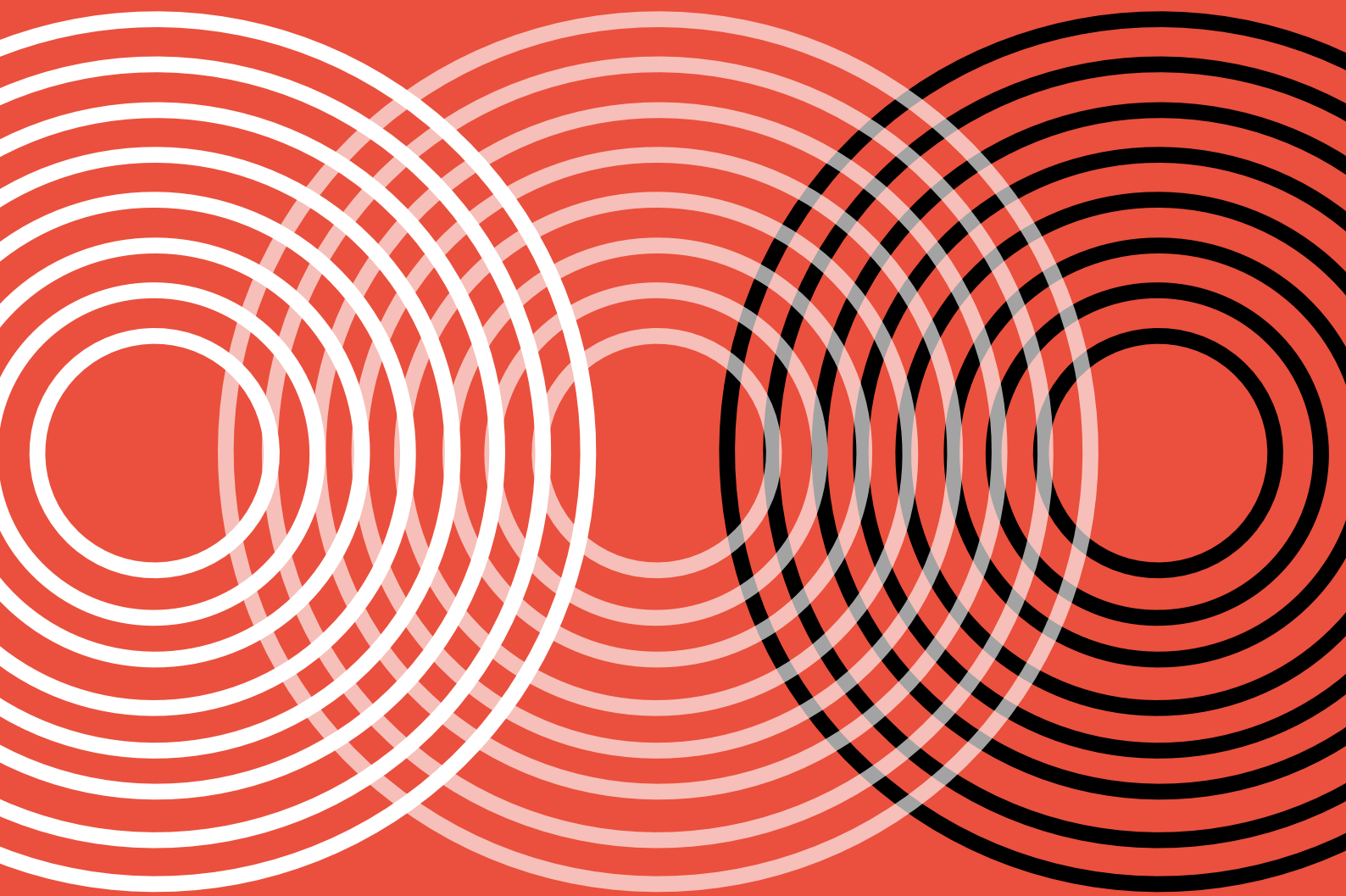# THE STATE OF THE
HUMANITARIAN
SYSTEM

2018 EDITION

ALNAP

ALNAP is a global network of humanitarian organisations, including UN agencies, members of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, NGOs, donors, academics and consultants dedicated to learning how to improve the response to humanitarian crises.

sohs.alnap.org

Lead author:

Paul Knox Clarke

Contributing authors:

Abby Stoddard (Humanitarian Outcomes)
Luminita Tuchel (Development Initiatives)

Editor:

Matthew Foley

The views contained in this report do not necessarily reflect those of ALNAP Members.

CONTENTS

TABLES & FIGURES

ACRONYMS

AAP	Accountability to Affected Populations
ALNAP	Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance
C4C	Charter for Change
CAAC	UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict
CAR	Central African Republic
CBPF	Country Based Pooled Fund
CERF	UN Central Emergency Response Fund
CE-DAT	Complex Emergency Database
CRED	Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters
CRRF	Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CTP	Cash Transfers Programming
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency

DFID	UK's Department for International Development
DI	Development Initiatives
DoC	Deed of Commitment
DPKO	UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations
DPP	disaster preparedness and prevention
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
DREF	Disaster Relief Emergency Fund
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
ECHO	European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations
EIB	European Investment Bank
EM-DAT	CRED's Emergency Events Database
EO	Executive Order
EU	European Union
EU-TF	EU Emergency Trust Fund
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FARC	Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia
FbF	Forecast-based Financing

FTS	Financial Tracking Service (OCHA)		**ICC**	International Criminal Court
FYROM	Macedonia		**ICRC**	International Committee of the Red Cross
GAUC	Global Alliance for Urban Crises		**ICT**	Information and Communications Technology
GCFF	Global Concessional Financing Facility		**ICVA**	International Council for Voluntary Agencies
GCRP	Global Crisis Response Platform		**IDA**	International Development Association
GAM	Global Acute Malnutrition		**IDP**	internally displaced person
HC	Humanitarian Coordinator		**IDMC**	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
HCT	Humanitarian Country Team		**IFRC**	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
HIB	Humanitarian Impact Bond		**IHL**	International Humanitarian Law
HIF	Humanitarian Innovation Fund		**IIED**	International Institute for Environment and Development
HNO	Humanitarian Needs Overview			
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan		**IIIM**	international, impartial and independent mechanism
HSNP	Hunger Safety Net Programme		**INCEIF**	Global University of Islamic Finance
HVI	Human Voice Index			
HXL	humanitarian exchange language		**INGOs**	international non-governmental organisations
IAHE	Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation		**IO**	international organisation
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee		**IOM**	International Organisation for Migration
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development			

IPC	International Phase Classification		**P5**	Permanent Member of the UN Security Council
IRC	International Rescue Committee		**PoC**	protection of civilians
IsDB	Islamic Development Bank		**PSEA**	protection against sexual exploitation and abuse
KI	key informant		**PSNP**	Productive Safety Net Programme
KII	key informant interview		**RC**	Resident Coordinator
LNGOs	local non-governmental organisations		**RCRC**	Red Cross / Red Crescent
MIC	middle-income country		**RRMP**	Rapid Response to Movements of Population Programme
MSF	Médecins Sans Frontières		**SDGs**	Sustainable Development Goals
NDAA	National Defense Authorisation Act		**SEDRP**	Somalia Emergency Drought Response and Recovery Project
NDMAs	National Disaster Management Authorities		**SLRC**	Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium
NGOs	Non-governmental organisations		**SOHS**	The State of the Humanitarian System
NNGOs	National NGOs		**SRP**	Syria Strategic Response Plan
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council		**UNCTAD**	UN Conference on Trade and Development
OCHA	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs		**UNDP**	UN Development Programme
ODI	Overseas Development Institute		**UNFPA**	UN Population Fund
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development		**UNHCR**	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
OIC	Organisation of Islamic Cooperation		**UNICEF**	UN Children's Fund
OPE	operational programme expenditure		**UOSSM**	Union of Medical Care and Relief Organizations

UNRWA	UN Relief and Works Agency
USAID	US Agency for International Development
UAV	unmanned aerial vehicle
WASH	Water, sanitation and hygiene
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
WHS	World Humanitarian Summit

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This fourth edition of *The State of the Humanitarian System (SOHS)* report is an ambitious undertaking in terms of its scope and depth of analysis. The findings are derived from multiple sources of primary and secondary data and include the views and opinions of thousands of aid recipients who kindly gave their time to answer questions on many aspects of humanitarian assistance. This first-hand information has enriched the report enormously and we would like to thank them and acknowledge their contribution.

The report itself has been developed and produced by the ALNAP Secretariat in partnership with several experienced consultants. The experience and knowledge that the consultants brought to bear has contributed greatly to the quality of the report (Annex 1, p. 306).

We are grateful to the Methodology Reference Group, who helped us develop the methodology in the inception phase (Annex 1, p. 306). Their expertise and insights have been invaluable.

As always, we are indebted to the SOHS Support and Advisory Group (SAG – Annex 1, p. 308), who provided wise guidance on the process, and numerous comments on earlier drafts.

Thanks are also due to the ALNAP Steering Committee, who provided steady and important oversight throughout this process.

Additional peer review and advisory input was given by colleagues who kindly volunteered their time (Annex 1, p. 308) and we are grateful to them. In addition, several people reviewed specific specialist areas of the report, and their knowledge and suggestions have also been extremely helpful (Annex 1, p. 308).

Supplementary data and information has kindly been provided by colleagues from other agencies and humanitarian initiatives (Annex 1, p.309), all of which has strengthened the content of the report.

We would also like to thank the organisations who generously hosted and supported field studies (Annex 1, p. 309). The field work and case studies would not have been possible without them.

Finally, I would like to thank my colleagues in the ALNAP Secretariat for their amazing skills and commitment in bringing this ambitious project to fruition. They are an inspirational team.

John Mitchell
ALNAP Director
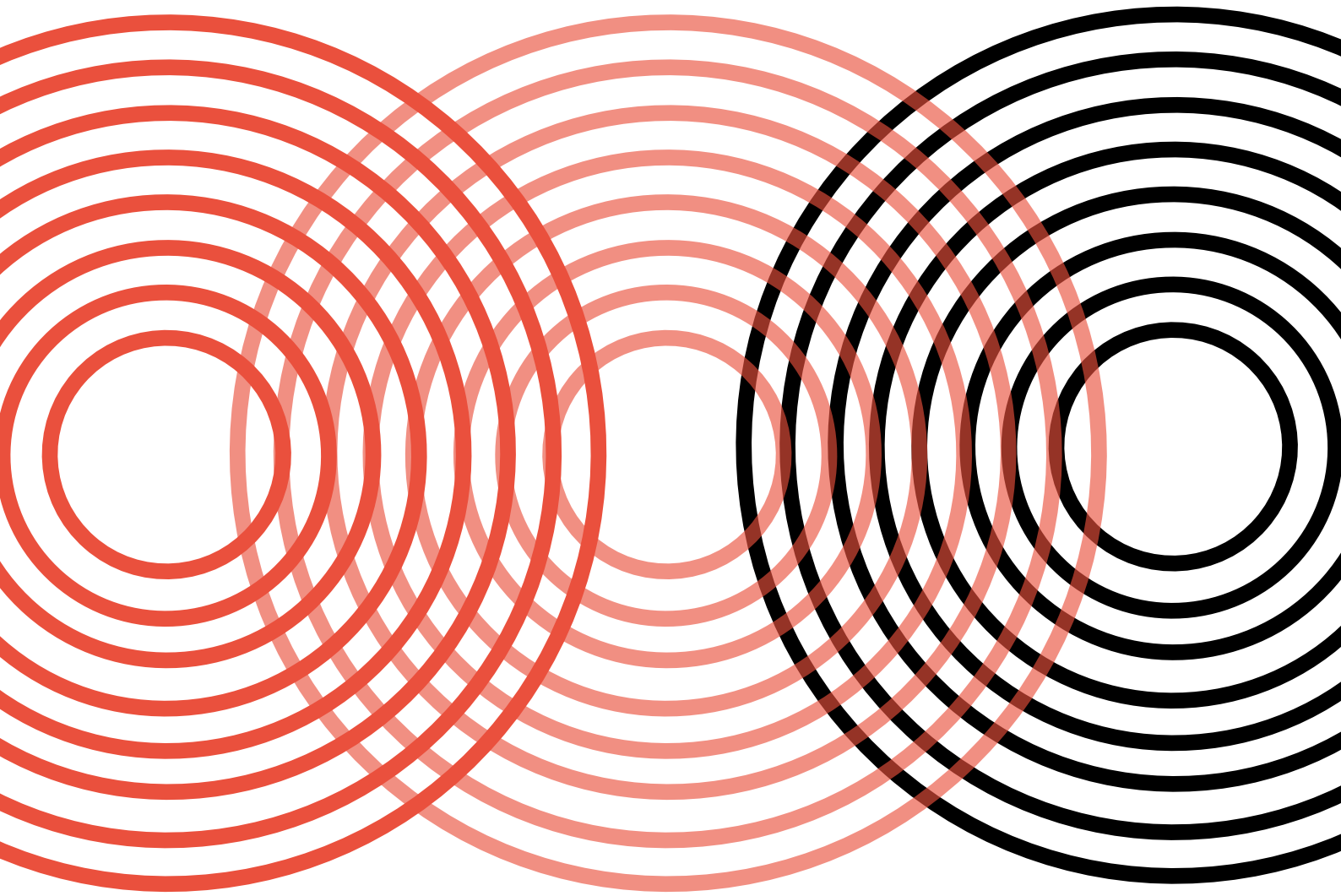
1

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report outlines humanitarian needs over the past three years; provides an overview of the resources made available to address these needs; describes the current size and structure of the humanitarian system; and presents an assessment of the system's performance in addressing humanitarian needs.

