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Humanitarian response to natural disasters

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International Development Committee

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Footnotes
In the footnotes of this Report, references to oral evidence are indicated by ‘Q’ followed by the question number. References to written evidence are indicated by the page number as in ‘Ev 12’.
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Summary

The frequency and intensity of natural disasters is increasing, as is the number of people they affect. Consequently disasters can halt progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and wipe out development gains which have been achieved. Given that unmet humanitarian needs already exist and overall need is increasing, the Secretary of State should commit to increasing the proportion of DFID’s spending accounted for by humanitarian assistance in line with the Department’s overall rising budget. DFID should use its humanitarian funding to encourage innovation and high standards in the humanitarian sector, rewarding exemplary work with further funding, and withdrawing funding to organisations whose work is inadequate.

Humanitarian actors and development practitioners need to stop treating natural disasters as one-off events and instead consider them as an integral part of the context in which they operate. There is a pressing need for more proactive involvement in disaster-prone countries, including increased investment in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR). DFID and other donors need to provide a sustained increase in resources to allow development actors to mainstream disaster risk into their programmes, and to enable humanitarian actors to expand their work on disaster preparedness and planning. Humanitarian and development actors need to work together to plan for the transitions between relief, recovery, reconstruction and development, recognising that these are rarely distinct phases.

The international humanitarian system has significantly improved the speed and effectiveness of its responses over the past decade, but serious shortcomings remain. The United Nations cluster coordination system, tried for the first time in response to the Pakistan earthquake, had some benefits, but demonstrated that UN reform has a long way to go if the UN system is to be able to respond as effectively as it should to disasters. Reform efforts have focused on donors and the UN; they must do more to include the non-governmental sector and Red Cross/ Red Crescent movement. More effort must be made to access and take account of the views of populations vulnerable to and affected by disasters at all stages of humanitarian response.

DFID and other humanitarian actors need to work hard to maintain political and public support for humanitarianism, recognising that the international humanitarian system will only ever be as effective as political decision-makers will allow.
Background and acknowledgements

Characterised as a “year of disasters”, 1 2005 opened with the unprecedented humanitarian response to the aftermath of the Indian Ocean Tsunami Disaster, 2 and closed with the massive international effort to avert a humanitarian disaster in the wake of the South Asian Earthquake. 3 These natural disasters, which killed hundreds of thousands of people and affected millions more, generated exceptional levels of personal philanthropy and international aid, focusing the spotlight of global attention on the policies and practices of international humanitarianism. The Department for International Development (DFID) is the world’s second largest bilateral humanitarian donor, spending £437 million in 2004/5, 4 and is acknowledged as a leader in the sector. 5 The Department has announced its intention to increase its work in fragile states, where “humanitarian assistance will remain a key instrument for meeting the basic needs of the most vulnerable,” 6 and to invest in work on social safety nets and social protection, which have important links with humanitarian assistance.

In January 2006, the International Development Committee (IDC) decided to undertake an inquiry into Humanitarian Response to Natural Disasters. We issued a call for evidence in March, and subsequently received written memoranda from 26 individuals and organisations with expertise relating to the inquiry’s terms of reference. During June and July we held 8 oral evidence sessions in Westminster, taking evidence from representatives of the media, NGOs, research institutes, the Disasters Emergency Committee, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the World Food Programme (WFP), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the European Commission Directorate General for Humanitarian Affairs (ECHO), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance, Jan Egeland, Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, United Nations Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), the Rt Hon Hilary Benn MP, Secretary of State for International Development and DFID officials.

In June, members of the Committee visited DFID’s humanitarian operations unit (the Conflict, Humanitarian and Security Department Operations Team (CHASE-OT)). Later that month, we visited Pakistan to examine the international response to the South Asian Earthquake. We would like to express our thanks to the Government of Pakistan (GoP),

2 The Indian Ocean Tsunami Disaster was caused by an undersea earthquake, measuring between 9.1 and 9.3 on the Richter scale, which occurred at 00:58:53 UTC on December 26, 2004 with an epicentre off the west coast of Sumatra, Indonesia. The earthquake triggered a series of tsunamis that spread throughout the Indian Ocean, killing large numbers of people and inundating coastal communities. Initial estimates put the worldwide death toll at over 275,000 with thousands of others missing.
3 The South Asian earthquake which occurred at 03:50:38 GMT on October 8, registered 7.6 on the Richter Scale and had its epicentre in Pakistan-administered Kashmir. As of 8 November, the Pakistani government’s official death toll was 73,276, while officials say nearly 1,400 people died in Indian-administered Kashmir and three people in Afghanistan.
4 This figure includes DFID’s bilateral (£344 million) and multilateral (£93 million) expenditure [Ev 126].
5 Ev 153 [British Red Cross], Ev 169 [Oxfam]
6 Ev 127 [DFID]
and to the staff of DFID and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), who facilitated our visit, and to all those who took the time to meet us. We would also like to thank everyone else who contributed their experience and expertise to our inquiry, in particular to our witnesses and to the Humanitarian Policy Group (HPG) of the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) who provided specialist advice to the Committee during the course of the inquiry.
1. Introduction

1. The number of natural disasters occurring worldwide is increasing, as is the number of people such disasters affect. The effects of natural disasters are particularly severe in Least Developed Countries (LDCs) where early warning systems are often inadequate, infrastructure is frequently poor and social protection mechanisms are usually absent. If the impact of natural disasters continues to increase, there is potential for progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to be halted, and indeed for all the progress which LDCs have made over the past half-century to be wiped out. We heard evidence that climate change, increasing population concentration and other processes of global change are likely to sustain the trend of natural disasters occurring with increasing frequency and intensity.

2. In response to the increasing impact of disasters worldwide, levels of international humanitarian assistance have grown. Over the past 10 years, such assistance has almost tripled, increasing from US$4.6 billion in 1995 to US$12.4 billion in 2005, or 13% of total official development assistance. This increasing volume of humanitarian assistance is being provided by a growing range of donors: the independent humanitarian aid monitoring programme Global Humanitarian Assistance (GHA) reports that 99 governments and 2 intergovernmental organisations contributed to the response to the Indian Ocean Tsunami Disaster, 13 of which had never previously made a recorded contribution to a disaster. Donors are also seeking ways to extract greater value from the money they provide by prioritising funding, financing critical gaps and improving the speed with which they disburse funds. Welcome as the extra funding has been, there is some concern that a proportion of this is money that would otherwise have been dedicated to delivering poverty reduction strategies and progress towards the Millennium Development Goals.

3. The increase in available resources has contributed to an exponential increase in the number of organisations working in the area. Jan Egeland, the UN Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC), told us that

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7 A recent World Bank report stated that the number of natural disasters had risen from fewer than 100 in 1975 to more than 400 in 2005. The cost of dealing with natural disasters has also risen; during the 1990s disaster response cost an estimated $652 billion, which is 15 times more than in the 1950s (World Bank Independent Evaluation Group, ‘Hazards of Nature, Risks to development: An IEG Evaluation of World Bank Assistance for Natural Disasters’ (2006)). Mr Jan Egeland told us “seven times more people are struck by natural disaster than by conflict” [Q 275]. See also Ev 181 and Ev 197.

8 On 29 April 1991, Bangladesh was hit by a cyclone which caused 140,000 deaths. Hurricane Andrew which struck the Florida coast in 1992, and was stronger than the 1991 Bangladesh cyclone, led to only forty deaths, directly and indirectly.


10 As discussed in more detail in Chapter 2, increasing urbanisation, the HIV/AIDS epidemic and conflict are factors which are increasing vulnerability to natural disasters.

11 Ev 149 [DFID]

12 Figures from Global Humanitarian Assistance, based on preliminary data released by the OECD DAC in April 2006 (see www.globalhumanitarianassistance.org).

13 Over half of the total pledged was provided by just five donors (USA, Australia, Germany, EC and Japan) [Development Initiatives, ‘The International Community’s funding of the Tsunami emergency and relief: analysis of overall funding flows: Final Draft’ (6 March 2006)].
whereas 15 years ago there were 100 agencies which would respond to an humanitarian emergency, today there were over 500.\textsuperscript{14} This has increased the challenges of coordinating humanitarian activities and ensuring adherence to commonly agreed standards. Some commentators have raised concerns about the practices of ‘briefcase’ NGOs, created to respond to specific problems and often to particular funding opportunities.\textsuperscript{15}

4. As the humanitarian sector has grown, it has faced numerous challenges, and in recent years these have accelerated. As the United Nations Office of the Coordinator of Humanitarian Affairs (UN-OCHA) comments in a review of its work in 2006:

“...The last three years have been turbulent years for the humanitarian community — Afghanistan, followed by Iraq, the Darfur crisis in Sudan and then the Indian Ocean Tsunami and South Asia Earthquake[...] The humanitarian response system has coped with these major events and we have managed to save lives and mitigate suffering, but these events also have changed the humanitarian environment in which we work. Each of these major crises has in its own way tested the humanitarian response system; they have challenged perceptions of humanitarian assistance as impartial, they have challenged the appropriateness of our response and they have challenged our capacity to respond.”\textsuperscript{16}

The natural disasters that were tackled during 2005 demonstrated many of the longstanding issues affecting the sector (such as coordination between humanitarian actors and ensuring adherence to agreed standards), as well as confronting it with new problems (such as how to deal with the rapid increase in individual philanthropy generated by the high profile crises). These challenges, both old and new, were exacerbated by the scale of the natural disasters which occurred during 2005, and also by the fact that they occurred at a time when the humanitarian sector was already heavily committed in its responses to emergencies elsewhere in the world.

5. Inevitably much of the evidence we have received has focused on the high profile crises that occurred during 2005. Yet such large-scale disasters, which attract a high degree of public attention and consequently adequate or even excessive funding, remain the exception rather than the rule. At one point over 500 humanitarian agencies were operating in the Indonesian province of Aceh in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean Tsunami Disaster, and several humanitarian agencies received more in financial donations than they had the capacity to spend on the ground.\textsuperscript{17} This situation created its own problems, but these were not typical of those faced by humanitarian agencies in their work. As representatives from non-governmental organisations (NGOs) emphasised in their oral evidence to the Committee, humanitarian responses to natural disasters are more commonly constrained by a lack of public attention, deficiencies in funding and too few agencies and staff available to work on the ground.\textsuperscript{18} Jan Egeland has repeatedly

\textsuperscript{14} Q 276 Mr Jan Egeland, UN-OCHA
\textsuperscript{15} UN-NGLS Civil Society Observer, ‘NGLS interviews World Vision International’ (January 2005).
\textsuperscript{17} The Economist, ‘Asia’s tsunami: Relief but little rebuilding’ (20 December 2005)
\textsuperscript{18} Q 35 Mr Toby Porter, Save the Children; Q 43 Ms Jane Cocking, Oxfam
underlined the inequity of responses to different disasters as one of the chief problems facing the humanitarian sector (we return to this issue in chapter 5). Bearing this in mind, we have sought in this inquiry to consider the issues affecting humanitarian responses to natural disasters generally, and to avoid an undue emphasis on the high profile crises of 2005.

6. In his oral evidence to the Committee, Jan Egeland said that the international humanitarian sector had made significant progress in the speed and effectiveness of its responses to disasters over the past decade. Other witnesses concurred. In recent years however, widespread acknowledgement of continuing shortcomings of the sector has led to a number of initiatives for reform, which have aimed to improve the timeliness, appropriateness and equity of international responses to humanitarian disasters. Proposals for reform have focused on: the quality, speed and effectiveness of international response capacity and leadership; the level, mechanisms and equity of financing; and, the measurement of needs and of collective performance. DFID has been instrumental in pushing forward the international humanitarian reform agenda, not least through its advocacy for the Good Humanitarian Donorship initiative. The Secretary of State for International Development, the Rt Hon Hilary Benn MP, has been particularly active in promoting reforms since 15 December 2004, when he launched his own agenda for reform of the international humanitarian system.

7. Under the International Development Act 2002, DFID is authorised to provide humanitarian assistance to alleviate the effects of natural or man-made disasters or other emergencies. DFID leads the UK’s response to humanitarian disasters through bilateral funding to non-governmental organisations (NGOs), multilateral funding including to the European Commission and United Nations agencies, and direct operational, technical and logistical support. Other government departments including the FCO and Ministry of Defence (MOD) support DFID’s humanitarian work.

8. The architecture of DFID’s own humanitarian policy has developed and clarified during 2006, with the publication of a new Disaster Risk Reduction Policy Paper in March 2006, a new Humanitarian Policy in July 2006 and specific humanitarian objectives included in the July 2006 White Paper. In our examination of DFID’s humanitarian work during this inquiry, we have taken account of the findings of a National Audit Office report on DFID’s humanitarian policy, published in March 2003, and of the July 2006 report of the OECD

19 Minutes of evidence taken before the International Development Committee, 9 February 2005, Q 1 Mr Jan Egeland, available online at http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200405/cmselect/cmintdev/328/5020901.htm.
20 Q 275 Mr Jan Egeland
21 Ev 155 [British Red Cross]; Q 92 Ms Afshan Khan, UNICEF
22 See p.45 for details.
23 Ev 131 [DFID]
Development Assistance Committee Peer Review of the UK, which included a specific focus on the UK’s humanitarian work.25

9. This report is structured as follows. Chapter 2 briefly outlines the key concepts which relate to natural disasters and humanitarian assistance. This is followed by an examination of initial disaster response in the UK in Chapter 3. Chapters 4, 5 and 6 respectively, consider the issues which have been targeted for reform in the humanitarian sector: coordination and leadership; financing; and, measuring needs and performance. Chapter 7 addresses key operational issues facing humanitarian agencies working in the field, and Chapter 8 examines work on disaster risk reduction (DRR). Chapter 9 draws together our findings on the relationship between development assistance and humanitarian aid.

Understanding disasters

10. In recent years, the IDC has undertaken several inquiries which have addressed issues relating to humanitarian assistance.\(^{26}\) Several of our inquiries, including those into Darfur, Iraq and Afghanistan have considered the role of human action in creating humanitarian crises.\(^{27}\) This was also a theme of our report on *Conflict and Development: Peacebuilding and Post-Conflict Reconstruction*.\(^{28}\) Having recently scrutinised a number of ‘man-made’ humanitarian crises, we decided to limit the broad terms of reference of our inquiry into humanitarian assistance by focusing specifically on responses to natural disasters. The case for this restricted focus was reinforced by the knowledge that seven times more people are affected by natural disasters than by man-made disasters, and that this proportion is rising.\(^{29}\)

Defining disasters

11. We are aware, however, that the distinction between natural and man-made disasters is largely an artificial one. Most disasters can be understood as the result of natural hazards combined with human vulnerability. Natural hazards can be either weather-related (including storms, drought and flooding) or geophysical (including earthquakes, volcanoes and landslides). Vulnerability can be defined as “the extent to which a person or group is likely to be affected by adverse circumstances”.\(^{30}\) The vulnerability of populations to disasters is created at various scales.\(^{31}\) At the broadest, global scale, there are root causes of vulnerability such as poor governance, civil war and demographic change. At the national and regional scale there are dynamic pressures that create vulnerability, such as structures of land tenure, economic policies, epidemic disease and urbanisation. At a local level there are unsafe conditions such as unsustainable land use, chronic hunger and poorly constructed buildings. Crucially therefore, a natural hazard will only lead to a disaster if it affects a population which is vulnerable to it. Furthermore, the extent of the impact of the disaster will be determined by the ability of the population to anticipate, cope with and recover from it: capacities often referred to collectively as ‘resilience’. It can therefore be argued that there are no purely natural disasters; human and natural elements are always inextricably linked.

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29 Q 275 Mr Jan Egeland


12. For the purposes of this report however, we have understood the term natural disaster according to the United Nations Development Programme’s (UNDP) definition as: “a serious disruption triggered by a natural hazard causing human, material, economic or environmental losses, which exceed the ability of those affected to cope.”\(^{32}\) Although we acknowledge that the boundaries between categories are frequently blurred, we have focused primarily on natural disasters as distinct from disasters triggered by human conflict, or ‘complex emergencies’ resulting from a combination of conflict and natural hazards.

13. Another distinction commonly made in the field of natural disaster response is between rapid-onset and slow-onset disasters. Both the Indian Ocean Tsunami Disaster and the South Asian Earthquake can be characterised as rapid-onset disasters. This classification is used to refer to hazards which arise suddenly, or whose occurrence cannot be predicted far in advance, including for example, earthquakes, cyclones and floods. Slow-onset disasters, by contrast are those resulting from hazards which can take months or years to generate a disaster. The most common example of a slow-onset disaster is drought, although the HIV/AIDS epidemic has also been seen as a slow-onset disaster.\(^{33}\)

14. If, as discussed above, natural disasters are understood as the result of natural hazards combined with human vulnerability, it is evident once again that the distinction between slow-and rapid-onset disasters is somewhat artificial. The socio-economic processes that make populations vulnerable to ‘rapid-onset’ disasters often occur over a period of years, while sudden changes in the local living conditions of populations in areas affected by ‘slow-onset’ disasters often precipitate individual experiences of disaster. Nonetheless the distinction is often useful and frequently employed within the humanitarian sector. In practice, humanitarian responses that have been developed to deal with slow-onset disasters often differ from those used in the context of rapid-onset disasters. The distinction between slow-and rapid-onset disasters is therefore one that we employ in this report.

**The relationship between humanitarian response and development assistance**

15. The term humanitarian response refers to actions taken in order:

“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”.\(^{34}\)

Fundamentally, most humanitarian action depends on national and local authorities giving their consent for a humanitarian presence and allowing access to affected populations.\(^{35}\) There is a widespread consensus that humanitarian actions should be rooted in a set of

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\(^{33}\) Stabinski, Pelley, Jacob, Long and Leaning ‘Reframing HIV and AIDS’, (2003), British Medical Journal 327, pp.1101-1103

\(^{34}\) Ev 139 [DFID]

\(^{35}\) UN Security Council authorised interventions are an exception to this.
humanitarian principles, including humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence. These have been codified in International Humanitarian Law and the framework of principles developed by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). The application of humanitarian principles, however, has often been contested with different actors interpreting them in different ways.

16. The traditional boundary between humanitarian and development actors used to be drawn according to a distinction between acute needs, necessitating an emergency response, and chronic needs, to be addressed through long term programming. Historically there has been a conceptual, cultural and operational divide between the humanitarian and development sectors. However, the move towards conceptualising disasters as the product of natural hazards combined with human vulnerability has blurred this divide. This conceptualisation has shown that the poverty-related needs addressed by development actors often make populations vulnerable to disasters. The extent to which development actors take account of populations’ disaster vulnerability and focus on disaster risk reduction, is variable. The UNDP has argued that the development community “generally continues to view disasters as exceptional natural events that interrupt normal development and that can be managed through humanitarian actions”.

17. Humanitarian interventions in the aftermath of a disaster often address the acute manifestation of chronic needs which had previously been addressed by development actors. Efforts by humanitarian actors to address acute needs often impact on prospects for the reduction of chronic needs, the long term aim of development actors. The extent to which humanitarian actors take account of the long term impacts of their interventions is also variable. Like development actors, humanitarian actors have had a tendency to treat natural disasters as atypical interruptions, rather than seeing them in their developmental context. Humanitarian actors have struggled in particular with crises related to chronic vulnerability such as the 2005 food crisis in Niger and the 2006 drought in the Greater Horn of Africa.

18. There is an increasing acknowledgement of the blurring of the boundary between development assistance and humanitarian responses, particularly in relation to slow-onset disasters. This seems to be partly related to the increased attention being paid by development actors to targeting extreme poverty and chronically poor people, and addressing exclusion, vulnerability, equity and rights issues. Development funds allocated to mitigating or preventing disasters will strengthen poverty reduction strategies, where failing to act may undermine or destroy them. The move towards seeing disasters as a

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37 See footnote 32.
38 According to the Humanitarian Policy Group at the ODI, questions “need to be asked about the quality of early-warning and assessment analysis; the capacity of humanitarian actors to respond; the appropriateness of the proposed responses and the preparedness of development actors for what should have been a predictable crisis”. HPG ‘Humanitarian Issues in Niger: An HPG Briefing Note’, (2005), London: ODI, available online at http://www.odi.org.uk/hpg/papers/HPGBriefingNote4.pdf
39 “The large-scale emergency livelihoods programming that the situation demanded was one that that neither humanitarian nor development actors were able to supply.” HGP ‘Saving lives through livelihoods: critical gaps in the response to the drought in the Greater Horn of Africa: An HPG Briefing Note’, (2006), London: ODI.
development issue has led to a renewed focus on the interface between the fields of humanitarianism and development assistance, and the extent to which they can be complementary. The effectiveness with which development and humanitarianism work together is particularly crucial for organisations such as DFID, which are engaged in both fields. Although it is important to acknowledge and retain the important differences and distinctions between the fields of humanitarianism and development, there remains scope for more effective interaction, lesson learning and cooperation at both policy and operational levels. We return to this subject in Chapter 9.
The UK’s initial disaster response

19. The speed, nature and scale of the UK’s response to a humanitarian crisis is determined by the interaction of various actors, which occurs within the context of wider factors such as the availability of funding and extent of political will. In this chapter we examine the roles of the key actors who shape the UK’s response to natural disasters. In subsequent chapters we consider many of the factors which shape the context in which they operate. As discussed previously, the HMG response to humanitarian disasters is led by DFID, with support from the FCO and MOD. In the non-governmental sector there are numerous UK-based NGOs engaged in the provision of humanitarian assistance. Thirteen of the most prominent humanitarian NGOs are members of the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC), an umbrella organisation which provides a mechanism for coordinating fundraising for large-scale disasters and facilitating inter-agency cooperation. The nature and extent of the coverage of natural disasters by media organisations plays a key role in determining the UK response to humanitarian crises by shaping the public’s reaction to disasters. The private sector is becoming increasingly involved in the provision of humanitarian assistance.

