved insightful in terms of identifying bottlenecks in donor assistance for multilateral humanitarian action as well as systemic practices that support good humanitarian donorship.

Context: Global trends in humanitarian domain

6. The landscape in which donor humanitarian action was peer reviewed during 2008-2009 has continued to be dynamic. It contains many familiar hallmarks from previous reports – protracted conflicts (*e.g* in Afghanistan, Sudan, DRC, Gaza, Georgia, Mindanao, Pakistan, Somalia and Sri Lanka), existing and new crises resulting from political instability (*e.g.* in Guinea, Kenya, Madagascar and Zimbabwe) and a prevalence of sudden-onset disasters (*e.g.* Cyclone Nargis in Burma/Myanmar, successive cyclones in East Asia, devastating earthquakes in China and Indonesia, flooding in southern India and tsunami event in the south Pacific). Recurrent, slower-onset disasters (*e.g.* seasonal flooding in southern Africa and drought in the Horn of Africa) have continued unabated amidst a growing body of evidence that their impact is deepening and expanding their impact. "*Although less pronounced than in other years, 2008 contributed to the upward global trend in natural disaster occurrence observed over the last decade. As in previous years, hydrological and meteorological disasters were the main contributors to this pattern. Though fewer disasters occurred in 2008 compared to 2000-2007, events had a larger impact on human settlements*" (CRED, 2009). In a single week in early October 2009, consecutive cyclones drenched the Philippines and Mekong region, a major earthquake devastated communities in West Sumatra; another offshore earthquake triggered a series of tsunamis that flooded coastal communities in the south Pacific and flooding in southern India reportedly killed up to 226 people. This sequence of events reiterated the importance of disaster risk reduction measures in mitigating the consequences of natural phenomenon over which there is no control.

7. Acute vulnerabilities created by man-made and natural crises are also increasingly overlain by the cumulative impacts of chronic vulnerabilities associated with climate change, urbanisation and chronic food insecurity. These global trends have not only exacerbated vulnerabilities of crisis-affected communities but also created new constituencies in need of humanitarian support. Many trends are likely to continue into the future, leading the USG for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, John Holmes, to remark in the closing session of the 2009 ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs segment that "*the biggest single issue is how we tackle the chronic vulnerabilities on the scale that we fear may be now emerging".*[8]

8. Accommodating the humanitarian consequences of these trends in chronic vulnerabilities has served to further deepen reflection on the linkages between humanitarian and development assistance and prompting USG Holmes to go on to observe that *"this is an opportunity to bring together humanitarian*

8 http://ochaonline.un.org/OchaLinkClick.aspx?link=ocha&docId=1112324

and development actors in a new way and to overcome the artificial barriers that currently exist".[9] Growing attention has been given to integration of disaster risk reduction (DRR) approaches into poverty reduction efforts in order to reduce vulnerability and protect livelihood assets (*e.g.* the *2009 Global Assessment Report on DRR: Risk and Poverty in a Changing Climate*). At the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction In June 2009, the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon remarked that investing in risk reduction is *"a triple win: against poverty, against disaster and against climate change*"[10]. The UN Secretary-General had earlier launched the High-Level Task Force on Global Food Security, which proposed a twin-track response to the global food security crisis of mid-2008 and sought to link emergency food assistance and other forms of social safety net support with longer term initiatives to improve agricultural practices and incentivise food production[11].The 2009 Global Platform for DRR in June 2009 concluded with "*a call to halve the number of disaster related deaths by 2015*"[12] and established specific targets (Box 1).

Box 1. Specific targets established at 2009 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction

Box 1: Specific targets established at 2009 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction

- By 2010 establish clear national and international financial commitments to DRR, for example to allocate a minimum of 10% of all humanitarian and reconstruction funding, at least 1% of development funding and at least 30% of climate change adaptation funding to DRR.
- By 2011, a global structural evaluation of all schools and hospitals and by 2015 firm action plans for safer schools and hospitals developed and implemented in all disaster prone countries with DRR included in all school curricula by the same year.
- • By 2015, all major cities in disaster prone areas to include and enforce DRR measures in their building and land use codes.

9. These events have also continued to cast the spotlight on protection aspects of humanitarian action – notably the special needs of women, children and other vulnerable groups in crisis situations, sexual and physical violence, denial of humanitarian access and other corruptive influences on the humanitarian imperative. The Secretary General's proposal[13] for a three pillar strategy[14] for implementing the responsibility to protect (R2P) was keenly – although, ultimately inconclusively - debated in the General Assembly in July 2009 leaving the nature of R2P undefined in the case of pandemics, natural disasters and environmental calamities. Nevertheless, the growing incidence of natural disasters has led to increasing interest in protection needs in the context of natural disasters as evidenced by the launch of the pilot field manual to the IASC Operational Guidelines on Human Rights and Natural Disasters in March

9 op cit

10 http://www.preventionweb.net/files/globalplatform/SGvideomessageGPDRR16June09.pdf

11 http://www.un.org/issues/food/taskforce/pdf/OutcomesAndActionsBooklet_v9.pdf

12 http://www.preventionweb.net/globalplatform/2009/media/documents/UNISDR-PR-10.pdf

13 United Nations (2009) Implementing the responsibility to protect: Report of Secretary-General, No. A/63/677

14 Pillar One (Protection responsibilities of the State); Pillar Two (International assistance and capacity-building); Pillar Three (Timely and decisive response)

2008[15].Aid workers themselves have come under ever increasing threat with more aid workers killed in 2008 than in any other year and 75 per cent of these attacks occurring in just seven countries i.e. Afghanistan, Chad, Iraq, Pakistan, Somalia, Sri Lanka and Sudan.[16] These threats have fuelled further debate on the nature of civil-military co-operation in the context of contested environments.

10. Meanwhile, for the second successive year, the annual mid-year review of the CAPs noted an encouraging trend in humanitarian financing, "*voluntary funding on which humanitarian action depends has been donated at a better pace than most previous years. In dollar terms, the total new funding committed to these appeals to date in 2009 – USD 3.2 billion – exceeds that at the same point in any previous year this decade; and (combined with funding in late 2008 carried over to this year) fulfils 49% of the requirements of these appeals*". However, the trend has not been uniform. In September 2009, the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), drew attention to the Agency's acute funding problems, which were described as "*perhaps more serious this year than ever*", mainly because they were affecting UNRWA's general fund, from which its basic programmes to promote human development and self-reliance of refugees, as well as health, education and social efforts were funded[17]. The mid-year CAP report itself qualified the positive commentary with the sobering observation "*donors cannot stop there. Funding requirements not yet met are also higher than ever in dollar terms (USD 4.8 billion)*" (OCHA, 2009).[18] In effect, humanitarian need continues to keep pace – if not actually outstrip – the availability of humanitarian funding. There is little reason to believe that it will diminish in the near future.

