



House of Commons
International Development
Committee

**The World
Humanitarian Summit:
priorities for reform**

Fifth Report of Session 2015–16



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to the report*

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The International Development Committee

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Summary

In May 2016, Istanbul will host the World Humanitarian Summit, the first event of its kind, which will aim to trigger much needed reforms in the global humanitarian system. The International Development Committee has identified 6 key priorities for reform that should be at the core of the Department for International Development's (DFID), and the wider UK Government's, approach to the Summit. These areas are:

- (1) **Upholding international humanitarian law (IHL):** *Beginning a process of universal political action to address violations of IHL.*
- (2) **A better understanding of resilience:** *Fostering a universal and clearly-defined approach to building resilience, clarifying how this should be implemented by partners and promoting the sharing of best practice.*
- (3) **Making the system truly global:** *Increasing the involvement of local actors and ensuring an inclusive system that recognises the needs of the most vulnerable and gives voice to those affected by crises.*
- (4) **Institutional and funding reforms:** *Separating powers between those assessing humanitarian needs and those appealing for funding, and developing innovative financing approaches to better manage risk and achieve better cohesion between humanitarian and development assistance.*
- (5) **Greater emphasis on preventing and resolving crises:** *Encouraging a more proactive approach to preparing for disasters before they occur and employing all available tools to prevent and end conflicts including: collective efforts to work on joint early warning systems and a global commitment to act upon them; and comprehensive, collaborative analysis to monitor political risks in fragile states.*
- (6) **Addressing unintended consequences of counter-terrorism legislation (CTL) and humanitarian responses:** *Ensuring action is taken to explore reasonable exceptions in counter-terrorism law for humanitarian activities as exist in jurisdictions such as Australia.*

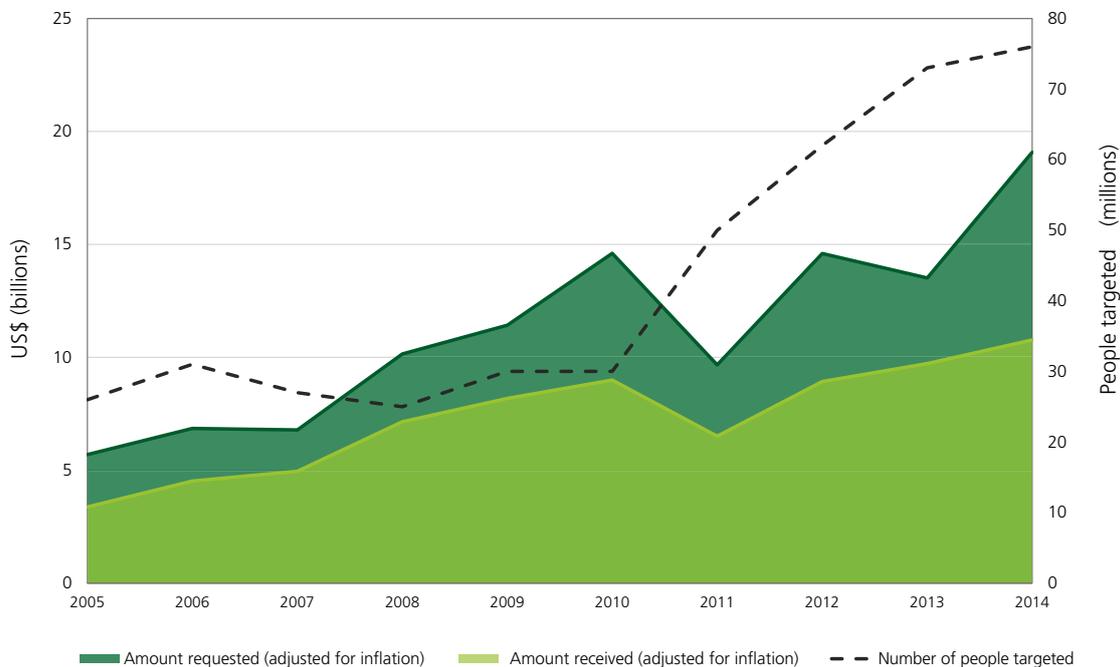
Concrete proposals to deliver on these points should be at the core of the Commitments to Action—the Summit outcome document that will set out the actions and commitments emerging from the Summit. The six points listed here cover systemic issues in current responses to humanitarian crises, though we also stress the need for commitments to key sectors. Crises have become increasingly protracted in recent decades, and the long term interruption of children's education cannot be allowed to continue. In line with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4.1, the Summit must aim to deliver on commitments to education for *all* children in crises—a goal that DFID has a key role to play in securing.

1 Introduction

“The global humanitarian system is facing a crisis of legitimacy, capacity and means, but the imperative to improve is outpacing the sector’s ability to do so, blocked by systemic flaws within the system. The process leading up to the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) has catalysed a global debate on the effectiveness of humanitarian action, generating a critical opportunity to rethink the foundations on which the system operates.”¹—Overseas Development Institute

1. The Department for International Development (DFID), along with the international community as a whole, is spending record amounts on humanitarian assistance, yet the gap between needs and available resources has never been so great. While the US\$25 billion currently spent annually is twelve times greater than fifteen years ago, this gap is at its widest ever (US\$15 billion).² The result is that the global community is failing to adequately meet the needs of millions of people devastated by wars and disasters, despite the global pledge, agreed as part of the Sustainable Development Goals last year, to “leave no one behind”.³ Furthermore, the frequency, scale and severity of humanitarian crises are set to continue rising, as a result of climate change, the proliferation of armed groups, water scarcity, and population growth.⁴ This highlights the urgency of developing a new approach to address current and future humanitarian needs more effectively.

Fig 1: The widening gap between needs and funding (inter-agency appeals)



Source: UN OCHA World Humanitarian Data and Trends, 2015

1 Overseas Development Institute ([DAS0016](#)) para 4
 2 High-Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing Report to the Secretary-General, [Too important to fail—addressing the humanitarian financing gap](#) (January 2016) p v
 3 DFID, [Leaving no one behind: Our promise](#) (November 2015)
 4 Heba Aly, IRIN News ([DAS0032](#)) para 4

2. In 2012, the UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-Moon, called for a World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) to collectively examine the effectiveness of humanitarian action and devise a plan on how to better meet the needs of people affected by conflict and disasters. Three years of preparation, involving consultations that reached more than 23,000 people in 153 countries revealed both the need and appetite for reform, both among actors in the system and crisis-affected communities.⁵

3. This wide consultation process carried out by the WHS Secretariat did an excellent job of listening to the views of a wide range of stakeholders within the system yet, by its own admission, has failed to build consensus around a priority set of proposals.⁶ The need for change in the humanitarian system built on the outcome of the WHS has prompted us to launch an inquiry to consider these priorities in the lead-up to the Summit. We called for written evidence, looking broadly at the challenges faced in reforming the humanitarian system, but more specifically at the following issues:

- What should DFID's priorities be for the Humanitarian Summit and how can it push these up the agenda?
- In the case of protracted crises, how can the global approach better ensure that humanitarian assistance evolves into longer term development support when needed?
- What are the shortcomings of the global humanitarian assistance funding model and how can these be overcome?
- To what extent are improvements to humanitarian responses inhibited by the slow pace of reform within the UN system?
- Are responses sufficiently tailored to particularly vulnerable groups? Do early responders have the necessary expertise in areas such as child protection and gender-based violence (GBV), and are there effective processes for integrating these priorities into longer term plans?
- The No Lost Generation Initiative (NLGI) has highlighted the impact of humanitarian crises on children. What more can be done to ensure that the potential for negative lifelong impact of crises on children is minimised?

4. This report has used the evidence received, both in writing and across three oral evidence sessions, the first with Bruno Lemarquis, Deputy Director, Crisis Response Unit, United Nations Development Programme, Christina Bennett, Research Fellow, Humanitarian Policy Group, Overseas Development Institute, Markus Geisser, Senior Humanitarian Affairs and Policy Adviser, International Committee of the Red Cross, Rt Hon Desmond Swayne TD MP, Minister of State, DFID and Dylan Winder, Head of Humanitarian Policy and Partnerships, DFID. The second session involved Rt Hon Clare Short and Rt Hon Andrew Mitchell MP, both former Secretaries of State for International Development. The final session involved Anne Foley, Head of Disaster Risk Management, Plan International UK, Mike Noyes, Head of Humanitarian Response and Resilience, ActionAid UK, George Graham, Head of Conflict and Humanitarian Policy and Advocacy, Save the Children UK and Mukesh Kapila CBE, Professor of Global Health and Humanitarian Affairs, University of Manchester. We are grateful to all those that

⁵ UN Secretary-General, *One humanity: shared responsibility*, para 14

⁶ Heba Aly, IRIN News ([DAS0032](#)) para 14

submitted oral and written evidence which has proved invaluable in helping to generate a list of priorities that we believe are key for DFID to deliver on at the WHS in its role as a major humanitarian donor.

5. In February 2016, Rt Hon Andrew Mitchell MP and Rt Hon Clare Short, both former Secretaries of State for International Development, wrote to the Committee to express concerns about the ability of NGOs to operate within and close to Syria. Their letter can be found in Appendix 1.

2 Reducing Humanitarian Needs

Upholding international humanitarian law

6. The need for humanitarian assistance comes, in part, from violations of international humanitarian law (IHL). As DFID states in its written evidence:

“Failure by warring parties to abide by international rules not only causes unforgiveable suffering, it generates vast movements of people and drives grievance, fuelling the next generation of violence. The summit needs to deliver a fundamental shift in global political culture so it is no longer acceptable for warring parties to violate the rules of war, and for women and girls in particular to be at such risk of violence and exploitation.”⁷

In Syria it has been argued that the protection of civilians appears to be an ‘empty concept’,⁸ and in our Yemen inquiry we heard that “all parties to the conflict have consistently failed to protect civilians”.⁹

7. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) agrees that the WHS needs to lay down a marker for change on IHL compliance. In written evidence, the ICRC stated that if the WHS fails to take any significant steps, armed conflicts will continue as “business as usual”.¹⁰ Such a failure would mean that the consequences of conflict will continue to devastate affected populations. 92 per cent of people killed or injured by the use of explosive weapons in populated areas are civilians.¹¹ In 2014, 80 per cent of recorded landmine and explosive remnant of war casualties were civilian, with an incidence rate of 10 casualties per day.¹² Humanitarian access is also a key feature of IHL that is not being upheld. In February 2016, the UN was only able to get its humanitarian support to a small proportion of those in hard-to-reach locations (mostly Da’esh controlled) in Syria due to denial of access (see table 1). These sorts of commonplace violations help to explain the estimated 60 million people around the world that had been forced from their homes due to conflict or persecution by the end of 2014, an increase of 40% relative to 2011 levels.¹³

Table 1: UN deliveries to the 4.6 million people in hard-to-reach areas in Syria, February 2016

Sector (UN delivery only)	Number of people reached (as percentage of 4.6 million)
Food security	359 000 (7.9)
Health	294 000 (6.4)
Non-food items	160 000 (3.5)
Water, sanitation and hygiene	65 882 (1.4)

Source: Implementation of Security Council resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014), 2191 (2014) and 2258 (2015)—Report of the Secretary-General.

7 DFID (DAS0025) para 6

8 Svoboda, E. *Addressing protection needs in Syria: overlooked, difficult, impossible?* (April 2014) p2

9 Save the Children (YEM0004) para 2.8

10 International Committee of the Red Cross (DAS0028) p2

11 UN Secretary-General, *One humanity: shared responsibility*, para 47

12 Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor, *Landmine Monitor 2015* (November 2015) p1

13 UNHCR, *World at War: UNHCR global trends — forced displacement in 2014* (June 2015) p5

8. It is not the absence of binding laws that has failed to eliminate IHL violations, but rather the persistent failure of certain parties to comply with these laws and the failure of others to enforce them.¹⁴ Despite the existence of mechanisms to enforce compliance—including penal measures against guilty parties, military legal counsel and sanctions for parties to conflict and courts and tribunals such as the International Court of Justice (ICJ) for states to pursue grievances—violations continue to occur. A wide range of contributors to this inquiry made a strong case that a successful WHS would involve concrete commitments to strengthen IHL compliance. These include CAFOD, Christian Aid, ICRC, Handicap International, Overseas Development Institute (ODI), Protection Approaches, Save the Children, Dr Rosa Freedman of the University of Birmingham and World Vision. DFID too acknowledges that: “This will be a challenging area to make immediate progress, but we cannot afford to stand by while violations of International Humanitarian Law continue.”¹⁵

9. A number of ideas have been suggested to ensure that violations of IHL no longer occur with impunity. In his report for the WHS, “One humanity: shared responsibility”, UN Secretary-General (UNSG) Ban Ki-Moon proposes several options for strengthening IHL compliance, including establishing a dedicated “watchdog” to track, collect data and report on trends of violations and an effort to encourage permanent members of the Security Council to withhold veto power on measures aimed at preventing or ending mass atrocities.¹⁶ While recent efforts to launch an international IHL compliance mechanism have failed due to a lack of political agreement,¹⁷ evidence to our inquiry called for a reinvigoration of this process.¹⁸

10. In addition to action at the global level, some witnesses advocated strengthening national mechanisms to monitor and prosecute violations of IHL. The Overseas Development Institute (ODI) asserted that there is a need to: “Improve national institutions to monitor and enforce IHL compliance, through technical assistance that improves their ability to analyse information on violations of IHL and to carry out investigations and prosecutions of allegations of violations of IHL and by enhancing judicial cooperation and assistance between states to share good practice.”¹⁹

11. *The UK Government should seize the opportunity of the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) to start a process that will bolster compliance with International Humanitarian Law (IHL). This can be done in a number of ways:*

- ***ensuring that political commitment to any IHL-related Summit outcome is truly universal, and not limited to a few parties;***
- ***reinvigorating and accelerating negotiations for a global, intergovernmental mechanism for IHL compliance and exploring other options for cooperative global action; and***

14 ODI, *Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict: Bridging the Gap Between Law and Reality* (October 2015)

15 DFID (DAS0025) para 6

16 UN Secretary-General, *One humanity: shared responsibility*, p52–53

17 IRIN, ‘No deal to strength respect for Geneva Conventions’

18 ODI (DAS0016) para 10

19 ODI (DAS0016) para 11

- *identifying states with weaker institutions, and helping to strengthen their capacity to investigate and prosecute allegations of IHL violations with particular reference to promoting the implementation of SDG 16.*

Such initiatives should feed into negotiations leading up to and at the Summit, particularly at the High-Level Leaders' Roundtable which will consider how to "Uphold the norms that safeguard humanity".