The role of DFID

20. Within DFID, humanitarian affairs are dealt with primarily through the Conflict, Humanitarian and Security Department (CHASE) and the Africa Conflict and Humanitarian Unit (ACHU). Responsibility for dealing with slow-onset and recurrent natural disasters rests in the first instance with DFID country offices. DFID’s Operations Team (CHASE OT) is responsible for 24-hour monitoring of emerging disasters, initial response to rapid-onset natural disasters and providing advice on request to ACHU and DFID country offices on chronic disasters and complex emergencies.

21. A wide range of factors were identified in oral and written evidence as affecting the scale and nature of DFID’s response to particular disasters. According to the evidence we received, DFID’s decisions are usually based primarily on assessments of unmet needs carried out on the ground by key actors (including in some cases DFID staff). We return to the issue of needs assessment in the humanitarian sector in Chapter 6. Other factors inevitably have an influence on DFID’s decision to respond, including the extent of attention paid by other actors (including the media, NGOs and other national governments), and national and global politics.

22. The evidence we saw regarding the operations of CHASE-OT impressed us. The efficacy of the 24-hour emergency monitoring system was clearly demonstrated by the rapid and effective response which DFID was able to mount on 26 December 2004 following the Indian Ocean Tsunami Disaster. Few other organisations were able to respond as quickly, as many staff were absent for the Christmas holiday. In Pakistan several different interlocutors, including representatives of the Government of Pakistan (GoP), commended the fact that the UK search and rescue teams had been the first to

41 The current members of the DEC are: ActionAid, British Red Cross, CAFOD, Care International UK, Christian Aid, Concern, Help the Aged, Islamic Relief, Merlin, Oxfam, Save the Children, Tearfund and World Vision.
arrive in country following the South Asian Earthquake. The UK’s High Commissioner to Pakistan told us that the inclusion of women in the search and rescue teams had been an important move culturally.

23. Speed is of the essence for successful search and rescue missions, but obviously the quality and effectiveness of the initial response is just as, if not more, important. The evidence we received about the quality and effectiveness of DFID’s initial disaster responses was uniformly positive. The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), an NGO which was one of DFID’s key implementing partners for the provision of emergency shelter in Pakistan, told us in their written submission:

“DFID decided to second staff to strengthen [provision of emergency shelter]… which quickly improved the situation. A caseload of one million people whose emergency shelter delivery was delayed for two months because of lack of coordination were addressed and could be dealt with in a systematic manner… DFID played a very proactive role in the coordination of the emergency phase… DFID’s decisions and actions saved many lives at a crucial time.”

24. This extract makes reference to one of CHASE-OT’s key strategies in its initial response to a disaster, that of seconding both its core staff and other specialists from its databases, to fill critical gaps in capacity in UN agencies, and to provide surge capacity for DFID offices. It is regrettable in this case that the UN did not identify the gap in its capacity sooner; we will return to this issue in Chapter 4. Given the problems of coordination and leadership which are currently evident amongst UN agencies, we applaud the effectiveness of DFID’s secondment strategy.

25. We saw that the UK’s rapid provision of assistance following the South Asian Earthquake had done more to raise the profile of DFID in Pakistan than many years of long term programmes had done. We conclude that nationally identified search and rescue teams are among the most effective forms of “flagging” available to bilateral donors. However such expenditure should not be at the expense of long term assistance for disaster preparedness which will have much more success in reducing fatalities and injuries when natural disasters occur.

26. The reputational benefit that DFID can derive from the excellent work of CHASE-OT should not be limited to partner countries, however. At a time when DFID has secured a significant increase in its total budget, as a result of G8 commitments during 2005, Sir Suma Chakrabarti, the Permanent Secretary, has acknowledged the need for the Department to sustain the UK public’s commitment to DFID’s agenda.43 We were concerned to hear of evidence that the UK public remains largely unaware of the key role that DFID plays in the UK response to humanitarian disasters, instead seeing NGOs as the main actors.44 In fact a significant proportion of funding for NGOs working in the humanitarian sector is provided by DFID, which relies on UN agencies, the Red Cross/

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42 Ev 220-222 [Norwegian Refugee Council]
44 Comments made during a private seminar on Humanitarian Response to Natural Disasters held by the IDC, 25 May 2006.
Red Crescent Movement and NGOs to disburse much of its humanitarian funding and manage much of its project work on the ground.\footnote{Ev 127 and 129 [DFID]}

27. We think that the work of CHASE-OT has the potential to be one effective means of creating and maintaining public commitment to DFID’s work. Consequently, we commend both the decision to include information on CHASE-OT’s response to the South Asian Earthquake in the Department’s 2006 Annual Report, and the new initiative of publishing monthly reports on DFID’s humanitarian work on the Departmental website.\footnote{See http://www.dfid.gov.uk/emergencies/humanitarian_update.asp.} \textbf{We recommend that DFID gives further thought to ways in which positive publicity for the Department can be gained from promoting the work of CHASE-OT more widely, potentially through work with the DEC and media organisations.}

28. One further issue relating to the work of CHASE-OT is the effectiveness of the transition between their work in the initial emergency phase of humanitarian response, and the later recovery and reconstruction phases, which are usually undertaken by DFID’s existing country teams. We return to this issue in Chapter 9.

\section*{The role of NGOs}

29. A large number of UK-based NGOs and UK branches of international NGOs (INGOs) are involved to some extent in humanitarian response to natural disasters. Their submissions to our inquiry reflect the considerable scope and variety of their work, which includes advocacy,\footnote{DFID told us that NGOs and INGOs play a useful role by lobbying to raise awareness of less well publicised emergencies [Ev 129].} policy development and the provision of assistance on the ground. During our visit to Pakistan we had the opportunity to visit water and sanitation projects being delivered by Oxfam near Muzaffarabad, the capital of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), and villages near Mansehra in North West Frontier Province (NWFP) where the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) had provided emergency shelter. We also met representatives of Care International, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), ActionAid, HelpAge International, the ICRC and Voluntary Services Overseas (VSO) working in the Muzaffarabad area. We were impressed by many of the examples we heard of the humanitarian work undertaken NGOs.

30. We were told that the number of NGOs involved in humanitarian response to natural disasters is constantly increasing.\footnote{Q 276 Mr Jan Egeland} The origins of many humanitarian NGOs lie in the response of an individual or group to a specific disaster. Each new humanitarian disaster therefore has the potential to spawn new humanitarian NGOs. The work done by these new organisations can be valuable, but they face a number of challenges: they may find it difficult to secure donor funding without a proven track record of providing assistance; they often lack connection to existing networks of humanitarian actors through which advice and best practice can be disseminated; their staff are often inexperienced; and they are often unaware of the principles and standards which have been developed within the humanitarian sector.\footnote{Q 34 Mr Toby Porter; Q 48 Mr Marcus Oxley, Tearfund; Q 290 Mr Jan Egeland} Nicholas Stockton from the Humanitarian Accountability
Partnership — International, told us that it was easier for medium-sized agencies to provide donors with good value for their money.\(^\text{50}\)

31. Some witnesses expressed fears that such organisations (described to us variously as “phoenix”, “cowboy” and “briefcase” NGOs) could hinder the work of more experienced NGOs and damage the reputation of humanitarian actors more generally. In the worst case, entirely fraudulent NGOs had been established to take advantage of the extensive funding available in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean Tsunami Disaster.\(^\text{51}\) However, Nicholas Stockton argued that aside from outright fraud, there was no evidence of the detrimental effects of ‘briefcase NGOs’.\(^\text{52}\) Paul Harvey, Research Fellow in the Humanitarian Policy Group (HPG) at the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) also cautioned against squashing the humanitarian instinct embodied by such organisations. He stressed that humanitarianism was a basic human impulse which should be encouraged, and warned that efforts to ensure the professionalism of the humanitarian sector should not undermine the very values which generated it in the first place.\(^\text{53}\)

32. We conclude that, unfortunately, competition for funds within the humanitarian sector discourages established NGOs from supporting newly emerging organisations. Although as one witness from a large UK-based NGO told us “in most situations there are too few humanitarian actors”, new NGOs tend to be seen as potential competitors rather than prospective partners to be nurtured. We accept that there may be instances in which newly created humanitarian NGOs may deliberately or inadvertently create problems. However, we see the increase in the number of organisations engaged in humanitarian work, particularly from the South, as a positive expression of the importance of humanitarianism, provided there is a clear commitment to partnership working and aligning their work with the priorities of local communities. Quite often such new NGOs may tap into new sources of funds or bring access to resources in-kind such as professional skills. This occurred with the medical and civil engineering professions following the South Asian earthquake, for example. **We conclude that established NGOs should see it as their responsibility to provide peer advice and support to new organisations, in order to ensure that the principles and standards they have created are maintained. DFID could take such work into account when making decisions about which NGOs to fund. We recommend that DFID provides on its website advice and contacts for new humanitarian NGOs, as well as for existing NGOs that wish to become involved in the provision of humanitarian assistance.**

33. One of the key factors determining the speed and nature of the NGO contribution to the UK response to a humanitarian disaster is the way in which donors disburse funds to their implementing partners. We discuss financing in the humanitarian sector in some detail in Chapter 5, consequently in this section we limit our remarks to those relating specifically to initial disaster responses in the UK.

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\(^\text{50}\) Q 135 Mr Nicholas Stockton, HAP-I

\(^\text{51}\) ‘Corruption, fraud, haunt Tsunami efforts’ (23 September 2006), *The Guardian.*

\(^\text{52}\) Q120 Mr Nicholas Stockton

\(^\text{53}\) Comments made during a private seminar on Humanitarian Response to Natural Disasters held by the IDC, 25 May 2006.
34. Although many UK-based NGOs have private and existing sources of funds which enable them to begin the provision of assistance according to their own timetable, many others have to await specific funding decisions by donors in relation to each emergency. DFID told us that their decision-making process and response is dependent on the type and quality of project proposals submitted by NGOs, as well as on the capacities of agencies on the ground to assess needs, to develop needs-based proposals and appeals and to implement programmes.\[54\] We heard concerns from some NGOs that DFID was not taking funding decisions quickly enough,\[55\] but were convinced by the Secretary of State’s argument that it would be difficult for the process to be accelerated without the validity of funding decisions being compromised.\[56\]

35. It also seems likely that attempts to accelerate DFID’s allocation of funds to implementing partners would be likely to advantage disproportionately NGOs which already have an established working relationship with DFID. Nicholas Stockton told us that the largest and best politically connected NGOs are already the most likely to secure donor funding, although they are not necessarily the organisations which can provide the best service. He suggested that ‘medium-sized’ NGOs were often best able to offer the most flexible response and value for money. Whether or not this is the case is clearly a decision for DFID to make in each specific situation. It would be a mistake to accelerate DFID’s funding evaluation process if this would work to the detriment of new applicants, including national NGOs in countries affected by disasters. We commend DFID’s efforts to work through developing country partners where possible.

36. We encourage DFID to undertake frequent evaluations to ensure that its process for determining which partners will deliver most efficiently and successfully in a given humanitarian situation is clear, transparent and as rapid as possible without compromising its effectiveness. DFID will inevitably end up funding many of the same NGOs in different emergencies due to these organisations’ humanitarian expertise. Nonetheless, we agree with Nicholas Stockton that DFID’s aim should be to create an open market-place for its humanitarian funding, in which exemplary work is encouraged and recognised through future funding decisions, whereas inadequate work has discernible consequences for the organisation concerned.

37. Effective realisation of this recommendation will clearly be dependent on the adequacy of DFID’s evaluation and monitoring mechanisms, a subject which we return to, together with a discussion of the accountability of NGOs, in Chapter 6.

The role of the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC)

38. Since the DEC was established in 1963 its role has been to coordinate non-governmental fundraising for the largest humanitarian emergencies. This has involved working with the UK’s aid, corporate, public and broadcasting sectors both to maximise the income raised from the British public and to ensure the funds raised are deployed by
the agency best placed to deliver them. Figures for the sums raised through DEC appeals demonstrate that the DEC is a highly effective organisation, which makes a significant contribution to the humanitarian sector in the UK. The DEC is a unique organisation and fulfils a very important role within the humanitarian sector in the UK. We recommend that the DEC explores ways in which its model of collective fundraising could be exported to other donor countries, in order to maximise the availability of funds for humanitarian work worldwide, and that DFID should consider funding such a project.

39. Brendan Gormley from the DEC, told us that funds raised by the DEC in each appeal were distributed between partner agencies according to their relative size. DEC partner agencies sometimes agreed to forego their full pro rata entitlement in circumstances where the requirements were less for one partner’s area of expertise or specialisation but favoured another partner with a lower entitlement. Some have suggested that the remit of the DEC could be extended to include the coordination of joint working by DEC partner agencies. Such suggestions reflect concerns about the negative impact of NGO rivalry over programmatic territory and funding. The competitive environment in which humanitarian NGOs operate tends to discourage cooperation and coordination, and to encourage duplication and disconnection.

40. Although happy to coordinate over fundraising, DEC partner agencies have, to date, defended their programmatic and operational sovereignty within the DEC fiercely. Brendan Gormley told us that that there was no appetite among DEC partner agencies to use the DEC as a mechanism to coordinate collective programmatic activities. In his view the realisation of suggestions to extend the remit of the DEC would divert its energies from its core fundraising remit, and would be beyond the capacity of the DEC’s small secretariat (which consists of only 5 people). We are not convinced by arguments that the DEC should expand its remit. We think that DEC partner agencies ought to explore ways of increasing the extent of their programmatic cooperation and coordination, but that the DEC is not necessarily the best mechanism for achieving this.

41. The DEC has been acknowledged as a leader in promoting accountability within the humanitarian sector. One method of ensuring the accountability of DEC partner agencies has been for the DEC secretariat to evaluate and monitor their activities in the field. Brendan Gormley told us that the secretariat was now considering shifting the balance of their monitoring and evaluation to focus more on the activities of NGO head offices in the North. Given that DEC agencies retain programmatic sovereignty for their operations on the ground, we agree that it makes more sense for the DEC to focus on the development of policies and practices in NGO head offices in the North.

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57 See http://www.dec.org.uk.
58 See http://www.dec.org.uk/index.cfm/site_id,1/asset_id,892.
60 Q 54 and 55 Mr Brendan Gormley, Disasters Emergency Committee
61 Q 61 Mr Brendan Gormley
42. For the last 5 years, another key means of ensuring accountability has been the secretariat’s commissioning of independent evaluations of the DEC’s responses to humanitarian disasters. Until 2004, it had been normal practice for the DEC to publish these evaluation reports in full. However, following adverse press comment on the DEC’s Southern Africa Appeal evaluation, the DEC secretariat took a decision not to publish its evaluations automatically, and to retain the option of deciding what to release. Following the Indian Ocean Tsunami Disaster, the DEC secretariat commissioned two evaluations (a full evaluation and a shorter report to the Board of Trustees) and, fearing that the media would pick up on critical passages in the full evaluation in isolation, decided to release only the report to the Board. In the event, an early version of the full evaluation was leaked and its contents formed the basis of criticism of DEC agencies on the BBC’s Newsnight programme. This confirmed the DEC’s decision not to publish the full report, which was circulated as planned within the DEC and among its partner agencies to allow dialogue and lesson learning.

43. The DEC has been criticised for its decision not to publish the full evaluation report into the Tsunami crisis response. Critics have argued that this decision represented a retrograde step for accountability within the humanitarian sector, reduced public dialogue and limited the chance of lesson learning beyond the DEC agencies. There has also been the suggestion that the existence of a ‘secret’ report may prove a temptation to journalists seeking to criticise the humanitarian sector. The media can certainly play an important role in holding the humanitarian sector to account, as we discuss in the next section. However, Brendan Gormley told us that due to the increasing tendency for the media to report evaluations selectively and take criticisms out of context, the DEC was now looking for new ways to ensure the accountability of its operations, to the public as well as to its trustees. We agree that it is essential that the DEC finds a way to sustain its reputation for accountability, without which the trust of the UK public may be lost, and their generosity towards humanitarian disasters may diminish.

The role of the media

44. Media coverage of humanitarian disasters is an important factor in determining the timing, funding and scale of any international response. However, we heard that while media coverage may be the key factor in initiating a humanitarian response, the extent of humanitarian need is only one of the factors driving editorial decisions about whether and how to cover a humanitarian disaster. Witnesses from the print and broadcast media told us that decisions were also driven by the location of the disaster, its relative significance in comparison to other disasters, the extent and location of the media organisation’s own resources, and the importance of the story to the UK public. David Munk from The Guardian, reminded us that “we are all quite parochial” in our humanitarian concerns. He also made the important point that media coverage of disasters is necessarily selective: if the media covered all the humanitarian emergencies which are constantly occurring, the

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62 The use here of the term “media” tends to homogenise the very wide range of print, electronic and broadcast services, which we acknowledge may address humanitarian emergencies in very different ways. The comments we make are of a general nature.

63 Q 1-4 Ms Lyse Doucet, BBC World Television and World Service Radio and Mr David Munk, The Guardian

64 Q 2 Mr David Munk
public would rapidly be afflicted by “compassion fatigue”, and the impact of the reporting would be significantly reduced.\textsuperscript{65}

45. We accept that although lives may be saved in a humanitarian emergency as a consequence of the media’s work, saving lives is not their job.\textsuperscript{66} However, we think that where the media choose to report on humanitarian emergencies, they should accept that they also take on certain responsibilities. These include: operating on a ‘do no harm’ basis by not impeding the work of humanitarian agencies;\textsuperscript{67} seeking to avoid stereotyping and disempowering disaster ‘victims’; and, wherever possible, communicating with humanitarian agencies working on the ground, in order to portray humanitarian needs accurately. We believe there is scope for the media and civil society to work together to develop an informal ethical code for media representatives reporting on humanitarian emergencies. Humanitarian NGOs should also consider offering training to media representatives on the standards and practices of humanitarianism, in order to improve the accuracy of media representations of disasters.

46. While the media should acknowledge these responsibilities, humanitarian NGOs need to accept the priorities and requirements of the media. NGOs are right to see the media as a resource for attracting public and political attention, and consequently funding, to ‘forgotten’ and emerging crises, but they need to acknowledge that the media are also driven by financial imperatives\textsuperscript{68} and audience requirements. Humanitarian agencies need to work to find creative ways of communicating with media organisations, and to ensure that they are conveying the information they require in a suitable format. \textbf{We recommend that the DEC initiates a process of dialogue between representatives of media organisations and the non-governmental humanitarian sector in the UK, to explore ways in which the reporting of humanitarian disasters and the activities of humanitarian actors could be more mutually productive.}

47. In addition to raising awareness of emerging humanitarian disasters, the media can play an important role in sustaining attention to, and consequently funding for, disasters which occurred in the past or which are ongoing. We were pleased to be assured by Lyse Doucet, Presenter and Special Correspondent for BBC World television and World Service radio, that the BBC has a policy of “staying with stories”.\textsuperscript{69} In the case of the Indian Ocean Tsunami Disaster for example, the BBC had returned to the affected areas 1 month, 100 days, 6 months and a year after the disaster, to examine the recovery and reconstruction processes. We hope that this policy will be applied to humanitarian disasters with a lower profile than the tsunami, and that other media organisations will follow the same approach.

\textsuperscript{65} Q 10 and 11 Mr David Munk
\textsuperscript{66} Q 13 Mr David Munk
\textsuperscript{67} Media actors might, for example, impede the work of humanitarian actors by monopolising or inflating the cost of scarce resources, such as transport and local personnel, in emergency situations.
\textsuperscript{68} Our witnesses from the BBC and \textit{The Guardian} emphasised that their organisations were set up in a way which meant that they were not driven by commercial imperatives. But all media organisations face financial constraints on their activities.
\textsuperscript{69} Q 4 Ms Lyse Doucet
The role of the private sector

48. The level of private donations made worldwide for humanitarian assistance has been increasing over time.70 Private contributions are particularly significant in relation to high profile disasters, as was demonstrated by those which occurred during 2005. According to a Reuters study, private donations exceeded government pledges in 8 of the 20 countries which were the biggest donors to the humanitarian response to the Indian Ocean Tsunami Disaster.71 According to Reuters, private donations from the UK totalled $663 million (£351 million), while the HMG pledge was $445.2 million (£236 million).72 The generous response of private individuals in the UK to the South Asian Earthquake, reflected the proportion of the UK population with links to the sub-continent.

49. In addition to monetary donations, private individuals often choose to make donations in kind. Where such donations fulfil specific unmet needs they are clearly useful. However, in-kind donations may be inappropriate and even hinder relief efforts. In Pakistan we heard that road access to areas affected by the South Asian Earthquake for humanitarian actors had been hindered by private individuals driving into the area to deliver goods that they had collected from family and friends. 90% of the tents distributed were not ‘winterised’ (designed to withstand the cold of Himalayan winter)73 and the streets of Muzaffarabad had been littered with unwanted second-hand clothes. In the aftermath of the earthquake, as in most other humanitarian situations, cash donations allowed the greatest flexibility for humanitarian agencies to meet the needs which they identified. We applaud the initiative taken by DFID and the DEC in producing their booklet Disasters and Emergencies Overseas: How you can help74 to guide private individuals and organisations who wish to make a contribution to humanitarian emergencies. We recommend that DFID and the DEC consider ways in which the key messages contained in the Disasters and Emergencies Overseas publication can be more effectively disseminated.

50. In our oral evidence session with the Secretary of State, we discussed the possibility of DFID producing a booklet on best practice in volunteering, including twinning initiatives.75 We appreciate the speed with which DFID followed up this discussion with supplementary evidence setting out how they plan to address these issues.76 We look forward to an update from DFID within the next twelve months on the possibility of using twinning initiatives to support the Department’s work in raising development awareness.