Executive summary

This report outlines humanitarian needs over the past three years; provides an overview of the resources made available to address these needs; describes the current size and structure of the humanitarian system; and presents an assessment of the system's performance in addressing humanitarian needs.

The State of the Humanitarian System project aims to provide a longitudinal assessment of the size, shape and performance of the humanitarian system. It reports every three years. This is the fourth report, covering the period 2015–17. It is based on the same broad structure, methodology and questions as the previous editions, to allow an assessment of progress over time.

Composition of the humanitarian system

In 2017, the total combined field personnel of the humanitarian sector numbered approximately 570,000. This represents an increase of 27% from the last SOHS report (450,000 in 2013). Growing numbers of national humanitarian workers appeared to drive this increase, while the number of international (expatriate) staff remained stable. On average across humanitarian organisations, this growth in personnel did not keep pace with the overall rise in operational expenditure.

The majority of funding continued to flow through UN agencies, with the World Food Programme (WFP), the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) the three largest in terms of expenditure. Much of this funding was then passed on as grants to non-governmental organisations (NGOs). These three agencies were also among the largest in terms of staffing, although for the first time they were outstripped in staff numbers by an NGO (Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF)). As in 2015, UN agencies and NGOs spent similar amounts overall ($16 billion for the UN and $16.8 billion for NGOs). Expenditure by the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement fell in proportion to both UN organisations and NGOs as a result of reduced expenditure by National Societies. The concentration of funding flowing through a small number of international NGOs evident in previous editions of *The State of the Humanitarian System* continued, though it was less marked than in the past: in 2017, 23% of funding went through six large international NGOs, compared to 31% through five in the previous edition of the SOHS.

Table 1 / Organisational resources devoted to humanitarian aid

	UN agencies•	NGOs (estimates)	Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement**
Field personnel **569,700**	**79,000**	**331,000**	**159,700**
	• **68,000** nationals	• **304,000** nationals	• **14,000** ICRC/IFRC, nationals
	• **11,000** internationals	• **27,000** internationals	• **2,700** ICRC/IFRC, internationals
			• **143,000** RCS, nationals
Humanitarian expenditure (not cumulative)***	**$16** billion	**$16.8** billion	**$15.7** billion

All figures are for the 2017 calendar year, apart from National Red Cross/Crescent Societies, where the most recent data is from 2016.
* Includes UN agency members of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), plus the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM).
** Includes the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and National Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies in non-high-income countries.
*** Figures for humanitarian expenditures cannot be totalled across provider types as this would result in double counting because UN agencies programme large portions of their humanitarian spend through NGOs.

An estimated

201 million

people needed international humanitarian assistance in 2017, the highest estimate to date.

Humanitarian needs and funding

Over 2015–17, humanitarian need was driven by protracted large-scale conflicts, primarily in Yemen, Syria and South Sudan. An estimated 201 million people needed international humanitarian assistance in 2017, the highest estimate to date.[1] Most countries requiring international assistance were affected by multiple crisis types, with many conflict-affected countries also hosting refugees or experiencing disasters associated with natural hazards. The number of people forcibly displaced by conflict and violence increased over the period, reaching 68.5 million in 2017; close to two-thirds of these people were internally displaced.

A small number of complex crises continued to receive the majority of funding, sustaining a growing trend from 2014 – 58% of international humanitarian assistance was directed to just five crises in 2017, a 5% increase on 2014. This increasing concentration of allocations was accompanied by a gradual shift from recipients primarily in the South of Sahara region to the Middle East and North of Sahara. Syria was the single largest emergency in all three years of the 2015–17 period, receiving 28% of international humanitarian assistance in 2017.

International humanitarian assistance continued to grow, reaching its peak to date at $27.3 billion in 2017. However, after a significant increase (16%) in 2014–15, growth slowed to 3% per year for 2016 and 2017. A small number of donor governments continued to contribute the majority of international humanitarian assistance over 2015–17. The three largest donors accounted for 59% of all government contributions in 2017, compared to 56% in 2014.

While overall humanitarian contributions grew, the shortfall between requirements and contributions to UN-coordinated appeals also increased. The amount requested through UN appeals stood at $25.2 billion in 2017, the highest ever requested, exceeding the total 2014 volumes by $4.9 billion. Funding to the appeals, while increasing to $14.9 billion in 2017, 19% higher than 2014, left a gap of $10.3 billion, again the largest to date.

The increase in the number of people displaced by conflict and violence was reflected in how funding was spent. Assistance to refugees is predominantly reported under the 'multi-sector' code, under which the largest amount of funding was both requested and received over 2015–17. Although the level of 'Multi-sector' funding grew, the shortfall against the level requested (i.e. coverage) also increased: in 2017, only 51% of the amount requested was received. Of sector-specific assistance, food security remained the largest in terms of volumes requested and received, with coverage of 61% in 2017, against 53% in 2015. Detail beyond broad sectoral categories remains difficult to gather. The same data availability challenges also hold with regard to quantifying volumes directed to disaster preparedness and prevention (DPP). Of the data reported to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC), humanitarian assistance for DPP amounted to $0.7 billion in 2016, almost 4% below 2015 volumes.

Humanitarian assistance reaches people in need through multiple channels, following long transaction chains. In 2016, $12.3 billion or 60% of all direct government funding went to multilateral organisations in the first instance. NGOs received $4 billion directly – 20% of the total. This configuration is broadly in line with the previous reporting period. There was a slight increase in direct funding to national and local NGOs, from 1.7% of all NGO funding in 2016 to 2.7% in 2017. However, local and national NGOs received just 0.4% directly of all international humanitarian assistance reported to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Financial Tracking Service (FTS) in 2017, a rise of just 0.1% from 2016. The majority of international humanitarian assistance to NGOs continues to go to international organisations, which received 94% of total NGO funding in 2017, up from 85% in 2016. Improved reporting may in part explain the changes seen in 2017, with a decrease in levels of 'undefined' funding.

Flexible funding volumes through pooled funds continued to grow, reaching a record $1.3 billion in 2017, 53% higher than 2014. Within this, funding for both the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and the 18 country-based pooled funds grew by 27% and 76% respectively over the same period. Cash transfers also grew, reaching an estimated $2.8 billion in 2016, a 40% increase on 2015 levels.

International resources in crisis contexts beyond humanitarian assistance remained limited. For example, levels of foreign direct investment and remittances are lower for the largest recipients of international humanitarian assistance compared to the group of other developing countries. Some

> Some financial sources and instruments in crisis settings evolved and became more prominent over the period, notably from initiatives from international financial institutions and Islamic social giving.

financial sources and instruments in crisis settings evolved and became more prominent over the period, notably from initiatives from international financial institutions and Islamic social giving. While not new in themselves, these sources received increasing attention given their potential to broaden the 'traditional' resource base of humanitarian assistance.

New funding instruments were developed primarily in response either to disasters associated with natural hazards or in relation to displacement: examples being trialled in crisis settings include Forecast-based Financing (FbF), the European Investment Bank (EIB)'s Economic Resilience Initiative and the Humanitarian Impact Bond (HIB). The World Bank trialled new types of instruments over the study period, with both sovereign and non-sovereign partners. Challenges remain not only in quantifying the volumes of assistance available from the Bank and other international financial institutions, but also in making this information available in a speedier manner to inform a more comprehensive and coordinated financial response.

Performance of the humanitarian system

The period 2015–17 was marked by important and rapid changes in the geopolitical landscape. Most – although not all – of these changes were negative, in that they increased needs and made responses more difficult. At the same time, the humanitarian system itself – despite calls for transformational change – continued along a path of incremental improvement in some areas, and a lack of movement in others.

Globally, the most notable features of the period from a humanitarian perspective were a rise in populist political movements and an increase in the number and political visibility of refugees, asylum-seekers and other irregular migrants attempting to enter high-income countries. In many cases, the two phenomena were related: populist politicians in a number of states built support by mixing concerns about immigration into their nationalist rhetoric.

This political shift away from a more internationalist, liberal worldview was particularly marked in a number of states that are important humanitarian donors, and that have, traditionally, provided political and financial support to international humanitarian action. This shift appears to have affected the global environment in which humanitarians work. Many experts interviewed for this edition of *The State of the Humanitarian System* gave examples of countries that were traditionally strong supporters of International Humanitarian and Refugee Law failing to challenge abuses, and in some cases even acting against the spirit and letter of the law. There are strong suggestions that this has emboldened some refugee-hosting governments and governments engaged in internal conflict to conduct abuses against civilians, ignore their obligations to refugees or obstruct access to humanitarian agencies. These changes account, in part, for the continued decline in performance in the areas of coverage (the ability to reach everyone in need) and coherence (the ability to conduct operations in line with international humanitarian and refugee law) outlined in this report.

At the same time, the increased political visibility of asylum-seekers and irregular migrants drew attention to poverty and insecurity in the countries that these people were leaving. This contributed to increased 'developmental' funding – through the World Bank and a series of bilateral compacts – for fragile and conflict-affected states, and for states hosting refugees. Humanitarian actors have, for many years, called for greater engagement by development actors in these contexts. It remains to be seen how the humanitarian system will accommodate itself to these changes now that these calls have, to a degree, been answered.

The European Migration 'Crisis' also challenged the traditional model of humanitarian action, which was largely developed in response to famines in states with little machinery of governance. The people entering Europe had a broad range of humanitarian needs – from the preservation of life while crossing the Mediterranean to help dealing with bureaucracies when they arrived in Europe. These needs occurred in, or off the shores of, some of the richest countries in the world. Not for the first time, humanitarian agencies were forced to consider their role in a context to which they were unaccustomed, and where the traditional model did not apply. A similar challenge faced the humanitarian system in its response to the Ebola Epidemic in West Africa. Originally seen by the United Nations and other international and regional bodies purely as a 'health crisis' (and so outside the ambit of most humanitarian organisations), it was eventually addressed in a more holistic and effective manner. Humanitarian organisations played an important role in this, but time was lost while they attempted to clarify their role and deploy human and other resources.

Large-scale migration into Europe and the Ebola Epidemic both underline the degree to which transport and communications technology have built stronger connections between different parts of the world and eroded the distance between the rich world of traditional donors and the poor world of traditional recipients of resources and venues of operations. Both were also, very largely, urban responses (as is much humanitarian work in Syria, Iraq and the Middle East more widely), taking place against new backgrounds of constraint and opportunity. The period 2015–17 showed that the system can adapt to these (still) unfamiliar situations, but it cannot yet do so quickly or reliably.