Build a better understanding of resilience

12. The need to build resilience in crisis-prone communities has emerged as a key component of pre-Summit discourse. In his report, the UNSG states that: "Resilience and self-reliance should underpin the delivery of assistance and risk management processes."²⁰ The High-Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing, appointed by the Secretary-General and tasked with finding solutions to the widening funding gap, also warns that without investing in fragility (through building resilience), the humanitarian bill will continue to rise.²¹

What is resilience?

13. Building resilience is recognised by DFID as a key priority in humanitarian action, as is demonstrated by its explicit mention in the title of the document "Saving lives, preventing suffering and building resilience: The UK Government's Humanitarian Policy". Yet in order to make communities more resilient to crises, it is first necessary to understand what resilience means and how it can be acquired. In its "Defining Disaster Resilience" approach paper, DFID states that resilience is: "the ability of countries, communities and households to manage change, by maintaining or transforming living standards in the face of shocks or stresses—such as earthquakes, drought or violent conflict—without compromising their long-term prospects."²² Such a definition is broadly consistent with thinking on resilience across the global system. Ann Foley, Head of Disaster Risk Management, Plan UK, told us: "It is all about whether you can help populations and Governments to understand the risks they face, to prepare for disasters and to be ready so that, if there is a disaster, the impact of it does not hit them so strongly and it allows them to continue with their human development."²³

14. However, we are concerned about the lack of clarity in translating this into practice. As we heard from Christina Bennett, Research Fellow with the Humanitarian Policy Group at the Overseas Development Institute:

"One problem I see with resilience is that it is still very poorly understood. While the UK has been at the forefront of defining what resilience is and what it means, humanitarian organisations have a hard time implementing it in terms of what programmes look like. They stick it in these funding proposals

20 UN Secretary-General, [One humanity: shared responsibility](#), para 117

21 High-Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing Report to the Secretary-General, [Too important to fail—addressing the humanitarian financing gap](#) (January 2016) p5

22 DFID, [Defining Disaster Resilience: A DFID Approach Paper](#) (November 2011) p6

23 Q84

in order to get money from DFID, but then they are not giving the staff and the resources to be able to implement resilience programmes, which are longer-term programmes effectively.”²⁴

Such concerns are reinforced by a recent independent evaluation of the DFID Syria humanitarian programme, carried out by Agulhas Applied Knowledge on behalf of DFID, which stated that:

“Several implementing partners mentioned that more clarification about DFID’s approach to resilience building and future intentions was needed. They also requested clarity about the funding available for resilience.”²⁵

15. We commend DFID’s efforts on resilience-building, particularly with regards to its “Defining Disaster Resilience” approach paper and the explicit mention of building resilience in the cross-Government humanitarian policy. However, we believe that the gap between conceptualising and implementing resilience could be reduced in order to build more crisis-resistant communities.

16. DFID should work closely with implementing partners to clarify expectations on how resilience should be built into programming interventions and how best practice can be more broadly shared. Launching such an initiative at the WHS would help develop universal best practices on resilience building that can strengthen crisis-prone communities and reduce humanitarian need.

Resilience in conflict

17. As previously mentioned, a push towards universal compliance with IHL is a necessary part of reducing levels of humanitarian need, much of which arises from violations of IHL. DFID makes explicit reference to violent conflicts in its definition of resilience, and evidence to this inquiry suggested that in interpreting definitions of resilience we should be wary of the blurring of lines between what people should and should not be made resilient to. In written evidence, the ICRC stated that:

“Resilience is more fitting as a general strategy for natural disasters than armed conflicts. It is simply wrong to try to make people resilient to indiscriminate military attacks, rape, inadequate detention practices and other violations of international humanitarian law.”²⁶

18. We recognise the value of incorporating resilience into programming in conflict-prone states—particularly with regard to food security, infrastructure and livelihoods—and commend DFID’s work in this respect. However, we urge the Government to assert that the obligations of all actors across the global system lie first and foremost with the upholding of IHL. Under no circumstances should resilience-building be used as a strategy to mitigate IHL violations.

24 Q9

25 DFID Syria Crisis Unit, *Humanitarian Programme Process Evaluation*, para 3.8

26 International Committee of the Red Cross ([DAS0028](#)) p3

Greater emphasis on preventing and resolving crises

Disaster risk reduction

19. Rising humanitarian needs and a widening gap between need and funding are partly explained by the increasing occurrence of disasters. Evidence from RESULTS UK highlighted that weather-related disasters were almost twice as common over the past 10 years as they were in the period 1985–94²⁷ and the number of people exposed to droughts has been predicted to increase by 17% by 2030 and as much as 90% by 2080.²⁸ These trends, and the inability of the humanitarian system to cope with their fallout, mean that there is an increased need to invest in proactively preventing and resolving crises, rather than just reacting to them. As Bruno Lemarquis, Deputy Director of the Crisis Response Unit at the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) told us: “The best way to reduce need is to invest in and to work on prevention and prepare countries, communities and systems [...] There should be a different balance struck between investment in avoiding crisis and responding to crisis.”²⁹

20. In its report to the UNSG, the High-Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing stated that the need for humanitarian assistance would shrink considerably if disaster-prone countries funded risk reduction and preparedness activities, as well as building national capacities to respond to disasters. However, it went on to say that they cannot do this alone.³⁰ A number of international commitments were recently made in the 2030 Agenda, the Sendai Framework, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Paris Agreement to help vulnerable countries reduce disaster risks, adapt to the impacts of climate change and prevent humanitarian crises. These commitments must be kept to and reinforced with new ones to ensure adequate support is given to countries trying to adapt to and mitigate the risks of disasters. In his report, the UNSG suggested that the percentage of Official Development Assistance (ODA) allocated for disaster risk reduction (DRR) should be doubled to at least 1% by 2020.³¹

21. Focusing on adaptation and risk mitigation is not without its challenges. Christina Bennett of ODI pointed out:

“The incentives to avert a crisis are much lower than the incentives to respond to a crisis [...] It is very hard to sell crisis prevention or preparedness to constituencies. You have to spend money now so that we never see these headlines. It is very hard to make that case.”³²

While this is a difficult problem that is inherent to DRR, the WHS is an opportunity to promote crisis prevention and seek solutions to issues like the lack of incentives. One way this can be done is to encourage high quality research to inform humanitarian actors and policymakers, as was suggested in written evidence by Oxfam.³³ If the benefits of proactive investment over reactive response can be quantified in financial terms, donors

27 RESULTS UK (DAS0018) para 5

28 World Bank *Shock Waves: Managing the Impacts of Climate Change on Poverty* (November 2015) p6

29 Q3

30 High-Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing Report to the Secretary-General, *Too important to fail—addressing the humanitarian financing gap* (January 2016) p6

31 UN Secretary-General, *One humanity: shared responsibility*, para 151 (c)

32 Q6

33 Oxfam (DAS0004) para 12

will be encouraged to rebalance their humanitarian efforts towards the former as it is cheaper.³⁴ Crown Agents also highlighted the potential of a private sector role. It stated that preparing for/reducing the risk of predictable events, such as recurring floods and droughts, could be funded through the investment market. However, due to the limited research on which Disaster Risk Financing and Insurance (DRFI) instruments are the most cost-effective, there is a need to strengthen the evidence base on this.³⁵

22. More research is needed on examples of where investment in DRR has paid off. Mike Noyes, Head of Humanitarian Response, ActionAid UK, referred to the countries around the Bay of Bengal, stating:

“We have made a huge achievement in that area. If we go back to the Orissa cyclone of 1999, compared with the one we had a couple of years ago the difference in terms of loss of life is a hundredfold.”³⁶

Ann Foley, Head of Disaster Risk Management, Plan UK echoed this point, mentioning earthquake-resistant building technologies and other evidence-based strategies. She went on to say that: “If you invest in that, far less investment will be needed if a disaster occurs and you will save lots of lives.”³⁷

23. The increased number of weather-related disasters has contributed to the increase in humanitarian needs over recent years, and this trend is likely to continue, linked to the effects of climate change. While conflicts and natural hazards cannot be avoided, there is a broad consensus on the need to invest in preventing the worst of their effects.

24. DFID should incentivise investment in preventing the worst effects of disasters by leading the way in adopting the UN Secretary General-endorsed target of allocating 1% of Official Development Assistance (ODA) to disaster risk reduction (DRR). DFID should seek reaffirmation of international commitments made in the 2030 Agenda, the Sendai Framework, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Paris Agreement to help vulnerable countries reduce disaster risks, as well as financial commitments to the necessary actions to achieve these. DFID should invest in research to clarify the benefits of crisis prevention for all donors.

Conflict prevention and resolution

25. The number of political conflicts has also significantly increased in recent years, rising from 278 in 2006 to 424 in 2014 with those deemed “high-intensity” increasing from 35 to 46.³⁸ A greater focus on preventing crises should sit within a long-term view of investing in fragile states, particularly those in a situation of protracted crisis. Several contributors to this inquiry highlighted the situation in the Central African Republic (CAR) as an example of where there has been an underinvestment in preventing conflict, despite the warning signs. As Bruno Lemarquis of UNDP told us: “not tackling issues

34 Q3

35 Crown Agents ([DAS0020](#)) para 4.3

36 Q92

37 Q91

38 UN OCHA [World Humanitarian Data and Trends 2015](#) (December 2015) p60

such as social, political and economic exclusion from large fringes of the population, all led to the explosion of violence two or three years ago.”³⁹ Indicators of the potential for violent conflict were not heeded and the result is a continuing humanitarian crisis.

26. The crisis in CAR escalated throughout 2013 but with little international media attention, and humanitarian organisations actually scaled down their activities even as humanitarian needs increased. From 2014 onwards, the trend reversed, but funding, staff capacity and the coverage of assistance were still far from sufficient.⁴⁰ Plan International UK voiced concern that: “Humanitarian actors allowed themselves to be directed by donor governments’ under-prioritisation of CAR, which in turn was likely driven by CAR’s perceived lack of importance in their foreign policy agendas.”⁴¹ Humanitarian assistance should be entirely needs-based and there should be no neglected crises.

27. Early warning systems can play a key role in averting crises. Bruno Lemarquis of UNDP stressed the need for collective efforts towards developing joint early warning systems to indicate rising political tensions that may benefit from intervention. He told us that:

“There is a lot more to be done so that various perspectives, from the political actors, the security actors and humanitarian and development actors, come together so that everybody reads from the same sheet of music.”⁴²

Yet it is not enough just to recognise the warning signs, they must be acted upon. As Mike Noyes of ActionAid said: “The greatest concern we have at the moment is when evidence is not acted upon.”⁴³ This was echoed in written evidence by Christian Aid who stated that: “We believe there is an urgent need for the UN Security Council to act on early warning data quickly, and for the causes of conflict to be judiciously addressed.”⁴⁴

28. Even with a renewed impetus on preventing conflicts, they will inevitably occur. Early warnings and work on prevention should therefore be paired with stronger political will to end conflicts when they do happen. In his report, the UNSG said that: “Preventing and ending conflicts and building peace are recognized in the Charter of the United Nations as our first and foremost responsibility to humanity. Yet, that effort is not where our political leadership or resources are presently focused.”⁴⁵ Both preventing and resolving conflicts require robust and timely analysis to assess the risks in fragile states. George Graham of Save the Children offered South Sudan as an example of where this had not happened:

“It was fairly obvious that there was some serious tension in that Government and that those guys had a very bloody past and knew how to fight, yet there was this great will to make South Sudan work and to throw development financing at it. It did not seem to be anybody’s job to worry about or manage the very obvious political risks.”⁴⁶

39 Q8

40 ALNAP, *The State of the Humanitarian System* (October 2015) p68

41 Plan International UK ([DAS0005](#)) para 14

42 Q4

43 Q86

44 Christian Aid ([DAS0019](#)) para 5.5

45 UN Secretary-General, *One humanity: shared responsibility*, para 22

46 Q93

While we commend DFID's commitment to supporting state-building in South Sudan since the outset of independence, it is important to recognise that the failings of collective monitoring and action to address the political risks were significant factors in the ultimate failure to prevent the outbreak of conflict.