70 Comments made during a private seminar on Humanitarian Response to Natural Disasters held by the IDC, 25 May 2006.
72 The Reuters figure for the UK’s total aid pledge includes £75 m for emergency humanitarian relief, £65 m for rehabilitation and reconstruction, £45 m of debt relief for Sri Lanka and £50 m of “gift aid” tax relief on tsunami-related donations from the public. Much of the long-term aid has been channelled through Indonesia’s multi-donor trust fund.
73 Discussion with NRC representatives in Mansehra, Pakistan, 28 June 2006.
74 Available online at http://www.dfid.gov.uk/emergencies/default.asp.
75 Q 377 Mr John Bercow MP, Rt Hon Hilary Benn MP
76 Ev 152 [DFID]
51. Private sector involvement in humanitarian response to natural disasters takes a variety
of forms, from philanthropy and donations in kind, to profit-oriented activities, such as
tendering for reconstruction contracts or selling products. The growing ‘corporate social
responsibility’ (CSR) agenda, which we examined in detail in our July 2006 report on
Private Sector Development, has made private sector organisations increasingly keen to be
seen to be involved in development and disaster relief work.77 We heard the example of a
UK company donating bottled water, which was flown to the Maldives by DFID following
the tsunami.78 Although companies may be keen to become involved in this way, searching
questions always need to be asked about the economic rationality of transporting goods
across the world which could have been sourced locally, thereby supporting the economy
of a disaster-affected region. The NRC told us that the majority of the materials they had
used in their emergency shelter programme had been sourced from South Asia.

52. In their written memorandum, Crown Agents comment that the variety of ways in
which the private sector has become involved in humanitarian response has made it
difficult to track systematically the contributions made by companies to humanitarian
work. It is difficult to ensure that the private sector organisations that involve themselves
in humanitarian work adhere to the principles and standards which are integral to the
humanitarian sector. Potential conflicts could arise as a result of the increasing
involvement in humanitarian activities of “the private sector, whose actions are primarily
motivated by profits, in a highly value-laden sector, where the work of traditional actors
has been predominantly driven by a sense of moral obligation and a duty to promote and
protect basic human rights.”79 Nevertheless we acknowledge that some companies respond
with a similar sense of wider moral obligation and duty especially in terms of the provision
of skills and expertise.

53. We recommend that DFID should take a leading role in engaging the private sector
in humanitarian responses. It should formalise this involvement by promoting the
establishment of a network of private sector organisations involved in humanitarian
response through which information and training on humanitarian standards and
principles could be delivered.

The wider context

54. In this chapter we have examined the roles played by various actors in the initial UK
response to humanitarian disasters. This individual country response occurs within the
context of the international humanitarian system. Analyses of the shortcomings of this
system have identified the need to improve the timeliness, appropriateness and equity of
international responses to humanitarian disasters. The next three chapters look in turn at
proposals for reform of: the coordination and leadership of international response capacity;
the level, mechanisms and equity of financing; and, the measurement of needs and of

77 International Development Committee’s Fourth Report of Session 2005/06, Private Sector Development, HC 921-I and
II, July 2006.

78 DFID ‘DFID Situation Report: Indian Ocean earthquakes and tsunamis 26 December 2004, Sitrep No.10 31 December
2004 ‘A First Choice Holidays plane, left Manchester Airport 29 December loaded with 17.28 tonnes (17,280 litres) of
bottled water donated by Scottish Water, following an urgent request from the Government of the Maldives.’

79 Ev 200 [Crown Agents]
collective performance. For each of these three areas, we examine the problems which have been identified and the initiatives which seek to address them.
4 Reform of the humanitarian sector: coordination and leadership

55. If one sat down today to design an international humanitarian system, it is unlikely that the result would bear much resemblance to the current system, which has grown organically over the past few decades. The main actors include:

- affected states which bear the primary responsibility for protecting and assisting those affected by humanitarian emergencies within their own borders;
- the Red Cross/Red Crescent movement, an international organisation which comprises the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC), and 183 national Red Cross/Red Crescent national societies, with a mandate for impartial involvement in disaster response;
- the United Nations humanitarian system, led by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), which has responsibility for coordinating the international humanitarian response and for the coordination of the Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP) and the Common Humanitarian Action Plan (CHAP), and is supported by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC);80
- donor governments, which in 2003 contributed US$7.8 billion in official humanitarian assistance (11% of total official development assistance (ODA)), and of which recently the US has been the largest contributor, exceeding the contributions of the next six largest donors combined – the UK, France, Sweden, Norway, the Netherlands and Germany;81
- multilateral donors, including the European Commission (EC), a multilateral organisation that is also a donor through the Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid (ECHO), and the World Bank;
- Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), operating at local, national and international levels; and,
- private sector organisations, which are playing an increasing role through funding, CSR initiatives and commercial contracts.

56. Given the number of actors which make up the international humanitarian system it is perhaps unsurprising that significant inconsistencies in the quality, speed and effectiveness of international capacity to respond to humanitarian disasters have been identified.82 These inconsistencies occur both within and between responses to disasters. Within the response to the South Asian Earthquake, for example, we heard that certain sectors were

80 The IASC brings together a range of humanitarian actors, including UN operational agencies, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), three consortia of major international NGOs, the Representative of the UN Secretary-General for the internally-displaced and the Red Cross/Red Crescent movement.
82 See, for example the Synthesis Report of the Tsunami Evaluation Committee at www.tsunami-evaluation.org.
relatively neglected, while others were well provided for. In terms of inconsistencies between disasters, Jan Egeland has repeatedly highlighted the problem of ‘forgotten emergencies’ to which there is little or no international response, while to others there is a more than adequate response. We return to the issue of forgotten emergencies in Chapter 5.

57. Many of the solutions proposed to the inconsistencies in the international humanitarian system have focused on improving coordination and leadership in the system. Several such proposals were contained within the Humanitarian Response Review (HRR), an analysis of the international humanitarian system commissioned by Jan Egeland in 2004, in response to the slowness and inadequacy of the humanitarian response in Darfur. Other proposals have come from the UK and from the UN Secretary General’s two reports A more secure world: our shared responsibility, and In Larger Freedom. This chapter examines the problems which have been identified in these areas, and the proposals which have been made to address them.

Coordination

58. In relation to coordination, the HRR concluded that: “As far as international humanitarian coordination is concerned, the [HRR] team believes that there are limited linkages and collaboration between the three humanitarian systems examined (UN, Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement and NGOs).” The evidence we have received has shown that there are also problems in coordination among NGOs and within the UN system.

The cluster approach

59. Of the recommendations included in the HRR, Jan Egeland prioritised the implementation of the ‘cluster approach’: a proposal to ensure that gaps in humanitarian provision in certain sectors were filled. The basic premise of the cluster approach is that the accountability, predictability and reliability of responses can be improved by identifying organisational leaders (or ‘cluster leads’) for areas in which gaps in provision have been identified, which will support the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinators in ensuring a coordinated response. The HRR proposed that, although the cluster lead


84 The HRR has been criticised for examining the international response to humanitarian disasters without including national responses [ICVA talkback 7 (3) October 2005, available online at http://www.icva.ch].


87 Humanitarian Response Review (HRR) (see footnote 83). The HRR’s conceptualisation of the international humanitarian sector as composed of three systems has been criticised as an overly simplistic model ‘What the HRR pictures as three vertical networks are, in reality, groupings of highly diverse agencies with very different structures for decision-making. Such a description comes close to being out of touch with reality in assuming that the NGO community works as one of these vertical “columns.”’ ICVA talkback 7 (3) October 2005, available online at http://www.icva.ch.

88 Susan Johnson told us that even coordination within the Red Cross/Red Crescent movement was like “herding cats” [Q 338 Ms Susan Johnson, IFRC].
agencies would not necessarily carry out all of the activities in their cluster themselves, they
would be the ‘provider of last resort’, with responsibility for ensuring that activities were
implemented. Jan Egeland described the practical consequences of this system for the
Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC):

“we have a phone number now for shelter; we did not have that in the past, we were
very unclear who was responsible for the shelter crisis in Darfur. It was very clear
that you came to me and asked, “Why is there not enough shelter?” when we met last
time and discussed Sudan. Now I have somebody I can call upon and that is UNHCR
in man-made disasters, it would be the Red Cross and the Red Crescent Movement
in natural disasters.”

60. At the beginning of September 2005, the members of the Inter-Agency Standing
Committee (IASC) agreed that the cluster approach would be implemented in all new
emergencies, and the heads of UN agencies agreed to the following cluster leads:

- Camp Coordination and Management – UN High Commission for Refugees
  (UNHCR) (for conflict-generated internally displaced people (IDPs))
- Emergency Telecommunications — OCHA for overall process owner; UNICEF for
data collection; World Food Programme (WFP) for common security
  telecommunications service
- Early Recovery (formerly called Reintegration and Recovery) — UN Development
  Programme (UNDP)
- Emergency Shelter — UNHCR (for conflict-generated IDPs)
- Health — World Health Organisation (WHO)
- Logistics — WFP
- Nutrition — UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF)
- Protection — UNHCR (for conflict-generated IDPs)
- Water and Sanitation — UNICEF

61. Shortly after these responsibilities were agreed, on 8 October 2005, the South Asian
Earthquake took place. The United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination Team
(UNDAC) together with the Humanitarian Coordinator and the UN Country Team,
decided to use the new cluster system to implement the international response. Most of
the evidence we received indicated that the first implementation of the cluster approach in
Pakistan had demonstrated the potential of the system, but several problems were
highlighted.

89 Q 277 Mr Jan Egeland
90 Sectors where no significant gaps were identified were not included among the clusters, and would continue to be
headed by existing lead agencies, for example the WFP on food.
62. At the most fundamental level, there was confusion over the purpose of the cluster system. Ed Schenkenberg van Mierop from the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA)\(^{91}\) told us that when first set out in the HRR, the cluster approach seemed intended to remedy the problem of inequity between different sectors of response, to ensure that there were no gaps in provision. When put into practice in Pakistan, however, the cluster approach seemed to be intended as a means to improve field-level coordination.\(^{92}\) The confusion was heightened by the inclusion of certain sectors as clusters when NGOs did not perceive any gap in provision (for example health), and the absence of clusters where NGOs did perceive gaps in provision (for example education).\(^{93}\) We think that the IASC needs to clarify the aims and objectives of the cluster approach as these have evolved since the initial formulation of the approach.

63. The implementation of the cluster system in Pakistan was hindered by the fact that the earthquake occurred before responsibility for certain clusters had been agreed. For example, a decision had not been reached on responsibility for shelter and camp management for natural disaster-generated IDPs.\(^{94}\) We were told that DFID’s secondment of personnel to the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) was key in enabling them, belatedly, to take on responsibility for the shelter cluster in NWFP. We heard evidence that this was necessary because the UN agency with the greatest expertise in the field, the UNHCR, had refused to extend its mandate to include IDPs.\(^{95}\) **We support DFID’s view that the UNHCR should formally extend its mandate to enable it to take on responsibility for internally displaced people resulting from natural disasters as well as those arising from conflict.**\(^{96}\) We were disappointed that UNHCR chose not to give oral or written evidence to our inquiry, because they felt their work was not relevant to it, despite the fact that other agencies clearly believe it is.

64. As implemented in Pakistan, the cluster approach was rather bureaucratic. Cluster leads held meetings in Islamabad as well as in 4 cluster hubs in the field (in Bagh, Batagram, Muzaffarabad and Mansehra). We were told of delays and breakdowns in communication between the hubs and Islamabad.\(^{97}\) Meetings were inefficient and sometimes minutes were not taken. Some NGOs did not have representation in Islamabad, and given their limited staffing and the transport difficulties in the affected area, many found it difficult to attend the numerous cluster coordination meetings while also pursuing their field activities.\(^{98}\) At the same time NGOs were unwilling to miss meetings in case funding decisions were made. Local NGOs were effectively excluded because

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\(^{91}\) The International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA), founded in 1962, is a global network of human rights, humanitarian, and development NGOs, which focuses its information exchange and advocacy efforts primarily on humanitarian affairs and refugee issues. ICVA is one of 3 NGO groupings involved in the IASC, the other two being InterAction and the Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response (SCHR).

\(^{92}\) Ev 189 [ActionAid International]

\(^{93}\) Ev 315 [Mr Ed Schenkenberg van Mierop, ICVA]

\(^{94}\) ICVA talkback 7 (3) October 2005, available online at http://www.icva.ch.

\(^{95}\) IDC meetings in Pakistan.

\(^{96}\) Ev 148 [DFID]. See also DFID, ‘Eliminating world poverty; making governance work for the poor; a White paper on International Development’ (2006) p. 109 ‘The UK will... Support changes to UNHCR’s mandate to include internally displaced people, and be willing to provide extra resources to support this work.’

\(^{97}\) Ev 220 [NRC]

\(^{98}\) Discussion with NGO representatives in Muzaffarabad, Pakistan, 27 June 2006. See also ActionAid International ‘The Evolving UN cluster approach in the aftermath of the Pakistan earthquake: an NGO perspective’ (2006).
We conclude that the IASC should systematically review organisational aspects of the way the cluster approach was implemented in Pakistan in order to refine the system.

65. A fundamental aspect of the cluster system, on which agreement is yet to be reached, is that of the concept of ‘provider of last resort’. We were told that, as a result of concerns about financial liability, lines of accountability and lack of powers to direct other agencies, several humanitarian agencies selected as cluster leads had refused to take on this aspect of the role. Agencies were concerned that if no other agency came forward, their leadership of a cluster might force them to undertake activities or take on roles that were incompatible with their organisational mandate. Matthias Schmale from the British Red Cross commented:

“[the IFRC] is in ongoing negotiations and discussions with the UN in particular on what “lead role” means. We have clearly said, and it defeats the purpose of lead role, that we are not able to accept a role of lender of last resort, and we also have difficulties with the idea of reporting to the UN.”

Afshan Khan from UNICEF told us:

“you remember that the provider of last resort phenomenon is for up to 500,000 people in any one given situation, and it is not just the UN that has hesitated. IFRC also spoke about it, IOM is also hesitating, because to be accountable for that without being given the resources to be able to respond to that crisis, nor the flexibility internally to move your own budgets around to swing that kind of money in to respond to a crisis, is political suicide, for lack of a better word.”

66. As Jan Egeland told us, further clarification of the concept of ‘provider of last resort’ will be required if it is to be effectively used. This must include elucidation of, and agreement over the concept’s financial implications and negotiations over the lines of accountability it will involve. The concept is central to the cluster approach: without it the cluster approach is little different from any of the existing coordination mechanisms within the international humanitarian system. Resolution of this issue is therefore crucial.

The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC)

67. While the cluster approach may be one means of improving field-level coordination, the IASC is a key mechanism for policy development and coordination. Ed Schenkenberg van Mierop told us that there was a need for greater acknowledgement of the role which the IASC could play in facilitating dialogue within the humanitarian sector. Currently
however it was too UN-centric, and needed to find ways of involving NGOs so that it became a more balanced coordination mechanism.\textsuperscript{106} We believe that the IASC should play a greater role in facilitating dialogue between UN agencies and NGOs; as Jan Egeland put it: “We have to get some UN people, especially at country level, to be less arrogant and some of the NGOs to be more rational in their way of behaving.”\textsuperscript{107}

\textbf{Streamlining the UN}

68. Many discussions about possible reform of the United Nations have highlighted the very large number of UN agencies, often with overlapping mandates, which have been established since the organisation was created. This observation is particularly relevant in relation to the UN’s development and humanitarian agencies.\textsuperscript{108} There has been a proliferation of UN agencies contributing to humanitarian responses, which are in constant competition for funds. At times this has led to inefficiencies, lack of coordination and difficulties with joint working.

69. The task of coordinating the UN’s humanitarian response, which falls to UN-OCHA internationally, and the UN humanitarian coordinator in relation to specific disasters, would undoubtedly be simpler if there were fewer agencies involved. However, as in many previous inquiries which have touched on the role of the UN,\textsuperscript{109} this inquiry has demonstrated to us the intractable nature of the issues which militate against such rationalisation. Once an agency is established, its staff have a vested interest in maintaining its existence, and consequently in involving themselves in as many UN-wide processes and programmes as possible, whether or not their expertise warrants this. Furthermore, the UN quota system for providing salaried positions to member states makes it unlikely that smaller or poorer states will vote to reduce the number of UN jobs to which they have access. The representatives of UN agencies who gave evidence to us were keen to establish the unique contribution of their own agency to the UN humanitarian system.\textsuperscript{110}

70. Rather than tackle the politically sensitive issue of closing UN agencies, most proposals for reform have focused on rationalising the operation of agencies within specific countries. One example of such proposals is the “four ones” principle advocated by the Secretary of State in one of his White Paper speeches during 2006:

“If we think of what reforms would best improve the UN’s role in a country, then it seems clear to me that we should adopt the principles of four ones — One UN Office, One UN Representative, One Programme and Budget, and One Funding Mechanism. The deal would be, you give us a clear, common UN plan for what you

\textsuperscript{106} Q 316 Mr Ed Schenkenberg van Mierop
\textsuperscript{107} Q 276 Mr Jan Egeland
\textsuperscript{108} There are currently 30 UN agencies within the UN Development Group.
\textsuperscript{110} Q 87 Ms Afshan Khan; Q 236 Mr Jean-Jacques Graisse, WFP
plan to do in the country to help development and if we think it’s right we will then fund it.”

71. The ‘four ones’ proposal relates to the everyday operations of the UN in a country, but would have important benefits for the UN system in the event of a humanitarian emergency. UN agencies that were already coordinating their administration, programmes and funding would find it easier to coordinate in relation to humanitarian issues, and UN agencies intervening in a country for the first time in the event of a specific emergency would have one established UN structure into which to integrate. As with any proposal for change within the UN system, however, we heard of hesitation from UN agencies (particularly the largest and most well-established), which are uncertain about the possible implications for their funding and autonomy. We approve of DFID’s decision to support the “four ones” initiative and think that the UK should work with other major donors to the UN to find ways to provide incentives for UN agencies to increase their coordination through such mechanisms.

Leadership

72. In addition to improving coordination within the humanitarian sector, a need for improved leadership at various levels was identified by our inquiry. We heard about problems with the leadership of individual clusters, issues with the system of UN Humanitarian Coordinators, and concerns about the role of the Emergency Relief Coordinator. Jan Egeland told us:

“the third leg of this three-legged humanitarian reform effort is really to have predictable leadership. Number one is predictable funding... The second is predictable response capacity... The third is predictable leadership and, as you have implied, no, we have not been predictable enough, we have been great in some aspects and with some people and not been great elsewhere.”

Sector coordinators

73. We heard about problems resulting from the poor leadership skills of some of the individuals chosen to coordinate clusters in Pakistan. These were mainly staff appointed by the designated cluster lead organisations (mostly UN agencies) from amongst their own employees. We were told that coordination meetings in some clusters were excessively long and poorly prioritised by cluster coordinators who lacked organisational and management skills. Some cluster members complained that cluster coordinators proved unable to step outside the organisational culture and priorities of their own agency when attempting to coordinate a variety of organisations. There were problems created by rapid turnover of staff. For example, we were told that there had been a series of 7 different coordinators sent by WHO to lead the health cluster in a period of just 8 months. We recommend that UN agencies give particular consideration to prior coordination experience and leadership skills when recruiting staff to coordinate clusters, and

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112 Q 75 Mr Howard Mollett; Q 91 and Q 92 Ms Afshan Khan
suggest that pre-emptive training be provided to staff who are likely to take on such roles in the future.

**Humanitarian coordinators**

74. In the event of a humanitarian emergency, the ERC appoints a UN official as the Humanitarian Coordinator, who is responsible for ensuring coherence of relief operations in the field, and who acts as the main intermediary between NGOs, donors and the affected country government. In practice it is usually the UN Resident Coordinator in the affected country who is appointed as Humanitarian Coordinator, and this was the case in Pakistan following the South Asian Earthquake.

75. We were told that some of the problems inherent in the Humanitarian Coordinator system were demonstrated in Pakistan. The UN Resident Coordinator in Pakistan had only recently arrived in-country when the earthquake occurred. He was made Humanitarian Coordinator, but unfortunately had little previous humanitarian experience. The secretariat appointed to support him was initially inadequate, except in the field of search and rescue. The first Deputy Humanitarian Coordinator was not appointed until approximately 5 weeks after the earthquake, and thereafter there was a rapid succession of individuals in the position. The lack of adequate coordinating capacity early in the disaster meant that steps were not taken then which might have mitigated problems later.

76. These views echoed several of the more general concerns we heard about the efficacy of the Humanitarian Coordinator system. We were told that a potential conflict arises when a Resident Coordinator tries in addition to take on the Humanitarian Coordinator role. The role of a Resident Coordinator is to build a close relationship with the country government in order to facilitate UN programmes on an ongoing basis. By contrast the role of the Humanitarian Coordinator is often to confront the government and to challenge the adequacy of its response to a crisis. Furthermore, the skills required to manage a coherent humanitarian response are different to those needed as a Resident Coordinator, and many Resident Coordinators have no prior humanitarian experience. Having no actual power to direct UN agencies, Humanitarian Coordinators have to fulfil a complex task by persuasion rather than formal powers.

77. Jan Egeland acknowledged problems with the Humanitarian Coordinator system. He told us of plans by UNDP to train a specialist cadre of humanitarian coordinators who would be deployed in areas vulnerable to disasters, or brought in rapidly once a disaster occurred.\(^{113}\) We applaud this initiative. The issue which he first highlighted to us in November 2005,\(^{114}\) of how to empower humanitarian coordinators, remains however. Giving evidence to this inquiry, Mr Egeland told us “Yes, in the long run there should be clearer [command] lines with a stronger humanitarian co-ordinator function. A humanitarian co-ordinator should be able to instruct more.” We agree.