In response to these and other trends, a number of new operational actors emerged in 2015–17. In Europe, there was a growth in civil society groups responding to the needs of migrants. In Nepal, NGOs from China and India became involved on a significant scale in disaster relief activities outside their own countries. Chinese NGOs in particular can be expected to take on an increased role in humanitarian action over the coming years as a result of the Belt and Road Initiative.

Within the humanitarian system, the period saw a large number of initiatives aimed at improving humanitarian action. Many were reflected in, and given further impetus by, the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit

> While many people had hoped that the WHS would catalyse a rapid and radical transformation to 'fix' a 'broken' system, actual changes appear to have been evolutionary and incremental.

(WHS). In particular, there was increased attention and institutional support for the 'localisation' of humanitarian action (supporting the governments and civil societies of crisis-affected states to play the lead role in humanitarian response); for improving the links between humanitarian and development programming; and for the provision of cash, rather than relief goods, to people affected by crisis. Recognising the continued pressure on humanitarian resources, donors and a group of the larger operational agencies also agreed a 'Grand Bargain' aimed at creating efficiencies and freeing up funding: donors agreed to make funds more flexible and reporting less onerous, while agencies agreed to greater transparency over how funds were spent.

At the end of 2017, discussions on how to implement many of these ideas were still taking place at the policy level: in the headquarters of donor organisations and humanitarian agencies. While many people had hoped that the WHS would catalyse a rapid and radical transformation to 'fix' a 'broken' system, actual changes appear to have been evolutionary and incremental – in fact, the process appears to have been most successful in giving impetus to changes and improvements already under way. As a result, progress on the ground has – to date – been modest in many areas; improvements appear to be moving more rapidly within individual agencies than they are in inter-agency contexts and in the system as a whole, and the tendency (noted in the SOHS 2012 report) to focus on specific changes to the process of aid delivery, rather than on the outcomes of humanitarian action (saving lives; securing livelihoods; protecting people from abuses) is still very evident.

A number of areas where improvement is needed, many of which were noted in the 2012 and 2015 editions of the SOHS, are still largely overlooked. These include: collection of information in a number of key areas, including information on mortality and on the longer-term impacts of aid; monitoring, particularly monitoring of the outcomes of humanitarian interventions; ensuring staff have the skills for humanitarian responses; incorporating the views and feedback of crisis-affected people into programme design; making programmes more context-specific and more adaptable to changes in context; and preventing abuse and exploitation in humanitarian programmes (although this was an area of renewed interest in early 2018).

Nevertheless, this edition of *The State of the Humanitarian System* does point to changes on the ground. Relations between international actors and the governments of affected states continue the trend of improvement seen in the last two editions of the report. While less has been achieved in handing over power and resources to local civil society organisations, the case studies and surveys for this report suggest that some small steps have been made. More programmes include elements of 'resilience' and attempt to address both immediate needs and the drivers of need than was the case in 2015. There appear to have been some limited improvements in the relevance and efficiency of aid.

Most importantly, the report identifies improvements in the quality, timeliness and effectiveness of humanitarian aid. The 2015 report concluded that there had been improvements in rapid responses to sudden-onset disasters: essentially, that the humanitarian system had become more effective in saving lives in the aftermath of hurricanes, earthquakes and large refugee movements. These improvements seem to have been maintained in 2015–17. The same report identified responses to slow-onset disasters (notably food insecurity related to drought and conflict) as 'abjectly slow'. In the period since 2015, the system appears to have become faster and more effective in identifying and meeting the life-saving needs of people in this type of situation, and in situations where people are dispersed and not living in camps – as demonstrated by activities in Somalia, Kenya and – to a lesser extent – South Sudan. However, these improvements, while significant, are neither sufficient nor universal. Even in these areas of relative success, mortality was still high, and in some situations – notably in Kasai in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) – responses were still very slow.

Improvements in the provision of immediate assistance have not been mirrored by improvements in meeting longer-term needs in protracted crises: there may be more humanitarian programmes addressing this area, but they do not seem to be particularly successful. At the same time – as noted above – development actors are becoming more engaged in addressing chronic needs in fragile states, and this may lead to improvements before the next edition of the SOHS. The system has also not improved in its ability to meet protection needs: performance here remains very mixed, with examples both of success and of failure. Similarly, in the area of advocacy and negotiation there are some examples of success – often at an operational level – but the conclusion of the 2015 report still holds: advocacy efforts are often unsuccessful because they 'lack a strategic and unified approach'.

In short, the period 2015–17 has seen progress – some of it fairly unheralded, but nevertheless important. But this progress has been slower and less transformational than many would have hoped. There are a number of reasons for this. Most systems resist change – there are many incentives to preserve the status quo. It may be unrealistic to expect a system as diverse as this to fundamentally change in one or two years, and even if fully committed to change, many of the most important levers for improvement lie outside the control of humanitarians themselves: they have limited influence over the amount of money the system receives; over many aspects of how it is spent; over the budgetary priorities of crisis-affected governments; and over the behaviour of combatants in conflicts. But the research for this report also suggests that there are some areas where improvements could be made if humanitarians were prepared to reconsider their attitudes and ways of working.

The first of these areas is **coverage** – ensuring that everyone in need is able to access humanitarian assistance. This element of humanitarian performance has got steadily worse since 2012, and is currently far short

of adequate. As noted above, much of the blame for this lies at the door of governments and non-state armed groups. However, at least part of the problem lies in the attitudes and behaviours of (many) humanitarian organisations themselves: overly risk-averse and insufficiently prepared to move rapidly from one location to another.

The second area where improvement is required is around **collective action**. The system currently demonstrates a lack of effective methods, structures and (often) desire to collaborate. In many areas – accountability, protection against sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA), innovation, procurement, working with civil society and many more – some individual agencies have made significant advances. But these advances have not led to improvements at the level of the system as a whole, which is, as a result, consistently less than the sum of its parts. The nature of the humanitarian system makes working together difficult: there is no overall authority, and so no effective way of compelling organisations to collaborate. In addition, the organisations that make up the system are competing with one another, and may not wish to collaborate. Previous editions of the SOHS have reported on improvements in coordination at the level of individual countries, but the impression remains that, if the humanitarian system is to make major improvements, it needs to fundamentally reassess how it can address this challenge of collective action at all levels.

A third area is **understanding of, and ability to adapt to, context**. The humanitarian system still operates, very largely, according to a standard set of activities, structures and procedures. This approach is effective, and has many benefits where the standard set is being used to address the situations for which it was designed. However, as noted above, in the last three years there has been an increase in non-standard emergencies: in urban contexts, in middle- and high-income countries, in response to new and unexpected crises. The model also fails to take into account the capacities of the state and of civil society affected by crises, and so allow the system to 'fill gaps' and work in support of mechanisms that are already in place.

None of these problems are new: they have been pointed out extensively in research, including previous editions of *The State of the Humanitarian System*. All of them are pressing, all relate directly to the core humanitarian concern of saving human life and none can be addressed by pushing only for changes in one process or approach. If the humanitarian system wants to keep pace with changes in its environment, any one of these three areas would be a good place to start.

> The humanitarian system still operates according to a standard set of activities, structures and procedures. However, in the last three years there has been an increase in non-standard emergencies: in urban contexts, in middle- and high-income countries, in response to new and unexpected crises.

Table 2 / Progress against SOHS performance criteria by study period

	SOHS 2018 (compared to SOHS 2015)	
Sufficiency	⊖	**No progress** • Despite increased funding, the system still does not have sufficient resources to cover needs. This is a result of growing numbers of people in need of humanitarian assistance and also, potentially, of increased ambition on the part of the humanitarian sector.
Coverage	▽	**Decline** • Poor coverage of internally displaced people (IDPs) outside camps identified in the 2015 report has not been effectively addressed. • Concerns about addressing the needs of people and communities hosting refugees have increased. • The ability of people to access humanitarian assistance in situations of conflict has got worse, with governments and non-state armed groups increasingly denying access or using bureaucracy to hinder access. • Humanitarian coverage has been poor for large numbers of irregular migrants.
Relevance & appropriateness	△	**Limited progress** • Humanitarian aid comprises a basic package of life-saving assistance, which is seen as relevant in many situations. • Priority protection needs are often not met, although there has been increased focus on this area in country strategies over the period. • Needs beyond the acute, immediate response 'package' are often not understood and generally not met. • The specific needs of the elderly and people with disabilities are often not met, but the system has taken limited steps to better meet the specific needs of women and girls. • Multi-purpose cash grants can go some way to increasing the relevance of aid.
Accountability & participation	△	**Limited progress** • The main challenge identified in the 2015 report – that feedback mechanisms are in place, but do not influence decision-making – has not been addressed. • While there are a number of initiatives and approaches that show potential, they have not yet delivered greater accountability or participation. • Many interviewees are concerned that AAP is becoming a 'box-ticking exercise'.
Effectiveness	△	**Improvement** • Effectiveness in meeting immediate life-saving needs in 'natural' disasters and in responding to sudden movements of refugees has been maintained, although agencies have found it hard to identify their role and objectives in the European Migration 'Crisis'. • Effectiveness – including timeliness – improved in responding to food insecurity in complex emergencies. • The system is still not effective in meeting protection needs overall, but there are more examples of specific programmes meeting (often quite limited) protection objectives. Do no harm approaches appear to be more commonly used. • The quality of responses appears to have improved.

⊖ **No progress**   △ **Limited progress**   △ **Improvement**   ▽ **Decline**   ⧖ **Mixed progress**

SOHS 2015 (compared to SOHS 2012)		

Sufficiency & coverage	▽	**Decline**
		• Despite an increase in funding, overall coverage decreased.
		   • Most gaps were seen in support for chronic crises, including deficits in funding, technical capacity, and recruitment, as well as access constraints.
		   • Some coverage improvements were cited in responses to natural disasters.
		• Perceptions of sufficiency among humanitarian actors surveyed dropped to 24% (from 34% in 2012).
		• More pessimism was expressed about ability to reach people in need in conflicts, mostly due to insecurity.

Relevance & appropriateness	⊖	**No progress** • A slight majority (51%) said needs assessment had improved but saw no progress in engaging local participation. • Some methodological innovations occurred in needs assessment, but no consensus was reached on tools. • More feedback mechanisms were developed, but there is little evidence of affected populations' input to project design or approach.
Effectiveness	▽	**Mixed progress** • Improvements were noted in both timeliness and mortality/morbidity outcomes in rapid responses to major natural disasters. • Improvements were noted in coordination, and in quality of leadership and personnel in major emergencies. • Performance was poor in conflict settings. • A majority of survey respondents graded effectiveness low. • Cross-cutting issues have not yet been systematically addressed. Most progress has been in the area of gender, but more needs to be done in the areas of age and disability.

Table 2 / Progress against SOHS performance criteria by study period (cont.)