29. The situation in Syria is an example of where poor understanding of political risks and the nature of a conflict has contributed to the failure by the international community to resolve it. As George Graham told us: "We cannot fix Syria, but there are things that can happen in other conflict contexts and perhaps could have happened in Syria in 2011 if there was a better quality of analysis right from the get-go."⁴⁷ The recent independent evaluation of the Syria Crisis Unit, carried out by Agulhas Applied Knowledge on behalf of DFID, also states that: "DFID initially assumed that the crisis would follow a particular trajectory (towards regime change in Syria) and did not fully incorporate alternative outcomes into its planning."⁴⁸ This approach was reflected across the UK Government, and while DFID reports that it undertook regular scenario planning, its strategic position assumed that the conflict would be limited, displacement of refugees would be temporary and regime change would occur.⁴⁹

30. It is clear that this assumption was mistaken and the way the Syria conflict has unfolded highlights the need for comprehensive and collaborative analysis in informing both responses and efforts to resolve crises. The UNSG suggests that: "National Governments and regional and international organizations should increase their capacity to analyse risks and monitor deteriorating situations."⁵⁰ A plan on how to achieve this should be a key outcome of the WHS.

31. Under the UN Charter, Member States are obliged to make efforts to prevent and end conflicts and to build peace. As the number of political conflicts has steadily increased over recent years, it is clear that the international system is failing to deliver on this obligation.

32. *The World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) should provide a platform for discussion on how to improve systems to monitor political risks and warn of heightened risks of conflict, and to initiate political action/intervention. The UK Government should play a key role in ensuring that monitoring systems become both more collaborative and timely. Governments should also agree in advance circumstances in which political intervention, through all available instruments, is initiated.*

33. *The UK Government should also invest in strengthening the capacities of international and regional organisations to monitor and mediate cases of rising political tensions through use of the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF). It should use the WHS to push for a commitment to a needs-based, as opposed to political, approach to humanitarian intervention to ensure that all severe crises are pre-empted and addressed and that none are neglected, as in the case of the Central African Republic (CAR).*

47 Q93

48 DFID Syria Crisis Unit, [Humanitarian Programme Process Evaluation](#), para 3.8

49 DFID Syria Crisis Unit, [Humanitarian Programme Process Evaluation](#), para 2.6

50 UN Secretary-General, [One humanity: shared responsibility](#), para 33

34. Political commitment to humanitarian values is crucial in delivering a more effective humanitarian system. We commend the UK Government's efforts in this respect, particularly in the hosting of the Syria conference earlier this year. A number of contributors to this inquiry have stressed that the Prime Minister's attendance at the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) would be an important signal of the UK's continued support.

35. As such a large donor, a signal of high-level UK support is vital to a strong Summit outcome and thus a more effective delivery of UK humanitarian assistance. We strongly recommend that the Prime Minister consider attending the WHS.

3 Reforming the system

Institutional and funding reforms

Humanitarian and development assistance

36. The gap between the activities of short term humanitarian and longer term development actors has long been considered a problem, and has already been recognised as a priority for action at the WHS.⁵¹ Crises have become increasingly protracted over recent decades.⁵² As former Secretary of State for International Development Clare Short told us: “there is a need to get a better interface between humanitarian aid and development because some of the crises are so prolonged.”⁵³ Crucially, this will involve incorporating a broad range of actors into the system. As ODI stated in written evidence: “The WHS needs to be a conversation driven by humanitarian values, but not a conversation only amongst humanitarian actors.”⁵⁴ This means recognising and incorporating what the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) calls the “diverse ecology of humanitarian response”.⁵⁵

37. Immediate humanitarian assistance is key in supporting displaced people, but due consideration must also be given to meeting development needs in the longer term. Often, humanitarian actors find themselves required to meet these needs which can overstretch them beyond both their budgets and remits. As the ICRC stated in written evidence:

“Even though people’s needs in protracted conflict are long-term and dependent on the continuity of development infrastructure and basic services, development institutions are often absent. The result is that humanitarian organisations like the ICRC are left to sustain vital indispensable assets on short-term humanitarian budgets.”⁵⁶

38. In addition to greater collaboration between humanitarian and development actors, there is a need for actors to be flexible and responsive, and to rapidly scale up programmes in response to sudden onset crises. As Development Initiatives stated in written evidence: “The flexibility to shift gears between humanitarian and development funding in response to the changing needs of affected populations is also important.”⁵⁷ The US Agency for International Development (USAID) is at the forefront of flexible approaches to protracted crises, for example through the introduction of ‘crisis modifiers’—immediately available contingency funds—in the Horn of Africa after the 2011 food crisis. Having such features built into development programming allows for projects to switch into emergency mode in response to a sudden shock or deterioration in resilience that might affect a vulnerable population’s capacity to cope—an approach DFID has also experimented with in Yemen.⁵⁸

51 High-Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing Report to the Secretary-General, [Too important to fail—addressing the humanitarian financing gap](#) (January 2016) p6-7

52 UN Secretary-General, [One humanity: shared responsibility](#), para 73

53 Q63

54 ODI ([DAS0016](#)) p3

55 International Committee of the Red Cross ([DAS0028](#)) p4

56 International Committee of the Red Cross ([DAS0028](#)) p5

57 Development Initiatives ([DAS0010](#)) para 1.2

58 Development Initiatives ([DAS0010](#)) para 4.9

39. Evidence to our inquiry suggested that failure to address predictable development issues exacerbates humanitarian need. George Graham, Head of Conflict and Humanitarian Policy and Advocacy, Save the Children UK, used the El Niño weather event as an example of this. He told us that:

“Right now, we are seeing an entirely predictable El Niño event with entirely predictable consequences on food and security. One million children in southern and eastern Africa are severely and acutely malnourished. It is completely unnecessary. It is a scandal that that has happened, is happening again and keeps happening. It should not fall into the humanitarian basket to deal with that, because that is really clearly a failure of development.”⁵⁹

If crises are occurring in the first place due to a failure of development programmes to adequately prepare and build the resilience of vulnerable populations, the responsibility of development actors should be recognised.

40. One development policy area where humanitarian and development interventions could be better connected is education. Crises often have a significant impact on access to schooling, particularly for girls. A girl in South Sudan is more likely to die in childbirth than complete secondary school and in Somalia, fewer than 2% of girls enrol in secondary school—both countries with protracted crises.⁶⁰ Surveys in crisis-prone countries consistently show that education is a top priority for affected populations.⁶¹ This should be recognised at the WHS, in keeping with the message of a greater voice for the people. In written evidence, Africa Educational Trust refers to education as the “bridge between humanitarian assistance and long term development work” as it enables people to live “healthy, meaningful and resilient lives”.⁶²

41. However, in 2013, development assistance for primary education in low and low-middle income countries averaged \$15 per child—in countries in protracted crises it was only \$7 per child.⁶³ In keeping with the UK Government’s commitment to fragile states, finding the right approach to investing in the education of children affected by crises is crucial. The World Humanitarian Summit will host a special session on ‘Education in Emergencies and Protracted Crises’, which will see the launch of the Education Crisis Platform. This platform will aim to provide faster and flexible support where it is most needed.

42. Closing the gap between the activities of short term humanitarian and longer term development actors has been recognised as a priority for action at the World Humanitarian Summit. While prior discussions on this topic have failed to deliver much needed reforms, the Summit is an important opportunity to launch a concrete set of actions to deliver results.

59 Q84

60 Africa Educational Trust ([DAS0007](#)) para 6.1

61 Overseas Development Institute, *Investment for education in emergencies: A review of evidence* (February 2015) p viii

62 Africa Educational Trust ([DAS0007](#)) para 1 & 4.2

63 UNESCO, *Humanitarian aid for education: Why it matters and why more is needed* (June 2015) p5

43. *DFID should propose a number of ways to close the gap between development and humanitarian interventions. It should:*

- *increase the use of ‘crisis modifiers’ in crisis-prone countries—both in its own projects and through partners—to allow for a rapid shift from development to emergency humanitarian assistance as required.*
- *hold development actors to account in their role in building resilience and prevention so that if predictable shocks occur and they still result in crises, there are answers as to why. It should encourage other donors to do the same at the Summit.*
- *consider proposing a “bridging conference” to ensure that the outcomes of the Summit are connected with the wider 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly with regard to “leaving no one behind”.*

44. We commend DFID’s commitment to education in crises, particularly its support for the No Lost Generation Initiative. Education is consistently highlighted as a priority for those affected by crises and acts as a bridge between overcoming crises in the short term and longer term development.

45. *DFID should use the Summit to stress the long term development effects of disrupted education and press for commitments on providing an education for all children in emergencies and protracted crises. It should ensure that the Education Crisis Platform reflects a truly transformative approach to education in crises.*

Independent needs assessment

46. In the humanitarian system, needs assessments are currently undertaken by the same agencies that are appealing for funds. Mukesh Kapila told us that as an organisation appealing for humanitarian funding: “you decide what the needs are, you write an appeal, you get the money, you decide how to spend it and then you judge for yourself whether or not you have been successful.”⁶⁴ This is a worrying feature of the system. CAFOD says that, as a result, there is “a lack of confidence in the needs identified through the current needs assessment approaches, which are seen as inflated.”⁶⁵ The incentives built into such a model also encourage agencies to expand their activities, sometimes irrespective of the relevance and their technical expertise.⁶⁶

47. In their evidence, both CAFOD and Mukesh Kapila argue the need for an independent body to undertake the assessment of humanitarian needs. Mr Kapila stated that:

“This body of people must be completely separate from both the givers of the funds and the intermediaries responsible for spending them, whose only purpose is to make sure that what is done with the money is done in the best interests of the people on the ground.”⁶⁷

This sentiment was echoed by respondents to the consultation process ahead of the WHS, including by crisis-affected people. The Synthesis Report states that: “a mechanism is needed to verify and improve the quality and credibility of needs assessments, track

64 Q118

65 CAFOD ([DAS0027](#)) para 4.1

66 ODI ([DAS0016](#)) para 23

67 Q118

progress in meeting needs and provide a channel for handling complaints by affected people. These mechanisms should be independent, and consult local people, government authorities, civil society and humanitarian organizations.”⁶⁸

48. The global humanitarian system displays a worrying lack of separation of powers between those assessing needs and those appealing for funds. DFID should propose the establishment of an independent body to be responsible for conducting needs assessments in crises. DFID should work with like-minded donors in the build up to and at the Summit to ensure this fundamental problem is addressed.

High-level coordination and structural reform

49. In evidence to this inquiry, several organisations (including ODI, Save the Children, ActionAid and DFID) called for reforms to the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC). While the IASC plays an important coordinating role in bringing together key UN agencies, consortia representing largely Western NGOs and the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement, neither donors nor non-Western NGOs are represented. This has led some to question the basis of its representative capacity and governance structures. On the subject of expanded membership of the IASC, Desmond Swayne TD MP, Minister of State, DFID said: “It is important that the IASC has legitimacy. That involves inclusiveness.”⁶⁹ ActionAid stated that IASC membership should be reviewed to reflect the “new reality” of humanitarian action,⁷⁰ and ODI suggested that such a review should bring about an enlarged membership which includes “non-traditional” organisations.⁷¹

50. Save the Children stressed the need for: “a concerted plan at the WHS for decentralisation of decision-making, management and coordination within the international humanitarian system”.⁷² One example of where centralised decision-making had unintended consequences was the case of Cyclone Pam which struck Vanuatu in March 2015. George Graham told us that while Vanuatu is used to cyclones and has preparedness measures in place, the approach imposed by the IASC framework through international agencies created a “disconnect and unnecessary dysfunction” where local organisations were crowded out.⁷³ Localisation of humanitarian responses will be a key outcome from a successful WHS, and reform of the IASC to make it less remote and deliver a more responsive and flexible framework for humanitarian action could help to deliver this.