78. Giving humanitarian coordinators greater power over the distribution of funds, and accountability for their use, might be one method of strengthening this role. This is the

\(^{113}\) Q 280 Mr Jan Egeland

\(^{114}\) During an informal meeting as part of the IDC’s visit to New York and Washington in November 2005.
intention behind the proposal to establish Common Funds at country level, outlined by Hilary Benn as part of his 2004 humanitarian reform agenda. Referring specifically to crises like Darfur, he highlighted the need for improved leadership at country level and strengthening the Humanitarian Coordinator, to improve the effectiveness of the international response. A Common Fund is a multi-donor fund managed by the Humanitarian Coordinator for the humanitarian elements of the UN’s annual workplan for a country experiencing an ongoing humanitarian emergency. Joanna Macrae from CHASE, DFID expanded on the rationale behind the Common Fund:

“One of the huge in-built weaknesses at the moment to the humanitarian system is that we are requiring that humanitarian co-ordinators deliver the consolidated appeal behind which is the common humanitarian action plan. So we are asking them to deliver a strategic plan, but at the moment the way that we fund that is we say “Thank you very much for the strategic plan. Now we are going to cherry-pick all these little bits that we do like and fund those” in a completely project-ised way. Part of the thinking behind the Common Fund is to reverse that trend and to say ”No, actually, we actually want to try and keep the integrity of that strategic plan” and to empower the person who is responsible for delivering it, the humanitarian co-ordinator, with the ability to exert some real leverage over the operational partners, in other words, to influence resource allocation.”

The first Common Funds are being trialled in Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). We believe that it is currently too early to evaluate the effectiveness of the Common Fund initiative. It seems that Common Funds have the potential to improve the speed, coordination and prioritisation of the distribution of funds at a country level, and may have the additional benefit of empowering the Humanitarian Coordinator. We will watch the progress of the trial funds with interest.

The Emergency Relief Coordinator and OCHA

79. Some of the reforms that have been proposed to the international humanitarian system, including the HRR, have involved increasing the powers of the ERC and UN-OCHA. These reform proposals see strengthening the body which already has responsibility for leading and coordinating the sector as the most promising way of improving the international humanitarian system. As we discuss in more depth in Chapter 5, the expansion of the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) from a $50m loan-based facility to a $500m grant-based facility has already given the ERC greater financial powers. Other reforms have proposed increasing the powers of humanitarian coordinators and the ERC to direct UN agencies. However, these have been resisted by individual UN agencies. Some NGOs are also reluctant to see the ERC and OCHA

115 Q 116 Ms Joanna Macrae, DFID
116 Initial evaluation of the Common Funds proposed for Sudan and DRC has been carried out by Development Initiatives. See website for their evaluation reports: http://www.globalhumanitarianassistance.org/funding_mechanisms.htm.
117 Although as the Secretary of State reminded us, the CERF will represent only a very small proportion of total annual humanitarian spending (Q 376).
118 Q296 to 305 Mr Jan Egeland and Mr Quentin Davies MP
119 Q 276 Mr Jan Egeland
acquire greater powers. Nicholas Stockton told us that in his view the need for greater coordination within the international humanitarian sector had been overstated, and that UN-OCHA specifically contributed “very little value added” to coordination:

“You cannot do a proper humanitarian job without [management] resources. But, that does not mean to say that there is a justification, for example, for having a coordination body within the United Nations, which is generally considered in the field to have very little value added by those people who work in the field, which employs 700 international civil servants.”

80. The structure of the UN system, with each UN agency led independently, militates against the coordination of UN agencies. This is particularly the case in situations where these agencies are competing for the same pot of money. The witnesses we heard from UN agencies, including UNICEF and the WFP, were staunch in defending the remit of their own organisations, but less convincing in their declarations of the importance of coordination among UN bodies. This demonstrated to us the difficulty of UN-OCHA’s task in coordinating and leading the UN response to humanitarian disasters. Merely increasing the human and financial resources available to UN-OCHA will not solve the difficulties it experiences in fulfilling its role. We believe that the member states of the UN should press the UN Secretary-General to devolve greater powers to the ERC and his team of humanitarian coordinators, in order to increase their capacity to achieve their coordination and leadership remit.

**Staffing in the humanitarian sector**

81. Efforts to enhance leadership in the humanitarian sector will only be effective if the sector improves its ability to recruit and retain sufficient numbers of qualified and experienced humanitarian workers. The irregular, intensive and demanding nature of humanitarian work often results in ‘burn-out’ and a high turnover of staff. This is particularly unfortunate given the importance of expertise and experience for effective humanitarian assistance. DFID acknowledges in its 2006 White Paper that there is a need to find more skilled and experienced people to work in emergency situations.

82. UN staff often need to take on key roles in coordinating and delivering the international response to humanitarian emergencies on the ground, and deficiencies in their capacity to take on these roles can cause significant problems. One mechanism for overcoming such deficiencies in UN agencies has been staff secondments by NGOs and donors. We were impressed by the model of the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), a non-governmental organisation which seconds its trained and experienced staff to UN agencies as necessary when emergencies occur. As noted earlier, DFID also seconds its humanitarian staff into UN agencies to very positive effect. In its written submission, the NRC argues that such secondments should not be the role of donor organisations:

120 Q 128 Mr Nicholas Stockton
121 Q 92 Ms Afshan Khan
123 DFID, Departmental Annual Report 2006, p.109
“it is worrying that a donor has to take on such a role (or at all find themselves in a position where they have to choose whether to do so or not) — simply because the UN is unable, under-funded or unwilling to perform outside their agencies’ programme mandates, confusing their coordination responsibilities with their own programme responsibilities.”

83. We understand these concerns and agree that there is a need for UN agencies to be more flexible in contributing to international responses to humanitarian disasters. Given the intermittent nature of natural disasters, however, it would be inefficient for the UN to maintain a large cadre of trained humanitarian workers on standby in all countries potentially at risk of natural disasters at all times. Consequently, we believe that the model of donors and NGOs seconding staff into UN agencies is a useful one. It depends crucially however on rapid and accurate assessments of existing capacity in the relevant agencies undertaken immediately after a natural disaster occurs.

84. The Secretary-General has set a goal of 50/50 gender distribution of UN staff and reports annually to the General Assembly on progress towards this goal. By mid-June 2005, 37.1% of all UN professional staff were women. As we discuss in more detail in Chapter 7, gender is a significant factor in the equity and efficacy of humanitarian assistance. Within OCHA women represent 50.3% of all staff, but only 40.5% of professional staff and just 31% of professional staff at field level. We are concerned that the international humanitarian system is unlikely to be able to deliver humanitarian assistance equitably while its own gender make-up is unbalanced. We recommend that DFID urge UN humanitarian agencies to accelerate their efforts to achieve an equitable gender balance in professional staff operating at both headquarters and field level, as well as paying attention to the gender balance within its own humanitarian team.

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124 Ev 222 [Norwegian Refugee Council]

5 Reform of the humanitarian sector: financing

85. The financing of the international humanitarian system is the second issue which has been identified as key to improving its performance. DFID told us that “Globally, the financing of humanitarian work is highly fragmented and volatile, and there is weak coordination between donors, and between them and the operational agencies.” There are three issues of concern in relation to funding:

- the total level of funding available;
- the equity of the distribution of funds between humanitarian emergencies; and,
- the speed with which funds are disbursed in the event of an emergency.

The idea of expanding the CERF to improve the speed and equity (between emergencies) of funding to UN agencies was one of the two proposals from the HRR which Jan Egeland prioritised for implementation (together with the cluster approach discussed in Chapter 4). Other proposals have focused on the manner in which donors and UN agencies disburse funds, and the provision of funding to NGOs. In this chapter we examine the problems which have been identified in relation to financing, and the proposals which have been made to address them.

Total funding

86. As mentioned earlier, the volume of international humanitarian assistance has been rising over time. Rather than increasing steadily, the increases have tended to occur step-wise in response to specific high-profile emergencies, a phenomenon which Judith Randel of Development Initiatives described to us as a “ratchet effect”. She suggested that increases in humanitarian assistance had been the result of: globalisation, which had created a ‘global village’ in which people saw physically distant individuals as ‘neighbours’; the arrival of new bilateral donors; and, increasing media attention to humanitarian disasters. She cautioned against the blind assumption that recent increases in humanitarian assistance, which had been ratcheted up by humanitarian crises in Iraq, Afghanistan, the Indian Ocean and Pakistan, would be sustained in the long term.

87. While OECD-DAC countries provide the large majority of official humanitarian assistance, the donor group is very diverse. Many non-OECD countries have a long history of international humanitarian engagement — including Saudi Arabia, South Korea, and Eastern European states. Jan Egeland told us that attracting new donors was a

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126 Ev 127 [DFID]
127 Paragraph 2 of this report.
128 Comments made during a private seminar on Humanitarian Response to Natural Disasters held by the IDC, 25 May 2006.
key priority for UN-OCHA.\textsuperscript{130} We were encouraged to hear that several new bilateral actors had responded to the disasters during 2005, including several Gulf States.\textsuperscript{131}

88. Despite the principled neutrality of humanitarian actors, the provision of humanitarian funding can clearly have political implications. For example, numerous commentators have suggested that the generosity of US assistance to the humanitarian response to the tsunami in Indonesia was an effort to improve the country’s reputation in the state with the world’s largest Muslim population.\textsuperscript{132} We believe that the international humanitarian sector needs to be recognised for the important role it can play in uniting people behind common humanitarian principles, particularly given the religious and political tensions which have been heightened by the international ‘war on terror’. The wider and more diverse the international humanitarian landscape, the more likely that different individuals and communities will find points of identity rather than divergence. We support DFID’s ongoing work to help potential donors find ways of contributing to the international humanitarian efforts.

89. A core principle of humanitarianism is the allocation of funds according to the extent of humanitarian need. Despite the increasing volume of international humanitarian aid, it was argued to us that "the global funding pot is too small"\textsuperscript{133} and the total pot of humanitarian funding for any given emergency is usually inadequate to meet the needs identified by humanitarian actors.\textsuperscript{134} The Indian Ocean Tsunami Disaster was extremely unusual in attracting more funds than were required for humanitarian actors to carry out the projects they proposed to meet the needs they had identified. Despite this apparent surplus of funds we heard claims of unmet needs on the ground and assertions that much was wasted in administration rather than delivery. The evidence we received showed that the humanitarian effects of natural disasters are increasing, and that in most humanitarian disasters, the funding available to humanitarian actors to tackle the unmet needs they identify is inadequate. Consequently, we were disappointed that the Secretary of State could not give us an assurance that the proportion of DFID’s spending accounted for by humanitarian assistance would increase in line with the Department’s overall budget.\textsuperscript{135} Instead he told us that the extent of DFID’s humanitarian assistance would be determined by the extent of humanitarian need identified. \textbf{As unmet humanitarian needs already exist, and overall humanitarian need is increasing, we recommend that the Secretary of State make a commitment to increase the proportion of DFID’s spending accounted for by humanitarian assistance in line with the Department’s overall budget.} This would demonstrate the importance that DFID affords to its provision of humanitarian assistance and set a valuable example to other donors, particularly others who made commitments during 2005 to increase their ODA.

\textsuperscript{130} Q 284 Mr Jan Egeland

\textsuperscript{131} Global Humanitarian Assistance, see http://www.globalhumanitarianassistance.org/additionaldonors.htm.

\textsuperscript{132} Q 81 Mr Eric Stobbaerts, MSF; USA Today ‘Could US aid to survivors alter anti-Americanism among Muslims?’, 1 January 2005

\textsuperscript{133} Ev 127 [DFID]

\textsuperscript{134} Q 35 Mr Toby Porter; Q 186 Mr Johannes Luchner, DG-ECHO

\textsuperscript{135} The Spending Review Settlement in 2004 gave DFID a significant increase in financial resources up from £4.5 billion in 2005/06 to £5.3 billion in 2007/08. This will contribute significantly towards the Government’s commitment to reach an ODA/GNI ratio of 0.7% by 2013 [DFID Annual Report 2006].
90. A further issue, which relates to all forms of humanitarian fundraising, is the extent to which donors fulfil the pledges they make.\(^{136}\) The United Nations reports, for example, that donors actually paid out less than half the amounts they promised following Hurricane Mitch which killed 10,000 people in Central America in 1998.\(^{137}\) Monitoring of the extent to which pledges are fulfilled has been hampered by a lack of transparency and consistency in the reporting of humanitarian assistance, although recently DAC donors have taken some steps to improve this. Global Humanitarian Assistance reports that the DAC has been working with OCHA to improve systems for tracking expenditure in tsunami-affected countries. The Reuters AlertNet website has maintained a 'Tsunami Aid-watch' which currently reports that $6.86 billion of the $7.34 billion pledged in response to the tsunami has been allocated.\(^{138}\) At a country level, Afghanistan has established a database for monitoring aid flows, the Donor Assistance Database.\(^{139}\) According to Global Humanitarian Assistance: "Combining country level and international monitoring should help to track the humanitarian dollar more accurately from the point when a donor makes a commitment to the point where expenditure is made on the ground."\(^{140}\) We applaud all efforts to make the reporting of global humanitarian assistance more accurate and transparent, and think that the most effective means of ensuring donors fulfil their pledges is to publicise such data as widely as possible.

**Equity**

91. Highlighting the problem of inequity in the international response to different humanitarian disasters has been a preoccupation of the current ERC, Jan Egeland.\(^{141}\) The disparities can be demonstrated most starkly through financial data. Figures from the Global Humanitarian Assistance (GHA) project show that contributions to the Indian Ocean Tsunami Disaster averaged US $3000 for each person living in the most affected areas, donations to the South Asian Earthquake averaged US $1000 for each directly affected person, but funding to the Niger famine averaged only US $29 for each affected person.\(^{142}\) In general slow-onset disasters have been more poorly funded than rapid-onset disasters.\(^{143}\) Disparities in funding create ‘orphan’ or ‘forgotten’ emergencies where extensive needs remain unmet.

92. Certain humanitarian agencies make it a priority to identify and provide assistance to forgotten emergencies. Susan Johnson from the IFRC told us that one of the aims of the IFRC’s Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) was to provide support to minor emergencies which might be overlooked by other agencies.\(^{144}\) In 2005, more than half the allocations from the DREF went to fund responses to small or minor emergencies for

\(^{136}\) Ev 188 [ActionAid International]  

\(^{137}\) See http://www.alertnet.org/thefacts/aidtracker/methodology.htm  

\(^{138}\) See http://www.alertnet.org/thefacts/aidtracker/  

\(^{139}\) See http://aaacad.synisys.com  

\(^{140}\) Global Humanitarian Assistance ‘GHA Update 2004-05’, p.28.  

\(^{141}\) See Footnote 19.  

\(^{142}\) GHA also notes that natural disasters tend to be better funded than conflict-related emergencies.  

\(^{143}\) Q 200Mr John Scicchitano, USAID  

\(^{144}\) Q 348 Ms Susan Johnson. The other aims of the DREF are to release funds rapidly and to invest in disaster preparedness.
which no emergency appeal was launched. Susan Johnson expressed concern that that
the creation of the CERF might lead to a reduction in donor funding to the DREF.

93. The CERF, an upgraded version of the Central Emergency Revolving Fund originally
established in 1991, is intended to address the dual problems of inequity and slowness in
humanitarian financing. We now consider the role of the CERF in improving the equity of
the international humanitarian system, and will then examine the role of the CERF in
improving the speed with which funding is made available to UN agencies.

94. The aim is for the CERF to total $500 million by 2008, with $50 million safeguarded as
a revolving loan facility and $450 million as a grant facility to be voluntarily replenished by
international donors. It may prove difficult for the CERF to reach its $500 million goal;
total pledges to the fund currently stand at $261 million, with $106 million received to
date. Jean-Jacques Graisse of the UN World Food Programme told us that donors were
reluctant to contribute funds to the CERF because it meant that their contribution to a
particular crisis would not be evident. Donors preferred to be able to contribute funds at
the time of a crisis, so that their contribution was visible, rather than having to tell their
constituents that their contribution had been made indirectly through a central fund. Jan
Egeland argued that this was not the case. If this did occur it would imply that those
donors were missing the point, namely that immediate response is more important than
which donor gets the credit, and that contributing to the CERF does not preclude donors
from acting simultaneously with their own resources. This is even more the case with low
profile needs where the ERC wants to respond in spite of the lack of high public awareness
or interest. We hope that other donors will follow DFID’s lead by contributing to the
CERF, forgoing their desire to ‘flag’ their humanitarian contributions in the interests
of facilitating the rapid and equitable disbursement of funds by the ERC.

95. One third of the $500 million is to be allocated at the discretion of the ERC to fund
‘neglected crises’, in two tranches a year. The ERC recently announced the first tranche of
$32 million for ten under-funded emergencies. In its written evidence, ActionAid
International expressed concern that “the criteria and mechanisms for the distribution of
funds for chronically under-funded crises are still not sufficiently clarified.” The CERF
mechanism has increased the powers of the ERC by giving him responsibility for the
allocation of funds. We hope that Jan Egeland and his successors will respond by ensuring
that the allocation process is completely open and transparent.

96. The earmarking of CERF funds specifically for under-funded emergencies is a welcome
step towards increasing the equity of the humanitarian system. However, even if the CERF
reaches its intended total of $500 million it will still comprise only 4% of annual global

145 Ev 156 [British Red Cross]
146 Q 348 Ms Susan Johnson, see also Ev 154 [British Red Cross]
147 The UK is the CERF’s largest contributor; the Secretary of State announced on 7 June 2006 that the UK would
provide it with £40 m annually for the next three years. DFID Press Release, 7 June 2006. A further issue is whether
the fund, once established will be replenished.
148 Q 285-289 Mr Jan Egeland
149 Burundi ($2 m); Central African Republic ($1 m); Chad ($4 m); Cote d’Ivoire ($1 m); Democratic Republic of the
Congo ($17 m); Guinea ($1 m); Haiti ($1 m); Republic of Congo ($1 m); Zimbabwe ($1 m); and Ethiopia, Kenya and
Zambia (jointly $3 m) [OCHA, CERF overview, 23 May 2006];
humanitarian assistance. The CERF is intended to complement rather than substitute for existing financing mechanisms such as the UN Consolidated Appeals process. Although a very positive development, the CERF alone will not solve the inequity in the international humanitarian sector. As we discuss in Chapter 6, donors still need to do more to improve their monitoring, assessment and needs based allocation of funds.

97. In its written evidence, the WFP expressed concern that the CERF could have the effect of reducing the total funding available from other sources for its operations: “We… worry that some donors may feel their job is done if they contribute to the CERF and then do not help us directly.” Given that the WFP frequently issues appeals totalling several hundred million dollars for a single crisis, they see the $30 million cap on disbursements for each crisis (to all agencies combined) as potentially problematic. In our view however, the CERF is just one fundraising mechanism of several which the WFP can use to seek funds, and one of several that most donors will use to provide humanitarian funding. Current progress does not suggest that any significant donors have decided to channel funding solely through the CERF mechanism, which is intended to be a mechanism to provide funds where they have not been forthcoming, or to ‘kickstart’ funding at the start of a rapid onset disaster. DFID certainly has an ongoing Institutional Strategy with the WFP and has given no indication that it will reduce its funding to UN agencies as a result of its generous contributions to the CERF.

Speed

98. In addition to funding neglected emergencies, the CERF is intended to improve the speed of humanitarian financing, allowing UN agencies to commence critical operations and to fund lifesaving programmes during the early stages of a disaster, when these costs have not yet been covered by other donors. Two-thirds of the CERF’s grant funds are to be used to allow emergency rapid disbursement of up to $30 million per emergency. CERF has undertaken to respond to UN agencies’ requests for funds within three to four days. In many cases the funds received by UN agencies will then be passed onto NGOs and civil society organisations, which will be responsible for relief distribution on the ground. In its written memorandum, ActionAid International expresses concerns that “the mechanism for applying for and distributing the relief funds may create more layers of bureaucracy rather than enable rapid disbursement of funds... a time limit also needs to be set for disbursement to implementing agencies. The UN should streamline its sub-contracting agreements in such cases and adhere to a similar three or four day deadline.” We agree. We have heard in several contexts about delays in the disbursement of funds by UN agencies to NGOs. In the context of humanitarian disasters where the costs of any delay can be measured in lives lost, inefficiencies are even less acceptable. We suggest that UN OCHA incorporates an indicator on speed of disbursement to partner agencies into its evaluations of the way agencies employ the funds it distributes through the CERF. In combination with indicators of quality and effectiveness, the speed of disbursement indicator should affect the distribution of funds in later appeals.

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151 Ev 187 [WFP]
152 Ev 195 [Christian Aid]
99. In addition to the CERF, the UN humanitarian system raises funds through the Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP) and the Flash Appeal system. The CAP is intended to foster closer cooperation between host governments, donors, NGOs, the Red Cross/Red Crescent movement, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and UN agencies. When a disaster occurs in a given country or region, these organisations work together to produce a Common Humanitarian Action Plan (CHAP), which is intended to be a strategic plan for a humanitarian response. The CHAP is used as the basis for the development of a Consolidated Appeal, which is an appeal for funds for the same crisis by several humanitarian actors together. The Consolidated Appeal identifies a common understanding of the situation, and sets out which agency (including NGOs and UN agencies) will do what and where, using strategic action plans and specific project proposals. The intention is to avoid competing or overlapping appeals.

100. Flash appeals are a tool for generating a structured and coordinated humanitarian response in the first three to six months after an emergency occurs. The UN Humanitarian Coordinator in the country concerned must trigger a flash appeal within one week of an emergency, working in consultation with stakeholders. The Humanitarian Coordinator then collaborates with the UN Country Team and ERC to lead the flash appeal process. Flash appeals provide a brief assessment of urgent life-saving needs and should only include recovery projects that can be implemented within the timeframe of the Appeal.