11. However, Development Initiatives (2009) noted that "[f]*inancing is not just a flow of resources; it affects behaviour, architecture, the power and influence of different groups, priorities and capacity development*". The hallmarks of improved performance - reflection and innovation - have gained an increasing foothold in the humanitarian domain. Interest in humanitarian impact assessment continues to grow although the dynamic context in which it occurs poses particular challenges. A background paper for the 24th meeting of the Active Learning Network for Accountability and Practice in Humanitarian Action (ALNAP in December 2008 noted that "[h]*umanitarian agencies arguably have greatest control over key decisions and events at the inputs, activities and outputs end of the 'chain' ... once the programme is underway, the balance of influence should begin to change, and wider contextual factors beyond the control of an individual agency become more prominent. Taking these wider factors into account is considered particularly important in emergency contexts in order to ensure that the minimum standard of do no harm' is maintained*".[19] However, ALNAP has cautioned that "*generative learning' is ... inhibited by a growing culture of compliance and the rigid contractual nature of aid relationships, both of which push agencies to deliver according to pre-defined goals, methods and targets*".[20] This anomaly reflects an apparent divergence between humanitarian practice and development practice that has served to inhibit greater institutionalisation of humanitarian evaluations within DAC member states.

15 http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/lib.nsf/db900sid/KHII-7EE9KM/$file/brookings_HR_mar08.pdf?openelement accessed 28th September 2009

16 _____ (2009) Providing Aid in Insecure Environments, ODI, London

17 http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900SID/MUMA-7W237R?OpenDocument accessed 21 September 2009

18 http://ochaonline.un.org/HUMANITARIANAPPEAL/webpage.asp?SiteID=306 accessed on 13 August 2009

19 http://www.alnap.org/pool/files/24_background.pdf accessed on 30th September 2009

20 ALNAP (2009) 8th Review of Humanitarian Action, London, UK

12. ALNAP identified four critical areas requiring innovation in the humanitarian sector: "*products, such as better cooking stoves; processes, such as stockpiling goods or better quality assurance; positioning, for instance changing from tents to semi-permanent homes for emergency shelter; and paradigms, for example pushing beneficiaries to participate in programming or encouraging local ownership of crisis responses*".[21] The Mid-Year Review of the 2009 CAPs noted that these programming innovations "*must be matched by innovations on the funding side, to fill the gaps in the "grey area" between clearly-triggered humanitarian crises and poverty reduction with its more deliberate approaches – which, in any event, may not work when people are desperate*"[22]. Peer reviews have uncovered several examples of donor innovation, *e.g.* in the area of support for cash-based emergency programming (Peer Review of Switzerland, 2009), strengthened alignment behind national disaster management organizations (*e.g.* the case of Mozambique cited in the Peer Review of Sweden) and widening support for installation of early warning systems (cited in several Peer Reviews). For innovation to take hold, however, donors must continue to be willing to take more calculated but principled risks of this nature. In turn, this will require an expanded reach for the concept and practices of good humanitarian donorship and within the frameworks of dynamic partnerships with implementing partners.

Further consideration by the DAC and GHD group

- *The commitments made by DAC members at the 2009 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction could be incorporated into future iterations of the DAC Humanitarian Assessment Framework.*
- *The DAC and the GHD group could collaborate to encourage and disseminate innovations in the humanitarian sector.*

What do the 2008-2009 DAC Peer Reviews reveal about donor practices?

13. While some commentators have suggested that donor humanitarian practices continue to lag behind GHD commitments, DAC peer reviews suggest a far more nuanced picture and a discernible – although variable – trend towards improved donor practice. The four second generation peer reviews, for example, revealed that of the fourteen humanitarian-related recommendations contained in the "first generation" peer review reports, nine were found to have been fully or substantially met during the "second generation" peer reviews. The remaining five recommendations were, at least, partially met, i.e. no recommendation was disputed or ignored. While it is not possible to directly attribute these improvements to the DAC peer review process, they are an encouraging sign that commitments to good humanitarian donorship remain steadfast and that the *Principles and Good Practice of Humanitarian Donorship* continue to represent a legitimate building block for enhanced donor support to the international (and where applicable, national) humanitarian system. Nevertheless, improvements continue to be incremental rather than wholesale and variable rather than uniform.

14. In a further indication of the benefits of including GHD-based assessments in peer reviews, the special review of the Korean development co-operation system in 2008 suggested that Korea formally endorses the *Principles and Good Practice of Humanitarian Donorship* and adopt them as the basis for a new humanitarian action policy. In July 2009, Korea participated in the annual high-level meeting of the

21 op cit

22 http://ochadms.unog.ch/quickplace/cap/main.nsf/h_Index/MYR_2009_Humanitarian_Appeal/$FILE/MYR_2009_Humanitarian_Appeal_SCREEN.pdf?OpenElement

GHD group for the first time[23] - a welcome signal not only of Korea's intention to embrace globally-defined good practices in the humanitarian sector but also of the potential leverage of DAC peer reviews.

Policy and legislative framework

15. The *Principles and Good Practices of Humanitarian Donorship* sought to define a common understanding of humanitarian objectives and the basis on which humanitarian action is undertaken. At a national level, several DAC members peer reviewed in 2007-2008 (*e.g.* Australia, Ireland, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland) have translated these GHD commitments into national policy statements that re-assert these values. For others (*e.g.* Austria, France, Italy, Luxembourg), the *European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid,* which directly references *the Principles and Good Practice of Humanitarian Donorship*, has been adopted as a *de facto* national policy statement. The GHD principles and good practices do therefore appear to have been adopted as the nexus for harmonising donor support to the international humanitarian system.

16. For those DAC members who have published humanitarian policies, these are often portrayed as national GHD action plans in accordance with the agreement at the second international meeting in October 2004 for donors to *develop a domestic framework/action plan or ensure that existing domestic mechanisms account for GHD"*.[24] However, often they do not contain targets or indicators to animate these commitments and provide transparency. For those DAC members who refer to the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid, the situation is similar since it is not translated into an EC-wide performance framework nor are their contributions are separately identifiable.