		SOHS 2018 (compared to SOHS 2015)
Efficiency	▲	**Limited progress** • The main constraints to efficiency identified in the 2015 report – particularly non-harmonised reporting and 'pass through' arrangements for funding – have not been addressed. • Increased work on early response – and particularly the use of social safety nets – has prevented inefficient 'peak of crisis' response in some areas. • Some improvements have been made in joint procurement and supply chains within the UN. • Increased use of cash has increased efficiency in many (but not all) areas. • The 'Grand Bargain' process, initiated during the study period, aims to address a number of areas related to efficiency.
Coherence	▼	**Decline** • The increased integration of humanitarian action into development and stabilisation agendas has made coherence with humanitarian principles more difficult for operational agencies. • Humanitarians are operating in a context of declining respect for IHL and refugee law.
Connectedness	▲	**Improvement** • Changes in policy and increases in funding have led to closer connections between humanitarian and development activities, often in the form of 'resilience' work. • There is some evidence that this has been effective at protecting against future shocks where the work has been done with governments, and where it addresses foreseeable 'natural' disasters (droughts, earthquakes). • There is much less evidence that this work is effective in other circumstances. • There has been a significant increase in interest among donors in fragile states and refugee-hosting states. • Development financing is increasingly available for the provision of services in countries experiencing conflict. • Donors are supporting more 'developmental' approaches to refugee situations. • Donors are also supporting work in 'stabilisation' and peace-building: many humanitarian agencies are not engaged, or do not wish to engage, with this work.
Complementarity[2]	▲	**Improvement** • Relations with the governments of crisis-affected states are improving in many cases, although there is still a tendency to push governments aside in rapid-onset, 'surge' situations. • Relations with governments are often more difficult where the state is a party to internal armed conflict or in refugee contexts. There has been an increase in governments using bureaucratic obstacles to hinder the provision of impartial humanitarian assistance. • There has been significant activity at policy level in strengthening the role of national and local NGOs in the international humanitarian system, but, to date, this has had limited effect on the ground.
Impact		**Insufficient information to draw a conclusion**

SOHS 2015 (compared to SOHS 2012)		
Efficiency	▲	**Limited progress** • No significant change or new development was noted since the last review. • A few small-scale (project-level) examples of new efficiencies were noted. • Some inefficiencies were cited in surge response to Typhoon Haiyan and in the Syrian Refugee Response.
Coherence	—	**No progress** • Stabilisation and counter-terror agendas continued to influence donors' humanitarian funding decisions. • Donor firewalling of humanitarian aid, and their consideration of principles, has weakened. • There is a perception of increasing instrumentalisation and politicisation of humanitarian assistance, including by affected states. • Despite the rise of the resilience concept, no progress occurred in changing aid architecture to suit, or in phasing in development resources earlier in the response and recovery phases.
Connectedness	▲	**Limited progress** • Limited progress in Asia was outweighed by lack of progress in many other regions. • Survey participants saw little participation and consultation of local authorities. • Consultation and participation of recipients ranked poorest among practitioners.

Endnotes for this chapter

1. People in need by country is calculated selecting the maximum number of people in need by cross-referencing five different databases:
   a. primary source – ACAPS (people in need published in the most recent weekly report from 2017
   b. GRFC Population in Crisis (people in need gathered from *2018 Global Report on Food Crises*)
   c. *Global Humanitarian Overview 2018* report (people in need by country); d. UNHCR refugees, refugee-like situations and asylum-seekers
   e. UNRWA total of refugees (and IDPs in Palestine).
   The UNHCR and UNRWA data refers to the number of refugees (and IDPs) in hosting countries. As a result, this figure includes people in need numbers for countries beyond those with a UN-coordinated appeal and will therefore be higher than OCHA's *Humanitarian Needs Overview* estimate.

2. This criterion was not looked at separately in previous reports. The improvement is based on comparison with information that was previously under other categories.

2

INTRODUCTION

This fourth edition of *The State of the Humanitarian System* report covers the three years from January 2015 to December 2017. As with previous editions, the report aims to provide answers to three key research questions: What was the humanitarian caseload over the period? What is the current shape and size of the system? How has the system performed over the study period?

Goals and objectives of *The State of the Humanitarian System* report 2018

This fourth edition of *The State of the Humanitarian System* report covers the three years from January 2015 to December 2017. As with previous editions, the report aims to provide answers to three key research questions:

1. **What was the humanitarian caseload over the period?**

   - How many emergency responses were there in 2015–17, and where did they take place? How does this compare to previous periods?
   - What types of crises did the system respond to in 2015–17? How does this compare to previous periods?
   - Approximately how many people were affected, and how many received aid? How does this compare to previous periods?

2. **What is the current size and shape of the humanitarian system, and how did this change over the period?**

   - What were the levels and trends in international funding flows for humanitarian action in the period 2015–17? How does this compare to previous periods?
   - What was the distribution of human and financial resources by source, type of crisis and number/type of agencies? How does this compare to previous periods?
   - How many agencies and humanitarian staff are there? What types of agencies?

3. **How has the humanitarian system performed over the study period?**

   - How have humanitarian actors, and the system as a whole, performed on the basis of OECD DAC criteria? How does this compare to previous periods?
   - To what degree does performance differ from one type of crisis to another?

The research is primarily descriptive. It aims to provide an objective and evidence-based picture of the current situation with regard to internationally-funded humanitarian assistance. In doing so, it serves a number of functions:

- **Performance improvement:** it allows humanitarian decision-makers to identify key areas of success and concern, providing information that can be used as the basis for performance improvement.

- **Accountability:** it provides a single assessment of the overall performance of a system largely funded by taxpayers and individual donors, and which provides services to people in crisis who are often poor and marginalised. In doing so, it provides a tool for these various stakeholders, and their representatives, to hold the system to account.
- **Learning:** it provides an introduction to the main elements of the humanitarian system, and the main issues affecting humanitarian performance.

Structure of the report

Scope and analytical structure

What do we mean by 'the humanitarian system'?

The SOHS report series aims to provide a longitudinal analysis of the size, shape and performance of international humanitarian assistance. To do this, it uses the concept of a 'system' to define its unit of analysis over time.

The Oxford English Dictionary defines a system as 'a group of interacting, interrelated, or interdependent elements forming a complex whole working toward a common set of objectives'. Systems come in a number of different types, depending on the degree to which the elements can make independent choices, and the degree to which they interact with other systems in a wider environment.

Mechanical systems (the simplest form of system) are made up of parts that can only perform predetermined actions – a cog cannot choose what it does. They are also closed: they see relatively little exchange between their parts and the wider environment (the cog's behaviour is very largely controlled by other elements in the system, not by external elements). In contrast, more complex, open systems have parts that can make independent choices, and which interact with the wider environment. Social and ecological systems are generally complex and open.

The humanitarian system is an example of a complex system. It is made up of parts that are at once interrelated and which can also determine their own actions, and which interact with many other elements outside the system. Because it is a complex, open system it behaves in particular ways. It is non-linear: the very large number of interacting elements makes it almost impossible to predict how the system will behave. It is also emergent: as a result of the interactions between the elements, the system itself may develop characteristics which are the result of multiple interactions and are more than the sum of the component parts. Some observers have taken to labelling the humanitarian system as an 'ecosystem' to emphasise its complex, open and adaptive nature. The idea of an ecosystem is useful as a metaphor – ecosystems are another (although different) type of complex adaptive system. But as ecosystems are essentially about biological processes, rather than political, social or economic processes, we have

> "
>
> The humanitarian system is an example of a complex system. It is made up of parts that are at once interrelated and which can also determine their own actions, and which interact with many other elements outside the system.

preferred to stay with the terminology 'humanitarian system': we are looking at organisations, not organisms.

The definition of the 'humanitarian system' used for this report is:

> The network of inter-connected institutional and operational entities that receive funds, directly or indirectly from public donors and private sources, to enhance, support or substitute for in-country responses in the provision of humanitarian assistance and protection to a population in crisis.

This definition builds on the one used in previous editions of the report,[1] but emphasises that the nature of connection, and a defining characteristic of the system, is that it is based around financial flows. Additionally, it underlines that, while the common objective is to provide humanitarian assistance and protection, humanitarian actors work in a variety of different configurations in a variety of different contexts: the roles of various actors will change from one situation to another.

The system as defined here comprises all organisational entities funded specifically to undertake humanitarian action, which constitutes their primary mandate or mission. They are operationally or financially related to each other and share common overarching goals, norms and principles. They include:

- local, national and international NGOs conducting humanitarian activities
- UN humanitarian agencies
- the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement
- host government agencies and authorities and regional/ intergovernmental agencies
- donor agencies: primarily government agencies, but also trusts and other donors.

As the humanitarian system is open to other influences, these organisations will often interact with and be influenced by entities involved in crisis contexts, which are not related to the same funding mechanisms as the humanitarian system and/or whose main objectives are not the provision of humanitarian aid and protection. These entities include:

- national militaries and civil defence groups
- development actors
- the private sector
- diaspora groups
- civil society groups (such as faith groups) that do not have an explicitly humanitarian function
- the media
- academia.

Figure 1 / Organisational entities in the humanitarian system

Development actors

Militaries and civil defence groups

Diaspora groups

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

Donors

Government agencies

Trusts

International NGOs

Affected communities

Governments

Host governments

Humanitarian arms of regional intergovernmental organisations

UN humanitarian agencies

Academics

National NGOs

Media

Civil society groups e.g faith groups

Private-sector entities

Organisational entities whose primary mandate is the provision of aid

Groups that play a critical role in humanitarian response but humanitarian action is not their core function

These organisations also play critical roles related to humanitarian responses, and may work in parallel to, and at times in coordination with, actors from the system. This report focuses on the 'formal system' as it is a construct which is more amenable to quantification and analysis than 'all individuals and organisations involved in crises'. However, it does not seek to obscure the importance of these actors, and wherever possible their contribution and relationship to the response is captured in the report.

What do we mean by 'performance'?

As in previous editions, this report uses the OECD DAC criteria[2] to assess humanitarian performance. However, following a review of the criteria ALNAP has made two important revisions.

The first concerns accountability and participation. In past editions, these issues have been examined under 'Relevance/appropriateness', because accountability and participation have been considered as an important means for achieving relevant assistance. After discussions with the SOHS Methods Group,[3] ALNAP has amended the criteria to include 'Accountability and participation' as a separate criterion for measuring performance. This reflects the group's view that accountability and participation are not just tools to achieve relevance, but are also ends in themselves. As such, it is not possible to say that the system has performed satisfactorily unless aid is provided in a way that is accountable to those who receive it, and allows them some measure of influence in decisions over the aid they receive.[4]

The second revision concerns the relationship between international humanitarian action, affected states and civil society and agendas such as risk reduction, recovery, development and peacebuilding. These issues have all been addressed in previous SOHS editions under the DAC criterion of 'Connectedness'. However, this has meant that the Connectedness criterion has considered both how the international humanitarian system connects with development and peacebuilding activities, and how it connects with national actors, including the state. Although there is significant overlap between these two areas, they are distinct: it is possible for international actors to work on humanitarian response in close coordination with the state, and not engage in development work, for example.

Two of the major policy directions during the study period have been on the 'nexus' between development and humanitarian action and (separately) on localisation – moving responsibility to the affected state and civil society. In the 2018 edition, ALNAP aims to provide a more focused picture of how the humanitarian system engages with activities related to risk reduction, resilience, development and peacebuilding, and allows for a more specific assessment of the relationships between international agencies and local and national actors. To do this, the criterion of Connectedness focuses on links between humanitarian action and other activities such as development and peacebuilding, while the recently proposed criterion of 'Complementarity' (Bourns and Alexander, 2016) looks at the relationship between international humanitarian action and national and

"

In the 2018 edition, ALNAP aims to provide a more focused picture of how the humanitarian system engages with activities related to risk reduction, resilience, development and peacebuilding, and allow for a more specific assessment of the relationships between international agencies and local and national actors.

local capacities. ALNAP will also use a honed approach to the criterion of 'Coherence' to focus specifically on the degree to which humanitarian activities are aligned around humanitarian principles, International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and Refugee Law.[5]

Following these changes, the criteria used to judge the performance of the humanitarian system in this report are:

Sufficiency: the degree to which the resources available to the international humanitarian system are sufficient to cover humanitarian needs.

Coverage: the degree to which action by the international humanitarian system reaches all people in need.

Relevance & appropriateness: the degree to which the assistance and protection that the international humanitarian system provides addresses the most important needs of recipients (as judged both by humanitarian professionals and by crisis-affected people themselves).

Accountability & participation: the degree to which actors within the international humanitarian system can be held to account by crisis-affected people, and the degree to which crisis-affected people are able to influence decisions related to assistance and protection.

Effectiveness: the degree to which humanitarian operations meet their stated objectives, in a timely manner and at an acceptable level of quality.

Efficiency: the degree to which humanitarian outputs are produced for the lowest possible amount of inputs.

Coherence: the degree to which actors in the international humanitarian system act in compliance with humanitarian principles and IHL, and the degree to which they are able to influence states and non-state armed groups to respect humanitarian principles and conform to IHL.

Complementarity: the degree to which the international humanitarian system recognises and supports the capacities of national and local actors, in particular governments and civil society organisations.

Connectedness: the degree to which the international humanitarian system articulates with development, resilience, risk reduction and peacebuilding.