51. However, it also should be noted that we heard a very different perspective on the IASC with two areas of caution from Mukesh Kapila. Firstly, he told us that the IASC is “not the great block to change” that some claim it is.⁷⁴ In order to achieve the genuine reform that the humanitarian system needs, he went on to say: “It is not about changing institutional structures and systems; it is about changing mind-sets”.⁷⁵ Institutional reforms to the IASC and other bodies should be undertaken to achieve a more representative coordinating body, but that should not be seen as a panacea for the problems in the humanitarian

68 World Humanitarian Summit, *Restoring humanity: global voices calling for action* (October 2015) p xii

69 Q26

70 ActionAid (DAS0030) para 14

71 ODI (DAS0016) para 14

72 Save the Children (DAS0029) p5

73 Q107

74 Q120

75 Q126

system. Real change requires that IASC reforms are accompanied by a change of thinking within the agencies the IASC is comprised of. Secondly, Mr Kapila warned of the dangers of an expanded IASC membership including donors and governments. He said:

“Either you are a donor giving money and holding to account those who are spending your money; or you become part of the action and the operational policy-making machinery. What you cannot do is both.”⁷⁶

52. A number of organisations have called for institutional reforms to the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), the humanitarian system’s high-level coordinating body. It is our view that the IASC represents a dated approach to the coordination of humanitarian assistance that is increasingly failing to represent the reality on the ground.

53. DFID should press for expanded membership of the IASC, with an aim to include representation from local and national organisations in order to move towards a decentralised network model. The inclusion of voices from affected communities, particularly women and women’s organisations, is important. Decision-making processes within the IASC should remain independent of donors and governments who should focus on holding the institutions that govern the humanitarian system to account. Expanded membership should therefore not include donors or governments. At the High-Level Leaders’ Roundtables, the UK Government should make it clear that reforms of institutional structures are a necessary but not sufficient condition for an improved system. Rather than being content with tweaks to the way institutions are run, all actors must work together to foster a system-wide change in thinking on how humanitarian assistance can best be delivered.

54. The High-Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing points out that: “Humanitarian assistance overreaching itself is a result of a wider systems failure [...] Faced with exponential growth in humanitarian needs, there is an urgent requirement to overhaul the global approach to providing aid.”⁷⁷ While structural changes alone may not be sufficient to deliver this complete overhaul, we believe that the institutions within the system ought to be examined.

55. Regarding the structure of the system, a recent inquiry into DFID’s responses to crises by the House of Commons Public Accounts Committee (PAC) concluded that: “The value for money for the UK taxpayer of the Department’s funding of UN agencies is undermined by the overlapping remits of the agencies and inflexibility in their systems.”⁷⁸ This would suggest that reforms are a necessity.

56. However, not all parties agree on the need for reforms, let alone on how to achieve them. The UN Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs, Stephen O’Brien, has stated that “the system is not broken. It’s simply financially broke”,⁷⁹ while in evidence to the PAC inquiry, Mark Lowcock, Permanent Secretary, DFID identified three priorities in DFID’s efforts to “improve” the multilateral agencies:

76 Q119

77 High-Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing Report to the Secretary-General, [Too important to fail—addressing the humanitarian financing gap](#) (January 2016) p2

78 Committee of Public Accounts, Thirty-fifth Report of Session 2015–16, [Department for International Development: responding to crises](#), HC 728, para 6

79 IRIN, [‘Q&A: ‘UN doesn’t have to change,’ says relief chief’](#)

“The first is getting them to work together better and compete less. We are using some of our funding to try to force that join-up. The second is about data quality. I have commissioned an independent review, which I have asked them to help and engage with, to look at all the data and information about where their costs fall so we have a much better understanding of what they spend money on and can have a proper dialogue about it. The third is that we give them multi-year funding, and we would like to pass on the benefit of that to their sub-agents.”⁸⁰

Minister Swayne suggested that DFID will try to shape the system using financial incentives rather than redefining institutions. He told us that:

“The consensus in the Department is that we need to provide incentives in the form of the financing—the way that we finance the system—to get it to behave more in the way they want, rather than to secure institutional reform.”⁸¹

57. Reforms should be pursued by all available means, including examining the structure of the system itself. Heba Aly, Managing Editor of IRIN News, highlighted in written evidence that: “the problems facing the sector are much more fundamental. It has become a mammoth machinery that has, in many ways, lost track of what it stands for.” The PAC report suggests that DFID has had limited success in influencing change in UN institutions in the past. It states that: “the Department has found it difficult to influence the UN to adapt its structure and the practices of individual UN bodies to improve their effectiveness.”⁸² As a result, we want to ensure that the opportunity for a global push to address institutional issues is not lost at the WHS.

58. Despite the importance of reforms, the WHS appears to be lacking a forum to address the problems at the core architecture of the system. A rethinking of the humanitarian system should include a close examination of its structure. A High-Level Roundtable that was planned on “Building the future of humanitarian action: towards more effective, context-specific, and predictable responses” was dropped from the final list of events. As a result, the WHS has no high-level forum to address the concerns about the core architecture of the system.

59. We have heard evidence that there is a need for fundamental, systemic reform to address concerns about the core architecture of the humanitarian system and rethink the approach to humanitarian assistance. We are disappointed to see the lack of a forum to directly address these issues at the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS), particularly the exclusion of the High-Level Leaders’ Roundtable on “Building the future of humanitarian action: towards more effective, context-specific, and predictable responses” from the final programme.

60. We urge DFID to build consensus on the need to examine these concerns in the build-up to the WHS. An independent investigation of the organisational structures within the humanitarian system should be commissioned. Where structural problems

80 Oral evidence taken on 10 February 2016, HC (2015–16) [728](#), Q41

81 Q22

82 Committee of Public Accounts, Thirty-fifth Report of Session 2015–16, [Department for International Development: responding to crises](#), HC 728, para 6

are evident, as determined by thorough and objective consideration of the evidence, DFID should strive to find like-minded donors and push for an open conversation on how best to deal with them through the necessary reforms.

An improved funding model

61. Five countries fund nearly two thirds of global humanitarian finance provided by governments (in 2015, these were the United States, the UK, Germany, Japan and Sweden),⁸³ while six UN agencies receive and manage half of that funding.⁸⁴ The giving, receiving and channelling of funds within the system is thus concentrated among a small pool of very large actors. This is a core problem that the WHS needs to address, as written evidence from ODI stated: “This creates a ‘humanitarian oligopoly’ that both marginalises new funders and excluding new, potentially significant, sources of funding, and crowding out national and local actors who might be more efficient and effective at responding to crises.”⁸⁵

62. The imbalance of donors and agencies in the system underpins the High Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing’s proposal of a “Grand Bargain”—a new model of humanitarian financing based on flexible financing by donors and more transparent and efficient delivery by agencies and other humanitarian actors. Much of the evidence to our inquiry agrees that the Grand Bargain is a positive step. George Graham of Save the Children stated that: “In particular, the work around transparency and accountability has the potential to be transformative.”⁸⁶

63. A further key component of the Grand Bargain raised in evidence, related to better coordination between humanitarian and development actors, is the importance of a commitment to predictable, multi-year financing. Meeting immediate, life-saving needs is undoubtedly important, but humanitarian assistance is rarely limited to the short-term. Sustained funding is required over a long period to “respond to chronic or recurrent needs, to support recovery processes, and to build capacity and resilience to prevent or withstand further shocks.”⁸⁷ However, as we heard from World Vision:

“Longer-term responses are often made up of multiple cycles of short term response. This results in more work for operational agencies, unpredictability for intended beneficiaries and inefficiency for donors.”⁸⁸

83 [UN OCHA Financial Tracking Service](#)

84 [Global Humanitarian Assistance Report 2015](#) p 32–33

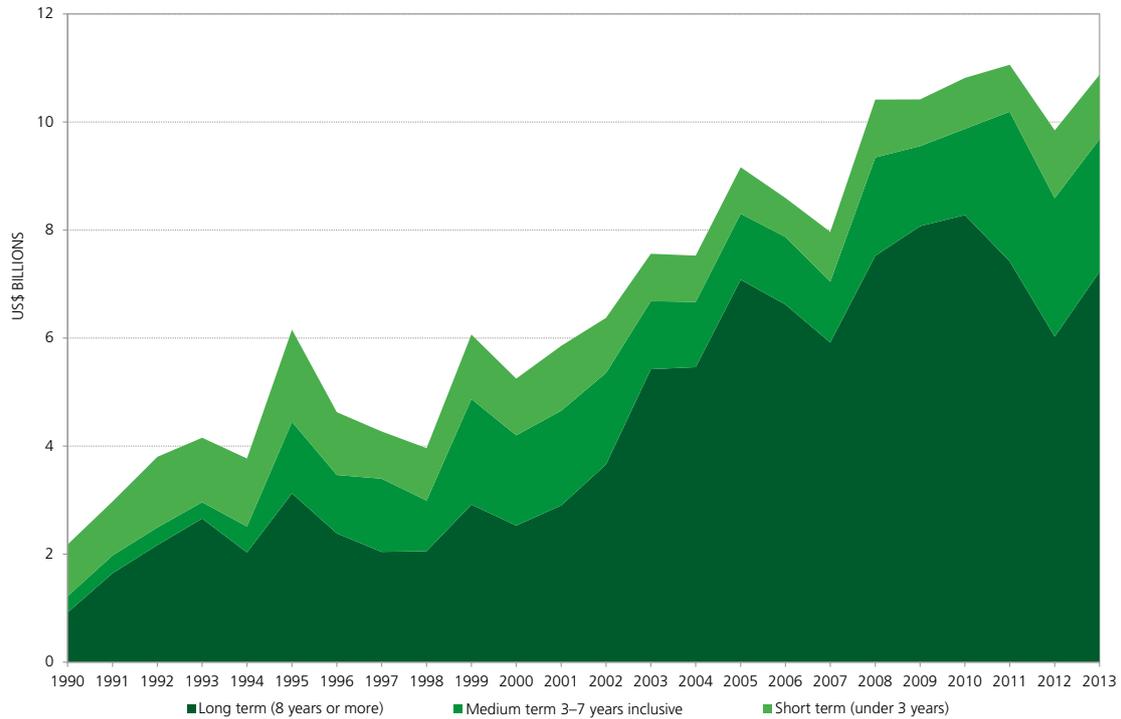
85 ODI ([DAS0016](#)) para 22

86 Q94

87 Development Initiatives ([DAS0010](#)) para 4.6

88 World Vision ([DAS0002](#)) para 9

Figure 2: Long-, medium- and short-term recipients of official humanitarian assistance from DAC donors, 1990–2013



Source: Development Initiatives based on OECD DAC and UN CERF data

64. Multi-year financing is important, not just to align the timescales of budgeting and needs, but also to demonstrate greater commitment and remove the element of unpredictability and volatility of funding.⁸⁹ A 2013 review of development assistance in fragile states found that over half of them experienced four or more ‘aid shocks’ between 2005 and 2013: a fluctuation of 15% or more from one year to the next.⁹⁰ This highlights the need for predictable funding to plan effective, long term programmes that can build resilience and help break the recurrent and chronic nature of certain crises. The benefits of multi-year financing also allow donors to make necessary longer term investments in their programmes. This is demonstrated by DFID’s work in Somalia, where investment in monitoring and evaluation has made programming more flexible, adaptive and accountable to beneficiaries.⁹¹

65. Multi-year financing is also of particular importance with regard to education in crises. SDG 4.1 stresses the need for *quality* primary and secondary education, and as Africa Educational Trust stated in written evidence, short term humanitarian budgets:

“typically target construction of school buildings, purchasing textbooks and teachers resources and classroom equipment, while efforts to improve quality education, such as the deployment of well-trained quality teachers, are sidelined.”⁹²

89 Development Initiatives (DAS0010) para 4.2

90 Development Initiatives, *Global Humanitarian Assistance Report 2015*, (June 2015) p115

91 DFID (DAS0025) para 10

92 Africa Educational Trust (DAS0007) para 7.2

Financing quality education in humanitarian crises requires the capacity to work in partnership with Ministries of Education to ensure well-trained teachers and relevant curricula. Such efforts cannot be as effective on traditional, short term humanitarian funding timescales.

66. Another important issue that surrounds financing for humanitarian crises is the role of the International Financial Institutions (IFIs) such as the World Bank. As was detailed in the Committee’s report on the Syrian refugee crisis,⁹³ countries that neighbour major crises in the Middle East and elsewhere can struggle with the financial burden that hosting refugees places on them. Yet such countries often do not have the access to the long term, predictable financing that they need, such as through the World Bank’s International Development Association (IDA), due to them having incomes that are too high to meet eligibility criteria. It has also been argued that the IDA’s Crisis Response Window, the dedicated funding mechanism for responding to crises, is inadequate, with the United Nations Secretary General (UNSG) suggesting that it should be tripled.⁹⁴

67. A key aim for the World Humanitarian Summit needs to be a new funding model that can deliver humanitarian assistance in a more efficient and effective manner and which seeks to broaden the donor base. We welcome DFID’s efforts in increasingly introducing multi-year financing into its programming in fragile states. In line with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4.1, multi-year financing is particularly important in delivering quality universal education to children in crises.

68. DFID should push for a commitment from all donors to a reoriented funding model that invests in longer term needs through multi-year financing, particularly at the High-Level Leaders’ Roundtable on humanitarian financing. DFID should focus on education as a key sector that needs an alternative financing approach, building consensus around commitment to education in crises in conjunction with multi-year commitments.