101. Some donors, including DFID, have criticised the existing flash appeal system, because they feel that flash appeals frequently include projects and programmes which are not strictly emergency-related, or which are excessive. We heard that UN agencies sometimes take the opportunity of a flash appeal to try to fund projects for which they have not found the money elsewhere. DFID told us that there had been internal UN problems with the flash appeal for the South Asian Earthquake. Once constituted, the flash appeal had been scrutinised in Islamabad and elements of it deleted as not particularly emergency-related. However, when the flash appeal was scrutinised in Geneva, some of the UN agency work which had been deleted was reinstated without reference back to Islamabad. DFID felt that some elements of the flash appeal were opportunistic and unnecessary. None of the UN agency representatives whom we questioned about this issue in Pakistan or London were able to give a satisfactory explanation of why this had happened.

102. It is vital that donors are able to rely on emergency appeals being precisely that, appeals to fund interventions which need to be delivered immediately in order to fulfil basic unmet needs. It should not be necessary for donors to feel that they have to scrutinise all the elements of a flash appeal for relevance and urgency. Including excessive or non-emergency programmes in flash appeals is counterproductive for everyone if it makes donors less inclined to fund them. The UN appeals system is an important means of structuring the international humanitarian response but if it does not function as intended, donors may be tempted to channel funds bilaterally to UN agencies, risking gaps and overlaps in the international response. In its 2006 White Paper, DFID reiterates the Secretary of State’s commitment to “Promote changes to the emergency appeals process

153 Several UN agencies also maintain earmarked funds to enable them to respond immediately to disasters, for example the WFP’s Immediate Response Account [Ev 187 [WFP]] and UNICEF’s Emergency Programme Fund [Ev 181 UNICEF].

154 Ev 131 [DFID]
We support DFID’s commitment to improving the flash appeals system, and request that in twelve months time, DFID reports back to us on its progress on this issue.

NGO funding

103. A number of NGOs drew our attention to problems with systems for disbursing funds to NGOs and civil society organisations. The British Red Cross told us: "there are real concerns that funds are committed mainly through the UN system, and that the two other pillars (the NGOs and the RC/RC Movement) may not receive a timely and adequate flow of funds." Christian Aid commented that: "Where the UN acts as a funding source, there is often little money available for NGOs and other civil society groups. Even when the UN has been used solely as a mechanism to deliver resources to NGOs, the system has been slow, unwieldy, inefficient and unresponsive to the needs of affected communities."

104. It is true that most of the initiatives put forward to date to improve funding in the international humanitarian system have been focused on the UN system. Given that NGOs and civil society organisations are responsible for disbursing more than 50% of relief on the ground, it is vital that donors also pay attention to the efficiency of the systems through which they themselves supply funds to NGOs, and through which the UN agencies they fund pass on money to NGOs. We have already discussed the issue of the speed of UN disbursements to partner agencies. One solution which NGOs propose to the problems they have experienced in accessing funds from UN agencies is that they should be able to access funds from the CERF directly. We do not agree. Opening up access to CERF funds to the plethora of civil society organisations working on humanitarian issues would make the process of evaluating proposals and disbursing funds significantly more bureaucratic and time-consuming, negating one of the CERF’s principal advantages.

105. Nonetheless we accept that NGOs have real concerns about the speed, efficiency and extent of funding available to them when funds are disbursed through the UN system. We hope that now the CERF is in place, UN OCHA will turn its attention to the issue of how funds are disbursed to partner agencies. DFID makes regular, annual contributions of over £70 million to UN agencies and the ICRC/IFRC outside the CAP. We recommend that DFID uses its reviews of its Institutional Strategies for working with International Organisations to emphasise the importance of the way in which funds are disbursed to partner agencies.

106. Many donors, including DFID, disburse funds directly to NGOs as well as indirectly via UN agencies. We received positive evidence about DFID’s funding systems for NGOs. During 2005, DFID launched a new Conflict and Humanitarian Fund (CHF)

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156 [British Red Cross]

157 [Christian Aid]

158 [ActionAid International]

159 [ActionAid International]

160 [Christian Aid]
through which INGOs and NGOs working regionally or globally can access more regular DFID funding, outside the context of specific emergencies. This seems to be a positive innovation, but as yet it is too early to assess the impact of the new fund.

107. We heard that DFID had directly supported national NGOs to respond to the South Asian Earthquake. DFID told us that “DFID country offices maintain direct contacts with national NGOs. DFID’s calls for proposals are open to national NGOs.” We are concerned that although such calls are theoretically open, national NGOs may lack the capacity to fulfil DFID’s criteria for funding proposals. We recommend that DFID offices in countries prone to natural disasters be encouraged proactively to establish links with, and build the capacity of, national NGOs in the time between disasters, in order to support their ability to apply successfully for DFID funding when disasters occur.
6 Reform of the humanitarian sector: measuring needs and performance

108. Measurement of humanitarian needs and the performance of aid agencies is the third area which has been identified as in need of reform. Particular issues include: improving the measurement of need; enhancing evaluation of the performance of humanitarian actors; ensuring the implementation of lessons learned from evaluations; and establishing the accountability of humanitarian actors.

109. In recent years, and particularly as a result of the Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda (JEEAR) in 1996, a number of initiatives have been developed to address these issues. DFID has been supportive of these initiatives and provided funding to several. It seems that lack of progress in this area must be due to a deficiency in donor will, rather than a lack of initiatives, as these seem to have proliferated. The most prominent include:

- Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action (ALNAP) established in 1997, as a sector-wide network to provide a forum on learning, accountability and performance issues for the humanitarian sector;

- Humanitarian Accountability Partnership — International (HAP-I) founded by humanitarian agencies in 2003 with the aim of making humanitarian work more accountable to its intended beneficiaries;

- People in Aid established in 1995 as a central resource to assist the humanitarian agencies to improve the quality of their human resource management;

- The Sphere Project initiated by humanitarian NGOs and the Red Cross/Red Crescent movement in 1997 to produce a Humanitarian Charter and handbook of standards for humanitarian work; and

- Good Humanitarian Donorship Initiative (GHD) established in 2003, to provide a forum for donors to discuss good practice in funding humanitarian assistance and other shared concerns, to define principles and standards, and to provide a mechanism for encouraging greater donor accountability.

Needs assessment

110. In its written submission the British Red Cross emphasised the importance of “the quality, accuracy and speed of assessments on the ground provided by key actors” in affecting DFID’s decisions about how to respond to humanitarian disasters. DFID told us that “humanitarian operations remain characterised by a weak evidence base.”\[162\] The lack of an agreed common basis for measuring and comparing levels of humanitarian need continues to present a major obstacle to prioritisation, impartial decision-making and accountability in the humanitarian sector. John Scicchitano from USAID used the
example of the international response to the famine in the Sahel in 2005 to warn of the dangers of implementing humanitarian interventions based on inadequate data and understandings of need: “Much of the 2005 CAP funding for the Sahel came after heavy media coverage… Such reports successfully galvanized attention to an acute need, but donors and implementing agencies would be wise to look beyond the media reports towards technical assessments of the need.”163 The British Red Cross told us: "A regular finding from evaluations is the weakness of needs assessment practice."164 Oxfam commented that: "Assessment and monitoring systems must be refined to better identify needs, to track earlier-stage crisis indicators, and to serve as a guide for more equitable allocation of global resources.”165

111. Our predecessor Committee commented on the inadequacy of humanitarian data collection and analysis in its 2005 report Darfur, Sudan: The responsibility to protect.166 The Committee was concerned by the “extremely misleading” mortality data produced by the WHO, which only included violent deaths among internally displaced people (IDPs) who had managed to reach IDP camps. In its response to the report, HMG told us:

“We recognise the limitations of both the WHO’s survey and other studies and agree that more accurate data is needed… We agree that it is very important the statistics are presented in such a way that they are not open to misinterpretation, and will be working with WHO to ensure this.”

The humanitarian crisis in Darfur highlighted the potential consequences of inadequacies in data collection and analysis, and the importance of progress in this area.

112. The development of benchmarks based upon a core set of common indicators provides a possible way to improve the ability of needs assessments to inform resource allocation. Need is usually measured by malnutrition and mortality indicators, and DFID told us that the WHO has begun work to develop new global benchmarks for mortality and malnutrition.167 We are pleased to see the commitment made by DFID in their response to the OECD DAC Peer Review of the UK to:

"Strengthen the evidence base for DFID’s decision-making. This will be done by working with international partners to improve the quality and timeliness of data on humanitarian need, in particular malnutrition, mortality and other selected performance indicators.”168

We are concerned that any new initiative to develop benchmarks for humanitarian need should not “reinvent the wheel”. Nonetheless there is considerable support for such an initiative, which donors must note would need to be adequately resourced. **We look forward to hearing about DFID’s progress on benchmarking.**

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163 Ev 185 [Mr John Scicchitano]

164 Ev 154 [British Red Cross]

165 Ev 169 [Oxfam]


167 Ev 131 [DFID]

168 DFID’s response to the OECD DAC Peer Review of the United Kingdom, 11 September 2006, paragraph 36.
113. In addition to agreeing a common basis for measuring and comparing levels of humanitarian need, humanitarian actors must work to improve their data collection practices, in order to ensure the quality of the data they collect. We heard evidence that the most important way of ensuring that needs assessments are accurate and realistic is to involve those affected by a disaster. We heard a great deal of rhetoric about the importance of community consultation in needs assessments, but we remain unconvinced that this is universally reflected in practice.

114. During our visit to Pakistan we visited a village in North-West Frontier Province, which had been affected by the earthquake. The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) who had provided emergency shelter in the village kindly facilitated the visit. A staff member of the NRC told us the agency’s standard practice was to send a three person team to assess the needs of each village, and that in order to ensure a gender-balance in the needs assessment at least one member of each team had to be a woman. When female members of our group sought an opportunity to talk to women in the village, however, the women told them that they were the first women to come to the village in the aftermath of the earthquake, and that the women had not been asked for their views on the emergency shelter programme. It would be unfair to judge the efficacy of NRC’s needs assessment process on the grounds of this single anecdote, and the women we spoke to were very satisfied with the emergency shelter which had been provided, but this example does illustrate the potential gulf between rhetoric and reality in terms of needs assessment.

115. This example also highlights the difficulty for DFID of evaluating the effectiveness of the needs assessment procedures practiced by its NGO partners. This issue relates to a broader one arising from DFID’s increasing engagement in fragile states and other difficult environments, where the difficulty of monitoring partners and the projects they implement increases the risk of under-performance or even fraud. We recommend that DFID gives detailed consideration to the issue of how to monitor and evaluate the work of its partner agencies in countries where conflict or other dangerous conditions make first-hand assessments by DFID staff infrequent or impossible.

116. Several NGOs highlighted the importance, once data has been collected, of disaggregating the resulting analysis of needs according to different criteria. Oxfam and Womankind Worldwide both told us: "There is a need to disaggregate assessment information on gender lines to better understand unique vulnerabilities." HelpAge International emphasised the need to disaggregate data according to age “in order to design an inclusive and effective response based on need.”

**Evaluating the performance of humanitarian actors**

117. In its written evidence ActionAid International drew on an analysis of the international response to the South Asia Earthquake to highlight one of the dangers of inadequate evaluation of humanitarian interventions: "Monitoring and evaluation were poor, and unless these issues are improved the British public are likely to be less responsive
to future emergency appeals. There needs to be more emphasis on monitoring and oversight of equality and equity with funding allocated to this.171

118. Effective evaluation is naturally dependent on an accurate assessment of the needs the intervention was seeking to address. This further strengthens the case outlined above for improving needs assessment in the humanitarian sector. A second prerequisite for effective evaluation is the existence of agreed benchmarks against which the quality of responses can be measured. We heard that the quality of such evaluations has increased since the Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda (JEEAR) in 1996.172 At the moment the key benchmarks for the quality of responses to the needs of those affected by a disaster include Sphere standards and the Red Cross/Red Crescent/NGO Code of Conduct. Nicholas Stockton told us that: "We do have now a way of talking about humanitarian need, thanks to the Sphere Project, that enables us to have a genuine conversation about relatively objective observed needs and also responses around the main areas of humanitarian assistance."173 The Sphere standards have been criticised, however, for being too aspirational and for employing indicators which are not context sensitive. According to the ICVA the standards are predominantly used by operational staff, through whose experience they were framed, and are not well known at the level of senior humanitarian coordinators.174

119. The Secretary of State has been a strong advocate of "the need to set benchmarks for the scale and speed of the response we require the humanitarian system to provide" and to create "standards against which we can hold agencies to account."175 These goals have been encompassed within the agenda of the Good Humanitarian Donorship Initiative (GHD) which has been strongly championed by DFID. The HRR also called for a new focus on benchmarks but laid a different emphasis, on the need to measure response in the first four weeks of a crisis.176 ICVA question how "the first four weeks" would be defined in a slow onset disaster and complain that Jan Egeland has de-prioritised benchmarking so that it has not progressed as fast as it might have done.177 Nonetheless the Secretary of State`s call has generated an important debate around the nature and quality of the data upon which humanitarian actors premise their response.

Lesson-learning

120. Evaluating humanitarian interventions is pointless unless lessons are learnt from the evaluations and applied in future disaster scenarios. Good evaluations do not necessarily lead to good impacts.178 We were told that lesson-learning does not happen consistently.

171 Ev 189 [ActionAid international]
172 Q 124 Mr John Mitchell, ALNAP
173 Q 134 Mr Nicholas Stockton
174 ICVA talkback 7(3) October 2005
175 Ev 131 [DFID]
177 ICVA talkback 7(3) October 2005
178 Q 151 Mr John Mitchell
Tearfund said: “It is apparent that lessons are seldom learnt from previous disasters.”\textsuperscript{179} John Mitchell from ALNAP informed us that “to try to improve learning through evaluation”\textsuperscript{180} was his organisation’s key mandate. ALNAP produces an annual Review of Humanitarian Action in which it evaluates the quality of the evaluations that have been undertaken that year by its 56 members in the humanitarian sector, and produces an evaluation synthesis. The goal is to improve performance in the humanitarian sector by improving the quality of evaluations and facilitating learning from those evaluations. ALNAP also produces "Lessons learned" papers in the aftermath of specific disasters, drawing together relevant lessons learnt through evaluations of previous similar disasters.\textsuperscript{181} Nonetheless, responding to a question about the extent to which the lessons learnt from evaluations are put into practice, John Mitchell said:

“I think people are trying, but I cannot put my hand on my heart and say there has been a significant improvement. Every year we do an evaluation synthesis of ALNAP and the same lessons are coming round time and time again now. There are about eight or ten key areas that we see keep recurring.”\textsuperscript{182}

121. The British Red Cross recommended the use of real time evaluations to achieve lesson learning in the context of an ongoing response:

"Our experience is that real time evaluations that provide feedback to the concerned implementers as they manage a response are a useful tool for learning and improving practice. We thus recommend increasing usage of this tool provided that it is understood and used appropriately by professionals with demonstrated skill. Another challenge, particularly important with real-time evaluations, is to communicate to the media and the public complex messages from evaluations in an accurate and intelligible manner, and to ensure that these messages are not deformed, oversimplified, or used out of context by the media.”\textsuperscript{183}

It seems likely that evaluations undertaken while a response is ongoing are more likely to have an impact than those undertaken once a response is complete.

**Accountability**

122. Nicholas Stockton told us that in his view, the humanitarian sector was "profoundly unaccountable." He went on to explain:

"...as a system... concerned with the delivery of services and goods to people, probably more than any other system I can think of, it is one characterised by the profound imbalance of power between those who provide assistance and those who receive it. Economists talk about this as the principal/agent relationship. The greater the imbalance of power between the provider and agent of services and goods and the principal (the people who are supposed to be provided with some kind of service

\textsuperscript{179} Ev 174 [Tearfund]
\textsuperscript{180} Q 124 Mr John Mitchell
\textsuperscript{181} For example Houghton ‘Tsunami emergency - lessons from previous natural disasters’, (January 2005) ALNAP.
\textsuperscript{182} Q 141 Mr John Mitchell
\textsuperscript{183} Ev 155 [British Red Cross]
or receive assistance) the greater are the risks of those services being both inefficient and ineffective.”

Mr Stockton’s explanation highlights the key concern of HAP-I, to improve the accountability of the humanitarian sector to its beneficiaries, so-called "downwards accountability", on the basis that most accountability in the sector is currently "upwards" towards multilateral agencies and donors.

123. Tearfund’s memorandum supported Nicholas Stockton’s argument: "Downwards accountability to affected communities remains extremely weak, despite there being a direct correlation between this type of accountability and the quality of work.” Mr Stockton attributed the weakness of downwards accountability to the “very, very long, extraordinarily long chains of accountability” which make it a "very, very rare event" for donors such as DFID to be "in a position to listen to complaints from beneficiaries, survivors of disasters, and take serious account of their views.” In his view, DFID needs to be more rigorous about ensuring that its partners are soliciting and taking on board the views of beneficiaries:

“I would like DFID to consistently ask of an organisation which asks for humanitarian funding: Will you talk to the people that you say you are going to assist, in order that you can ascertain that what you are proposing to do is what they need? Early consultation would be my very first question. My second question would be: Do you then ensure that there is public information provided about what you are going to do to people that need it?… Do you provide clear information in a language that is accessible to those people who need to interpret it, if you like, into their own language in a way that enables them to plan and review your response and, if necessary, tell you that you are doing the wrong thing? Do you ensure that there are mechanisms thereafter for feedback, including, complaints and so on?”

124. The 2006 OECD DAC Peer Review of the UK included a focus on the UK’s humanitarian assistance. It found that:

“UK’s approach to ensure adequate involvement of beneficiaries in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of its humanitarian activities is not clear and at field level it is recognised that this issue will have to be addressed to further strengthen capacity building and advance the design of needs based response.”

DFID did not respond to this specific issue in its response to the DAC Review, although in its written memorandum the Department admits: “we recognise that there remains a need to improve how existing standards are applied and monitored, and to find better ways of enabling beneficiaries to contribute and hold humanitarian actors responsible.”

184 Q 119 Mr Nicholas Stockton
185 Ev 175 [Tearfund]
186 Q 130 Mr Nicholas Stockton
188 DFID’s response to the OECD DAC Peer Review of the United Kingdom, 11 September 2006
189 Ev 132 [DFID]
recommend that DFID clarifies its approach to ensuring the involvement of beneficiaries in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of its humanitarian activities, and affirm its commitment to tackling this issue at headquarters as well as field level. The involvement of beneficiaries should include opportunities for recipient states and populations to input into dialogue on and review of proposals for humanitarian reform.

**Good Humanitarian Donorship Initiative (GHD)**

125. As the GHD initiative was established only in 2003, it remains early to evaluate the impact it has had, although the evidence we received indicates there is support for the initiative within the humanitarian sector. Joanna Macrae outlined the rationale behind it:

"I think what donors came to realise… was that the volume of ODA being spent on humanitarian assistance was rising very, very sharply but there were no norms against which donor performance could be measured… and I think also whole agendas around harmonisation of donor procedures were getting greater currency more generally, so there was a kind of moment then when donors came to the view that it would be useful to have such principles to guide their behaviour both bilaterally and collectively, and by initially incorporating these principles into the DAC peer review process and, more recently, having them agreed as a reference point for DAC members, I think there has been an attempt made to make sure that humanitarian assistance is basically subject to the same level of scrutiny as the main part of development assistance."  

The GHD "Principles and Good Practice of Humanitarian Donorship" were endorsed at a conference in Stockholm on 17 June 2003, and there are 23 governments which are now signatories to the process.

126. It is important that the GHD does not remain a northern donor-led initiative but incorporates southern and non-traditional donors. Although DFID’s advocacy for GHD is valuable, the Department needs to make sure that it continues to be seen as a sector-wide initiative and not purely as a UK-driven agenda. The GHD process also needs to engage NGOs and civil society who could potentially use GHD as a framework for evaluating donors’ work. In future inquiries which touch on humanitarian issues we will consider the extent to which DFID is adhering to the GHD principles it has championed.

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190 Q 74 Mr Eric Stobbaerts; Ev 153 [British Red Cross]; Ev 216 [Merlin]
191 Q 109 Ms Joanna Macrae
192 Ev 139 [DFID]
193 Q 112 Ms Joanna Macrae
7 Operational Issues

127. In this chapter we examine some of the operational issues which are currently subject to concern or debate among humanitarian agencies working in field contexts. In addition to receiving written and oral evidence on these issues, we heard about them at first-hand from the humanitarian practitioners we met during our visit to northern Pakistan. We have chosen to focus specifically on three issues:

- first, the way in which humanitarian actors work with affected governments;
- second, the relationship between humanitarian actors and military and civil defence actors; and
- third, the question of whether humanitarian actors should label or "flag" their assistance.

Working with affected governments

128. Sovereign states bear primary responsibility for protecting and assisting the victims of humanitarian emergencies within their own borders. Humanitarian principles including the Red Cross/Crescent Code of Conduct, Sphere standards and the Good Humanitarian Donorship (GHD) initiative underline the primary role of affected people and their authorities in responding to disasters. Whether a natural hazard results in a humanitarian disaster requiring international assistance is significantly determined by the capacity and political will of the affected state. The nature of the role played by the state should inform the response by the international humanitarian system and the roles played by different actors.

129. Political interests can influence how crises are presented by the affected states, which may not wish to have crises within their borders labelled ‘humanitarian disasters’ as this would attract unwanted international attention. There is an additional concern that governments in countries facing slow-onset disasters may lack the motivation to take the necessary measures to avert them, which may carry a political and capital cost, recognising that if the culmination of a slow-onset disaster is conspicuous it is likely to attract international attention and far greater funds than at the pre-disaster phase.