Impact: the degree to which humanitarian action produces (intentionally or unintentionally) positive longer-term outcomes for the people and societies receiving support.

The SOHS takes the view that humanitarian performance should be judged against all of these criteria – and that, ideally, it would perform at least satisfactorily against all of the criteria at the same time. However, experience suggests that there can often be tensions between the criteria – that performing well against one makes it harder to perform well against others – and so in practice it is difficult for any operation or organisation, or for the system as a whole, to perform well under all criteria simultaneously. Different actors – while generally agreeing on the importance of all the criteria – will also prioritise them differently (Dunantist[6] operational agencies may give more emphasis to coherence; multi-mandate agencies more emphasis to connectedness; donors more emphasis to efficiency). For this reason, the report does not give an overall statement or score for performance over the period 2015–17, concentrating instead on assessing each criterion separately.

Contexts considered in the report

The international humanitarian system engages in many different ways in many different crises. Every crisis involves a specific set of needs in a specific social, political and economic context. This context will, obviously, affect how humanitarians work (although perhaps not as much as it should – the system has been regularly criticised for its failure to adapt to context), and the success of humanitarian operations.

The individual and specific nature of each crisis can make it hard to provide an overall view of system performance. Effectiveness, or coverage, or coherence will likely be very different when working in partnership with a government to address the consequences of drought than when working in a violent conflict in an area controlled by armed militia. And because every crisis is unique, it is difficult to extrapolate a general assessment from very diverse situations. To (partially) address the problem of creating a common assessment for very different responses, this edition of the SOHS considered three different 'types' of humanitarian response separately, in order to compare sets of information that are more internally coherent. The three types were:

- humanitarian response to complex emergencies
- humanitarian response to disasters connected to natural phenomena and to health crises in non-conflict settings
- humanitarian response to refugee and migration situations.

With regard to the first crisis type, complex emergencies, this report uses the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) definition:

a humanitarian crisis in a country, region or society where there is total or considerable breakdown of authority resulting from internal or external conflict and which requires an international response that goes beyond the mandate or capacity of any single agency and/or the ongoing United Nations country program (IASC, 1994).

The second crisis type, disasters connected to natural phenomena and to health crises in non-conflict settings, includes all crises in which natural processes (geological, hydrological, meteorological or biological) play a significant part in increasing mortality, disease morbidity and damage to livelihoods, and where these effects are not compounded by war or widespread armed violence.[7]

The third crisis type covers all situations in which there has been large-scale movement across national borders, and where people – refugees, asylum-seekers or other categories of international migrant – are in need of international humanitarian assistance and protection.

These three broad contexts were chosen because they are commonly recognised and understood, and because each demonstrates certain characteristics that are not generally found in the other two types, and which we would assume a priori to have significant effects on how humanitarian action might take place.[8] Specifically, they differ in terms of the legal framework within which humanitarian activities take place, the degree to which the state is likely to be able and willing to provide assistance and the nature and possible duration of activities.

The three contexts are useful but imperfect models. They are based on criteria which are not fixed or agreed. Many 'stable' countries suffer from high levels of internal violence and some degree of breakdown of authority: determining whether a crisis is 'complex' becomes a matter of degree, and can depend on the judgement of the researcher or the specific part of the country they are looking at. Similarly, 'natural' disasters are not always categorically clear: there is, for example, no universal definition of drought. As a result, and as demonstrated in chapter 5 on needs and funding, it is common to find all three contexts in different parts of the same country. To the degree possible, research for this report avoided the assumption that any specific country represented only one of the three types of crisis. In many cases, researchers allocated interviews or evaluations related to one country into different crisis types (as some interviewees in Colombia, for example, might be talking about displacement caused by conflict, while others were talking about the effects of natural disasters). Respondents to the practitioner and recipient surveys were asked to identify the specific context that best applied to them – and in many cases respondents to the recipient survey in 'natural' disaster countries (such as Kenya and Ethiopia) said that their needs were predominantly a result of local violence, while those in countries more commonly associated with conflict (such as DRC or Afghanistan) responded that their needs were a result of natural disasters.

> To the degree possible, research for this report avoided the assumption that any specific country represented only one of the three types of crisis.

Nevertheless, the three context types do help us to better understand the performance of the system across very diverse environments. For some criteria, there are marked similarities between performance from – say – one complex emergency to another, and differences between performance in complex emergencies and the other two contexts. However, this is not true of all criteria – for some there does not appear to be a great deal of difference between complex emergencies, 'natural' disasters and refugee situations. As a result, this final report was structured according to the criteria, and not according to the contexts – and where results differed by context, this is addressed by providing specific sub-sections for each context.

A note on terminology
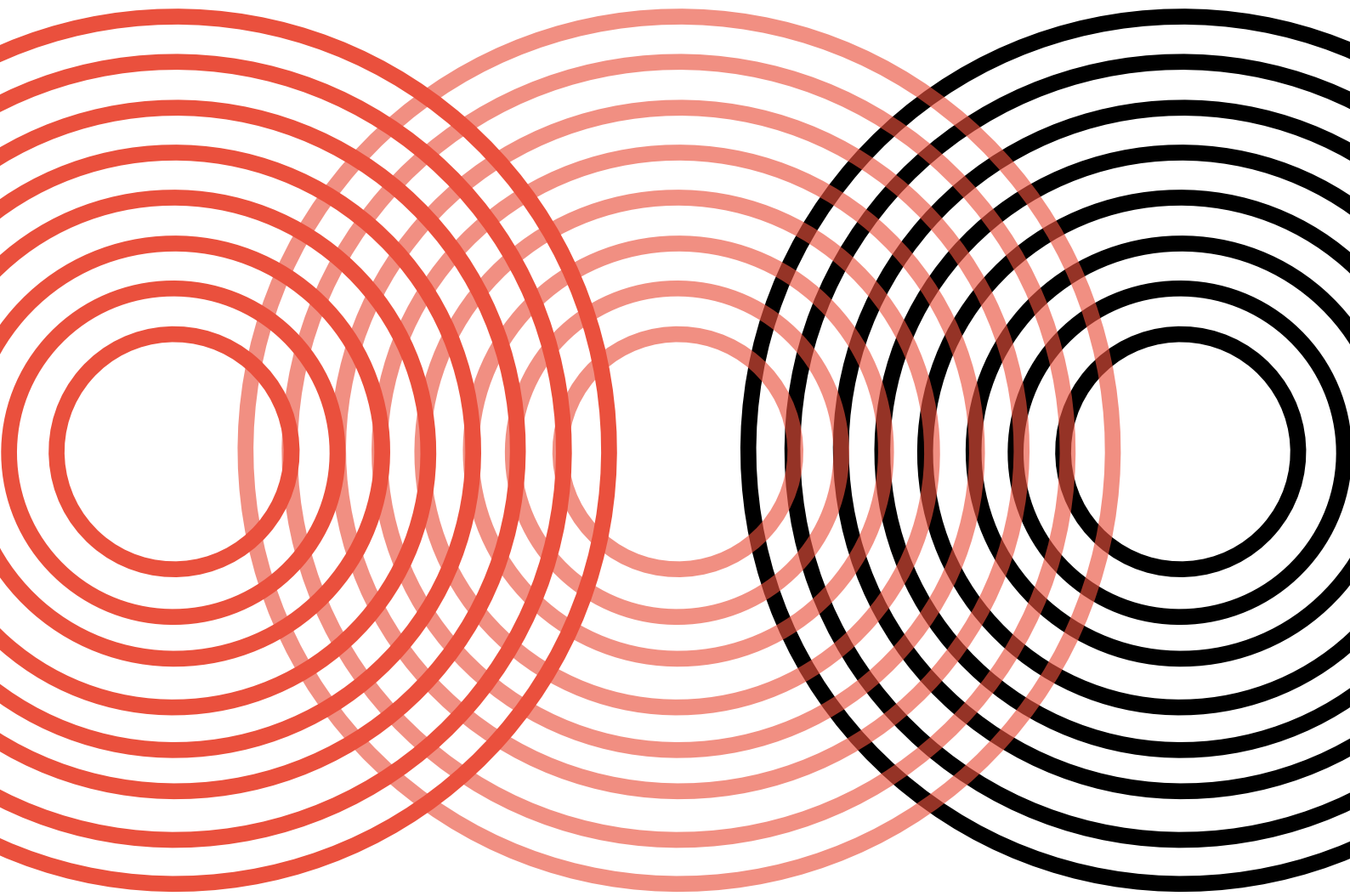
The humanitarian sector is closely entwined with the broader global situation. Political and economic decisions are the causes of many crises, and political and economic inequalities have a strong influence on who is affected. Humanitarian action itself is an exercise of a type of power: the ability of those with means – governments, organisations or individuals – to support those in need. In this context, vocabulary matters. The words used to describe a situation can obscure injustices and inequalities, deny the dignity and agency of people in crisis and (perhaps more helpfully) betray biases and assumptions.

Throughout this report, the authors have been mindful of these realities, while also preserving readability and consistency with previous reports. This has meant that the term 'disasters connected to natural phenomena and health crises in non-conflict settings' has generally been shortened to 'natural' disaster. The reader should, however, be aware that the human effects of these natural phenomena are a result of human and political factors, as well as the natural phenomenon itself. In describing the people that the humanitarian system serves, the authors have used the phrase 'people receiving humanitarian assistance and protection' – shortened in some cases to 'recipient' – in preference to 'beneficiary'. The term 'people affected by crisis' has been used when talking more generally about all people in a crisis situation, including those who do not receive assistance or protection.

The study period saw a notable rise in the number of irregular migrants, including asylum-seekers, entering Europe, and increasing politicisation of these population movements. This has been widely referred to as the 'European Refugee Crisis' or 'European Migration Crisis'. While the idea of a crisis captures attention, and may accurately refer both to the situation of some migrants and to popular perceptions of and political responses to the situation, it is also a loaded term, suggesting that the fact of migration leads to a crisis for Europe, rather than, say, an opportunity. For this reason this report refers to the Migration 'Crisis', placing the 'crisis' in apostrophes.

Endnotes for this chapter

1. 'The network of interconnected institutional and operational entities through which humanitarian assistance is provided when local and national resources are insufficient to meet the needs of a population in crisis' (ALNAP, 2015: 18).

2. Using the criteria as laid out in Beck, 2006.

3. This review was based on ALNAP's experience in producing the briefing papers for the 2015 Global Forum for Improving Humanitarian Action. Similar issues with the DAC criteria are also addressed in OCHA's study on humanitarian effectiveness (Bourns and Alexander, 2016).

4. Similarly, the OCHA report proposes 'Accountability' as one of the 12 elements of humanitarian effectiveness (Bourns and Alexander, 2016).

5. The assessment of coherence in Beck (2006) entails a 'focus on the extent to which policies of different actors were complementary or contradictory'. This requires consideration of whether humanitarian actors are working to similar policies; whether humanitarians and other actors (such as the military and the private sector) are working to similar/complementary policies; and whether these policies 'take into account humanitarian and human-rights considerations'. The definition requires an assessment of all policies – including security, developmental, trade and military policies. In this edition of the SOHS we have significantly narrowed the focus to look only at the degree to which the actions of humanitarian and other actors align with humanitarian and human rights considerations. In practice, this means that, while we look at how the policies of 'other' actors (particularly states) align with 'humanitarian' law and policy, we do not examine how the policies of humanitarians align with, for example, the trade policies of affected states. Alignment with developmental policy is addressed separately under the criterion of connectedness.

6. 'Dunantist' humanitarianism refers to Red Cross founder Henry Dunant. These organisations generally seek to position themselves outside of state interests, and are strong supporters of humanitarian principles.

7. This – or a similarly defined category of emergencies – is widely used, by bodies including the Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters (CRED), the IFRC and the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR).

8. International humanitarian law – at least in its customary provisions – is generally applicable in armed conflicts. International refugee law is applicable in refugee situations.

3

COMPONENTS, METHOD AND APPROACH

The State of the Humanitarian System report is based on several different research components including: reviews of evaluations and research literature, interviews, case studies and questionnaires.