69. DFID should also ensure that the Summit results in a reinvigorated role for the International Financial Institutions, particularly the World Bank, in responding to crises. This should involve a push to expand the World Bank’s Crisis Response Window and a discussion on how the World Bank can better support crisis-affected countries who are not eligible for support from the International Development Association (IDA). Such discussions should be linked with the upcoming IDA replenishment.

Innovative approaches to risk financing

70. At US\$15 billion, the gap between humanitarian funding and humanitarian needs has never been greater.⁹⁵ At the core of the financing agenda for the WHS is the idea that available resources need to be used in smarter and more efficient ways. In the UNSG’s report, he emphasises the need for the humanitarian system to shift its focus away from short term funding and towards longer term financing. He writes that:

“While grants will continue to play a central role in the aid sector, particularly in acute conflict or sudden-onset disaster situations, they will need to be

93 International Development Committee, First Report of Session 2015–16, [Syrian refugee crisis](#), HC 463

94 UN Secretary-General, [One humanity: shared responsibility](#), para 152

95 High-Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing Report to the Secretary-General, [Too important to fail—addressing the humanitarian financing gap](#) (January 2016) p v

complemented by a broader range of financing options, including risk-pooling and transfer tools, impact bonds, microlevies, loans and guarantees. Ultimately, shifting from funding to financing means offering the right finance tool, for the right actor, at the right time.”⁹⁶

71. Many have argued that there is particular potential for a transformed approach to financing through risk transfer mechanisms such as weather-indexed microinsurance, parametric disaster (re)insurance and sovereign risk pooling facilities. The High-Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing stated that such tools would increase liquidity for early action, rather than relying on post-crisis ‘relief-itemised’ assistance.⁹⁷ According to RESULTS UK, there are three core benefits in shifting towards such an approach. It would:

- incentivise risk analysis and reduction, preparedness and resilience building;
- forge new partnerships and leverage the private sector’s capacity to absorb risk and its capital, expertise and technologies; and
- speed up the delivery and increase cost-effectiveness relative to post-hoc aid appeals.⁹⁸

72. The High-Level Panel points out that there is already movement in this area. The African Risk Capacity (ARC) is an agency of the African Union, established to help the financial capacity of governments to deal with crises. While the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (CCRIF) is an established regional risk pooling facility. The Group of Seven (G7) also recently launched an initiative on climate risk insurance (InsuResilience) with the aim of increasing, by up to 400 million, the number of people in disaster-prone countries that have access to direct or indirect insurance by 2020.⁹⁹ It is important that any renewed approach to financing is flexible and adaptive to the unique contexts of crisis-prone countries. As Bruno Lemarquis of UNDP stated: “we need a lot of work on the financing architecture to ensure you use the right type of funding instrument at the right moment for the right type of situation.”¹⁰⁰

73. Social protection—protecting the poor from social risks through targeted policies to support them—can provide an indirect insurance mechanism that offers the potential to mitigate the effects of disasters and avert crises. As George Graham of Save the Children told us:

“Another thing you can do, and some countries are getting there on this, is to have social protection systems—benefit systems, if you like—that already exist but flex when there is obviously going to be a spike in humanitarian need [...] That is a mechanism that DFID is championing and trying to introduce in various parts of Africa. It is something that needs more energising.”¹⁰¹

74. A report from the World Bank has highlighted the potential for disaster-sensitive social protection programmes in lowering the vulnerability of the population, minimising costs to governments, and preventing protracted social and economic crisis. As the report

96 UN Secretary-General, *One humanity: shared responsibility*, para 159

97 High-Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing Report to the Secretary-General, *Too important to fail—addressing the humanitarian financing gap* (January 2016) p14

98 RESULTS UK (DAS0018) para 8

99 G7 Germany, *Think Ahead, Act Together* (June 2015) p16

100 Q17

101 Q88

states: “By leveraging existing and already well-functioning social protection platforms, disaster-risk social protection programs can help more effectively target the most vulnerable populations and provide immediate assistance following a disaster.”¹⁰² The social protection agenda is also important in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with Goal 1.3 focusing on the implementation of nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all.

75. A new approach to the financing of the humanitarian assistance is undoubtedly needed to close the US\$15 billion gap between needs and resources. New approaches to direct and indirect insurance mechanisms should be a key feature of this agenda at the World Humanitarian Summit.

76. We urge DFID to champion risk transfer mechanisms such as climate insurance at the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) and negotiate multi-year commitments for the G7 InsuResilience initiative up to 2020. We commend DFID’s work in advocating for the role of social protection systems in avoiding crises, and we encourage the Department to make commitments to social protection a key objective of the WHS. In order to do this, DFID should ensure that all actors in the global system have plans in place to deliver on SDG Goal 1.3 (on social protection systems), and that disaster-prone countries are assisted in achieving this goal.

Make the system truly global

77. Between May 2014 and July 2015, the WHS Secretariat launched eight regional consultations involving more than 23,000 people. Coupled with thematic and stakeholder consultations, online dialogues and the review of over 400 written submissions, the WHS agenda emerged from a broad consultation process. One of the main themes that surfaced was the concept of dignity for affected people, particularly in their ability to exercise greater voice and choice in humanitarian action. As Professor Mukesh Kapila CBE, Professor of Global Health and Humanitarian Affairs, University of Manchester, told us:

“The humanitarian system could be better designed if it started off by listening to the people [...] What they are looking for is not charity; what they are looking for is dignity.”¹⁰³

IRIN, an independent humanitarian news organisation, stated in written evidence that: “aid agencies have improved their ability to garner feedback from the communities they serve, but they have yet to be able to meaningfully and systematically respond to it.”¹⁰⁴ Listening to and responding to the voices of affected communities is both a challenge and an opportunity for a reinvigorated and truly global humanitarian system.

¹⁰² World Bank, *Strengthening Social Protection Systems to Manage Disaster and Climate Risk in Asia and Pacific* (January 2015) p 2

¹⁰³ Q116

¹⁰⁴ Heba Aly, IRIN News ([DAS0032](#)) para 11

Strengthening local actors

78. In order to make the system truly global and deliver on the concept of dignity, there is need for systemic reform that puts crisis-affected people at the centre of humanitarian action. One way of doing this is through supporting and enabling national and local actors who, as Christian Aid put it:

“Are able to shape programmes in a contextually appropriate, culturally sensitive way, based on a community’s own understanding of its needs. Local partners, closer to and more trusted by communities, are better-positioned to ensure accountability to affected populations, and respect long-term perspectives.”¹⁰⁵

79. The primary responsibility for dealing with crises lies with domestic governments, however the capacity of national authorities to meet the needs of people in crises varies enormously. This is also true of local actors who are often the first and last responders in crisis situations and also play a critical role in preparedness, disaster risk reduction, building resilience and transitioning towards recovery.¹⁰⁶ Partnerships with national and local actors are thus key, yet as one report highlights, “Major evaluations of numerous high profile humanitarian crises—most notably that of the Indian Ocean tsunami—have identified insufficient investment in, and commitment to, such partnerships as the biggest hindrance to effective performance.”¹⁰⁷

80. Several recent crises have shown the value of strong local responses. As Christina Bennett of ODI told us:

“Local is most of the time faster. You saw that in the Philippines, where it was church groups who were the first to respond to Typhoon Haiyan. Local organisations can be more appropriate. During the Ebola crisis you saw that it was communities and community health workers who were able to deliver the messages about handwashing and safe burials much more effectively than anybody else. You see in Syria, and we have said before, that local populations can get better access to population when international actors are blocked.”¹⁰⁸

81. The WHS synthesis report recommended that direct funding of local organisations be expanded.¹⁰⁹ One way in which DFID is already leading the way is through initiatives such as the Start Fund, a UK-based NGO consortium which pools funding from its members (and donors) into a fund that members can tap into to quickly respond to rapid-onset crises. This represents an innovative approach which provides a greater proportion of funding to local and national NGOs relative to the traditional humanitarian system.¹¹⁰ Initial decisions about the need for crisis responses and assessments of the level of need lie with local civil society actors who are closest to affected communities. This approach

105 Christian Aid ([DAS0019](#)) para 3.3

106 World Humanitarian Summit, [Restoring humanity: global voices calling for action](#) (October 2015) p14

107 Ramalingam, B., Gray, B. and Cerruti, G., [Missed Opportunities: the case for strengthening national and local partnership based humanitarian responses](#) (October 2013) p4

108 Q18

109 World Humanitarian Summit, [Restoring humanity: global voices calling for action](#) (October 2015) p xiii

110 Direct funding of local and national NGOs accounted for only 0.2% of all funding reported to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Financial Tracking Service (FTS) in 2014, while 50% of the Start Fund’s projects are implemented by local partners.

ensures that responses are complementary and coherent in a way that single organisations cannot achieve individually.¹¹¹ At the WHS in May, ADESO will launch a similar NGO network and pooled fund aimed at southern-based NGOs.

Box 1: The Start Network / Fund

The Start Network is an international network of NGOs that enables a broad range of humanitarian actors and partners to provide the best possible solutions for people affected by crises. It provides platforms to enable collaborative approaches to decision-making and provision in order to foster a more collaborative and decentralised approach. At present the Network is overseeing £56m of such programmes in West Africa and Europe and is investing in Network infrastructure and capability to deliver more such collaborative responses in the future.

In April 2014 the Start Network launched the Start Fund, the first multi-donor pooled fund managed exclusively by NGOs. The Start Fund disperses money within 72 hours of a crisis alert, which makes it one of the fastest early response mechanisms in the world. To date, the Start Fund has been activated in more than 40 emergencies, helping more than 3.5 million people in 28 countries. The average time from alert to project selection is 66 hours; 50% of the projects are implemented by local partners and 83% are selected in country.

Source: Start Network (DAS0033)

82. While there are major challenges in delivering on the localisation agenda, DFID can play an important part in overcoming these. There are limitations to what local organisations can achieve themselves. They may lack specialised skills and the ability to respond at scale, and in conflicts they can be seen as partial, putting them at risk.¹¹² Markus Geisser of the ICRC gave an example of this in oral evidence:

“At times, local humanitarian actors, particularly in armed conflict, get into trouble, politically and emotionally. A clear example is today they simply cannot go into Syria, into a federal prison, to check the living conditions of detainees.”¹¹³

83. The Syrian example is one where a response from an international organisation such as the ICRC is most appropriate, and it highlights the importance of subsidiarity within the humanitarian system. ODI define subsidiarity as the principle that: “matters ought to be handled by the smallest, lowest or least centralised competent authority.”¹¹⁴ Crisis responses should operate on the basis of this principle so that needs are determined and responded to locally where possible, with the support of international organisations, NGOs and governments. Only in instances where local responses are not the best solution should the emphasis fall on international actors.

84. On the part of donors, there may be concerns about increasing funding to local organisations. Donors need to know that their money is being spent effectively, and there are practical challenges with overseeing a large number of small organisations. As Rt Hon Desmond Swayne MP, Minister of State for DFID, expressed: “I have to be aware of the

111 Start Network (DAS0033) p1

112 Q18

113 Q18

114 ODI (DAS0016) p3

problem of managing lots of little ones and having the due diligence to ensure that they are capable.”¹¹⁵ Yet the importance of the localisation agenda means that, as CAFOD urged in written evidence, DFID needs to be at the forefront of policy-thinking on how to address this problem.¹¹⁶ Incentivising investment in local responses can be done by stressing the potential cost savings of “short-circuiting the often lengthy chain of transactions from governments to crisis-affected populations.”¹¹⁷

85. In its inquiry into DFID’s management of crises, the Public Accounts Committee concludes that: “In complex projects the Department does not always know the range of organisations its first tier partners are funding, making it difficult for the Department to manage risks.”¹¹⁸ Greater transparency in the humanitarian system can help donors manage their risk whilst also building more trusting relationships with partners. DFID is an ‘early adopter’ of the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI), a voluntary scheme aimed at improving transparency by having humanitarian and development actors publish data on their activities through the IATI Standard. A stronger push amongst all donors and intermediaries to sign up to the IATI Standard would create a more transparent environment and inspire confidence in engaging with a broader range of partners.