130. The high level of cooperation from the Government of Pakistan (GoP) and the role played by the Pakistani military in the relief effort have been cited as key factors in the success of the response to the South Asia Earthquake in 2005, including the prevention of a feared second wave of winter deaths. Salman Shah, Economic Adviser to the Prime Minister of Pakistan, told us that within two weeks of the earthquake the GoP had established the Federal Relief Commission (FRC), a new institution based within the Prime Minister’s office charged with coordinating emergency relief efforts. The GoP then went on to establish a second ad hoc body, the Earthquake Rehabilitation and Reconstruction

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194 As outlined in Resolution 46/182 of the UN General Assembly: “Each State has the responsibility first and foremost to take care of the victims of natural disasters and other emergencies occurring on its territory. Hence, the affected State has the primary role in the initiation, organization, coordination, and implementation of humanitarian assistance within its territory.”
Authority (ERRA) with the mandate to plan, coordinate, monitor and regulate reconstruction and rehabilitation activities in earthquake affected areas. We heard that there were some problems with coordination and overlap between the two bodies; the FRC had a higher profile and was more dynamically led initially, while ERRA experienced some delays and was less well-integrated into the international humanitarian response. We were impressed by the comprehensive plans for reconstruction we were shown by ERRA officials, and the programme of compensation which they outlined to us. We heard concerns from NGOs, however, about the administration of the compensation scheme, and the unrealistic nature of the timescale for the reconstruction programme. DFID officials expressed similar concerns, saying that the GoP was planning to rebuild in 3 years what would be more likely to take 10 years to achieve. They felt that ERRA was too focused on outputs and needed to switch to an emphasis on outcomes.

131. Despite these specific concerns it was evident that DFID was working closely with the GoP, and that the GoP appreciated this approach. Salman Shah compared DFID’s approach favourably with that of USAID, saying that USAID had taken longer to get its relief efforts up and running, and had been more expensive because it had established its own programmes and used its own contractors, rather than working with ERRA. We support DFID’s acknowledgement that: “it is important for donors to have working partnerships with the governments of disaster-affected countries, partnerships which respect and support local capacities rather than supplanting or cutting across them.”

132. In addition to the role of national governments, we heard evidence about the importance of the role played by local government and institutions. We were told that local responses to disasters are often overlooked by humanitarian actors, particularly in the case of sudden onset disasters. A representative of Oxfam in Pakistan told us that the staff, records and offices of the provincial government and district health authority in Muzaffarabad had been decimated by the earthquake. In such situations, support and capacity building for remaining staff is particularly crucial.

133. The need for donors to recognise and work through local and national government was one of the key messages of the Tsunami Evaluation Coalition’s final synthesis report. We support the TEC’s conclusion and recommendation:

“As is often the case in the aftermath of a sudden and intense natural disaster, it was those directly affected by the calamity and those people in the immediate vicinity who were the first to respond…Yet the contribution of affected populations and local organisations are often overlooked by international aid agencies, private aid providers and the media. The international aid effort geared up several days after the immediate life-saving work had taken place. One of the biggest weaknesses with the international operation was its lack of understanding of the local context and its reluctance and/or inability to consult with and work through and with local

196 Ev 133 [DFID]
198 There were political sensitivities over the provision of assistance in AJK because the Government of AJK wanted to be more involved than the Government of Pakistan would allow.
communities, groups and organisations. This laid the basis for some inappropriate and poor quality programming which in some cases even undermined the progress of local initiatives. International aid was found to be more effective when provided in tandem with local and national initiatives. The key issue here is that of ownership. Aid works best when local communities and authorities have been consulted and are involved in the planning and management of programmes. Such collaboration creates an environment where responsibilities are owned by local people…

Recommendation: The international humanitarian response system needs to work much harder to understand local contexts and work with and through local structures… International agencies must respect the role and responsibility of affected states as the primary duty bearers and authorities in responding to natural disasters.”

Working with the military and civil defence actors

134. Although this inquiry has focused on humanitarian responses to natural disasters, our investigation has highlighted the increasing demands placed upon the international humanitarian system by complex and conflict-related humanitarian crises. In many humanitarian emergencies, whether generated by nature or by political forces, the role of military and civil defence actors has become a significant and sometimes contentious issue, for a number of reasons.

135. Natural disasters often occur in areas currently or historically affected by conflict or political suppression. For the population of such areas, military actors are often viewed with suspicion or fear. It may be difficult for affected people to accept the participation of the military or civil defence actors in the provision of humanitarian relief, when they have seen the same people acting with very different motivations and consequences. In such circumstances military and civil defence actors may simply be inappropriate vectors for humanitarian assistance and where possible their use should be avoided.

136. There are also gender issues relating to the involvement of the military in humanitarian aid provision. Ideally there should be a gender balance in the humanitarian actors distributing aid, but throughout the world military and civil defence forces are composed predominantly of men. Where military and civil defence forces are used to deliver humanitarian aid, this can cause problems in the equity and ethics of distribution. Women may be less willing or able to receive relief supplies from men, men may be more inclined to distribute aid “via” other men, and sexual exploitation is possible. Furthermore, although there are variations in the education and training which armed forces in different countries receive, and the emphasis is usually on military accomplishment rather than on the complex and subtle negotiating skills which are necessary to identify humanitarian needs and ensure equitable distribution of assistance.

137. During our visit to Pakistan we heard a lot about the important role played by the Pakistani military in the response to the South Asian earthquake. Most of those we spoke to acknowledged the need for the involvement of the military due to the extreme logistical

difficulty of accessing many of the communities affected by the earthquake in remote mountain areas. The Pakistani military had the best (though still not complete) knowledge of the distribution of settlements in the inaccessible valleys affected by the earthquake. They also had the helicopters and heavy lift capacity to transport people and aid supplies into these remote areas. This capacity was particularly important once the winter arrived. We were told that in the course of the humanitarian response, many humanitarian actors, including the ICRC, had worked to an unprecedented extent with military actors. Some of those we spoke to felt that a significant shift in military-humanitarian relations had taken place as a result of the disaster.

138. A number of NGOs, however, expressed reservations about the involvement of the Pakistani military in the relief effort. Their comments were focused on perennial concerns around "humanitarian space": the possibility that the neutrality of humanitarian actors could be compromised through association with the military, and that access to disaster situations could thereby be reduced or humanitarian actors endangered. Care International told us that, particularly in the early stages of the response, the Pakistani military had exerted "considerable pressure... to conduct centralised distribution of relief," and had "attempted to impose military escorts on CARE response teams." The British Red Cross told us: "While recognising that it is appropriate in particular circumstances to reinforce the humanitarian capacity, we have concerns about the use of military assets becoming a 'default' position. We urge that this should be exceptional and a last resort.'

139. A report from the International Crisis Group went much further in criticising international humanitarian organisations for their "embedded relationship" with the Pakistani military, commenting: "While civilian authorities and institutions usually undertake humanitarian relief, the military has, even after the initial emergency phase, excluded elected bodies, civil society organisations and communities and sidelined civil administration from the effort, as well as its reconstruction and rehabilitation plans... The willingness of donors to accept military directives and priorities, willingly or reluctantly, has also inadvertently empowered extremists and, if extended to the reconstruction phase, could further undermine the prospects of democratisation in Pakistan and Pakistan-administered Kashmir." ActionAid International told us: "the widespread use of the Pakistani military sidelined elected bodies and civil society organisations from the relief effort." We support ActionAid International’s recommendation that: "in order to support democratic processes in both rapid onset and complex emergencies the role of the military should be governed by parliamentary oversight." Despite these concerns, the weight of opinion we heard during our visit to Pakistan was supportive of the role which the Pakistani military had played.

200 Although we heard that a significant proportion of Pakistan’s helicopter fleet was not mobilised for the disaster response, being on active duty in tribal and border areas of Southern Pakistan. We also heard about delays in the arrival of UN helicopters to support the relief effort, although these claims have been refuted by the WFP (see Ev 188 [WFP]).

201 Ev 163 [CARE International]


203 Ev 189 [ActionAid International]

204 Ibid
140. The British Red Cross (BRC) noted that one argument used to justify the use of the military in relief operations is that of cost-effectiveness, but that they have not seen any evidence about the relative cost-effectiveness of the military in comparison to humanitarian agencies. They say: "This is a matter that has been repeatedly documented in the NGO Military Contact Group, hosted and chaired by the BRC, and we have asked HMG to provide such evidence, but no data has been made available so far."205 We recommend that, in the interests of transparency, DFID publishes any documents relating to its decision-making processes for logistics in relation to the humanitarian response in Pakistan to the South Asia Earthquake and in Indonesia to the Indian Ocean Tsunami Disaster. We would like to see evidence of the projected costs of the different options which were considered for the transportation and delivery of assistance by different actors, and the actual costs of the options which were selected, including how much was paid to military agents.

141. The OECD DAC Peer review of the UK found that: “Complications arise for DFID’s mandate to provide principled humanitarian aid when the UK is part of the conflict such as in Iraq and Afghanistan…. While DFID’s policy on humanitarian aid recognises the risks of compromising humanitarian principles, the FCO and MOD could further define their respective roles in civil-military operations and develop procedures designed to clarify such operations and protect the principles.” We were pleased to note the commitment made in DFID’s 2006 White Paper to “develop clear arrangements for using UK military equipment and personnel in humanitarian crises.” We look forward to seeing the outcome of the exchange of letters between DFID and the Ministry of Defence on this issue. We recommend that DFID uses this opportunity to initiate the development of a joint FCO/MOD/DFID policy framework delineating the respective roles of each department, and that of the military, in civil-military operations taking place in the context of humanitarian situations. This framework should be based on existing best practice and guidelines identified under the IASC, and consistent with the provisions of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security.

"Flying the flag"

142. The issue of flagging was brought to our attention during a visit to a village in NWFP which had been supplied with emergency housing by the Norwegian Refugee Council. Or at least this was our impression when we arrived in the village and saw a number of shiny new shelters prominently stamped with the logo and name of the NRC. We were later told, however, that DFID had funded over 50% of the NRC’s emergency shelter activities in Mansehra.206

143. We accept that there are good reasons why DFID usually chooses not to "fly the flag" over the programmes it has funded and the initiatives it has supported. Often this is in order to increase a sense of ownership of the programme by the local community or national government, with the aim of building capacity and making the programme more sustainable in the long term. But this aim will be frustrated if DFID’s partner agencies put their own “flags” on such programmes. We also accept that in some situations security...
considerations make it inappropriate for DFID to identify the programmes it has funded. We feel however that there are some circumstances in which it would be appropriate for DFID to identify its contributions to humanitarian assistance, as this could have a positive impact on perceptions of the UK in the countries concerned. **We recommend that DFID reviews its policy on "flagging". DFID should stipulate that where the UK has provided more than 50% of the funding for a programme of humanitarian assistance to be delivered by a partner agency, that agency should not advertise its own name or logo in connection with that programme without also displaying DFID’s name or logo.**

144. During our visit to Pakistan we saw many instances of donors and NGOs displaying their name or logo on or around the projects they had funded. We were surprised to note that the vast majority of this signage was in English. **We recommend that wherever possible, labels identifying DFID’s participation in or funding of a project should be translated into the local language.**
8 Disaster risk reduction

145. The term Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) refers to “the broad development and application of policies, strategies and practices to minimise vulnerabilities and disaster risks throughout society, through prevention, mitigation and preparedness”. Within the field of DRR, activities are commonly divided into mitigation and preparedness. Mitigation involves focusing on the causes of disasters and on actions taken to lessen the chances of disasters happening. As Marcus Oxley from Tearfund explained:

“what mitigation is saying is how can we prevent that cyclone from happening in the first place or how we can prevent that flood. That is things like plans to move people out of the flood plain… that requires a lot of long term, up-front investment.”

Preparedness involves focusing on the effects of disasters and on actions to be taken in the event of a disaster to reduce its impacts. This includes forecasts, warning systems and physical precautions. Mitigation and preparedness activities vary according to the nature of the natural disaster, including whether it is a slow- or rapid-onset disaster.

146. The Committee heard evidence that historically DRR has been given a low priority, with a tendency to fall into the ‘gap’ between development and humanitarian work. Development actors have often neglected to address the vulnerability of their target populations to disasters, while humanitarian actors have almost exclusively focused on the aftermath of disasters. Although some actors from each field have carried out DRR to some extent, the field has not attracted significant political interest or funding.

147. We were told that the limited political attention and funding which DRR has attracted has had a tendency to be focused on low-frequency high-impact disasters. David Peppiatt from the ProVention Consortium Secretariat warned that the low-frequency high-impact disasters which occurred during 2005 should not be allowed to skew the risk reduction agenda away from the low-impact high-frequency disasters such as drought and famine which have greater cumulative impact worldwide.

148. Recently, however, there has been growing recognition of the importance of DRR, and the disproportionate benefits that can derive from investment in mitigation and preparedness. Awareness of DRR was raised during the UN’s International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (1990–1999) and by the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) formulated at the end of the decade. In January 2005, the UN

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208 Q 44 Mr Marcus Oxley
210 Q 214 Mr David Peppiatt, ProVention Consortium
211 Q 210 Dr John Twigg, UCL; Q 223 Mr David Peppiatt
212 “Impact” is used here to refer to public consciousness of a disaster, rather than to human suffering or material damage.
213 Q 213 Mr David Peppiatt; Ev 231 [Dr Ben Wisner]
convened a World Conference on Disaster Reduction in Hyogo, Japan, which produced the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015.\textsuperscript{215} The Hyogo Framework underlines the need to mainstream DRR in development policies. Jan Egeland has recently sought to emphasise the importance of DRR, and we heard that Louis Michel, EC Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, had given “instructions to all his services that disaster reduction and prevention needs to become a mainstay… of longer term development aid programmes.”\textsuperscript{216}

149. DFID’s humanitarian work has historically included DRR, but recently this aspect of the Department’s work has been given a higher priority. After a scoping study published by the Department in 2004,\textsuperscript{217} DRR was included as an element in the humanitarian reform initiative launched by the Secretary of State in December 2004.\textsuperscript{218} In March 2006 DFID launched a Disaster Risk Reduction Policy Paper expressing the Department’s intention “to integrate disaster risk reduction measures more effectively into its own work, as well as strengthen the international system’s capacity to manage disaster risks.”\textsuperscript{219} DRR was also highlighted in DFID’s July 2006 White Paper.\textsuperscript{220}

\section*{Disaster Mitigation}

150. An easy way to demonstrate the value of disaster mitigation is to compare the impacts of the South Asian Earthquake in Pakistan with the likely impact of an earthquake of similar magnitude occurring in California. Building and planning regulations in California, combined with widespread insurance coverage, would mean that, if an earthquake occurred, although the financial impact might be substantial, loss of life and serious injury would be rare. In Pakistan, by contrast, lack of enforced, earthquake-sensitive planning regulations governing the nature and location of buildings meant that many buildings collapsed contributing to over 70,000 deaths and hundreds of thousands of injuries. Furthermore, very few people who survived the earthquake had any form of insurance to mitigate its impact on their future lives.

151. In Pakistan we heard that not only had planning regulation been lacking, in one case a GoP development policy had had the consequence of multiplying the number of children killed by the earthquake. The GoP had offered to build a school in any village that would provide the land free of charge. Inevitably many villages offered plots which were otherwise undesirable to villagers, being on steep slopes or in unstable areas. When the earthquake struck, shortly after the start of the school day, many of these buildings were the first to collapse. UNICEF reported that at least 17,000 children (almost 25\% of the total

\textsuperscript{215} See http://www.unisdr.org.
\textsuperscript{216} Q 160 Mr Johannes Luchner
\textsuperscript{217} DFID, ‘Disaster Risk Reduction: A Development Concern’, 2004
death toll) were killed in the South Asian earthquake.\footnote{UNICEF ‘On the eve of Eid-ul-Fitr, quake-affected children have little to celebrate’, 3 November 2005.} Christian Aid highlighted the findings of one of their partner agencies in respect of this issue:

“500 children from one school were crushed to death when the school building collapsed. With £500, the school could have been made earthquake-resistant: that is just £1 per child.”\footnote{Ev 198 [Christian Aid]}

152. Unfortunately, building to mitigate all such potential disaster risks is not financially possible in most developing countries. Nonetheless, the tragic example of the school children killed in Pakistan highlights the importance of integrating awareness of disaster vulnerability into development policies, and seeking to mitigate the effects of potential disasters. In his written evidence, Dr Ben Wisner draws our attention to the two-year school safety campaign launched by the ISDR Cluster Group on Education, supported by a Coalition for Global School Safety.\footnote{Ev 229 [Dr Ben Wisner]} He raises the important point that if the MDG goal of sending all primary school-aged children to school were reached, 34 million of these children might be at risk in seismically-unsafe schools. This observation highlights again the importance of mainstreaming DRR into development thinking.

153. We heard several examples of agencies working to disseminate affordable disaster mitigation strategies in developing countries, including education, training, and learning lessons from local communities. Christian Aid, for example, told us about the mitigation work undertaken by their partner agencies, including the promotion of earthquake safety in northern India and community DRR training in central Asia.\footnote{Ev 198 [Christian Aid]} Plan UK informed us about their work educating children in disaster mitigation in El Salvador.\footnote{Ev 224 [Plan UK]}

154. The evidence we heard revealed a potential conflict inherent in the promotion of disaster mitigation following a disaster. Attempts to mitigate the effects of future disasters often entail rebuilding differently and/or in a different location. In some cases such strategies will be accepted or even welcomed by those affected by a disaster. Some residents of very remote villages in Pakistan had welcomed the opportunity to move closer to the amenities of less remote, and less disaster prone areas. In other cases, however, those affected by a disaster may be reluctant to accept such strategies. We heard that some tribal peoples living in remote areas of Pakistan were dismayed by the prospect of moving away from their traditional lands and sedenterising their nomadic lifestyles. In such cases, the desire of humanitarian and development actors to mitigate future disasters can potentially conflict with the right of those affected to determine their own future. Ed Schenkenberg van Mierop cautioned about a further danger, that in some circumstances actors might seek to fulfil political objectives under the veneer of disaster mitigation. For example, a natural disaster might provide an opportunity for a government to move a population to more politically convenient locations, using the justification of an argument that it was less disaster prone.\footnote{Q 326 and Q 328 Mr Ed Schenkenberg van Mierop} In Pakistan we heard that following seismic surveys, certain areas had
been designated a “red zone” in which the risk of a future earthquake was too high for rebuilding to be permitted. This meant that the entire town of Balakot was due to be relocated. We heard unverifiable complaints from some people that this policy was designed more for the Government’s convenience, to move populations out of inaccessible areas, than for their own protection. As we discussed in Chapter 6, needs assessment based on effective consultation of those affected is a crucial element in resolving such dilemmas.

**Disaster Preparedness**

155. Alongside disaster mitigation measures, which seek to reduce the frequency of disasters, must be implemented disaster preparedness initiatives, which seek to reduce the impacts of the disasters which do occur. Such initiatives may include: prior planning; information and warning systems; education and training; and rehearsals.\(^{227}\) One of the key examples we heard of the value of disaster preparedness was that of Bangladesh where low-tech disaster preparedness strategies (including early warning, evacuation and cyclone shelters) have reduced the numbers killed by cyclones from tens of thousands to hundreds, despite an increase in the overall frequency of cyclone-generated floods.\(^{228}\)

156. We heard that in order to be effective, disaster preparedness initiatives must be based on accurate analysis of vulnerable areas and populations.\(^{229}\) ActionAid International highlighted the Participatory Vulnerability Analysis (PVA) tool which it has developed for this purpose, and implemented in 20 of its country programmes: “a systematic process that involves communities and other stakeholders in an in-depth examination of their vulnerability, and at the same time empowers or motivates them to take appropriate action.”\(^{230}\) Transparency International told us that the involvement of affected communities and vulnerable groups in all stages of preparedness planning has the additional advantages of minimising the risk of corruption and promoting a sense of ownership within these groups.\(^{231}\) As discussed in Chapter 6, we are convinced that the knowledge and experiences of local people should be placed at the centre of disaster preparedness and response. Consequently, we applaud the participatory focus of ActionAid International’s Participatory Vulnerability Analysis tool, and hope that DFID will take account of any lessons which are learnt from its use.

157. We received evidence that disaster preparedness initiatives should take special account of the particular vulnerabilities of: children;\(^{232}\) women;\(^{233}\) the elderly;\(^{234}\) the

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228 Q 225 and Q 226 Mr David Peppiatt, Q 274 Dr Saleemul Huq, IIED. See also Twigg, ‘Disaster Risk Reduction: Mitigation and preparedness in development and emergency planning’, Humanitarian Practice Network Good Practice Review Number 9, (March 2004).
229 Ev 190 [ActionAid International]; Ev 204 [HelpAge International]
230 Ev 190 [ActionAid International]
231 Ev 225 [Transparency International]
232 Ev 222 [Plan UK]
233 Ev 232 [Womankind Worldwide]
234 Ev 202 [HelpAge International]
disabled; and, people with low status in society, including dalits, tribal peoples and pastoralists. In their submission, Womankind Worldwide argue that “Disasters can present opportunities to redress pre-existing inequalities.” We agree that the redress of pre-existing inequalities is a desirable goal for the international humanitarian community. Before aiming for this goal, however, the international humanitarian community needs to take the first step of ensuring that its work does not exacerbate pre-existing inequalities.

Disaster preparedness should include coordination between civil society organisations, UN agencies, Red Cross and Red Crescent societies and governments in disaster-prone areas during times when disasters are not occurring. Inter-agency capacity analysis and contingency planning will facilitate cooperation during times of crisis and avoid unnecessary duplication.

Forecasting and early warning systems are key aspects of disaster preparedness, and vary greatly in terms of size, structure, management and technological sophistication. The greatest distinction is between systems warning of slow-onset disasters and those forecasting rapid-onset emergencies. Warning systems for slow-onset disasters are primarily focused on potential food shortages. The first major food shortage warning system was the Food and Agriculture Organisation’s (FAO) Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS), developed after the Sahel famines of the early 1970s to monitor food production and supplies at national level, and to assess emergency food needs in areas facing critical shortages. Several more were established following the African famines of the mid–1980s, including USAID’s Famine and Early Warning System Network (FEWSNet), which we heard has made a positive contribution to famine monitoring. Drawing on problems that arose during crises in West Africa and Niger, however, John Scicchitano acknowledged weaknesses in FEWSNet, including its potential negative effects on markets in neighbouring countries and its failure to take account of nutritional indicators.