Components

Needs and funding

The section covering humanitarian needs and funding is based on a desk review of data from public sources and a survey of private funding. For more information on sources, see the methodology section below.

Composition of the system

This element of the report is based on Humanitarian Outcomes' database of humanitarian organisations. Information on data sources is included in the methodology section, below.

Performance of the system

The element of the report that assesses the performance of the system over the period 2015–17 is based on a synthesis of the following components, each of which uses distinct methods (see the methodology section).

1. **Evaluation synthesis** – a synthesis of key points from 120 evaluations.
2. **Case studies** – visits to Bangladesh, Kenya, Lebanon, Mali and Yemen, combining observation with interviews with a total of 346 individuals: aid recipients, international NGO (INGO), UN and Red Cross/Crescent staff working in the country, members of national and local NGOs and government representatives.
3. **Key informant interviews** – 151 interviews with 153 interviewees at HQ level in donor organisations, UN agencies, INGOs and national NGOs (NNGOs), the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, academia, the private sector and the military, plus another 150 interviews with representatives of organisations working in humanitarian operations in crisis-affected countries.
4. **Aid recipient survey** – a mobile phone questionnaire completed by 5,000 people who had received humanitarian assistance in Afghanistan, DRC, Ethiopia, Iraq and Kenya.
5. **Global aid practitioner survey** – an online survey aimed at humanitarian staff working in country programmes, which received 1,170 responses.
6. **Government questionnaire** – based on the practitioner questionnaire, a questionnaire sent to individuals working in the governments of affected states who are involved in humanitarian action, or who liaise with the international humanitarian system.
7. **Targeted literature review** – addressing specific information gaps not covered by the other methods.

In addition, the SOHS was supported by Ground Truth Solutions, who kindly shared recent data from their new Humanitarian Voice Index, and the Peer2Peer support team (formerly STAIT), who allowed the SOHS to access P2P reports for the period 2015–17.

Figure 2 / The geographical spread of SOHS 2018 components

Global aid practitioner survey ● Aid recipient survey ● Government survey ● Case studies ● Additional interviews ●
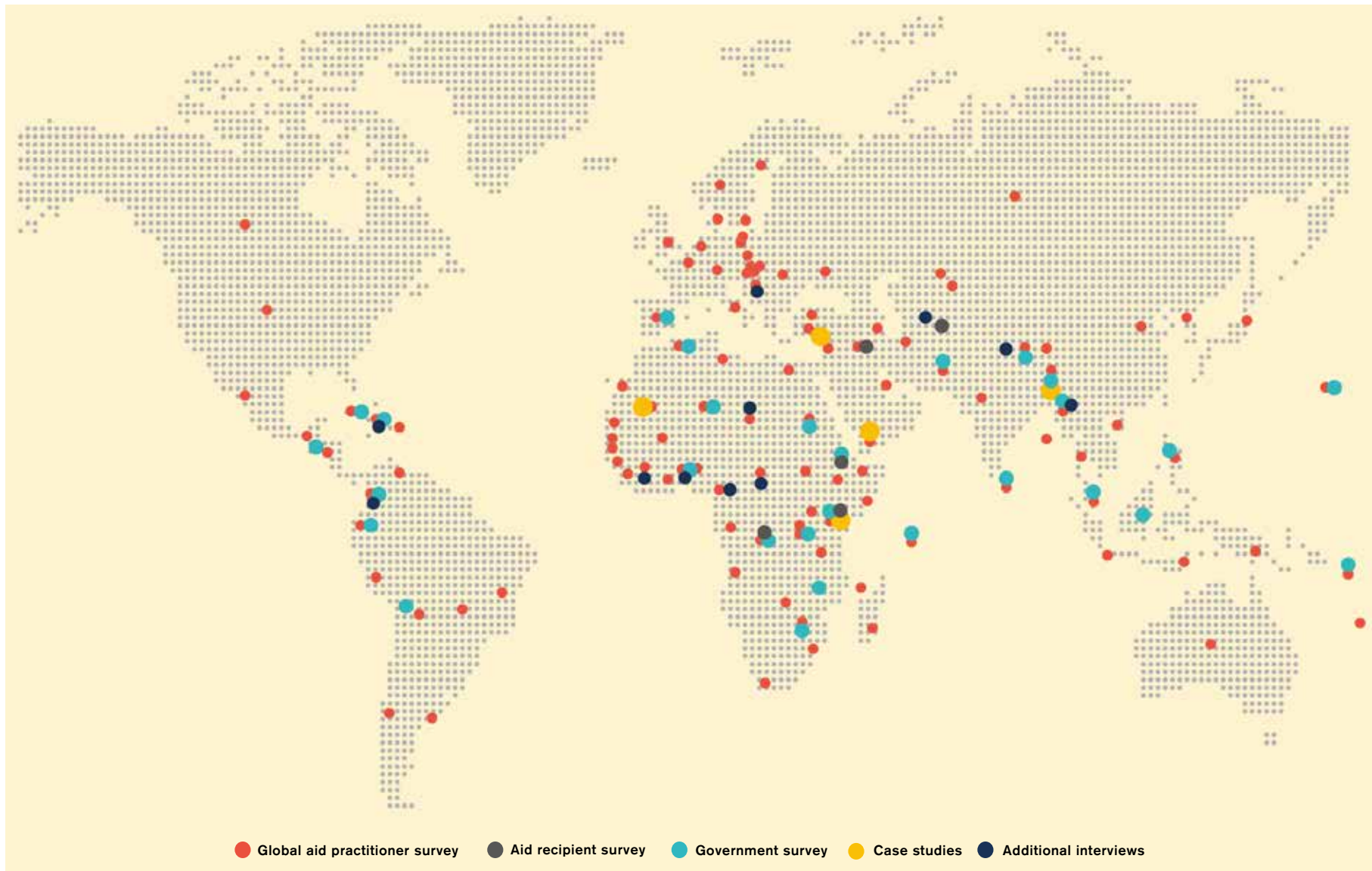
Note: This map shows where evidence was gathered for the SOHS 2018. Where components recorded geographical data these have been visualised above. This map is not to scale.

Methodology

Humanitarian needs and funding

Overview

The analyses on people in need, humanitarian funding and crisis-related financing are primarily collated from public sources; private funding figures were collected through a survey. The main reporting platforms for international humanitarian assistance are the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC) and OCHA's Financial Tracking Service (FTS). It is mandatory for OECD DAC members to report their humanitarian contributions as part of their reporting on official development assistance (ODA), and in accordance with definitions set out by the DAC. Some non-DAC governments and multilateral institutions voluntarily report to the DAC. FTS is open to all humanitarian donors and implementing agencies to voluntarily report international contributions of humanitarian assistance, according to agreed criteria.

The analysis in this edition of the SOHS draws on data reported to OECD DAC and FTS. These two sources use different criteria regarding what can be counted as international humanitarian assistance. This has been taken into account when calculating aggregate volumes, and where necessary the analysis explains the data sources and methodologies used to reconcile figures or to prevent double counting. At the beginning of 2017 FTS released a new flow-based model which, along with a number of new functionalities, also makes it easier to trace funding, allowing us for the first time to compile figures beyond first-level recipients.

Crisis categories

For the analysis of crises by category, we determined the category into which each crisis fell by considering a series of indicators on conflict, displacement and losses associated with natural hazards. We used indicators in INFORM's Index for Risk Management and data from the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) to identify countries affected by conflict; for countries affected by disasters associated with natural hazards, we used data from the CRED Emergency Events Database (EM-DAT) and Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) reports on El Niño; and to identify refugee-hosting countries, we used data from UNHCR and the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA).

For a clearer visualisation, figure 12 shows 'Complex crises' as those that were marked as having scored the criteria for all three of the types of crisis above (conflict, refugee crisis and natural hazards).

> "
> The analysis in this edition of the SOHS draws on data reported to OECD DAC and FTS. These two sources use different criteria regarding what can be counted as international humanitarian assistance.

International humanitarian assistance

Our estimate of total international humanitarian assistance is the sum of that from private donors and from government donors and EU institutions. Our calculation of international humanitarian assistance from government donors is the sum of:

- 'Official' humanitarian assistance (OECD DAC donors).
- International humanitarian assistance from OECD DAC donors to non-ODA eligible countries from FTS.
- International humanitarian assistance from donors outside the OECD DAC using data from FTS.

The calculation of 'official' humanitarian assistance comprises:

- The bilateral humanitarian expenditure of OECD DAC members, as reported to the OECD DAC database.
- The multilateral humanitarian assistance of OECD DAC members. This comprises:

  - The unearmarked ODA contributions of DAC members to nine key multilateral agencies engaged in humanitarian response: FAO, IOM, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UNHCR, OCHA, UNICEF, UNRWA, WFP and World Health Organization (WHO), as reported to the OECD DAC. We do not include all ODA to FAO, IOM, UNICEF and WFP, but apply a percentage to take into account that these agencies also have a development mandate. These shares are calculated using data on humanitarian expenditure as a proportion of the total core ODA spent by each multilateral agency.
  - The ODA contributions of DAC members to other multilateral organisations (beyond those already listed) which, although not primarily humanitarian-oriented, still report a level of humanitarian aid to OECD DAC. We do not include all reported ODA to these multilaterals, just the humanitarian element.
  - Contributions to the CERF that are not reported under DAC members' bilateral humanitarian assistance. This data is taken from the CERF website (https://cerf.un.org/).

Official humanitarian assistance from OECD DAC countries that are also members of the EU includes an imputed calculation of their humanitarian assistance channelled through EU institutions, based on their ODA contributions to these institutions. This is not included in our total calculations for international humanitarian assistance and response to avoid double counting. Our estimate for official humanitarian assistance in 2017 is derived from preliminary DAC donor reporting on humanitarian aid grants. Turkey's humanitarian assistance, which it voluntarily reports to the DAC,

largely comprises expenditure on hosting Syrian refugees within Turkey. This is not included in our total international humanitarian assistance and response calculations elsewhere in the report as these only include amounts directed internationally by donors.

Composition of the humanitarian system

The organisational mapping research for *The State of the Humanitarian System* reports encompasses the core actors in the international humanitarian system, defined as the UN humanitarian agencies, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs engaged in humanitarian relief efforts. Searching publicly available documents, the researchers gathered and compiled, to the extent available, the following figures for humanitarian organisations for the years 2014–2017:

- operational programme expenditure (OPE), i.e. excluding HQ and non-programme costs
- humanitarian expenditure (a subset of OPE, as distinct from development, religious or other work)
- total field staff
- national staff
- international staff.

Most of these figures were sourced from annual reports and financial statements, supplemented by website information and direct queries to the organisations concerned. UN agency information was also supplemented by figures from the databases of the UN Chief Executives Board (www.unsystem. org). The UN humanitarian agencies include the full members of the IASC,[1] plus the IOM and UNRWA.

The International Red Cross/Crescent Movement consists of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and 190 individual National Societies. Figures for the national societies come from IFRC's Databank and Reporting System (http://data.ifrc.org/fdrs/data-download), of which the most recent year available was 2016. The National Societies' data used for these measures exclude those in high-income countries, on the reasoning that they are unlikely to require an international humanitarian intervention in response to crisis, and their disproportionately large staff sizes would inflate the global estimate of humanitarian workers. International NGOs encompass those that operate in humanitarian response, as indicated by inclusion as a recipient or provider agency on FTS, registration with a major consortium or registry of international aid organisations, a past implementing partnership with a UN humanitarian agency or a recipient of humanitarian funds from a large government donor or the European Commission.

NGOs comprise the largest part of the Humanitarian Outcomes' database used to compile this information. For the largest, most significant humanitarian actors, and roughly 200 organisations of decreasing size, budget and staffing data were gathered manually, and their formally reported numbers entered into the database. Because of the large number of far smaller organisations, and the lack of publicly available annual reports or financial statements for most of them, Humanitarian Outcomes uses an algorithm for imputing the missing data, which improves in accuracy the more hard data is gathered directly from these organisations. In this model, NGOs are divided into tiers according to overseas programme expenditures and operational profiles. The tiers are used to calculate the mean values of staff and expenditures that are used to extrapolate missing data, on the logic that similarly sized and mandated organisations have similar operational configurations, presence levels, and staff-to-budget ratios (a process known as conditional mean imputation). Because data is largely unavailable for the lower tiers of smaller and local NGOs, these figures are the softest estimates with the most imputation used. However, given the great disparity in size between the largest and smallest organisations in the system, we expect much of this to fall within a rounding error.