86. *DFID should expand upon its good work in incorporating local actors into crisis response in a number of ways:*

- *by continuing its support for the Start Fund, replicating the experience by funding the new Southern NGO network to be launched at the World Humanitarian Summit in May, and encouraging other donors to foster and engage with pooled funds managed by NGOs;*
- *by emphasising the importance of, and seeking commitments to, the principle of subsidiarity in humanitarian responses, supporting local organisations rather than running in parallel to them or crowding them out;*
- *by using its position as the largest contributor to the country-based pooled funds to press for increased allocation to local actors; and*
- *by encouraging other donors and recipients to publish their humanitarian funding through the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) to help build a more transparent system based on trust, collaboration and partnership.*

An inclusive system

87. A genuinely global system needs to be more inclusive. As Age International and HelpAge International point out in written evidence:

115 Q27

116 CAFOD ([DAS0027](#)) para 3.4

117 Development Initiatives ([DAS0010](#)) para 4.12

118 Committee of Public Accounts, Thirty-fifth Report of Session 2015–16, [Department for International Development: responding to crises](#), HC 728, para 7

“The Red Cross Code of Conduct states that humanitarian action must be carried out on the basis of need alone. However, the current humanitarian system is set up to deliver one-size-fits-all responses, which fail to take account of the specific needs of marginalised groups”.¹¹⁹

Such marginalised groups include the elderly, people with disabilities, women and children and those from minority ethnic and religious groups. Three-quarters of those who died during Hurricane Katrina in 2005 were aged over 60, and more than half of those who died during the Japanese tsunami in 2011 were aged 65 or over.¹²⁰ For every Indian or Sri Lankan man killed in the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, four women lost their lives.¹²¹ Three quarters of people with disabilities do not have adequate access to basic assistance in crises, including water, shelter, food or healthcare.¹²² 400 million children from minority ethnic and religious groups are being discriminated against worldwide.¹²³

88. As UNICEF points out with regard to children, marginalised groups have unique populations with differing sets of needs, perspectives and capacities that differ from adults.¹²⁴ Approaches to humanitarian action should reflect the specific needs of groups that are often marginalised: at the moment those needs are often overlooked. Approximately 15% of the global population has a disability, yet, according to Handicap International, less than 1% of international humanitarian aid is targeted at those with disabilities.¹²⁵ Handicap International notes DFID’s good work in pushing the system to change in this respect. Its written evidence states that: “DFID has taken multiple steps to improve its inclusive approach to humanitarian assistance, including specifically mentioning older and disabled people as vulnerable groups in their humanitarian policy and by prioritising humanitarian assistance in DFID’s Disability Framework 2014.”¹²⁶ However, more still needs to be done to encourage other actors to adopt universal standards of inclusivity in the humanitarian system.

89. ActionAid raised concerns in written evidence about the representation of women in leadership roles in the humanitarian system. Their written evidence stated:

“The current humanitarian system is male-dominated and its architecture discriminates against women from playing leadership roles even though they are often the first responders. Women are in the frontline of humanitarian responses, taking risks, providing unpaid care and essential work. But they are not sufficiently represented in key leadership and decision-making humanitarian roles.”¹²⁷

119 Age International and HelpAge International (DAS0014) para 13

120 Age International and HelpAge International (DAS0014) para 4

121 ActionAid and The Economist *The South Asia Women’s Resilience Index: Examining the Role of Women in Preparing for and Recovering for Disasters* (2014) p8

122 Handicap International UK (DAS0013) para 3

123 Save the Children *Every Last Child* (April 2016) p vi

124 UNICEF (DAS0011) para 1.2

125 Handicap International UK (DAS0013) para 8

126 Handicap International UK (DAS0013) para 15

127 ActionAid (DAS0030) para 19

Handicap International also expressed the need to: “Correct the neglect of people with disabilities in humanitarian action by recognizing their leadership and capacity to meaningfully participate in and actively contribute to the inclusion of all marginalised/ at risk groups”.¹²⁸

90. DFID has rightly championed the needs of vulnerable groups in crises in the past, and the World Humanitarian Summit is an opportunity to develop global standards on inclusivity in humanitarian responses. We commend DFID for its support of the Charter on Inclusion of People with Disabilities to be launched at the Summit.

91. DFID should advocate for the outcomes of the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) to include a pledge on global standards of inclusivity in the humanitarian system from all donors and funding recipients. This should include a commitment that no group will be neglected in responses and a recognition that needs vary within crisis-affected populations. We urge DFID to ensure that strong support for the Charter on Inclusion of People with Disabilities across the international community is a key outcome of the Summit. DFID should also lead a drive to promote diverse leadership within the humanitarian system, so that the interests of vulnerable groups are reflected in processes driving decision-making and funding allocations.

Counter-terrorism legislation (CTL) and humanitarian responses

92. In February 2016, Rt Hon Andrew Mitchell MP and Rt Hon Clare Short, both former Secretaries of State for International Development, wrote to the Committee to express concerns about the ability of NGOs to operate within and close to Syria. One of these barriers, particularly relating to Muslim NGOs, pertains to counter-terrorism legislation. As they wrote:

“we have seen clear evidence that the relief effort in Syria is hampered both by fears of anti-terrorist legislation and the effect it could have on the charities themselves. Also the reluctance of banks in Britain to transfer funds on the grounds that they themselves could fall foul of this legislation.”¹²⁹

Such concerns were echoed in written evidence, including by ODI and Christian Aid, with the latter saying that: “Counter-terrorism legislation is severely impeding humanitarian assistance from reaching those most in need.”¹³⁰

93. At a time when the humanitarian system is stretched to its limit, the system must make effective use of all the resources and actors at its disposal. The security of international financial flows is of paramount importance in the fight against terrorism, yet counter-terrorism legislation can act as a significant impediment to humanitarian operations through limiting the access of legitimate NGOs to financial services. A report published by ODI’s Humanitarian Policy Group found that:

“British INGOs face increasing restrictions on their access to financial services relating to the global regulatory framework in place to prevent the financing of illicit activities, including terrorism [...] In the worst cases, donations

128 Handicap International ([DAS0013](#)) para 28

129 Rt Hon Andrew Mitchell MP and Rt Hon Clare Short ([DAS0031](#))

130 Christian Aid ([DAS0019](#)) para 3.12

transferred to British INGOs and payments made by them have been delayed, blocked or returned; accounts have been frozen or closed, and requests to open new accounts have been declined.”¹³¹

Often it is the organisations that operate in countries where proscribed armed groups are present, such as Syria, Somalia, Afghanistan and Gaza, who face the greatest challenges in this respect. However, it is in these places that humanitarian needs are often greatest.¹³²

94. We understand from Dylan Winder, Head of Humanitarian Policy and Partnerships at DFID, that the Department has established a working group with NGOs and the banking sector to try and resolve these problems. We encourage the Government to explore ways to reconcile the need to stop financial flows to terrorists with the need for NGOs to operate effectively in conflict-affected environments.

95. A further concern relates to those who work for NGOs in these environments, who not only risk their lives in such dangerous environments, but also risk falling foul of counter-terrorism legislation. This is what Rt Hon Andrew Mitchell MP referred to as the “Guantanamo Bay danger”, where, for Muslim development actors particularly, even being photographed in the same area as armed groups could mean they are seen by authorities as being associated with terrorist groups. As Mr Mitchell told us: “There is a real danger to some of these humanitarian actors that this terrorist legislation not only restricts their financing but places an added burden upon them, when they are doing dangerous and difficult work relieving people in very difficult circumstances.”¹³³

96. It is easy to see why the UK’s counter-terrorism legislation may cause concern for humanitarian actors. Section 12 of the Terrorism Act 2000 states that “A person commits an offence if he arranges, manages or assists in arranging or managing a meeting which he knows is to be addressed by a person who belongs or professes to belong to a proscribed organisation.”¹³⁴ Therefore, those required to engage with proscribed organisations to negotiate humanitarian access (including with several groups operating in Syria where access is a big problem) may be in breach of counter-terrorism laws. Other jurisdictions such as Australia and New Zealand have exemptions for humanitarian actors that are appropriate for their counter-terrorism legislation. For example, Australian law prohibits associating with a terrorist organisation, except where “the association is only for the purpose of providing aid of a humanitarian nature”.¹³⁵

97. While we recognise the importance of the security of international financial flows, we are concerned that, in certain circumstances, NGOs are not able to operate effectively due to unintended adverse consequences of counter-terrorism legislation.

98. We commend DFID for taking steps to address this issue domestically, but we urge it to use the World Humanitarian Summit as a platform to address this problem at the global level. This should involve the opening of a dialogue between all parties concerned (the financial sector, NGOs, national governments, etc.) to explore solutions

131 Metcalfe-Hough, V., Keatinge, T. and Pantuliano, S., [UK humanitarian aid in the age of counterterrorism: Perceptions and reality](#) (March 2015) p7

132 Metcalfe-Hough, V., Keatinge, T. and Pantuliano, S., [UK humanitarian aid in the age of counterterrorism: Perceptions and reality](#) (March 2015) p7

133 Q49

134 [Terrorism Act 2000, section 12](#)

135 Mackintosh and Duplat, [Study of the Impact of Donor Counter-Terrorism Measures on Principled Humanitarian Action](#).

to these problems. We also urge the UK Government to explore reasonable exceptions in counter-terrorism statutes for humanitarian activities, as exist in jurisdictions such as Australia.

Conclusions and recommendations

Reducing Humanitarian Needs

1. *The UK Government should seize the opportunity of the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) to start a process that will bolster compliance with International Humanitarian Law (IHL). This can be done in a number of ways:*

- *ensuring that political commitment to any IHL-related Summit outcome is truly universal, and not limited to a few parties;*
- *reinvigorating and accelerating negotiations for a global, intergovernmental mechanism for IHL compliance and exploring other options for cooperative global action; and*
- *identifying states with weaker institutions, and helping to strengthen their capacity to investigate and prosecute allegations of IHL violations with particular reference to promoting the implementation of SDG 16.*

Such initiatives should feed into negotiations leading up to and at the Summit, particularly at the High-Level Leaders' Roundtable which will consider how to "Uphold the norms that safeguard humanity". (Paragraph 11)

2. We commend DFID's efforts on resilience-building, particularly with regards to its "Defining Disaster Resilience" approach paper and the explicit mention of building resilience in the cross-Government humanitarian policy. However, we believe that the gap between conceptualising and implementing resilience could be reduced in order to build more crisis-resistant communities. (Paragraph 15)
3. *DFID should work closely with implementing partners to clarify expectations on how resilience should be built into programming interventions and how best practice can be more broadly shared. Launching such an initiative at the WHS would help develop universal best practices on resilience building that can strengthen crisis-prone communities and reduce humanitarian need. (Paragraph 16)*
4. We recognise the value of incorporating resilience into programming in conflict-prone states—particularly with regard to food security, infrastructure and livelihoods—and commend DFID's work in this respect. (Paragraph 18)
5. *However, we urge the Government to assert that the obligations of all actors across the global system lie first and foremost with the upholding of IHL. Under no circumstances should resilience-building be used as a strategy to mitigate IHL violations. (Paragraph 18)*
6. The increased number of weather-related disasters has contributed to the increase in humanitarian needs over recent years, and this trend is likely to continue, linked to the effects of climate change. While conflicts and natural hazards cannot be avoided, there is a broad consensus on the need to invest in preventing the worst of their effects. (Paragraph 23)

7. *DFID should incentivise investment in preventing the worst effects of disasters by leading the way in adopting the UN Secretary General-endorsed target of allocating 1% of Official Development Assistance (ODA) to disaster risk reduction (DRR). DFID should seek reaffirmation of international commitments made in the 2030 Agenda, the Sendai Framework, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Paris Agreement to help vulnerable countries reduce disaster risks, as well as financial commitments to the necessary actions to achieve these. DFID should invest in research to clarify the benefits of crisis prevention for all donors. (Paragraph 24)*
8. Under the UN Charter, Member States are obliged to make efforts to prevent and end conflicts and to build peace. As the number of political conflicts has steadily increased over recent years, it is clear that the international system is failing to deliver on this obligation. (Paragraph 31)
9. *The World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) should provide a platform for discussion on how to improve systems to monitor political risks and warn of heightened risks of conflict, and to initiate political action/intervention. The UK Government should play a key role in ensuring that monitoring systems become both more collaborative and timely. Governments should also agree in advance circumstances in which political intervention, through all available instruments, is initiated. (Paragraph 32)*
10. *The UK Government should also invest in strengthening the capacities of international and regional organisations to monitor and mediate cases of rising political tensions through use of the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF). It should use the WHS to push for a commitment to a needs-based, as opposed to political, approach to humanitarian intervention to ensure that all severe crises are pre-empted and addressed and that none are neglected, as in the case of the Central African Republic (CAR). (Paragraph 33)*
11. Political commitment to humanitarian values is crucial in delivering a more effective humanitarian system. We commend the UK Government's efforts in this respect, particularly in the hosting of the Syria conference earlier this year. A number of contributors to this inquiry have stressed that the Prime Minister's attendance at the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) would be an important signal of the UK's continued support. (Paragraph 34)
12. *As such a large donor, a signal of high-level UK support is vital to a strong Summit outcome and thus a more effective delivery of UK humanitarian assistance. We strongly recommend that the Prime Minister consider attending the WHS. (Paragraph 35)*

Reforming the system

13. Closing the gap between the activities of short term humanitarian and longer term development actors has been recognised as a priority for action at the World Humanitarian Summit. While prior discussions on this topic have failed to deliver much needed reforms, the Summit is an important opportunity to launch a concrete set of actions to deliver results. (Paragraph 42)