17. The *Principles and Good Practices of Humanitarian Donorship* stemmed not only from concerns about unpredictable and inflexible funding streams for the international humanitarian system but also from a sense that humanitarianism was under threat of politicisation and securitisation. The GHD commitments therefore sought to re-affirm the humanitarian principles of neutrality, impartiality, independence and humanity and to define the "humanitarian space" within which humanitarian actors operate. DAC peer reviews confirm that among those who have drafted humanitarian policy statements, humanitarian principles are referenced in all cases.

18. In essence the humanitarian principles represent a value system that is often expressed by DAC members as an expression of international solidarity with those affect by disaster and conflict in developing countries. Nevertheless, humanitarian action occurs at the complex interface with other policy objectives – particularly foreign and security policies – that challenge the authenticity of this commitment. "*The experience gained from natural disasters and conflicts has shown that humanitarian assistance must be viewed in a broader political context. However, more coherent international engagement does not mean that humanitarian considerations should be subordinated to political considerations. On the contrary, humanitarian values must always be safeguarded and promoted in the overall effort*" (MFA, 2009).[25] DAC peer reviews revealed scant evidence that national commitments to humanitarian principles have been firmly embedded in the policies and guidelines of other non-aid communities.

19. In stark contrast to the challenge of maintaining a discrete separation between humanitarian and political objectives, DAC members have continued to struggle with the dilemmas in forging coherent

23 http://www.goodhumanitariandonorship.org/documents/090723_chairs_summary_outcomes.pdf accessed 25th September 2009

24 Chair's Overview: Continued commitment to good humanitarian donorship and a roadmap for the way forward, http://www.goodhumanitariandonorship.org/annual-meetings.asp accessed 18th August 2009

25 Norwegian MFA (2008) Norway's Humanitarian Policy, Oslo, p.9

linkages between relief, rehabilitation and development (LRRD) during the post-crisis transition period and in the area of DRR. These linkages are critical since they allow "*the national authorities to reinstate their lead in the recovery* [and development] *process*".[26] The joint follow-up evaluation of the links between relief, rehabilitation and development in the context of communities affected by the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami produced eleven recommendations across six domains for donors each of which reflects the need to take a longer-term vision of crises and concludes that the main question about relevant and effective linkages is "*not so much about 'relief', versus 'rehabilitation' and 'development', but rather one of proper choice of partners and scope of work*".[27]

20. For some donors (*e.g.* Australia, Ireland and Norway) separate policies have been formulated or are proposed for LRRD and/or DRR. Other DAC members (*e.g.* France, Italy and Luxembourg) look to the relevant sections of the *European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid* and the *European Consensus on Development*[28] to define the humanitarian elements of LRRD and DRR priorities. Notwithstanding these initiatives, it is apparent that significant work still remains to operationalise the linkages. The INCAF work on transition financing (including the study commissioned from Development Initiatives) will be informative in addressing this deficit. The previous synthesis report also stimulated a discussion paper, commissioned by Norway, and presented to both GHD group and INCAF on alignment between the *Principles and Good Practices of Humanitarian Donorship* and the Paris Declaration/AAA aid effectiveness agenda. Both papers suggest that a strengthened dialogue between the development and humanitarian communities on areas of overlapping interest is imperative in overcoming the perceived gap.

Further considerations by DAC and GHD group

- *The focus on policy coherence for development represents a useful model when trying to encourage non-aid actors within government administrations to embed national commitments to humanitarian principles in the policies and guidance. In this context, the DAC and GHD group might consider collaborating to promote policy coherence for humanitarian action across government departments.*

- *The INCAF workstream on transition financing and programming would be enriched by more deliberate engagement with the GHD group. At the same time, appropriately referencing humanitarian concerns within development partnerships will help to promote a longer-term vision of crises.*

Financing

21. While definitions of humanitarian action have generally coalesced around the GHD definition at a policy level, there remains considerable variation between donors in how these activities are financed. For some donors (*e.g.* Ireland and Italy), the emergency or humanitarian window includes all or most activities in a crisis context within a specified time period. Accordingly, activities are reported under humanitarian action notwithstanding that many activities may have a distinct developmental character. For others (*e.g.* Australia and Austria), protracted humanitarian responses and early recovery activities are increasingly funded through bilateral development windows and may be reported to the DAC under development sector codes – notwithstanding, in these cases, their distinct humanitarian character.

26 Tsunami Evaluation Coalition (2009) *A ripple in development? Long-term perspectives on the response to the Indian Ocean tsunami 2004*, Sida, Stockholm

27 *op cit*, p.10-12

28 paras 21 and 22, http://ec.europa.eu/development/icenter/repository/european_consensus_2005_en.pdf accessed 29th September 2009

Contemporary disaster risk reduction approaches mean that GHD-eligible activities are increasingly being financed through development funding envelopes – and are reported to the DAC under associated development sector codes. This characterisation is in line with recognition at the Global Platform for Disaster Reduction that poverty is a key determinant of vulnerability to natural hazards. Accordingly, investments in building disaster management and preparedness capacities and vulnerability reduction are sensible development investments in reducing risks associated with these calamitous events s well as protecting previous development gains.

22. The GHD group has placed significant emphasis on development of common needs-based assessments and needs-based allocation of resources within the humanitarian reform process. Nevertheless, it is apparent that there remain different interpretations of what these principles mean in practice, Some donors apply a global perspective aimed at allocating resources to all UN Consolidated Appeals (*e.g.* Sweden) or to emergency situations where there are significant funding shortfalls – otherwise known as "forgotten emergencies" - (*e.g.* Luxembourg and Austria). For other donors, allocation of humanitarian resources is more closely aligned to the priority countries of the broader development co-operation in order to facilitate closer monitoring of situations and enhance linkages to recovery and development funding streams (*e.g.* Australia and, in the future, Italy). The latter tend to interpret commitments to "need-based allocation" in terms of vulnerable groups and priority sectors within this somewhat narrower range of crisis-related situations. All donors peer reviewed in this biennium have continued to provide financial support through pooled funding mechanisms, such as the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and the country-based funds.