As part of the research assignment for the SOHS 2018, Humanitarian Outcomes recruited a data scientist/statistician to review and test the imputation methodology for validity and rigour, and to recommend improvements. The report found that the first-level imputations (estimating missing data based on previous actual numbers and staff-to-budget ratio from that organisation) were highly accurate, and second-level imputations (using tier averages) significantly less so, given the amount of missing data. The report recommended a modification to the algorithm based on this finding to increase the accuracy of second-level imputations, which Humanitarian Outcomes has adopted and used in this year's mapping. This involves taking forward previous years' first-level imputations to include as data points for the second-level imputations.

As a general caveat, while the model used produces rigorous, systematic estimates for the organisational mapping, they are still just estimates, and should be considered and cited as such.

Performance of the humanitarian system

Developments to the method for the 2018 edition

This edition of the SOHS, like previous editions, has been created through a synthesis of findings from separate research components using distinct methods. To better facilitate this synthesis and make the process more transparent, ALNAP developed a study matrix with indicators for each of the DAC criteria, used to ensure consistency across the different consultants and research components, and to ensure that all of the key issues were addressed, and that the different components addressed these issues in the same way using a common set of questions. This study matrix is available in annex 3.

For the first time, all of the interviews (key informant interviews and case studies) were recorded and transcribed verbatim. To ensure consistency between the various elements of the research, and to allow for comparison of all the data from different elements on the same topic, these interview transcripts and the evaluation synthesis were then coded in MaxQDA using a common coding framework (essentially a list of topics and sub-topics, based on the study matrix described above).

These improvements to the methodology are part of ALNAP's continuous attempts to ensure and improve the quality of evidence used in its research. They are particularly important, given the increased amounts of data gathered as part of the 2018 edition. In line with recommendations from The State of the Humanitarian System Methods Group, this edition makes a specific attempt to increase the amount of information collected in humanitarian operations, and in particular to increase the amount of information collected from aid recipients:

- This edition includes 346 interviews with individuals in five country case studies and 17 other countries (compared to 201 interviews in four countries in 2015).
- This edition includes responses from 5,000 aid recipients in five countries (compared to 1,189 aid recipients in four countries in 2015).

In addition, statistical regression was used for the first time on the aid recipient surveys to understand relationships between participants' responses to performance questions, as well as relationships between these responses and participants' characteristics (age, gender, type of crisis, status).

> " In line with recommendations from the SOHS Methods Group, this edition made a specific attempt to increase the amount of information collected in humanitarian operations, and in particular to increase the amount of information collected from aid recipients.

Evaluation synthesis

A synthesis of relevant evaluation findings from the period January 2015 to December 2017 forms one component of the evidence base for the SOHS 2018. Around 170 evaluations were considered, based primarily on a search of the ALNAP evaluation database. Of these, 121 of the most relevant were included in the synthesis process. These were then scored for quality and depth of relevant evidence (see below), and the synthesis process was organised in such a way as to prioritise findings from evaluations with the highest evidence scores.

Selection of evaluations

The sample of evaluations was purposive, designed to give a reasonable balance of evidence across the following parameters:

- subject matter by type of crisis: 'natural' disaster/health crisis, conflict, forced displacement or generic
- region/country
- commissioning agency

A bias was noted in the pool of available evaluations towards evidence from certain countries and regions, notably the Syria region and countries affected by the Ebola Epidemic in West Africa. This is reflected to some degree in the sample chosen, since these appear to represent particularly rich areas of learning for the humanitarian sector, and have to a significant degree reshaped thinking about the role of the system and appropriate programme approaches. Each evaluation included in the Evaluations Matrix produced as part of the evaluation synthesis process includes an evidence score for each report included in the sample. This is done on a scale of 1–3, with 3 representing the strongest evidence. These scores are based on the judgement of the researchers against two parameters, each with its own criteria:

- Evidence depth: the depth and extent of relevant analysis in the report ('relevant' here means that it relates to the themes highlighted in the coding system – see below). The related criteria included whether the work appeared to add significantly to the existing evidence base on the subject.
- Evidence quality: the quality of the analysis and the related evidence base. Here, we considered in particular how well argued and evidenced the conclusions of each evaluation were.

Each of the two parameters was scored 1–3, with the overall value score being the average of the two scores (e.g. 3/2 = 2.5). Reports that scored 2.5–3 were considered core reference documents for the purposes of the synthesis, and a primary source of evidence. Reports scoring 1.5–2 were considered a secondary source, and those scoring 1 were used to supplement the evidence base where appropriate. In-depth and multi-sector evaluations tended to score higher than lighter reviews, based on depth of coverage.

Analysis of information

Analysis was conducted according to the common coding system in MaxQDA 2018. The researchers coded and grouped extracts from the evaluations under the relevant themes. Decisions about which extracts to include were made by researchers based mainly on relevance. Results were then synthesised. The synthesis process involved two main elements:

1. Collating the material according to related findings on common themes.
2. Identifying common findings: findings that appeared to be (broadly) common across a range of evaluation evidence. In addition to this, some 'meta findings' were identified; in other words, findings that emerged not from any one source or sources but from a 'helicopter' view of the evidence as a whole. This included findings about the state of the evidence itself.

A 'first cut' synthesis was made based on around 30 evaluations from the sample that were judged to provide the greatest depth and quality of evidence. Provisional findings were identified as the process went on, with extracts grouped under sub-headings (provisional findings or hypotheses) within each theme, according to whether they tended to confirm (or contradict) the finding in question. These were then tested against the wider sample, with additional extracts added as appropriate. The process was thus both inductive and iterative.

The main findings from the synthesis were presented in a preliminary summary according to the common format (an Excel spreadsheet) agreed for the SOHS 2018 process, i.e. according to the criteria and indicators agreed in the Study Matrix. In the summary, evidence for each point was presented as strong, moderate or weak.

Constraints and limitations

Attempts to conduct a systematic, comparative review of evidence from humanitarian evaluations across the sector are hampered by several factors. One is the variability in the object of evaluation: most of the evaluation material is response- and organisation-specific. Related to this is the difficulty of controlling for contextual variables. A third factor is the variability in the methods of investigation adopted in the evaluations, and the way in which results are recorded. Most of the available evidence is qualitative; where quantitative results are available, the factors noted above tend to make comparison difficult or impossible. This rules out any statistically valid process of meta-analysis, and variations in the quality of evidence from different sources require some weighting of evidence that invariably involves a degree of subjectivity and hence bias. In short, evaluation synthesis does not meet the criteria for systematic review in the stricter sense. That said, a systematic approach to reviewing the available evidence, using evidence quality criteria to identify an analytical sample from a relatively large pool of evidence, can have greater validity than would be the case with a smaller sample,

> The pool of publicly available humanitarian evaluations for the period 2015–17 is substantial, and allows a sample to be compiled covering a reasonable cross-section of different crisis and organisational types.

randomly selected and analysed in a non-systematic way. Although there is considerable reliance on the judgment of those compiling the synthesis – and some inevitable bias in this process – we believe that the evaluation synthesis conducted for the SOHS meets these criteria. Triangulating the results with those from the other methods of enquiry used for the SOHS also gives greater confidence in the findings.

The pool of publicly available humanitarian evaluations for the period 2015–17 is substantial, and allows a sample to be compiled covering a reasonable cross-section of different crisis and organisational types. However, enquiries suggest that a large amount of relevant material – particularly internal reviews on more sensitive issues such as accountability and remote management – is not publicly available, and so was not included in the sample used for the SOHS. This suggests that some more sensitive issues in particular may be under-represented in the sample.

Finally, as noted the sample is biased towards particular contexts (e.g. Syria region, Ebola Crisis) and tends to reflect the predominant concerns of the system in the period 2014–16, given the time lag in conducting evaluations. For example, there is more analysis of relevance to the UN's Transformative Agenda than there is to the agenda that emerged from the WHS in May 2016.

Case studies

Selection of countries and of interviewees

Full case studies were conducted in five countries (Bangladesh, Kenya, Lebanon, Mali and Yemen). In addition, team members interviewed individuals and focus groups in a number of other countries (Afghanistan, Cameroon, Central African Republic (CAR), Chad, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Greece, Haiti, Nepal, Nigeria). In total, 346 people were interviewed through 171 bilateral or focus group meetings.

Case study countries were chosen to provide a sample with geographical diversity (across regions) and contextual diversity (across the three main contexts considered in the report).

Table 3 / Number of interviewees per country

Afghanistan	5	Haiti	55
Bangladesh*	31	Kenya*	42
Cameroon	5	Lebanon*	44
CAR	1	Mali*	52
Chad	6	Myanmar	2
Colombia	16	Nepal	40
Côte d'Ivoire	9	Nigeria	8
DRC	9	Yemen*	17
Greece	4		
Total			**346**

* Case studies produced for this research

Of the total, 38% of interviewees were from Africa, 18% from the Middle East and North Africa, 23% from Asia, 20% from the Americas and 1% from Europe.

As noted above, it is not entirely accurate to say that any country represents only one crisis context. However, we can say, broadly, that 44% of interviewees were from disasters linked to natural phenomena (Colombia,[2] Haiti, Kenya and Nepal), 33% from conflict-affected areas (Afghanistan, Cameroon, CAR, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Mali, Myanmar, Nigeria and Yemen) and 23% from refugee-hosting contexts (Bangladesh, Greece and Lebanon).

The interviewees were selected to be representative of the diversity of organisations taking part in humanitarian action and its coordination. However, as the key informant section of the research was oriented towards HQ staff and international organisations (see below), the case study interviews aimed to give a higher profile to national organisations and to aid recipients . As a result, local actors (national and local NGOs, national and local authorities) represent the larger group, with 36% of interviewees, aid recipients 34% and international actors (international organisations and INGOs) 30%.

Table 4 / Number of interviewees per category

Category	Number of interviewees	Percentage of the total
Aid recipients	117	34%
NNGO	31	9%
LNGO	17	5%
Local and national authorities	75	22%
International organisation	35	10%
INGO	71	20%
Total	346	100%

Interviewee selection was partially purposive (inasmuch as interviewers attempted to interview a certain number of people from each category) and partially by convenience (interviewers were working on a short timeframe, and within categories tended to interview people who were available and qualified to speak on the situation). Aid recipients interviewed were selected on a convenience basis. Although the study team tried to achieve an appropriate level of diversity in terms of gender and age criteria this was not always possible and, in some cases, very few or no women were reached. Overall, 42% of interviewees were women and 58% men.

Table 5 / Gender ratio of interviewees

Country	Total interviewees	Women	Men
Afghanistan	5	0	5
Bangladesh	31	18	13
Cameroon	5	0	5
CAR	1	0	1
Chad	6	1	5
Colombia	16	5	11
Côte d'Ivoire	9	2	7
DRC	9	5	4
Greece	4	3	1
Haiti	55	34	21
Kenya	42	14	28
Lebanon	44	28	16
Mali	52	12	40
Myanmar	2	1	1
Nepal	40	15	25
Nigeria	8	4	4
Yemen	17	0	17
Total	346	142	204

Interview structure

Interviews were semi-structured. The interview protocol was constructed using the common study matrix (see annex 3). Interviews were conducted in local languages wherever possible (English, French and Spanish, as well as Arabic, Dari, Creole, Turkana, Rohingya and Bangla). Interviews followed ODI's research ethics policy, which covers all ALNAP research, and informed consent was obtained either in writing or, where written consent was deemed contextually inappropriate, verbally. Interviews were recorded and transcribed. Interviews in languages other than English, French or Spanish were then translated into English for coding.

Analysis

The interview transcripts were coded by two team members, using the common coding framework, in MaxQDA 12. This exercise resulted in the identification of 4,329 coded sections of text. These were then assessed to identify key findings under each code. To determine the strength of evidence for each code, team members used two main and combined criteria: quantity and consistency of quotes.