14. *DFID should propose a number of ways to close the gap between development and humanitarian interventions. It should:*
 - *increase the use of ‘crisis modifiers’ in crisis-prone countries—both in its own projects and through partners—to allow for a rapid shift from development to emergency humanitarian assistance as required.*
 - *hold development actors to account in their role in building resilience and prevention so that if predictable shocks occur and they still result in crises, there are answers as to why. It should encourage other donors to do the same at the Summit.*
 - *consider proposing a “bridging conference” to ensure that the outcomes of the Summit are connected with the wider 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly with regard to “leaving no one behind”. (Paragraph 43)*
15. *We commend DFID’s commitment to education in crises, particularly its support for the No Lost Generation Initiative. Education is consistently highlighted as a priority for those affected by crises and acts as a bridge between overcoming crises in the short term and longer term development. (Paragraph 44)*
16. *DFID should use the Summit to stress the long term development effects of disrupted education and press for commitments on providing an education for all children in emergencies and protracted crises. It should ensure that the Education Crisis Platform reflects a truly transformative approach to education in crises. (Paragraph 45)*
17. *The global humanitarian system displays a worrying lack of separation of powers between those assessing needs and those appealing for funds. (Paragraph 48)*
18. *DFID should propose the establishment of an independent body to be responsible for conducting needs assessments in crises. DFID should work with like-minded donors in the build up to and at the Summit to ensure this fundamental problem is addressed. (Paragraph 48)*
19. *A number of organisations have called for institutional reforms to the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), the humanitarian system’s high-level coordinating body. It is our view that the IASC represents a dated approach to the coordination of humanitarian assistance that is increasingly failing to represent the reality on the ground. (Paragraph 52)*
20. *DFID should press for expanded membership of the IASC, with an aim to include representation from local and national organisations in order to move towards a decentralised network model. The inclusion of voices from affected communities, particularly women and women’s organisations, is important. Decision-making processes within the IASC should remain independent of donors and governments who should focus on holding the institutions that govern the humanitarian system to account. Expanded membership should therefore not include donors or governments. At the High-Level Leaders’ Roundtables, the UK Government should make it clear that reforms of institutional structures are a necessary but not sufficient condition for an improved system. Rather than being content with tweaks to the way institutions are run, all actors must work together to foster a system-wide change in thinking on how humanitarian assistance can best be delivered. (Paragraph 53)*

21. We have heard evidence that there is a need for fundamental, systemic reform to address concerns about the core architecture of the humanitarian system and rethink the approach to humanitarian assistance. We are disappointed to see the lack of a forum to directly address these issues at the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS), particularly the exclusion of the High-Level Leaders' Roundtable on "Building the future of humanitarian action: towards more effective, context-specific, and predictable responses" from the final programme. (Paragraph 59)
22. *We urge DFID to build consensus on the need to examine these concerns in the build-up to the WHS. An independent investigation of the organisational structures within the humanitarian system should be commissioned. Where structural problems are evident, as determined by thorough and objective consideration of the evidence, DFID should strive to find like-minded donors and push for an open conversation on how best to deal with them through the necessary reforms.* (Paragraph 60)
23. A key aim for the World Humanitarian Summit needs to be a new funding model that can deliver humanitarian assistance in a more efficient and effective manner and which seeks to broaden the donor base. We welcome DFID's efforts in increasingly introducing multi-year financing into its programming in fragile states. In line with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4.1, multi-year financing is particularly important in delivering quality universal education to children in crises. (Paragraph 67)
24. *DFID should push for a commitment from all donors to a reoriented funding model that invests in longer term needs through multi-year financing, particularly at the High-Level Leaders' Roundtable on humanitarian financing. DFID should focus on education as a key sector that needs an alternative financing approach, building consensus around commitment to education in crises in conjunction with multi-year commitments.* (Paragraph 68)
25. *DFID should also ensure that the Summit results in a reinvigorated role for the International Financial Institutions, particularly the World Bank, in responding to crises. This should involve a push to expand the World Bank's Crisis Response Window and a discussion on how the World Bank can better support crisis-affected countries who are not eligible for support from the International Development Association (IDA). Such discussions should be linked with the upcoming IDA replenishment.* (Paragraph 69)
26. A new approach to the financing of the humanitarian assistance is undoubtedly needed to close the US\$15 billion gap between needs and resources. New approaches to direct and indirect insurance mechanisms should be a key feature of this agenda at the World Humanitarian Summit. (Paragraph 75)
27. *We urge DFID to champion risk transfer mechanisms such as climate insurance at the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) and negotiate multi-year commitments for the G7 InsuResilience initiative up to 2020. We commend DFID's work in advocating for the role of social protection systems in avoiding crises, and we encourage the Department to make commitments to social protection a key objective of the WHS.*

In order to do this, DFID should ensure that all actors in the global system have plans in place to deliver on SDG Goal 1.3 (on social protection systems), and that disaster-prone countries are assisted in achieving this goal. (Paragraph 76)

28. *DFID should expand upon its good work in incorporating local actors into crisis response in a number of ways:*
 - *by continuing its support for the Start Fund, replicating the experience by funding the new Southern NGO network to be launched at the World Humanitarian Summit in May, and encouraging other donors to foster and engage with pooled funds managed by NGOs;*
 - *by emphasising the importance of, and seeking commitments to, the principle of subsidiarity in humanitarian responses, supporting local organisations rather than running in parallel to them or crowding them out;*
 - *by using its position as the largest contributor to the country-based pooled funds to press for increased allocation to local actors; and*
 - *by encouraging other donors and recipients to publish their humanitarian funding through the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) to help build a more transparent system based on trust, collaboration and partnership. (Paragraph 86)*
29. *DFID has rightly championed the needs of vulnerable groups in crises in the past, and the World Humanitarian Summit is an opportunity to develop global standards on inclusivity in humanitarian responses. We commend DFID for its support of the Charter on Inclusion of People with Disabilities to be launched at the Summit. (Paragraph 90)*
30. *DFID should advocate for the outcomes of the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) to include a pledge on global standards of inclusivity in the humanitarian system from all donors and funding recipients. This should include a commitment that no group will be neglected in responses and a recognition that needs vary within crisis-affected populations. We urge DFID to ensure that strong support for the Charter on Inclusion of People with Disabilities across the international community is a key outcome of the Summit. DFID should also lead a drive to promote diverse leadership within the humanitarian system, so that the interests of vulnerable groups are reflected in processes driving decision-making and funding allocations. (Paragraph 91)*
31. *While we recognise the importance of the security of international financial flows, we are concerned that, in certain circumstances, NGOs are not able to operate effectively due to unintended adverse consequences of counter-terrorism legislation. (Paragraph 97)*
32. *We commend DFID for taking steps to address this issue domestically, but we urge it to use the World Humanitarian Summit as a platform to address this problem at the global level. This should involve the opening of a dialogue between all parties concerned (the financial sector, NGOs, national governments, etc.) to explore solutions to these problems. We also urge the UK Government to explore reasonable exceptions in counter-terrorism statutes for humanitarian activities, as exist in jurisdictions such as Australia. (Paragraph 98)*

Appendix 1: Letter from Rt Hon Andrew Mitchell MP and Rt Hon Clare Short

From Rt Hon Andrew Mitchell MP and Rt Hon Clare Short

Stephen Twigg MP, Chair
International Development Select Committee

12 February 2016

Following the recent visit by the Rt Hon Clare Short and I to the Syria Turkey border we are writing to identify an issue which may well be of as much concern to members of the Select Committee as it is to us. We would like to suggest that you use your authority to investigate it and to make recommendations.

Our visit was conducted by and through the Muslim Charities Forum which is led by Dr Hany. In particular we were able to see at first hand the work of Islamic Relief and Human Appeal. We were also able to join the send-off across the Syria border some 90 heavily loaded trucks with flour, food, medicine, tents and heating stoves for internally displaced people in the North Western parts of Syria. This convoy was entirely funded by the British Muslim community who have already themselves raised nearly £300million from amongst British Muslims.

There are three areas about which Clare and I are deeply concerned.

The first about which we have had discussions with officials at Downing Street is that for whatever reason the flow of British taxpayer funding does appear to be discriminating against Muslim charities. There are clearly advantages in terms of getting aid through to vulnerable and besieged displaced communities in Syria from using Muslim Charities and personnel. In addition, domestically, it does send a negative signal to the British Muslim community about the esteem in which they are held by the British Government. Both Clare Short and I when we held the position of Secretary of State for International Development made particular efforts to tackle discriminations of this kind and we believe the Government should do more now in the teeth of the Syria refugee catastrophe

Secondly, we have seen clear evidence that the relief effort in Syria is hampered both by fears of anti-terrorist legislation and the effect it could have on the charities themselves. Also the reluctance of banks in Britain to transfer funds on the grounds that they themselves could fall foul of this legislation. This is a complex and difficult issue. We are concerned that it may be frustrating legitimate British Government policy and the relief effort inadvertently.

Thirdly, there is concern among Muslim Relief workers who are in some cases, with extraordinary bravery, putting their lives on the line for their fellow human beings about the “Guantanamo” effect - exemplified by the case of Shaker Aamer detained by the Americans for 14 years without trial or even charge because he was effectively in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Muslim aid workers fear that they could be photographed or recorded in places where terrorists are in control or deployed but also where they themselves are trying to help

desperate people. Both Clare Short and I feel that it is detrimental for the legitimate work of very brave people who are greatly respected in Britain for the work which they are carrying out - especially amongst the Muslim community. Both Clare Short and I hope that your Committee will look into this important matter and take evidence to see what it may be necessary to do to help address these complex but very important issues.

Rt Hon Andrew Mitchell MP and Rt Hon Clare Short

Annex 1: Letter to Rt Hon Andrew Mitchell MP and Rt Hon Clare Short

From Stephen Twigg MP, Chair

Rt Hon Andrew Mitchell MP

Rt Hon Clare Short

25 February 2016

Global Humanitarian System

Dear Andrew and Clare,

Thank you very much for your recent letter highlighting issues arising from your recent visit to the Syria Turkey border. You suggested that the Committee may wish to explore the issues you raise further.

The Committee is already conducting a short inquiry on the Global Humanitarian System. Our intention is to publish a short report ahead of the World Humanitarian Summit in May, to help identify priorities for that event. The inquiry provides the opportunity for the Committee to give at least a preliminary consideration to the matters to which you have drawn our attention. Indeed, written evidence submitted to the inquiry has identified the issue of the operation of organisations on the frontline in Syria. The Overseas Development Institute wrote: “Our research has highlighted the importance of revisiting the applicability of counter-terrorism legislation in humanitarian emergencies to ensure that counter-terrorism objectives do not undermine humanitarians’ ability to negotiate with armed groups, for example to gain access to areas they may control to assist and protect populations in need. These are discussions that cannot be left out of the WHS High-Level Leaders’ Roundtable on political leadership to prevent and end conflicts”.

This issue, and the other issues you raise about potential or perceived discrimination against Muslim charities and challenges for international NGOs in using the banking system to support their operations, are not an explicit focus for the Committee’s current inquiry. However, they are clearly relevant. The Committee would like to invite you to come and give oral evidence. That way we could understand in more detail the issues you have identified. It would also be an excellent opportunity for us to learn from your experiences as Secretaries of State for International Development, and get your thoughts on these issues and other priorities in the context of the wider World Humanitarian Summit agenda.

The terms of reference for our current inquiry are as follows:

What should DFID’s priorities be for next year’s Humanitarian Summit and how can it push these up the agenda?

In the case of protracted crises, how can the global approach better ensure that humanitarian assistance evolves into longer term development support when needed?

What are the shortcomings of the global humanitarian assistance funding model and how can these be overcome?

To what extent are improvements to humanitarian responses inhibited by the slow pace of reform within the UN system?

Vulnerable groups

Are responses sufficiently tailored to particularly vulnerable groups? Do early responders have the necessary expertise in areas such as child protection and gender-based violence (GBV), and are there effective processes for integrating these priorities into longer term plans?

The No Lost Generation Initiative (NLGI) has highlighted the impact of humanitarian crises on children. What more can be done to ensure that the potential for negative lifelong impact of crises on children is minimised?

I hope that you will respond favourably to our invitation to give oral evidence to the Committee. The Committee staff will be in touch with your offices to suggest a date and time. In the meantime, may I thank you again for writing to me on these important matters.

Stephen Twigg MP
Chair of the Committee

Annex 2: Letter to the Secretary of State for International Development

From Stephen Twigg MP, Chair

Rt Hon Justine Greening MP
Secretary of State
Department for International Development

20 April 2016

World Humanitarian Summit

Dear Justine,

As you know, the first ever World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) taking place in Istanbul in May 2016 is a vital opportunity to secure much needed reforms to the global humanitarian system. Support for those affected by humanitarian crises has increased substantially in recent years, with the UK's key contribution being something we are particularly proud of as a Committee. However, the gap between needs and resources still stands at US\$15 billion – its largest ever. It is the Committee's belief that perpetual increases in financial support cannot be the only answer. Based on the evidence we received in our recent inquiry, we believe that future approaches to humanitarian crises need to be reformed in two major ways.