In a written statement to the House, the Secretary of State commented on the failure of early warning systems to provide the information needed to trigger donor action in response to Niger famine during 2005. He asserted that the lack of response to the crisis was caused by a combination of factors including, “garbled information from early warning systems, inappropriate plans for dealing with the problem, unusually high food prices, and a failure of contingency planning and disaster preparedness.”

235 Q 353 Ms Susan Johnson
236 Ev 194 [Christian Aid]; Ev 230 [Dr Ben Wisner]. Dalits are low caste Hindus also referred to as untouchables.
237 Ev 233 [Womankind Worldwide]
238 Ev 160 [CARE]
239 Ev 232 [Womankind]
240 Q 44 Mr Marcus Oxley; Q 345 Ms Susan Johnson
241 Q 197 Mr John Scicchitano; Ev 230 [Dr Ben Wisner]
242 Q 197 Mr John Scicchitano
243 Ev 216 [Merlin]
244 ‘Food Crisis in Niger’ Written Ministerial Statement, 11 October 2006.
161. On the other hand, we heard evidence from several sources that systems to provide early warning of slow-onset disasters have become increasingly accurate. Jane Cocking from Oxfam told us that lessons learnt from the 2002–03 food crisis in Southern Africa had been applied to improve early warnings of later food crises. We heard, however, that improved accuracy in the forecasting of food crises has not led to a concomitant improvement in the efficacy of responses to such crises. In a recent paper, Sara Pantuliano of the ODI draws on data from the 2005–06 drought in the Horn of Africa to argue that, while early warning systems for famine are now very accurate, the difficulty is in generating the political will to commit funds to them before it is too late, especially when the government in a disaster-prone country may lack resources which the onset of a visible disaster could unlock several times over. As John Scicchitano told us, it may be difficult to attract attention to disasters which build up slowly: "Early warning is not well placed to sound alarm bells on situations that have been in existence for a long time." Eric Stobbaerts from Médecins Sans Frontières highlighted the examples of northern Kenya and Somalia, where early warning systems had identified problems, but responses on the ground had been very slow. He attributed this to the inflexibility of donor responses:

"I think it is one of the cases that demonstrates that it is not only about the mechanisms of early warning, but also about the capacity of the donor to be more flexible and adaptable to an environment that changes."

162. A number of witnesses advocated greater investment in early warning systems. We agree that investment in early warning systems is important, but think that equal emphasis should be placed on the importance of donors and political actors examining their mechanisms for responding to the warnings such systems produce in a timely fashion. We heard that DFID has worked with governments in disaster-prone areas to help develop early warning systems for slow-onset disasters. We recommend that, in addition to investing in the development of early warning systems for slow-onset disasters, DFID works with other donors and UN agencies to find ways of improving the predictability of responses to slow-onset disasters, making use of the data produced by existing early warning systems.

163. The massive loss of life caused by the Indian Ocean Tsunami Disaster inevitably focused attention on the value of early warning systems for rapid-onset disasters. DFID itself launched an Asia Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy in August 2005. Much of the focus after the tsunami was on the need to create an Indian Ocean tsunami early warning system.

246 Q 43 Ms Jane Cocking
248 Q 197 Mr John Scicchitano
249 Q 65 Mr Eric Stobbaerts
250 Q 44 Mr Marcus Oxley; Q 87 Ms Afshan Khan
251 Ev 134 [DFID]
252 Ibid
system, similar to that which is already established in the Pacific. However, as the tsunami which killed at least 339 people on the southern coast of Java on 17 July 2006 demonstrated however “19 months after the 26 December 2004 killer tsunami and $2 billion later, one cannot say that an Indian Ocean tsunami early warning system exists.”

Reuters AlertNet reported that none of Indonesia’s ocean buoys for detecting tsunamis was operational at the time, and The Guardian reported that although data were reportedly received 20 minutes before the first wave hit Java “[officials] were too busy monitoring the aftershocks… to raise the alarm.” As this example shows, early-warning systems are only useful if the warnings they produce are acted upon, and it may be misguided to invest in expensive hi-tech solutions at the expense of low-tech ones. Several witnesses emphasised this point.

164. We heard evidence from a number of witnesses on the value of low-tech early warning systems. Matthias Schmale emphasised the advantages of investment in ‘simple technology’, using the example of local people going out on bikes with whistles to warn of cyclones in Bangladesh. Howard Mollett from CARE International UK told us that investing in people and communities can be just as effective as “technical stuff.” ActionAid International emphasised that early warning systems should be “people-centred.”

165. Whether high- or low-tech, whether an early warning is acted upon is not only a question of official will. Once a threat has been detected, the first requirement is for information about it to be transmitted to those who are vulnerable. We heard that in many situations it is in “the last mile” that such information transfer breaks down. Agencies and individuals at a local level need to have the capacity to respond effectively to a warning. The second requirement is for vulnerable people to have disaster preparedness options available to them; as John Twigg from University College London remarked “there is no point getting a cyclone warning if you cannot go to a cyclone shelter.”

**Capacity Building**

166. Capacity building at various levels is central to both disaster mitigation and disaster preparedness. One of the goals of DFID’s new Humanitarian Policy is to assist governments in putting effective risk management strategies in place, including the establishment of national social security systems to provide a safety net in the event of a

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254 Ev 231 [Dr Ben Wisner]
256 Q 197 Dr John Twigg; Ev 231 [Dr Ben Wisner]
257 Q 71 Mr Matthias Schmale
258 Q 72 Mr Howard Mollett
259 Ev 190 [ActionAid International]
260 Q 199 Dr John Twigg
261 Q 198 Dr John Twigg
262 Q 197 Dr John Twigg
disaster. The written evidence provided by Dr Wisner supported DFID’s focus on reducing chronic needs and funding social protection to improve populations’ resilience to disasters: “nutrition and public health outreach and infrastructure are grossly neglected. The routine management and maintenance of such social protection mechanisms are vital if society is to have resilience to extreme events.” As DFID acknowledges, capacity building work must support local capabilities rather than undermining them, and be long term rather than just immediately in the aftermath of a disaster.

167. Risk reduction cannot be achieved solely through the improvement of government capacity; all levels of society must be involved. Local communities and indigenous NGOs are critical after a disaster, and must therefore be included in disaster preparedness as well. Involving the poor and marginalised is particularly important where government institutions are weak. Evidence from the British Red Cross and the IFRC emphasised the community basis of national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies. Several witnesses stressed the importance of investing financial and technical support in local capacity building to enable vulnerable communities to understand, mitigate and respond to the risks which face them.

**Funding DRR**

168. We heard evidence that, despite the increased profile of DRR, it remains difficult to persuade donors to spend money on DRR or to convince affected governments to make it a priority. These difficulties stem from the political intangibility of the benefits of DRR. Lives saved through DRR are invisible to the media whereas people pulled from the rubble by search and rescue teams are highly visible. Nonetheless the human and financial benefits of investment in DRR are proven. The question then is how to provide incentives for long term investment in DRR at a range of scales.

169. David Peppiatt reminded us that the poorest families in disaster-prone countries struggle to cope with daily challenges and do not have sufficient financial, economic or political incentives to invest in disaster mitigation. He raised the idea of providing financial incentives or rewards to families for investing in mitigation. There is an understandable tendency for individuals, local communities and national governments to spend their money on immediate needs rather than preparedness.
170. Where donors are concerned, Johannes Luchner from the EC Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid explained, when budgets are restrained, it is easy to spend money on immediate emergencies and harder for money to be directed to preparedness. John Scicchitano echoed the same point: “it is much more difficult to make... investments [in preparedness] because one is always fighting fires and so preventing fires becomes much more difficult.” This explains to some extent why, since the Indian Ocean Tsunami Disaster, there is: “broad governmental commitment to disaster preparedness, risk reduction... but it has not yet translated dramatically into big investments to organisations at the community level or national level.”

171. DFID now allocates 10% of its budget for responding to any specific disaster to mitigating the likelihood and effects of future disasters in that location. The Secretary of State told us that, using these funds, DFID was working with affected country governments to examine how disaster preparedness could be included in the reconstruction process and offering technical expertise. We commend DFID’s commitment to spend 10% of its budget for any specific humanitarian response on DRR. We recommend that DFID extend this commitment to apply to its total humanitarian budget rather than just specific emergencies.

172. We believe that DFID should seek to persuade other donors to follow the lead they have begun to take, and devote at least 10% of their total humanitarian budget to DRR. We heard evidence that the multilateral donors to which the UK contributes humanitarian funds do not yet adhere to this principle. Johannes Luchner told us that ECHO has a fixed budget for disaster preparedness which is ultimately set by member states. He said that ECHO had traditionally focused on small-scale community-based DRR projects, but was now trying to mainstream disaster preparedness into all its programmes, and he expressed the hope that funding for DRR would increase in future. We were pleased to hear that the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State received a positive response to his letter urging European Commissioner Louis Michel to do more to support DRR measures in disaster-prone developing countries. The UK needs to encourage other EU member states to reflect their growing political commitment to DRR in their funding decisions for DG-ECHO. We heard evidence that, with a few exceptions, DRR is not incorporated into the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) prepared by the World Bank. We were pleased to hear that DFID has funded a £4 million World Bank fund to help developing country governments incorporate DRR into their PRSPs over the next 3 years. We urge DFID to continue its advocacy to persuade the World Bank to increase its investment in DRR.

274 Q 183 Mr Johannes Luchner
275 Q 190 Mr John Scicchitano
276 Q 344 Ms Susan Johnson
277 Ev 134 [DFID]
278 Ev 152 [DFID]
279 Q 215 Mr David Peppiatt; Schipper and Pelling ‘Disaster risk, climate change and international development: scope for and challenges to integration’, Disasters (2006), 30 (1) pp.19-38. See also Q 269 Dr Saleemul Huq.
280 Ev 152 [DFID]
Risk Transfer Mechanisms

173. Only a very low percentage of homes and businesses in developing countries have insurance, and many stand to lose everything if a natural disaster occurs. Affected communities may get limited help from donors or their own national government, but many face destitution or have to borrow money at exorbitant rates of interest. We heard that the ProVention Consortium is exploring a number of novel financial risk-transfer schemes including: private-public insurance partnerships involving national government, international financial institutions and the private sector; risk transfer for public liabilities; and micro-insurance programmes aiming to reach the very poorest who are excluded from conventional insurance.281

174. In March 2006, the World Food Programme announced that AXA RE had been awarded the world’s first insurance contract for an humanitarian emergency. Jean Jacques Graisse explained the mechanism in his oral evidence. The pilot project is being carried out in Ethiopia; 28 meteorological stations will monitor rainfall, and should rainfall drop below a certain level during the harvest season the $930,000 contract will pay out US$7 million in contingency funding to farmers.282 This pilot, which would not be widely replicable without the installation of highly accurate meteorological monitoring stations, is intended to explore one alternative way of coping with the financial impact of disasters. WFP told us that they were also exploring other risk transfer solutions in relation to food aid, and were considering a hedging programme in South Africa.283 However, governments and donors are reluctant to come up with resources to experiment further, and DFID has not contributed to it as yet.

DFID and Disaster Risk Reduction

175. The 2003 National Audit Office (NAO) Report on DFID’s humanitarian work argued that if DRR was to be successfully mainstreamed, it needed to go beyond the policy level and actually be translated into action on the ground.284 In his written evidence, Dr Wisner commends DFID for its rapid learning on DRR since 2003, but concludes: “despite the excellent analyses, reports and policy statements, disaster risks reduction and “routine” development have not yet been adequately integrated.”285 David Peppiatt told us he was convinced that there would be parts of DFID which would be unaware of the Department’s new Disaster Risk Reduction policy, or have any knowledge of the Hyogo Framework. He suggested that there was still a long way to go to make mainstreaming of DRR a reality within DFID.286

176. In his oral evidence Michael Mosselmans from CHASE, DFID, told us that “DFID is going to step up a gear in disaster risk reduction... it has become a more important part of

282 Q 252 Marsha Singh MP
283 Q 253 Mr Jean-Jacques Graisse
284 National Audit Office ‘Department for International Development; Responding to Humanitarian Emergencies’, HC 1227, Session 2002/03.
285 Ev 230 [Dr Ben Wisner]
286 Q 214 Mr David Peppiatt
DFID policy and thinking.” He told us that in the future, DFID would make sure that all new Country Strategies for disaster-prone countries consider what more DFID could do to promote disaster risk reduction. Together with several witnesses, we welcome DFID’s increased commitment to DRR. However, we think that DFID needs to take concrete action to translate its “policy and thinking” on DRR into an understanding which is mainstreamed throughout its humanitarian and development work. We were concerned to hear that, of DFID’s approximately 2,700 staff, there were only 1 full-time and 4 part-time staff working in disaster reduction. If DRR is to be effectively mainstreamed throughout DFID’s humanitarian and development work, so that DFID staff as well as partner agencies and governments understand the priority which DFID accords to it, the Department is likely to need to increase its staff capacity in this area.

177. We were pleased to hear that DFID has begun to engage in planning in relation to avian influenza. ActionAid International told us that DFID’s strategy must include planning for livelihoods support in the event that poultry with the H5N1 virus is eradicated, and attention to the human rights of populations which might be displaced or evacuated if an outbreak occurred. The Health Protection Agency (HPA) highlighted the contribution which it believes the organisation’s public health expertise could make to DFID initiatives in this area. We recommend that, where appropriate, DFID considers the possibility of funding the HPA to contribute to the Department’s work on public health protection.

178. We heard evidence that HIV/AIDS can be considered a slow-onset disaster, and that the impacts of the pandemic also exacerbate the effects of other disasters. We agree with DFID’s assessment that there is much work to be done to understand the linkages between HIV treatment and nutrition, particularly among children.

DRR and Climate Change

179. Climate change itself can be understood as an example of a slow-onset disaster, and we heard that it is already affecting the frequency and intensity of other natural disasters, including floods, storms, drought and famine. Over two-thirds of natural disasters are climate-related, and Christian Aid said that 9 of the 11 disasters that its partners have responded to recently have been climate-related. Dr Saleemul Huq from the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) told us that the

287 Q 399 Mr Michael Mosselmans, DFID
288 Q 399 Mr Michael Mosselmans
289 Q 193 [Dr John Twigg]
290 Ev 135 [DFID]
291 Ev 192 [ActionAid International]
292 Ev 201-202 [Health Protection Agency]
293 Q 71 Mr Eric Stobbaerts; Ev 138 [DFID]
294 Ev 135 [DFID]
295 Q274 Dr Saleemul Huq
296 Q 218 Mr David Peppiatt
297 Ev 199 [Christian Aid]
forthcoming fourth assessment report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change would collate figures illustrating the increasing impact and frequency of climate-related disasters. Dr Wisner told us that climate change is also likely to affect populations’ vulnerability to disasters by impacting on health, for example increasing the range of malarial mosquitoes and affecting the quality of drinking water.

180. Given the weight of the evidence we received, it is alarming that international consensus on the reality and likely impacts of climate change remains elusive. We were told that the outcome document of the January 2005 World Conference on Disaster Reduction held in Hyogo, Japan only contained a reference to climate change after significant controversy.

181. Furthermore, even if consensus is reached, the huge challenge remains of translating political commitments into action at a local level. As David Peppiatt emphasised in his oral evidence, local organisations have limited financial and human resources and will find it difficult to adapt to climate change. Camilla Toulmin from the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) told us about the work that it was carrying out with partners to improve local communities’ understanding of issues and provide information which was often lacking. Saleemul Huq underlined that such understanding and information was necessary but not sufficient to enable communities to adapt to climate change: they also needed help to plan and carry out adaptation methods. We did hear some examples of how local communities had already begun to adapt to climate change; for example people living in the Sahel had improved their management of natural resources, including water, without significant support from government. The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State recently announced the funding of climate change adaptation initiatives by DFID. We applaud this move and urge DFID to ensure that it funds adaptation work at a grass-roots level, as well as policy-level processes. This could include facilitating such measures as stock disposal or temporary migration.

182. Our predecessors inquired into climate change in 2002, and published their findings in a report in July of that year. During that inquiry the Committee saw that many developing countries were particularly vulnerable to climate change, yet lacked the human and institutional capacity and resources to respond to its effects. The report recommended that vulnerability assessments be used to target assistance towards the most vulnerable, and that capacity building and adaptation to climate change be made priorities by DFID and other donors. The Committee found that a lack of policy integration was

298 Q 265 Dr Saleemul Huq
299 Ev 232 [Dr Ben Wisner]
301 Q 218 Mr David Peppiatt
302 Q 266 Dr Saleemul Huq
303 Q 260 Dr Camilla Toulmin
304 ‘Climate Change Adaptation in Africa; Research and Development Programme’ Written Ministerial Statement, 16 May 2006.
305 International Development Committee’s Third Report of Session 2001-02, Global Climate Change and Sustainable Development, HC 519, July 2002.
undermining action, and that PRSPs contained little that addressed climate change. The report recommended that donor activities be made subject to a climate impact assessment that assessed both the impact of climate change on their programmes, and the impact of their programmes on future climate risk. The Committee concluded that DFID needed to mainstream the issue through all its development policies.

183. In the course of the current inquiry, we requested follow-up information on DFID’s actions in relation to certain recommendations made in the 2002 report. DFID submitted supplementary written evidence which informed us that HMG has taken some important steps in this area including: funding the development and dissemination of PRECIS, a climate prediction model that can be used in countries lacking the resources for large-scale climate modelling; and collaborative work with the Governments of India and China on major bilateral research programmes to assess the impacts of climate change. It seems that DFID recognises that climate change will increase the threat of disasters affecting vulnerable populations and is likely to compromise the achievement of MDGs. The Secretary of State has made a number of speeches highlighting the issue of climate change, and assured us in oral evidence that climate change will now be taken into account by country teams developing new Country Assistance Plans. This could include planning for the incidence of flood, drought, landslides and erosion as part of development programmes, for example. We are encouraged that some progress has been made and strongly welcome the focus on climate change in DFID’s recent White Paper.

184. The evidence we have received, however, makes clear that there remains much more to be done. Saleemul Huq told us that DFID and the World Bank have started to look at climate change impacts on their investments. In his view this was an important first step, but he felt that awareness and capacity needed to be built up more quickly. He expressed concern that some DFID staff were not taking the potential significance of climate change for disasters seriously enough: “their mindset is very much an immediate post-emergency reaction.” Plan UK argued that HMG was still not sufficiently ‘joined-up’ on the issue of climate change; there is a continuing need to improve policy coherence. A Development and Environment Group analysis of the DFID White Paper echoed this view, and questioned why the White Paper had not included a specific recognition of HMG’s commitment to reduce carbon emissions by 20% by 2010. We recommend that within the next six months, DFID follows up the positive rhetoric on climate change contained within its 2006 White Paper with a detailed action plan setting out specific actions and measurable targets. This action plan should demonstrate how DFID plans to turn its research and rhetoric into action, and enable us to hold the Department to account for its work on climate change.

306 Ev 147 and 148 [DFID]
308 Q 402 Hilary Benn MP
309 Q 272 Dr Saleemul Huq
310 Q 272 Dr Saleemul Huq
311 Ev 224 [Plan UK]
9 The relationship between development assistance and humanitarian aid

185. This inquiry has demonstrated a clear need for development practitioners and humanitarian actors to pay more attention to the linkages between their fields. Each field has the potential to contribute to the other to an extent which to date has not been fully realised. On the contrary, we have heard examples of development interventions which have ignored or even exacerbated vulnerability to disasters, and humanitarian interventions which have paid no heed to or which have even undermined long term development interventions.313 The two fields operate according to different principles which they guard carefully, with justification, but these principles should not stand in the way of closer cooperation.

186. A study commissioned by DFID identified a number of constraints to a more effective relationship between humanitarian and development sectors.314 These included:

- The contrast between the visibility and media-friendliness of humanitarianism and development;
- Humanitarians’ focus on complex political emergencies at the expense of attention to vulnerability to natural hazards;
- The ‘institutional gulf’ between donors’ humanitarian and development sections;
- Flawed assumptions that if development endeavours to reduce poverty then reduced vulnerability will necessarily follow;
- Development professionals’ lack of exposure to disaster risk reduction issues; and
- Difficult questions over timing, criteria and mechanisms for transitions from relief to development modes.

187. Humanitarian actors and development practitioners need to stop treating natural disasters as one-off events and instead consider them as an integral part of the context in which they operate. As noted in a recent World Bank report, although most natural disasters are not predictable, they are foreseeable.315 We know, for example, that: small island states in the Caribbean are prone to hurricane damage; Pacific Rim countries are

313 “For slow onset, natural disasters, a hurried humanitarian response can be counterproductive to longer term initiatives… In the case of the Sahel humanitarian response in 2005, rapidly responding humanitarians largely ignored the longer term context of human needs.” [Ev 183 Mr John Scicchitano]. “According to ActionAid’s research… there were also found to be poor linkages between the earthquake response and on-going development activities.” [Ev 189 ActionAid International].


susceptible to earthquakes and volcanic eruptions; low-lying areas on the Bay of Bengal are sure to experience periodic flooding; and, countries in sub-Saharan Africa are liable to experience erratic rainfall and drought.\textsuperscript{316} Development and humanitarian actors need actively to recognise such realities, and do more to plan their operations accordingly.

188. In our view the concept of vulnerability holds considerable potential to bridge the gap between development and humanitarianism. Very often the root causes, dynamic pressures and unsafe conditions which combine to create populations which are vulnerable to disasters are the very factors which development actors are seeking to tackle in their projects and programmes in disaster-prone countries. Development actors need to make more effort to analyse and recognise the natural hazards which could potentially affect the countries and regions in which they are working. If they fail to meet this challenge they risk seeing considerable investments of time and money disappear in the wake of natural hazards.