23. The vast majority of support provided by DAC members to the international humanitarian system is in the form of financial grants – or, to a lesser extent, commodities – to multilateral and NGO implementing partners. DAC members have initiated practices to facilitate an appropriate and timely transfer of these resources to match emerging and/or protracted needs. Foremost among these are framework agreements that several donors have put in place with multilateral and NGO partners (see Table 1). In the case of multilateral agencies, multi-year agreements including annual financial commitments and, in some cases, pre-positioned funds provide for predictability in funding streams over the duration. In the case of NGO partners, annual or spontaneous funding commitments appear to be preferred. However, some donors have NGO partnership agreements that remain current for longer periods (*e.g.* Australia and Austria). Conversely, multilateral agencies drew attention to the unpredictability that is inherent in the absence of framework agreements (*e.g.* Austria) and some NGOs complained of the tardiness of donor humanitarian support where approval processes were not streamlined in this way (*e.g.* Italy). Concerns were also raised that framework agreements may represent obstacles for non-participating organisations and inhibit the emergence of newer or specialised agencies (e.g. Switzerland).

Table 1. Donor Framework Agreements with Multilateral Agencies and NGOs

Peer reviewed country	*Multilateral agencies*	*NGOs*
France (2008)	**Nil**	**Nil**
Luxembourg (2008)	**Three** multi-year MoU with ICRC, UNHCR and WFP	**Four** annual partnership agreements
Norway (2008)	**Nil**	**Nil**
Australia (2008)	**Nil** but subsequently four year agreements with OCHA and WFP. Also referenced in agency-wide agreement with UNICEF	**Six** periodic (three year) agreements and **two** standby personnel mechanisms
Ireland (2009)	**Three** multi-year framework agreements	Overarching strategic framework - **nil** agency-specific agreements
Austria (2009)	**Nil**	**Seven** NGOs are accredited but **nil** partnership agreements.

Sweden (2009)	Overarching multilateral strategy but **nil** agency-specific agreements	**Seven** humanitarian framework agreements and **one** standby personnel mechanism
Switzerland (2009)	Overarching strategic framework for multilateral commitments based on **six** primary partnerships underpinned by formal partnership agreements related to secondments and in-kind contributions but not financial contributions	**Four** (annual partnership agreements and **one** standby personnel mechanism
Italy (2009)	Annual allocations to **nine** agencies through *Emergency Bilateral Funds* mechanism	**Nil**. NGO grants are disbursed by UTLs are the country level

24. As noted earlier, humanitarian funding sought through, *inter alia*, United Nations Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeals (CAPs), UN Flash Appeals and the emergency appeals of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement reached record levels in 2008-2009. On the positive side of the ledger, ICRC reported improved access to people affected by war as a driver of increased humanitarian need.[29] However a recent report by UNOCHA and the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre found that in 2008, "*36 million people were displaced worldwide by sudden-onset natural disasters, including earthquakes and landslides. During the same period 4.6 million people were internally displaced by conflicts*". The report also notes the steadily increasing proportion of people affected by climate-related disasters within this displaced population – a trend that appears unlikely to be reversed in the short term. Furthermore, the record levels of funding requirements can also be attributable to burgeoning costs associated with high food and fuel costs as well as increased demand resulting from reduced remittances to crisis-affected communities from the diaspora. To date, DAC peer reviews have not revealed evidence that global recession has translated into reductions in humanitarian budgets. However, several have pointed to the critical requirement to maintain downstream funding streams in order to ensure the durability of recovery and rehabilitation efforts and to avoid recurrent crises.

24. An estimated USD 15 billion was allocated to humanitarian assistance in 2007. This continues a steady upward trend in global humanitarian financing although, as noted at the outset, increasing humanitarian need and rising costs temper the impact of these increases. DAC members provided USD 7.8 million in multi-bi funding and USD 913 million in unearmarked contributions to multilateral agencies (DI, 2009). This official ODA is often complemented by substantial private donations in the aftermath of major crises (*e.g.* the EUR 28 million raised from public sources and channelled through the Italian Civil Protection Department following the Asian tsunami in 2004[30]). Furthermore, several non-DAC donors from Gulf States have emerged as significant financiers of international humanitarian action (*e.g.* Saudi Arabia was the second largest donor to WFP after the US in 2008 and provided the largest single donation of USD 100 million to the UN CAP for 2.7 million Pakistani IDPs in 2009. The government of the United Arab Emirates signed an agreement with UNHCR in July 2009 to provide USD 30 million for relief operations in Pakistan and Qatar now features among the top twenty donors to the CERF since its inception in 2006). It should also be recalled that "*much humanitarian assistance is provided by local communities, neighbouring countries and families or friends living abroad. This is not currently quantified and remains invisible in humanitarian assistance statistics despite its importance for*

29 http://www.icrc.org/Web/Eng/siteeng0.nsf/html/annual-report-news-270509!OpenDocument accessed on 14 August 2009

30 Dipartimento Protezione Civile (2009) Sri Lanka: the Report and Peer Review of Italy (2009)

saving lives and protecting livelihoods".[31] Leveraging these non-DAC and public financial contributions adds value to DAC member contributions but the peer reviews did not find evidence of any DAC members in this cluster systematically pursuing these options.

Further consideration by the DAC and the GHD reference group

- *The forthcoming DAC study on the role of NGOs in the delivery of official ODA should consider good practice in the humanitarian sector*

- *The substantial resources flowing into the humanitarian system from the Gulf States could provide a focus for DAC outreach to these governments.*

Implementation and standards

25. In addition to the funding mechanisms described in the previous section, several donors have also developed standby mechanisms with a capability to mobilise personnel and equipment for direct bilateral action as well as secondment to multilateral agencies. The most extensive is the Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit (SHA) which has access to a pool of some 700 personnel and equipment including through the Swiss Rescue Services – a collaboration of eight Swiss organisations. Ireland was also developing a robust standby capacity under the Rapid Response Initiative and has ambitions to promote an EU-wide model. Australia, which often leads international disaster responses in poorly-served areas of Asia and the Pacific, has developed rapid response teams for direct bilateral action as well as augmenting capacities of overseas missions in times of crisis. Other donors have also formed "consortia" of civilian agencies capable of providing critical technical and logistical support to implementing partners (*e.g.* Luxembourg and Sweden). For these donors, direct bilateral action is mandated under the direct authority of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or aid agency.