Firstly, the WHS must secure transformative changes to the way the humanitarian system delivers aid, not just in terms of institutions, funding models and systems, but equally in the assumptions and mindsets of major actors, including the UK. Secondly, efforts must be made to reduce humanitarian needs by tackling the causes of crises. Both conflicts and natural disasters will continue to happen, so it is up to the international community to better deliver on its responsibilities to support the most vulnerable by mitigating their impacts and avoiding major crises.

While there is general agreement on both of these points, we also heard in evidence that there has been a failure to build consensus around a priority set of proposals to be achieved at the Summit.¹³⁶ We are concerned that without consensus around concrete proposals, the opportunity to achieve truly transformative outcomes will be missed, and the WHS will fail to deliver the essential reforms that are so urgently needed. We therefore propose a list of six priority areas with associated proposals that we believe the UK Government should focus on in order to build links with like-minded donors and secure the change that will deliver a more effective, efficient, people-centred approach to humanitarian crises. A formal IDC report to expand upon these points will be published in due course.

136 IRIN (DAS0032) para 4

Reducing humanitarian needs

1) Upholding international humanitarian law

There is a broad consensus on the need to ensure greater compliance with International Humanitarian Law (IHL) as well as the role the WHS has to play in starting this process. Such a consensus is welcome, and we propose DFID act on it by seeking three major commitments at the WHS:

- a) Universal commitment to reaffirm the principles of the Geneva Conventions and investigate and prosecute violations of IHL
- b) An agreement to reinvigorate and accelerate negotiations for a global intergovernmental mechanism for IHL compliance
- c) A pledge for funding to strengthen capacities of countries with weaker institutions to investigate and prosecute violations of IHL

2) Building a better understanding of resilience

We welcome DFID's commitment to resilience building and its efforts to enable crisis-affected populations to better withstand shocks, though we also note concerns about the lack of clarity in translating this into practice.¹³⁷ In the case of the Syria crisis, implementing partners have mentioned the need for more clarity about DFID's approach to resilience building and the funding available for it.¹³⁸ We believe that a concerted and coordinated effort to better understand resilience can help bridge the gap between conceptualising and implementing it, producing global standards on how to create more crisis-resistant communities. We believe that DFID should work closely with other donors and implementing partners in the build up to and at the WHS to launch an initiative to this effect.

We also urge DFID to stress that resilience building is more fitting as a general strategy for disasters. While incorporating resilience into programming in conflict-prone states – particularly with regard to food security, infrastructure and livelihoods – is welcome, there is a danger in blurring the lines concerning what people should and should not be made resilient to. We encourage DFID to reassert the idea that states' responsibilities to crisis-affected populations lies first and foremost with IHL – under no circumstances should resilience-building be used as a strategy to mitigate IHL violations.

3) Greater emphasis on preventing and resolving crises

The manner in which humanitarian needs have consistently grown faster than humanitarian funding is partly explained by the increasing occurrence of disasters and conflicts. The WHS should emphasise the need for a shift away from reactive responses and towards proactive crisis prevention. We believe that DFID can contribute to this, firstly by a commitment to spending a fixed proportion of its Official Development Assistance (ODA) on disaster risk reduction (as called for by the UNSG), and secondly by encouraging investment in research to quantify the cost effectiveness of crisis prevention relative to crisis response.

¹³⁷ Q9

¹³⁸ DFID Syria Crisis Unit, [Humanitarian Programme Process Evaluation](#), para 3.8

A greater emphasis on conflict prevention should also sit within DFID's commitment to fragile states. Often, systems to detect signs of rising political tensions are not in place or, where they are, are not heeded.¹³⁹ We urge DFID to ensure that strengthening early warning systems is a key feature of the WHS, and would welcome a funding commitment to this through the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF). Commitments should also be sought on reacting to these warning signs, so that a peer-reviewed standard of conflict risk will always trigger commensurate action. We urge DFID to stress that humanitarian responses must always be based solely on need. Neglected crises, such as that in the Central African Republic should not be allowed to happen, in order to maintain the spirit of the 2030 Agenda concept of "leaving no one behind".

Reforming the system

4) A new approach to institutions, systems, funding and thinking

The increasingly protracted nature of crises and the role of development actors in building crisis-resilient countries calls for the humanitarian-development distinction to be broken down. We urge DFID to scale up its own use of 'crisis modifiers' in crisis-prone countries, allowing for a rapid shift from development to humanitarian assistance. Other donors can be encouraged to do the same at the WHS. We also encourage DFID to use the WHS to promote accountability amongst development actors so that when entirely predictable events result in crises, such as caused by the recent El Niño, there are answers as to why. DFID should also continue its good work promoting education in crises to stress the long term development effects of disrupted education. A global assertion that SDG 4 on quality education extends to crisis-affected children should be sought as no child should be left behind.

We are also gravely concerned about the lack of separation of powers between those conducting needs assessments and those appealing for funding. We heard that this creates a lack of confidence in the system so we urge DFID to address this at the WHS through proposing an independent body to conduct needs assessments.

One of the areas where there is a lack of agreement between different actors is the need for institutional reform. Given these disagreements, we hope that DFID is in the process of finding points of convergence with like-minded donors, and building a consensus to secure necessary changes. We believe that membership of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), the humanitarian system's high-level coordinating body, should be extended to include a broader range of actors. However, we also feel that there is value in maintaining its independence from donors so they should not be included. In terms of the wider architecture of the system, we feel that this should be examined and were disappointed to see that the relevant High-Level Leaders' Roundtable was dropped from the final WHS programme. Despite the absence of such a high-level forum, we urge DFID to keep the discussion alive among other donors to ensure that no possible means by which to improve the humanitarian system is ruled out.

While institutional reforms are important, we stress that these are a necessary but not sufficient condition for true change. Securing genuine reform means a complete rethinking among humanitarian actors of how humanitarian assistance can best be delivered with the needs of the affected communities always prioritised above all else.

It is widely agreed that a different approach to funding humanitarian crises should be sought at the WHS. We urge DFID to push for a commitment across all donors to a reoriented funding model that invests in longer term needs. This should include an enhanced role for the World Bank through a review of the eligibility criteria for International Development Association (IDA) assistance as well as an expansion of the Crisis Response Window. DFID can also play an instrumental role in championing risk transfer mechanisms such as climate insurance at the WHS and should negotiate multi-year commitments for the G7 InsuResilience initiative.

5) **Making the system truly global**

One message from the UNSG's report and the pre-Summit consultation, that was echoed in evidence to us, is the need to give crisis-affected people a voice through inclusive local involvement in responses. DFID is already doing excellent work in this respect through the START fund, and we recommend that the model of pooled funds managed by NGOs be replicated and supported by the Department including with the Southern-led NGO network set to be launched by ADESO at the WHS. DFID can also contribute to this agenda by stressing the importance of subsidiarity in humanitarian responses – supporting local organisations rather than running in parallel to them or crowding them out. As the world's largest contributor to the country-based pooled funds, we also urge DFID to press for increased allocation to local actors.

A genuinely global system should be more inclusive. Despite DFID's efforts (such as through its own Disability Framework), the humanitarian system often falls short in addressing the needs of particularly vulnerable groups. We urge DFID to secure a pledge on global standards of inclusivity in the humanitarian system from all donors and funding recipients. This should include a drive to promote diverse leadership within the humanitarian system, so that the interests of vulnerable groups are reflected in processes driving decision-making and funding allocations.

6) **Address unintended consequences of counter-terrorism legislation (CTL) and humanitarian responses**

While we recognise the importance of the security of international financial flows, we are concerned that, in certain circumstances, NGOs are not able to operate effectively due to unintended adverse consequences of counter-terrorism legislation. We commend DFID for taking steps to address this issue domestically, but we urge it to use the World Humanitarian Summit as a platform to address this problem at the global level. This should involve the opening of a dialogue between all parties concerned (the financial sector, NGOs, national governments, etc.) to explore solutions to these problems. We also urge the UK Government to explore the proposal of reasonable exceptions in counter-terrorism statutes for humanitarian activities, as in jurisdictions such as Australia.

The Committee feels that addressing these points is essential to a successful WHS and thus a more effective and efficient future humanitarian system that both taxpayers and crisis-affected people deserve. We believe in the UK Government's commitment to this cause, and we strongly recommend that the Prime Minister consider attending the Summit to reinforce this commitment and show the world that the UK will continue to stand behind the most vulnerable.

Stephen Twigg MP
Chair of the Committee

Formal Minutes

Tuesday 3 May 2016

Members present:

Stephen Twigg, in the Chair

Fiona Bruce Wendy Morton

Draft Report (*The World Humanitarian Summit: priorities for reform*), proposed by the Chair, brought up and read.

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

Paragraphs 1 to 98 read and agreed to.

Annexes agreed to.

Summary agreed to.

A Paper was appended to the Report.

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

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

Ordered, That embargoed copies of the Report be made available (Standing Order No. 134).

[Adjourned till Tuesday 10 May at 10.00 a.m.]

Witnesses

The following witnesses gave evidence. Transcripts can be viewed on the [inquiry publications page](#) of the Committee's website.

Tuesday 8 March 2016

Question number

Bruno Lemarquis, Deputy Director, Crisis Response Unit, United Nations Development Programme, **Christina Bennett**, Research Fellow, Humanitarian Policy Group, Overseas Development Institute, and **Markus Geisser**, Senior Humanitarian Affairs and Policy Adviser, International Committee of the Red Cross

[Q1–18](#)

Rt Hon Desmond Swayne MP, Minister of State for International Development, and **Dylan Winder**, Head, Humanitarian Policy and Partnerships, Department for International Development

[Q19–46](#)

Monday 14 March 2016

Rt Hon Andrew Mitchell MP, Former Secretary of State for International Development, and **Rt Hon Clare Short**, Former Secretary of State for International Development

[Q47–83](#)

Tuesday 15 March 2016

George Graham, Head of Conflict and Humanitarian Policy and Advocacy, Save the Children, **Ann Foley**, Head of Disaster Risk Management, Plan UK, and **Mike Noyes**, Head of Humanitarian Response, ActionAid UK

[Q84–115](#)

Professor Mukesh Kapila CBE, Professor of Global Health and Humanitarian Affairs, University of Manchester

[Q116–138](#)

Published written evidence

The following written evidence was received and can be viewed on the [inquiry publications page](#) of the Committee's website.

DAS numbers are generated by the evidence processing system and so may not be complete.

- 1 ActionAid ([DAS0030](#))
- 2 Africa Educational Trust ([DAS0007](#))
- 3 Age International and HelpAge International ([DAS0014](#))
- 4 CAFOD ([DAS0027](#))
- 5 CBM ([DAS0023](#))
- 6 Christian Aid ([DAS0019](#))
- 7 Crown Agents ([DAS0020](#))
- 8 Department for International Development ([DAS0025](#))
- 9 Development Initiatives ([DAS0010](#))
- 10 Handicap International UK ([DAS0013](#))
- 11 Heba Aly, Managing Editor of IRIN News ([DAS0032](#))
- 12 International Committee of the Red Cross ([DAS0028](#))
- 13 Motivation Charitable Trust ([DAS0017](#))
- 14 Overseas Development Institute ([DAS0016](#))
- 15 Oxfam GB ([DAS0004](#))
- 16 Plan International UK ([DAS0005](#))
- 17 Population Matters ([DAS0006](#))
- 18 Protection Approaches ([DAS0024](#))
- 19 Pupils 2 Parliament ([DAS0012](#))
- 20 RESULTS UK ([DAS0018](#))
- 21 Rt Hon Andrew Mitchell MP and Rt Hon Clare Short ([DAS0031](#))
- 22 Save the Children ([DAS0029](#))
- 23 Sightsavers ([DAS0015](#))
- 24 Start Network ([DAS0033](#))
- 25 The Royal Society ([DAS0026](#))
- 26 UNDP ([DAS0003](#))
- 27 Unicef UK ([DAS0011](#))
- 28 University of Birmingham ([DAS0008](#))
- 29 World Vision UK ([DAS0002](#))

List of Reports from the Committee during the current Parliament

All publications from the Committee are available on the [publications page](#) of the Committee's website.

Session 2015–16

First Report	Syrian refugee crisis	HC 463
Second Report	Ebola: Responses to a public health emergency	HC 338
Third Report	UK aid: allocation of resources: interim report	HC 927
Fourth Report	Crisis in Yemen	HC 532
First Special Report	The Future of UK Development Co-operation: Phase 2: Beyond Aid: Government Response to the Committee's Tenth Report of Session 2014–15	HC 339
Second Special Report	Jobs and Livelihoods: Government Response to the Committee's Twelfth Report of Session 2014–15	HC 421
Third Special Report	DFID's bilateral programme in Nepal: Government Response to the Committee's Fourteenth Report of Session 2014–15	HC 422
Fourth Special Report	Department for International Development's Performance in 2013–14: the Departmental Annual Report 2013–14: Government Response to the Committee's Fourteenth Report of Session 2014–15	HC 420
Fifth Special Report	Syrian refugee crisis: Government Response to the Committee's First Report of Session 2015–16	HC 902
Sixth Special Report	Ebola: Responses to a public health emergency: Government Response to the Committee's Second Report of Session 2015–16	HC 946