189. Equally, humanitarian actors need to make more effort to move away from a reactive agenda and instead develop a proactive approach in countries and regions they know to be disaster-prone.\textsuperscript{317} In these countries they need to invest in DRR and develop their understanding of humanitarian emergencies as resulting from particular manifestations of human vulnerability created by processes operating in both the short and long term. When disasters occur their engagement in this proactive agenda will enable them to understand better the contextual factors that influence vulnerability and consequently shape the impacts of hazards. This will equip them better to determine which humanitarian interventions will be the most appropriate and effective.

190. We are convinced that there needs to be a significant shift towards a much more proactive approach to disasters, in both the humanitarian and development fields. If development actors are to mainstream an understanding of disaster risk into their programmes more effectively, and humanitarian actors are to expand their work on disaster preparedness and planning, then donors will need to provide them with sufficient resources to do so. In Chapter 4 we discussed the evidence we have received about the lack of human resources in the humanitarian sector. In Chapter 5 we analysed the insufficiency of funding for the humanitarian sector. In Chapter 8 we set out the particular difficulties in attracting funding for Disaster Risk Reduction. Donors need to address these issues if humanitarian and development actors are to achieve the shift we advocate. DFID needs to begin by allocating 10\% of its entire humanitarian budget to DRR and by increasing the funds allocated to reducing disaster vulnerability within its development programmes. The Department must also continue its advocacy to ensure that by 2010 all the multilateral agencies which HMG funds for humanitarian work are allocating at least 10\% of their funds to DRR. In the longer term we would like to see the proportion of funds which all agencies spend on DRR rise beyond 10\%. We are convinced that such investments will provide a substantial return in terms of reduced costs of responding to natural disasters.

\textsuperscript{316} Ev 186 [Mr Jean-Jacques Graisse]
\textsuperscript{317} Ev 197 [Christian Aid]
191. In the course of this inquiry we have explored the transition between humanitarian and development programming. This issue often seems to be neglected, both at the start of humanitarian interventions — for example we heard about humanitarian actors not taking sufficient account of development interventions in the Sahel\(^{318}\) — and at the end — for example we heard about humanitarian actors leaving abruptly when their funding finished in Pakistan. We have seen that, although the transition from disaster relief to recovery, reconstruction and development is rarely linear, funding frequently is.\(^{319}\) The lack of long term predictable funding creates problems for the long term sustainability of interventions. Humanitarian actors should be encouraged to plan for the process of transition to development, either working through the transition themselves (where organisations are engaged in both development and humanitarian work) or engaging development actors as partners to deliver the development phase. Such plans must acknowledge that relief, recovery, reconstruction and development are rarely distinct phases and often overlap. Donors, including DFID, should be ready to recognise the value of such integrated planning and reward it with longer term, predictable funding. We believe that this would improve responses to disasters by reducing competition between actors, promoting coordination and improving working practices.

192. Collaboration between humanitarian and development actors is particularly desirable as it is likely to reduce instances of dislocated or conflicting programming. We recognise the contribution that DFID’s Africa Conflict and Humanitarian Unit (ACHU) is making to the integration of DFID’s development and humanitarian planning in Africa. This was a contribution which we saw working in practice during our visit to Malawi in March 2006. We agree with the finding of the OECD DAC Peer Review, that DFID should examine the lessons which can be learnt from the operations of ACHU for its programmes in other geographical areas.\(^{320}\)

193. We are impressed by the efforts which we have seen underway to reform the international humanitarian system. The degree to which the proposed technical and managerial reforms will result in positive impacts for populations in crisis remains uncertain however. Many of the reform initiatives which have been proposed are heavily reliant on the UN multilateral system and call for donors to channel large resources through mechanisms managed by UN agencies.\(^{321}\) As we have discussed however, NGOs and the Red Cross/ Red Crescent movement undertake the majority of the implementation. We are concerned that this should not result in a middle level of bureaucracy without the value of this being closely monitored. The speed at which the multilateral system can find and engage suitable implementing partners in the event of any specific disaster will be critical in determining impact on the ground.

194. All reforms must take place in the context of a clear awareness of the nature of the international humanitarian system they are trying to create. At the centre of this system must be the populations who are vulnerable to and affected by disasters. As reforms are

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318 Ev 183 [Mr John Scicchitano]
319 Ev 217 [Merlin]; Ev 187 [WFP]
321 Ev 195 [Christian Aid]
195. While pursuing this reform agenda we must also remain aware that the more efficient, equitable international humanitarian system we are seeking to create will only be as effective as political decision-making will allow. Whether or not a humanitarian crisis results directly from political decision-making, very often it is political factors which are ultimately responsible for determining the nature and extent of the humanitarian response which will be forthcoming. “Averting humanitarian crises is also, therefore, unavoidably a question of political action.” The danger, as Jan Egeland pointed out in reference to the humanitarian crisis created by the 2006 Israeli-Lebanese conflict, is that we are “perfecting the plaster on the wound but… not looking at the wound as such.”

196. Anecdotal evidence suggests that political and public support for humanitarian assistance is very robust and that support for development assistance is underpinned by it. The political capital created by this public sense of humanitarianism has been enhanced by the huge public response to disasters during 2005 and the sense of confidence created by the process of reform underway in the international humanitarian system. Humanitarian agencies should not take this political capital for granted but should find ways of exploiting it to create the most effective response possible. This includes addressing the challenges of coordination created by the large number of actors involved in humanitarianism, and harnessing humanitarian instinct in ways which are useful and not counterproductive. As Global Humanitarian Assistance note:

“In development cooperation, years of development education and public awareness raising have resulted in a well informed, articulate constituency that demonstrated its political clout in 2005 with the call to Make Poverty History. Humanitarian awareness raising and education now needs to match the huge fund of good will and political capital that has been mobilised so powerfully.”

197. When opportunities arise, HMG should seize the opportunity to lead this humanitarian awareness-raising agenda. We heard that such a chance was missed in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean Tsunami Disaster. In the face of rapidly rising public pledges of assistance through the DEC, the Prime Minister made a public statement that HMG’s funding would match public contributions to the disaster. When the public

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323 Ev 128 [DFID]

324 Q 314 Mr Jan Egeland

325 Global Humanitarian Assistance, see http://www.globalhumanitarianassistance.org/political CAPITAL.htm.

326 See http://www.globalhumanitarianassistance.org/political CAPITAL.htm.

327 The UN Emergency Coordinator described the tsunami response as the ‘most generous and immediately funded emergency relief effort ever’. Funding timeliness was a record for the RC Movement: 19 % of the Federation appeal was received in the last week of December, and 58 per cent by the end of January 2005. The response from the general public was also extremely rapid. A record of £10 million in 24 hours was donated via the UK DEC website [Tsunami Evaluation Coalition ‘Funding the Tsunami Response’, (July 2006), TEC, p.24].

328 A similar bidding contest took place between bilateral donors [‘Officials gather in Jakarta for tsunami aid talks’ International Herald Tribune, 6 January 2005].
response proved exceptionally generous, the Government allowed this commitment to fade away. There was certainly an adequate response to the humanitarian needs created by the tsunami. However, as the evaluation of the DEC response to the Tsunami pointed out, the massive public response to the disaster should have been an opportunity to promote dialogue on the issue of disaster ‘bingeing’; the habit of the public to respond generously to certain disasters while ignoring others, and to encourage commitments to forgotten emergencies. **We recommend that DFID works to promote understanding across Whitehall of the need for a rational and needs-based approach to disasters, so that HMG can work coherently to promote appropriate and equitable responses to disasters.**
Conclusions and recommendations

1. We recommend that DFID give further thought to ways in which positive publicity for the Department can be gained from promoting the work of CHASE-OT more widely, potentially through work with the DEC and media organisations. (Paragraph 27) We recommend that DFID and the DEC consider ways in which the key messages contained in the Disasters and Emergencies Overseas publication can be more effectively disseminated. (Paragraph 49)

2. We conclude that established NGOs should see it as their responsibility to provide peer advice and support to new organisations, in order to ensure that the principles and standards they have created are maintained. DFID could take such work into account when making decisions about which NGOs to fund. We recommend that DFID provides on its website advice and contacts for new humanitarian NGOs, as well as for existing NGOs that wish to become involved in the provision of humanitarian assistance. (Paragraph 32)

3. DFID’s aim should be to create an open market-place for its humanitarian funding, in which exemplary work is encouraged and recognised through future funding decisions, whereas inadequate work has discernible consequences for the organisation concerned. (Paragraph 36)

4. We recommend that the DEC explores ways in which its model of collective fundraising could be exported to other donor countries, in order to maximise the availability of funds for humanitarian work worldwide, and that DFID should consider funding such a project. (Paragraph 38)

5. We are not convinced by arguments that the DEC should expand its remit. We think that DEC partner agencies ought to explore ways of increasing the extent of their programmatic cooperation and coordination, but that the DEC is not necessarily the best mechanism for achieving this. (Paragraph 40)

6. We recommend that the DEC initiates a process of dialogue between representatives of media organisations and the non-governmental humanitarian sector in the UK, to explore ways in which the reporting of humanitarian disasters and the activities of humanitarian actors could be more mutually productive. (Paragraph 46)

7. We look forward to an update from DFID within the next twelve months on the possibility of using twinning initiatives to support the Department’s work in raising development awareness. (Paragraph 50)

8. We recommend that DFID should take a leading role in engaging the private sector in humanitarian responses. It should formalise this involvement by promoting the establishment of a network of private sector organisations involved in humanitarian response through which information and training on humanitarian standards and principles could be delivered. (Paragraph 53)
9. We support DFID’s view that the UNHCR should formally extend its mandate to enable it to take on responsibility for internally displaced people resulting from natural disasters as well as those arising from conflict. (Paragraph 63)

10. We conclude that the IASC should systematically review organisational aspects of the way the cluster approach was implemented in Pakistan in order to refine the system. (Paragraph 64)

11. We approve of DFID’s decision to support the “four ones” initiative and think that the UK should work with other major donors to the UN to find ways to provide incentives for UN agencies to increase their coordination through such mechanisms. (Paragraph 71)

12. We recommend that UN agencies give particular consideration to prior coordination experience and leadership skills when recruiting staff to coordinate clusters, and suggest that pre-emptive training be provided to staff who are likely to take on such roles in the future. (Paragraph 73)

13. Mr Egeland told us “Yes, in the long run there should be clearer [command] lines with a stronger humanitarian co-ordinator function. A humanitarian co-ordinator should be able to instruct more.” We agree. (Paragraph 77)

14. Merely increasing the human and financial resources available to UN-OCHA will not solve the difficulties it experiences in fulfilling its role. We believe that the member states of the UN should press the UN Secretary-General to devolve greater powers to the ERC and his team of humanitarian coordinators, in order to increase their capacity to achieve their coordination and leadership remit. (Paragraph 80)

15. We recommend that DFID urge UN humanitarian agencies to accelerate their efforts to achieve an equitable gender balance in professional staff operating at both headquarters and field level, as well as paying attention to the gender balance within its own humanitarian team. (Paragraph 84)

16. As unmet humanitarian needs already exist, and overall humanitarian need is increasing, we recommend that the Secretary of State make a commitment to increase the proportion of DFID’s spending accounted for by humanitarian assistance in line with the Department’s overall budget. (Paragraph 89)

17. We hope that other donors will follow DFID’s lead in contributing to the CERF, forgoing their desire to ‘flag’ their humanitarian contributions in the interests of facilitating the rapid and equitable disbursement of funds by the ERC. (Paragraph 94)

18. We support DFID’s commitment to improving the flash appeals system, and request that in twelve months time, DFID reports back to us on its progress on this issue. (Paragraph 102)

19. We recommend that DFID uses its reviews of its Institutional Strategies for working with International Organisations to emphasise the importance of the way in which funds are disbursed to partner agencies. (Paragraph 105)
20. We recommend that DFID offices in countries prone to natural disasters be encouraged proactively to establish links with, and build the capacity of, national NGOs in the time between disasters, in order to support their ability to apply successfully for DFID funding when disasters occur. (Paragraph 107)

21. We look forward to hearing about DFID’s progress on benchmarking. (Paragraph 112)

22. We recommend that DFID gives detailed consideration to the issue of how to monitor and evaluate the work of its partner agencies in countries where conflict or other dangerous conditions make first-hand assessments by DFID staff infrequent or impossible. (Paragraph 115)

23. We recommend that DFID clarifies its approach to ensuring the involvement of beneficiaries in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of its humanitarian activities, and affirm its commitment to tackling this issue at headquarters as well as field level. The involvement of beneficiaries should include opportunities for recipient states and populations to input into dialogue on and review of proposals for humanitarian reform. (Paragraph 124)

24. Although DFID’s advocacy for GHD is valuable, the Department needs to make sure that it continues to be seen as a sector-wide initiative and not purely as a UK-driven agenda. The GHD process also needs to engage NGOs and civil society who could potentially use GHD as a framework for evaluating donors’ work. In future inquiries which touch on humanitarian issues we will consider the extent to which DFID is adhering to the GHD principles it has championed. (Paragraph 126)

25. We recommend that, in the interests of transparency, DFID publishes any documents relating to its decision-making processes for logistics in relation to the humanitarian response in Pakistan to the South Asia Earthquake and in Indonesia to the Indian Ocean Tsunami Disaster. We would like to see evidence of the projected costs of the different options which were considered for the transportation and delivery of assistance by different actors, and the actual costs of the options which were selected, including how much was paid to military agents. (Paragraph 140)

26. We recommend that DFID uses this opportunity to initiate the development of a joint FCO/MOD/DFID policy framework delineating the respective roles of each department, and that of the military, in civil-military operations taking place in the context of humanitarian situations. This framework should be based on existing best practice and guidelines identified under the IASC, and consistent with the provisions of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security. (Paragraph 141) We support ActionAid International’s recommendation that: “in order to support democratic processes in both rapid onset and complex emergencies the role of the military should be governed by parliamentary oversight. (Paragraph 139)

27. We recommend that DFID reviews its policy on "flagging". DFID should stipulate that where the UK has provided more than 50% of the funding for a programme of humanitarian assistance to be delivered by a partner agency, that agency should not advertise its own name or logo in connection with that programme without also displaying DFID’s name or logo. (Paragraph 143) We recommend that wherever
possible, labels identifying DFID’s participation in or funding of a project should be translated into the local language. (Paragraph 144)

28. We conclude that nationally identified search and rescue teams are among the most effective forms of ‘flagging’ available to bilateral donors. However such expenditure should not be at the expense of long term assistance for disaster preparedness which will have much more success in reducing fatalities and injuries when natural disasters occur. (Paragraph 25)

29. We recommend that, in addition to investing in the development of early warning systems for slow-onset disasters, DFID works with other donors and UN agencies to find ways of improving the predictability of responses to slow-onset disasters, making use of the data produced by existing early warning systems. (Paragraph 162)

30. We commend DFID’s commitment to spend 10% of its budget for any specific humanitarian response on DRR. We recommend that DFID extends this commitment to apply to its total humanitarian budget rather than just specific emergencies. (Paragraph 171) If DRR is to be effectively mainstreamed throughout DFID’s humanitarian and development work, so that DFID staff as well as partner agencies and governments understand the priority which DFID accords to it, the Department is likely to need to increase its staff capacity in this area. (Paragraph 176)

31. We believe that DFID should seek to persuade other donors to follow the lead they have begun to take, and devote at least 10% of their total humanitarian budget to DRR. (Paragraph 172) The UK needs to encourage other EU member states to reflect their growing political commitment to DRR in their funding decisions for DG-ECHO. (Paragraph 172) We urge DFID to continue its advocacy to persuade the World Bank to increase its investment in DRR. (Paragraph 172)

32. The Department must also continue its advocacy to ensure that by 2010 all the multilateral agencies which HMG funds for humanitarian work are allocating at least 10% of their funds to DRR. In the longer term we would like to see the proportion of funds which all agencies spend on DRR rise beyond 10%. We are convinced that such investments will provide a substantial return in terms of reduced costs of responding to natural disasters. (Paragraph 190)

33. We recommend that, where appropriate, DFID considers the possibility of funding the HPA to contribute to the Department’s work on public health protection. (Paragraph 177)

34. We heard evidence that HIV/AIDS can be considered a slow-onset disaster, and that the impacts of the pandemic also exacerbate the effects of other disasters. (Paragraph 178) We agree with DFID’s assessment that there is much work to be done to understand the linkages between HIV treatment and nutrition, particularly among children. (Paragraph 178)

35. The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State recently announced the funding of climate change adaptation initiatives by DFID. We applaud this move and urge DFID to ensure that it funds adaptation work at a grass-roots level, as well as policy-level processes. (Paragraph 181)
36. We are encouraged that some progress has been made and strongly welcome the focus on climate change in DFID’s recent White Paper. (Paragraph 183) We recommend that within the next six months, DFID follows up the positive rhetoric on climate change contained within its 2006 White Paper with a detailed action plan setting out specific actions and measurable targets. This action plan should demonstrate how DFID plans to turn its research and rhetoric into action, and enable us to hold the Department to account for its work on climate change. (Paragraph 184)

37. Humanitarian actors should be encouraged to plan for the process of transition to development, either working through the transition themselves (where organisations are engaged in both development and humanitarian work) or engaging development actors as partners to deliver the development phase. Such plans must acknowledge that relief, recovery, reconstruction and development are rarely distinct phases and often overlap. Donors, including DFID, should be ready to recognise the value of such integrated planning and reward it with longer term, predictable funding. We believe that this would improve responses to disasters by reducing competition between actors, promoting coordination and improving working practices. (Paragraph 191)

38. We agree with the finding of the OECD DAC Peer Review, that DFID should examine the lessons which can be learnt from the operations of ACHU for its programmes in other geographical areas. (Paragraph 192)

39. We recommend that DFID works to promote understanding across Whitehall of the need for a rational and needs-based approach to disasters, so that HMG can work coherently to promote appropriate and equitable responses to disasters. (Paragraph 197)
Formal minutes

Tuesday 24 October 2006

Members present:

Malcolm Bruce, in the Chair

John Barrett

Richard Burden

Joan Ruddock

Draft Report (Humanitarian Response to Natural Disasters), proposed by the Chairman, brought up and read.

Ordered, That the Chairman’s draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 197 read and agreed to

Summary agreed to.

Resolved, That the Report be the Seventh Report of the Committee to the House.

Ordered, That the Chairman make the Report to the House.

Ordered, That embargoed copies of the Report be made available, in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order No. 134.

Ordered, That the Appendices to the Minutes of Evidence taken before the Committee be reported to the House.

Several papers were ordered to be reported to the House.

[Adjourned till Tuesday 31 October at 10.15am]
List of witnesses

Tuesday 6 June 2006

Lyse Doucet, Presenter and Special Correspondent, BBC World television and World Service radio, and David Munk, Deputy Foreign Editor, The Guardian

Jane Cocking, Deputy Humanitarian Director, Oxfam, Marcus Oxley, Disaster Management Director, Tearfund, and Toby Porter, Director of Emergencies, Save the Children Fund

Brendan Gormley, Chief Executive, Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC)

Tuesday 13 June 2006

Howard Mollett, Humanitarian Aid Policy Advisor, CARE International UK, Matthias Schmale, International Director, British Red Cross, Bedreldin Shutta, Head of Asia Region, Islamic Relief Worldwide, and Eric Stobbaerts, Senior Researcher, Médecins Sans Frontières

Afshan Khan, Deputy Director, Office of Emergency Programmes, UNICEF

Joanna Macrae, Humanitarian Adviser, and Michael McCarthy, Deputy Head, Conflict, Humanitarian and Security Department (CHASE), Department for International Development

Tuesday 20 June 2006

John Mitchell, Head, Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action (ALNAP), and Nicholas Stockton, Director, Humanitarian Accountability Partnership — International

Johannes Luchner, Head of Unit, Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid (ECHO), European Commission

Thursday 6 July 2006

John Scicchitano, Regional Adviser for West and North Africa, USAID, Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance, and Dr John Twigg, Honorary Senior Research Fellow, Benfield Hazard Research Centre, University College London

David Peppiatt, Head, ProVention Consortium Secretariat

Tuesday 11 July 2006

Jean-Jacques Graisse, Senior Deputy Executive Director and Director of Operations, World Food Programme (WFP)

Dr Camilla Toulmin, Director, and Dr Saleemul Huq, Head, Climate Change Group, International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED)
Monday 17 July 2006

Jan Egeland, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)  

Tuesday 18 July 2006

Ed Schenkenberg van Mierop, Coordinator, International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA)  

Susan Johnson, Director, National Society and Field Support Division, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)  

Monday 24 July 2006

Rt Hon Hilary Benn MP, Secretary of State for International Development, Michael Mosselmans, Head, CHASE, and Phil Evans, Head, Africa Conflict and Humanitarian Unit (ACHU), Department for International Development
## List of written evidence

*Written evidence submitted by witnesses who also gave oral evidence:*

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*Other written evidence:*

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List of unprinted written evidence and papers

Additional papers have been received from the following and have been reported to the House but to save printing costs they have not been printed and copies have been placed in the House of Commons Library where they may be inspected by Members. Other copies are in the Record Office, House of Lords and are available to the public for inspection. Requests for inspection should be addressed to the Record Office, House of Lords, London SW1. (Tel 020 7219 3074). Hours of inspection are from 9:30am to 5:00pm on Mondays to Fridays.

Annexes to printed memoranda
— Coda International: *Nine years after Mitch – Hurricane Stan demonstrates increased vulnerability in El Salvador*
— Help the Hospices: *Bereavement needs in emergency situations: A post Tsunami workshop, 11 July 2005*

Other papers
— *Humanitarian Reforms: What is all this “cluster” talk?* International Council of Voluntary Agencies, Newsletter, Volume 7-3, October 2005
— Background notes on humanitarian aid trends in relation to natural disasters, presentation for the International Development Committee, 25 May 2006, Development Initiatives
— Briefing paper prepared for the International Development Committee by the Humanitarian Policy Group, ODI
# Reports from the International Development Committee

The Government Responses to International Development Committee reports are listed here in brackets by the HC (or Cm) No. after the report they relate to.

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