26. The situation is somewhat different in Italy and Austria where other government departments have significant autonomy. Italy's bilateral response capacity is drawn from the assets of the National Civil Protection Service under the auspices of the Civil Protection Department (CPD). While it is legally obligated to inform MFA of deployments, CPD falls under the formal authority of the Presidency of the Council Of Ministers and, in practice, appears to have considerable autonomy over operational decision-making. Similarly, the Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior has a small budget to respond to international calls for disaster relief assistance and appears to be able to mobilise assets, including the Austrian Armed Forces Disaster Relief Unit, without prior reference to the MFA. The peer reviews of Italy and Austria drew attention to the need to clarify roles and ensure joined-up support to the international humanitarian system. In every case where donors have established a bilateral response capacity, peer reviews encouraged the adoption of appropriate processes and structures to ensure that directly implemented humanitarian action by these parallel agencies is principled, accountable and participatory in line with national GHD commitments.

Promoting standards

27. Standard-setting and quality management are central to improved humanitarian action. Significant financial support has been provided by DAC members, which has led to a plethora of quality management tools and initiatives in the NGO sector[32] and these initiatives appear to be coalescing around a common quality and accountability framework. For most donors, the *Sphere Humanitarian Charter and*

31 http://www.globalhumanitarianassistance.org/uploads/01-executive-summary-gha2009_0.pdf

32 For example, the Sphere Project, Humanitarian Accountability Partnership, the Emergency Capacity Building Project, People in Aid and ALNAP

Minimum Standards in Disaster Relief (SCHR, 2004)[33] have acquired seminal status as benchmarks of good implementation practice. They are often directly referenced in grant agreements and promoted among partner agencies. Tangible evidence of individual DAC members seeking to promote and apply standards include the Advanced Training in Humanitarian Action programme sponsored by Sweden and the capacity building support provided by Australia and Ireland for their key NGO partners. Some donors (e.g. Sweden) are also considering making certification against the HAP Humanitarian Accountability and Quality Standard (2007)[34] a mandatory requirement for grant funding. Overall, however, donor support for these initiatives does not yet appear to have generated a vision among DAC members, on how this support can be harnessed to provide a comprehensive quality and accountability framework for NGO partnerships and bilateral response mechanisms, i.e. support has been largely input-based.

Civil-military co-operation

28. All DAC members peer reviewed in the 2008-2009 cluster have contributed to UN peacekeeping operations and several are part of the ISAF in Afghanistan (Table 2). Several EU states have also contributed to EUFOR deployments in Bosnia, DRC and Chad/RCA while Australia has led the Regional Assistance Mission in the Solomon Islands (RAMSI). Most of these operations have occurred in tandem with humanitarian missions, which they are mandated to protect and assist. Militaries in several reviewed countries (*e.g.* Australia, Austria and Switzerland) also have a deployable disaster response capacity that has been mobilised to assist civilian relief operations in the aftermath of sudden onset disasters. In all cases, peer reviewed countries have purported to uphold the relevant UN guidelines on civil-military co-operation and several (Australia, Austria and Sweden) reported participating in joint training exercises with their defence counterparts.

Table 2. Military deployments alongside humanitarian operations in contested environments

	Military personnel deployed to UN Peace Support Operations[35]	Afghanistan[36]	
		Military personnel in ISAF	Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT)
Australia	118	1090	PRT Tarin Kowt
Austria	401	3	-
France	2198	2780	-
Ireland	51	7	-
Italy	2497	2350	PRT Herat
Luxembourg	0	9	PRT Kunduz
Norway	67	485	PRT Meymenah
Sweden	80	410	PRT Mazari Sharif
Switzerland	25	-	-

29. Despite the resolute efforts of humanitarian units within DAC member agencies to represent the concerns of the humanitarian community, the nature and extent of civil-military co-operation remains one of the most contentious issues confronting the humanitarian sector. It has been the practice of embedding

33 http://www.sphereproject.org/

34 http://www.hapinternational.org/standards.aspx

35 Includes, military peacekeepers, military observers and police, http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/pub/yir2008.pdf accessed 19th August 2009

36 Deployments at June 2009, http://www.nato.int/isaf/docu/epub/pdf/placemat_archive/isaf_placemat_090608.pdf accessed 19th August 2009

civilian aid personnel within PRTs in Afghanistan and Iraq that has fuelled greatest criticism. Five of the nine reviewed countries participate in PRTs in Afghanistan (see Table 2). Success in insulating humanitarian action from other policy objectives has usually been the subject to continuous negotiation in these circumstances and DAC members with embedded personnel have argued that this is the most effective way to ensure that humanitarian principles are indeed protected. Norway, on the other hand, maintains a rigid separation between security and development functions at embassy level, "[m]*ilitary elements of the Meymaneh PRT contribute to security and stabilisation but do not implement development projects, which is the responsibility of the Norwegian embassy in Kabul and is implemented through the World Bank, United Nations agencies, ICRC and NGOs*" (Peer review of Norway, 2008).

30. Other donors have made strident efforts to protect the integrity of humanitarian action in areas of overlap with security objectives. At a systemic level, the peer review of Sweden noted that Swedish defence policy notes that "*it is important that the co-ordination of peace support operations respects the different roles, tasks and mandates … It is therefore in the interest of all players to press for the best possible co-ordination, provided this co-operation does not have an adverse impact on how the neutrality and independence of humanitarian operations is perceived*". [37] At a strategic level, the peer review of Australia noted that the recently established Asia-Pacific Centre for Civil-Military Co-operation "*should ensure that the progress* [Australia] *has made is captured in policy and guidance within its civilian and military institutions, particularly in continuing to emphasise the primacy of civilian leadership*". At an operational level, the roundtable mechanism established under an MoU between the Italian Embassy, the UTL, an Italian NGO platform and Italian military contingents with UNIFIL in Lebanon appears to have achieved some success in establishing a dialogue on civil-military issues as well as defining respective roles and responsibilities.

Further consideration by the DAC and the GHD reference group

- *The forthcoming DAC study on the role of NGOs in the delivery of official ODA should consider the effectiveness of DAC member support to NGO quality and accountability initiatives.*

Learning and accountability

31. The last synthesis report remarked that learning and accountability practices in the humanitarian domain are an area of weakness for many DAC members. Subsequent peer reviews have tended to confirm this impression with humanitarian evaluation regimes generally found to be unsystematic with weak follow-up. For example, the peer review of France (2008) noted that "*action learning processes are not yet systematically integrated into the* [humanitarian] *programme management cycle*" and the peer review of Italy (2009) found that "*evaluation and learning systems for Italian humanitarian action remain largely undeveloped*". Encouragingly, however, several DAC members (including France and Italy) acknowledged these deficiencies, which are often attributed to lack of resources but, in reality, also reflect failure to recognise that even well-intentioned humanitarian aid can have harmful impacts by exacerbating or prolonging existing tensions. Sweden has given credence to its commitment to improve learning by establishing "*the so-called Humanitarian Academy – a learning initiative for Swedish humanitarian staff, other Sida staff and, in some cases, other interested parties*" (Peer Review of Sweden, 2009). Others have extended management response systems from the development domain to ensure that evaluation recommendations are followed-up. Nevertheless, it is apparent that donor learning in the humanitarian sector generally lags behind learning amongst development counterparts.

37 Government of Sweden (2008) National Strategy for Swedish Participation in International Peace Support and Security-building Operations, Government Communication 2007/08:51, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Stockholm

32. The DAC Guidance for Evaluating Humanitarian Assistance in Complex Emergencies (1999), for example, noted that "*humanitarian assistance evaluation requires a greater emphasis upon policy evaluation techniques than is often the case in 'conventional' aid evaluation ... First, the fluidity of the context and the complexity and interrelatedness of the response system reduces (though by no means eliminates) the value and effectiveness of project evaluation techniques which require separation of cause and effect ... Second, humanitarian assistance is presently confronted by a range of major challenges (such as whether it may prolong conflicts and how best to provide protection to civilians in conflicts) and evaluation has a key role to play in addressing such questions*". The former issue highlights the necessity to incorporate real-time assessments – with concomitant capacity for real-time adjustments to activities – into humanitarian action while the latter requires deeper integration of the principle of "do no harm" within humanitarian decision-making processes. Both issues point to the critical requirement to adjust "conventional" methodologies. They do not, however, provide the grounds for exempting humanitarian action from corporate results-based management processes.

33. Evaluations of humanitarian activities that have occurred have been largely focussed on processual issues. There has been rather less attention being paid to impact assessment at either activity or programme levels. The onset of results-based management practices in donor administrations will demand greater attention to results and impacts in the humanitarian sector in the future. Several DAC members have already taken discernible steps in this direction. The peer review of Switzerland (2009) noted that "*there are encouraging signs that a culture of results is taking root within SDC-HA*". A proposed thematic review by the Office for Development Effectiveness is expected to lead to better integration of Australian humanitarian action into corporate results and reporting frameworks. Ireland has appointed a part-time specialist to develop separate guidelines for evaluating emergency and humanitarian assistance as well as to oversee an annual monitoring and evaluation schedule for the Emergency and Recovery Section (Peer Review of Ireland, 2009). Some peer reviewed interlocutors have noted that an increased focus on results in the humanitarian sector may facilitate better linkages with downstream recovery and development assistance – particularly if impact assessments are conducted jointly with other humanitarian actors.

Further consideration by the DAC and the GHD reference group

- *The DAC Evaluation Network could consider re-vitalising and promoting the DAC Guidance for Evaluating Humanitarian Assistance in Complex Emergencies (1999) in line with broader trends towards results-based management and extend these to natural and other disaster situations*

Management of official humanitarian action

34. Division of responsibilities for humanitarian action varies between DAC members but in most cases is more closely associated with institutional responsibilities for foreign policy and diplomacy than other components of development co-operation programming. Applying the typology for organisational structures utilised in, *Managing Aid* for example, reveals a greater concentration of humanitarian responsibilities at departmental level [38] among the nine peer reviewed countries than is evident for the broader programme (see Box 2).

Box 2. Organisational models for humanitarian action of nine DAC members

38 For donor humanitarian action, Models One and Two within the Managing Aid typology are virtually indistinguishable.

Humanitarian policy formulation and programme management at departmental level

- **France**: Primary responsibility rests with Delegation a l'Action Humanitaire (DAH) within MAE - overseen by Comite interministériel de l'action humanitaire d'urgence and co-ordinated through operational arm, Groupe opérationnel interministériel.

- **Ireland**: Emergency & Recovery Section of Irish Aid within the portfolio of Minister of State for Overseas Development comprises a director plus 14 staff.

- **Italy**: Emergency Office (Office VI) within MFA-DGCS comprises 1 diplomat and 14 officers. Civil Protection Department should notify Office VI of deployments but has authority to take independent decisions.

- **Luxembourg**: Humanitarian team (2 persons) within Development Co-operation Directorate of MAE and within portfolio of Minister for Co-operation and Humanitarian Action

- **Norway**: Section for Humanitarian Affairs (15 persons) within MFA and within budget portfolios of two Ministers, i.e. Minister of Environment and International Development (for Natural Disasters appropriation) and Minister for Foreign Affairs (for General Humanitarian appropriation)

- **Switzerland**: Humanitarian Aid Department (SDC-HA) is one of five corporate domains within SDC in the MFA and has policy, programme management and implementation responsibilities. SHA is operational arm of SDC-HA and provides flexibility adjust staffing levels according to requirements.

Humanitarian policy formulation responsibilities at departmental level with programme management responsibilities wholly or partially delegated to an agency.

- **Austria**: Humanitarian Aid Unit within MFA Division VII responsible for policy and core funding. NGO Cooperation and Humanitarian Unit within ADA responsible for programme management and implementation. [Ministry of Interior has small overseas disaster response capacity]

- **Sweden**: Humanitarian section (7 persons) within MFA with responsibility for conflict prevention/peace-building aspects of foreign policy in addition to humanitarian affairs policy. Humanitarian team within Sida (14 persons) in the Department for Countries in Conflict and Post-Conflict responsible for implementation of humanitarian assistance through network of focal points in country teams and one humanitarian policy adviser within the Policy Department of Human Security.

Humanitarian policy formulation and programme management responsibilities fully delegated to agency

- **Australia**: Humanitarian and Emergencies Section (20 persons) of AusAID (autonomous unit within portfolio of Minister for Foreign Affairs) leads Whole-of-Government approach that includes Australian Defence Forces, Departments of Defence and Foreign Affairs, and others.

35. The divergent organisational models within individual donor administrations for humanitarian action and development assistance has significant implications for attempts to forge better linkages between the two types of assistance (Box 3). Furthermore, the decentralisation processes being pursued by development co-operation programmes in line with the commitments under Paris Declaration and Accra Action Agenda often appear at odds with humanitarian decision-making processes which remain rather centralised, i.e. predominantly based in donor capitals. The latter are justifiable under the GHD initiative, which calls for unearmarked and flexible funding to UN humanitarian agencies and International Red Cross and Red Crescent organisations, i.e. decisions on resource allocation are effectively delegated to agency headquarters. This contrasts markedly with the corresponding processes for development co-operation which increasingly delegate these responsibilities to donor field offices that operate through national systems. The contrasting approaches can create tensions when attempting to design appropriate programmatic linkages between donor humanitarian action and other forms of development co-operation.

36. In an attempt to overcome these difficulties, Australia has integrated humanitarian action into country programmes. The 2008 peer review noted that this "*lends itself to good links between development and humanitarian programming*" but went on to note that "*[w]hile flexibility of AusAID funding mechanisms is a strength, more needs to be done to apply innovative funding approaches consistently across all programmes*". In Sweden, relocation of the Sida humanitarian team to the Department for Countries in Conflict and Post-Conflict also offers opportunities to synergise Swedish humanitarian action with other forms of development co-operation. Italy has also demonstrated the value of consolidated humanitarian and development responsibilities within the ROSS emergency programme in southern Lebanon, which provides short-term (up to one year) support for humanitarian, recovery and development activities, tailored to the fluctuating context. Since 2008, Switzerland has piloted a single division, the Europe and Mediterranean Division, with combined responsibilities for overseeing funding from the two different credit frameworks. The pilot division was successful in steering the Swiss response to the conflict in Gaza in January 2009.

Box 3. Global Humanitarian Assistance Report 2009, Development Initiatives

Analysis of the long-term trends in humanitarian spending challenges the division between humanitarian and development assistance. Whilst in theory, humanitarian assistance is defined as being short-term, life-saving and exceptional, in practice, the majority of humanitarian assistance over the past 13 years has been spent on long-term protracted crises in countries that are classified as chronically poor'. Humanitarian and development assistance are growing closer together: the links between crisis, risk, vulnerability and the impact of disasters are increasingly visible in donor humanitarian policies, while development assistance is becoming increasingly concerned with issues around conflict and fragile states. Despite this convergence, the institutional arrangements for development and humanitarian assistance within individual donor agencies often remain separate and have different norms and practices.

37. Clear lines of leadership are critical in formulating timely and appropriate responses. A key innovation adopted by a number of donors to enhance both the timeliness and quality of emergency responses has been to vest overarching operational responsibilities with a single, nominated individual. Australia, for example, created the Humanitarian Coordinator position at senior executive level to create clarity over leadership. Switzerland has gone a step further to enshrine special authority to the Delegate of Humanitarian Aid through the Federal Act of 1976 and further detailed through the Decree on Swiss Humanitarian Action (SHA). The law solidifies the authority and autonomy of the Delegate in several areas, such as an ability to respond without prior mandatory consultation in case of sudden crisis or catastrophe or to request direct contact with the Head of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs and other departmental directors.

Cross-cutting themes

38. During crises, some groups are at greater risk than others. Pre-existing, social structures, conditions and vulnerabilities - defined in terms of gender, age, disability or social status - become accentuated during crises, which create conditions that are conducive to abuses, exploitation as well as the rapid transmission of pandemics. The requirement to gather sex-disaggregated information and address the specific needs of these vulnerable groups during crises has been widely acknowledged, although deeper analysis of social and gender issues does not always inform recovery programming. For example, the IASC Gender Handbook in Humanitarian Action (2008) notes that "*wars, natural disasters and related crisis situations have profoundly different impacts on women, girls, boys and men. They face different risks and are thus victimized in different ways*". It goes on to observe that "*equality is neither a luxury nor a matter of giving privileges to women over men, or vice versa. Gender equality is about ensuring that the protection and assistance provided in emergencies is planned and implemented in a way that benefits*

women and men equally, taking into account an analysis of their needs as well as their capacities".[39] The IASC Sub-Working Group on Gender and Humanitarian Action launched a five-point strategy to address gendered vulnerabilities (Box 4).

Box 4. The IASC Sub Working Group on Gender and Humanitarian Action

The work of the SWG focuses on the implementation of a 5 point strategy which is reviewed yearly and revised as needed. The revised "5 ways" for 2008 is:

1. Implementing standards for gender equality and gender-based violence (GBV) programming contained in guidance documents produced by SWG
2. Build capacity of humanitarian actors on gender issues, including GBV and deploy experts on gender and GBV in emergencies.
3. Get the right data by encouraging the collection and use of sex and age disaggregated data for decision-making
4. Build partnerships with NGOs for increased and more consistent gender equality programming in crises.
5. Strengthen accountability systems on gender and GBV in humanitarian action

39. UNISDR guidance also notes that "Women's responsibilities in households, communities, and as stewards of natural resources, position them well to develop strategies for adapting to changing environmental realities. Without the input of women, risk reduction and climate change adaptation strategies will not be designed for the entire community. Disaster risk reduction projects, policies and programmes will be meaningful and successful only if the interests of the whole community are taken into consideration."[40] More specifically, earlier UNISDR guidance had noted that "[s]uccessful implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action also requires the full, active and balanced participation of women and men, girls and boys"[41]. Nevertheless, a paper at the UN Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination meeting in 2008 noted that even in the highly disaster-prone region of Asia and the Pacific, women were often "left out of planning for disaster risk management and response" leading to missed opportunities to foster women's contributions to community led responses and recovery activities.[42] Strengthening gender policy guidance in the area of humanitarian action and deepening the involvement of women in all aspects of humanitarian action would therefore, appear to be imperative to commitments to good humanitarian donorship.

40. Similarly, the IASC Guidelines on HIV/AIDS Interventions in Emergency Settings noted that the precarious situation of people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) is often intensified during emergencies and they become even more vulnerable to stigmatisation, marginalisation and abuse. "*Recent humanitarian crises reveal a complex interaction between the HIV/AIDS epidemic, food insecurity and weakened governance. The interplay of these forces must be borne in mind when responding to emergencies*".[43] At

39http://ochaonline.un.org/HumanitarianIssues/GenderEquality/KeyDocuments/IASCGenderHandbook/tabid/1384/language/en-US/Default.aspx

40 UNISDR (2008) *Gender Perspectives: Integrating Disaster Risk Reduction into Climate Change Adaptation: Good Practices and Lessons Learned*, United Nations, Geneva

41 UNISDR (2007) *Gender Perspective: Working Together for Disaster Risk Reduction: Good Practices and Lessons Learned*, United Nations, Geneva

42 UN RCM Thematic Working Group on Environment & Disaster Management, *Gender, Environment and Disaster management in Asia and the Pacific*, Bangkok, September 2008

43 http://data.unaids.org/Publications/External-Documents/IASC_Guidelines-Emergency-Settings_en.pdf

the same time, lawlessness and population mobility often associated with crises expose new populations to situations in which HIV/AIDS may flourish. "*Many will feel removed or free from the normal socio-cultural constraints on their behaviour and be separated from their family or community members who uphold sanctions on norms of behaviour*". But there may also be a positive association between crises and HIV/AIDS as a report by ASCI noted that "*conflict may in some instances be a protective factor against HIV, when low prevalence populations are less mobile and have increased access to humanitarian support and HIV prevention, care and treatment*"[44]. The same report found, however, that the risk factors increased during post-crisis transitions when low and high prevalence communities into contact again at the same time that humanitarian support begins to wane and gaps in national health services re-emerge.

41. Nevertheless, the focus on cross-cutting issues among operational agencies has been less evident in donor humanitarian action. While the GHD initiative did not contain explicit commitments, its objective "*to alleviate suffering and maintain human dignity*" as well as the GHD commitment to the "*protection of civilians and those no longer taking part in hostilities*" (see Annex A) does impart a responsibility on DAC members to consider the vulnerabilities of "special needs groups". However, DAC peer reviews reveal that consideration of the specific vulnerabilities of these groups within the context of humanitarian action is highly variable among DAC members. For some, there appears to be scant guidance at all on incorporating the special needs of women, children, disabled people or people living with HIV/AIDS and, as a consequence, they seem to barely feature in humanitarian decision-making. For others (*e.g.* Sweden and Italy), corporate guidance is reported to be applicable although, in practice, the exceptional circumstances of crisis situations appear to provide leeway in their actual application.

42. For a few donors, however, the peculiarities of crisis contexts have provided the grounds for explicit policy guidance. Several donors have developed specific guidance on these themes (*e.g.* Switzerland and Ireland on gender issues, Netherlands and Ireland on HIV/AIDS, Italy on children and, in the future, Australia on disability). Others have incorporated commitments within their humanitarian policies. For example, Norway's humanitarian policy (2008) states that "*Norway require its partners to ensure that the needs of girls and women are taken into account in all humanitarian activities, on a par with the needs of boys and men*". In a similar vein, Ireland's Humanitarian Relief Policy (2009) states that "*in responding to need, Irish Aid recognises that individual vulnerabilities must be taken into account. Special attention is therefore paid to the differing needs of, for example, women, children, elderly, sick or disabled people*".

43. At the time of the peer review, Ireland was in the process of finalizing two sets of guidelines to animate these commitments - on gender and on HIV/AIDS in humanitarian action respectively. These will be incorporated into training programs for staff dealing with humanitarian issues as well as being reflected in funding proposal formats. Switzerland was also developing a gender and humanitarian action training package to activate commitments to gender-responsiveness in humanitarian action. Norway has given expression to this commitment, *inter alia*, through sponsorship of an international conference as well as a training programme for Norwegian NGOs on gender in humanitarian action and funding support to the UN Gender Standby Capacity mechanism (GenCap). Australia has "*actively engaged with the emerging but under-resourced issue of sexual and reproductive health in emergencies through its multi-year funding to the regional SPRINT training initiative*".[45] (Peer Review of Australia, 2008)

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44 AIDS, Security & Conflict Initiative (2009) HIV/AIDS, Security and Conflict: New Realities, New Responses, UNAIDS and Clingendael Institute, Netherlands, http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWFiles2009.nsf/FilesByRWDocUnidFilename/MYAI-7W63UH-full_report.pdf/$File/full_report.pdf accessed on 27 September 2009

45 The Sexual and Reproductive Health Programme in Crisis and Post-Crisis Situations in East, South-East Asia and the Pacific (SPRINT) is co-ordinated by the International Planned Parenthood Federation.

Further consideration by the DAC and the GHD reference group

- *The GHD group may wish to consider how donors can more systematically support the focus of operational agencies on the specific needs of vulnerable groups. The DAC Gender Network could consider developing guidance for donor support to better integrate gender considerations into humanitarian action, in collaboration with the GHD group, as follow-up to planned work on aid focused on gender equality, which is expected to include analysis of aid in humanitarian situations, and situations of fragility and conflict.*

ANNEX A: PRINCIPLES AND GOOD PRACTICE OF HUMANITARIAN DONORSHIP

Objectives and definition of humanitarian action

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

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

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

General principles

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Good practices in donor financing, management and accountability

(a) Funding

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

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

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

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

(b) Promoting standards and enhancing implementation

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

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

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

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

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

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

(c) Learning and accountability

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

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

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

ANNEX B: PEER REVIEW SCHEDULE

Reviewed Country	GHD-based Humanitarian Annex to DAC Peer Reviews			
	1st Generation PR	HA Field Visit	2nd Generation PR	HA Field Visit
DAC members				
1. Norway	Nov 2004	-	Oct 2008	-
2. Australia	Dec 2004	Cambodia	Dec 2008	Indonesia
3. New Zealand	Dec 2010[46]			
4. Sweden	May 2005	Kenya	June 2009	Mozambique
5. Switzerland	June 2005	Bosnia	Oct 2009	-
6. Belgium	Oct 2005	-	June 2010	
7. Germany	Dec 2005	Ethiopia	Oct 2010	
8. Portugal	April 2006	-	Nov 2010	
9. United Kingdom	May 2006	Zambia	April 2010	
10. Netherlands	Sept 2006	Uganda		
11. Greece	Nov 2006	-		
12. USA	Dec 2006	Indonesia		
13. Denmark	June 2007	Nepal		
14. EC	July 2007	Pakistan		
15. Canada	Oct 2007	-		
16. Spain	Nov 2007	-		
17. Finland	Dec 2007	-		
18. France	May 2008	Central African Republic		
19. Luxembourg	June 2008	-		
20. Ireland	March 2009	-		
21. Austria	April 2009	-		
22. Italy	Nov 2009	Lebanon		
23. Japan	May 2010	-		
Non-DAC members				
24. Czech Republic	Feb 2007	n/a[47]		
25. Republic of Korea	Sept 2008	n/a[48]		

46 New Zealand had not endorsed the GHD principles and good practices at the time of the last peer review in 2005.

47 Humanitarian elements of Czech development co-operation were not peer reviewed.

48 Humanitarian Aid Advisor did not take part in HQ visit. Nevertheless, GHD indicators were applied as de facto benchmarks by examiners.