- If a large number of interviewees reported the same response/issue/perception for that topic, and there were no significant or alternative findings, the finding was recorded and classed as 'strong'.

Components and methods

Five country case
studies fed into the
analysis for the SOHS
2018 report:

**Bangladesh
Kenya
Lebanon
Mali
Yemen**

- If a smaller but homogenous group reported the same response/issue/ perception, the finding was recorded as strong, but attributed only to one group of respondents (category of key informant, or one country, or one category of context).
- If interviewees reported diverging responses/issues/perceptions, the finding may be 'moderate' (where a significant number of interviewees raised the issue and the majority agree) or 'weak' (where a small number of interviewees raise the issue).
- If an issue is only discussed by a few interviewees, no finding was recorded (however, where this was the case for findings from aid recipients, a lower threshold was applied – so that weak findings from recipients had a higher chance of being included in the final analysis).

These findings were then presented, by OECD DAC criterion, in a preliminary summary. During the writing process, the lead author returned to the codes to check the strength of findings for particular points.

Constraints and limitations

Despite attempts to select countries that broadly mirrored the distribution of activities conducted by the international humanitarian system, the interviews tend to over-represent disasters linked to natural phenomena, and to over-represent some regions (particularly Latin America) when compared to the size of humanitarian activities in that context/region (as measured by humanitarian expenditure).

The convenience nature of the sample, particularly with respect to interviewees from the affected population, is a significant constraint. As described above, recipient interviewees were selected mainly on an opportunistic basis (communities available during a short field visit, beneficiaries living in urban areas near aid agencies' offices), introducing potential bias into the results. People further from towns and roads were not adequately represented. As noted, women and girls were under-represented.

A further constraint was the limited amount of time available for data collection. The researchers had only ten days in each country to meet stakeholders and run the interviews. This was, to a degree, compensated by the fact that the international researchers worked with a local counterpart, who was able to provide information on the context and situation. Finally, case study findings are based almost exclusively on perceptions rather than objectively verifiable data. To a degree, this constraint can be addressed by triangulating the perceptions of different types of respondent – recipients, local authorities and international NGOs, for example.

Key informant interviews

Selection of interviewees

The key informant interviews were designed to be as representative as possible. The team aimed to cover all of the major types of actor within the sector: UN agencies, the Red Cross and Crescent Movement (RCRC), international NGOs, national NGOs, donors, development banks and other multilaterals, think-tanks, academia, the media, affected governments and commentators. The team also sought out respondents at different levels of the system and of the organisations and bodies outlined above – from senior leaders to those working at functional, operational or operational coordination levels in humanitarian programmes. The team also used a snowball approach, asking interviewees to recommend people who had differing views or who represented a particular aspect of a discussion, or who had specific technical or geographic expertise. In all, 153 people were interviewed. The breakdown of interviewees by type of agency is given in Table 6.

Table 6 / Breakdown of interviewees by type of agency

Category	Male	Female	Total
Academic/analysis	18	10	27 (17.7%)
Donors	9	11	20 (13%)
UN	25	10	35 (23%)
RCRC	5	5	10 (6.6%)
INGOs	21	9	30 (19.8%)
NNGOs	2	1	3 (2%)
Humanitarian networks	7	6	13 (8.6%)
Regional organisations	3	3	6 (4%)
Other (media, private sector, peace orgs, etc.)	3	5	8 (5.3%)
Total	93 (60.8%)	60 (39.2%)	153

Interviews were semi-structured, based on a protocol derived from the common study framework. Interviewees generally took a global, rather than an operation-specific, view of the performance of the system. Interviews were conducted in English, and followed ODI's research ethics policy.

Analysis

Interviews were either noted or recorded and transcribed, and the resulting documents were coded in MaxQDA 12 using the common coding framework. The coding exercise resulted in 3,320 coded sections of text. The team analysed the coded texts against the common study matrix to identify evidence relating to each element of the matrix and determine the strength of this evidence. Evidence strength was assessed using a scoring

Interviews with around

500
PEOPLE

fed into the analysis for the **SOHS 2018**.

system. If an issue recurred in a significant number of interviews (typically 10–20-plus) in largely the same way then it was assessed as 'strong'. If an issue recurred in a similar way in a number of interviews, either numerically (5–10) or in a very similar way among a smaller number of people with expertise in that particular topic, it was assessed as 'moderate'. If the issue recurred in a handful of interviews, or in a number of interviews but in a different way (for instance a wide range of divergent views on a particular issue), the evidence was assessed as 'weak'. The findings were presented, by OECD DAC criterion, in a preliminary summary.

Constraints

The major constraint, as might be expected with an exercise of this nature, was getting people to commit to and then attend interviews. People within the humanitarian sector have high workloads and unpredictable travel, and senior leaders are regularly responding to similar interview requests. As a result, the interview team became overly reliant on personal connexions and relationships, influencing respondent selection. Some groups were under-represented because, despite numerous invitations, very few individuals agreed to be interviewed. As with the case studies, a further constraint with the interview approach was that the results were almost entirely perceptional.

Aid recipient survey

Selection of countries and participants

For this *State of the Humanitarian System* report, ALNAP again commissioned GeoPoll to carry out telephone surveys in DRC, the Horn of Africa (Kenya and Ethiopia), Iraq and Afghanistan. The SOHS 2012 was one of the first major surveys of aid recipients in humanitarian action, reaching 1,104 aid recipients in DRC. This iteration surveyed 5,000 aid recipients across the five countries. These countries were chosen to represent humanitarian responses in a variety of geographical areas and contexts. The selection was partially influenced by the choice of case study countries, and aimed to include more conflict contexts to make up for their under-representation in the case studies.

The survey used a probability sample of mobile phone respondents, with a two-step sampling methodology:

1. **Pre-stratification:** respondents were selected based on key factors such as age, gender or location, to allow for comparisons across different demographic groups and to ensure representation. Respondents in the GeoPoll database are incrementally indexed for pre-stratification purposes. With respect to location, as the aim of the survey was to elicit responses from people who had been in receipt of aid, certain geographical regions (where a higher proportion of the population had been in receipt of humanitarian aid) were chosen for the survey in DRC, Iraq and Kenya.

Table 7 / Geographical regions chosen for the aid recipient survey

DRC	Iraq	Kenya
Majority of the sample from the following provinces (though not limited to these provinces):	**Limited to the following provinces:**	**Limited to the following locations:**
North Kivu	Anbar	Turkana
South Kivu	Ninewa	Wajir
Katanga	Erbil	Marsabit
Maniem	Kirkuk	Isiolo
	Salahal-Din	Mandera
	Baghdad	Garissa
	Dahuk	Nairobi
	Diyala	Tana River
	Sulaymaniyah	
	Babylon	

2. **Simple Random Sample (SRS):** respondents were randomly selected from the GeoPoll database (a database of all mobile phone subscribers or mobile subscribers with the largest service providers in the country) to participate in a survey. GeoPoll asked eligibility questions at the beginning of the survey to determine if the respondent had been an aid recipient within the past two years. Only those who were eligible continued on to complete the survey. Recipients were all aged 15 years and over.

   In total, 693,795 surveys were sent out, 31,987 people responded and 5,000 completed responses were received (including 331 responses to the CATI voice questionnaire (see below) in Iraq). The relatively low number of completions among those who responded is largely a function of the eligibility question: many respondents had not received aid in the past two years.

Questionnaire structure

ALNAP provided GeoPoll with the content of questions for the survey, which used the same or slightly modified questions from the 2012 and 2015 editions to provide consistent comparisons over time. The 2018 survey used text-based (SMS) survey instruments (with the exception of Iraq) to collect data, which was the same method used in the 2012 and 2015 editions. In Iraq, GeoPoll collected a portion of the responses with computer-aided telephone interviewing (CATI). CATI was used as a supplemental method in order to increase response rates.

Constraints and limitations

The methodology used for the aid recipient survey suffers from a number of potential biases.

Selection bias: as there is no overall, country-level list of aid recipients, it is not possible to conduct a probability sample specially targeting all aid recipients. Rather, GeoPoll targeted the whole population, and then screened out those who were not aid recipients. In some cases, it may be theoretically possible to conduct a probability sample of the whole population, using census data as the sampling frame. However, it is not clear that aid recipients mirror the entire population in composition, and so data on the overall population would not represent the subset of the population who had received aid.

The aid recipient survey uses a database of mobile phone subscribers as the sampling frame. The degree to which this reflects the entire population will differ from country to country, depending on the proportion of the population who are mobile subscribers (see Table 8).

Table 8 / Rates of mobile phone ownership

Country	Mobile phone penetration	Unique subscribers (m)
Kenya	59%	28.3
Ethiopia	34%	34.7
DRC	26%	21.0
Iraq	50%	Not applicable
Afghanistan	41%*	Not applicable

Source: GSMA The Mobile Economy 2017, https://www.gsma.com/mobileeconomy/
Notes: m: million. As Afghanistan was not included in the GSMA report, we have inserted the following calculation as an estimate: the GeoPoll database in Afghanistan as a percentage of the national population, multiplied by the reverse proportion of mobile network operators (MNOs) on which GeoPoll is active.

The fact that only those individuals with access to a mobile phone are able to participate in the survey research introduces important selection biases, when comparing respondents to the whole population. In particular, respondents will tend to be more urban, male, younger and of a higher socio-economic status.

Non-response bias: the relatively low response rates suggest that some respondents elected not to participate in the study. There could be a number of reasons for this, in particular literacy levels (as the survey was delivered by SMS, people with low levels of literacy would tend not to respond). One concrete illustration of these biases was the relatively low rate of female and older respondents. Overall, 28% of respondents were female and 72% male; 43% were aged 15–24, 33% 25–34 and 24% 35 and above.

Surveys of

1,170
aid practitioners

116
countries

28
governments

5,000
aid recipients from
Afghanistan, DRC,
Ethiopia, Iraq and
Kenya
informed the
SOHS 2018.

GeoPoll ran a test to check for any statistically significant differences between gender or age categories in each country. There were statistically significant differences in answers by gender in only 14% of the response sets,[3] and by age in 42% of response sets. We considered applying a weight to the results, but in the majority of cases there was no need to apply a weight to the results (as there was no statistically significant difference based on gender or age), and on those where it would have been useful, the weights GeoPoll would need to use would be higher than typically recommended, which would have led to significant over-compensation.

These constraints are important, but it is worth remembering that it is not currently possible to create a true probability sample of aid recipients, and that any survey mechanism will suffer from selection bias. The SMS approach, while affected by the biases above, does offer the ability to collect responses from hard to reach areas (those which were not accessed by the case studies, for example). It may also avoid interview effects (such as interviewees providing responses that they think will please the interviewer) and provide better-quality data from those who respond (Link et al., 2014).

Practitioner and government surveys

The practitioner and government surveys for this iteration of the SOHS were updated to ensure that the questions asked covered all of the areas in the study matrix, but without sacrificing the comparability of the survey over time. The surveys were translated into French, Spanish and Arabic and uploaded to SurveyMonkey for dissemination.

The ALNAP team prepared a dissemination plan mapping local NGO networks and national disaster management agencies (NDMAs), liaised with the SOHS Strategic Advisory Group to spread the word and supported ALNAP Members that are operational with messaging and channels so that the surveys could reach staff on the ground. Adverts were placed on ReliefWeb and Dawns Digest, and the survey was also promoted with social media campaigns. The surveys were open for six months (from August 2017 to January 2018) and were completed by 1,170 practitioners and 38 government representatives from a wide geographical spread.

The ALNAP team cleaned and prepared all the answers collected through pivot charts in spreadsheets, to allow for cross-cutting and analysis of the data received. Datasets from past SOHS surveys were incorporated to allow for comparison of responses over time.

Literature review

The literature review was used mainly to provide information on specific areas not captured fully by other means in the Study Matrix. These related primarily to the functions of the humanitarian system beyond the provision of humanitarian assistance, including protection and resilience. The rationale for considering these elements in a separate literature review is that, while these activities should be addressed in humanitarian evaluations, there is some evidence that they do not receive consistent attention in humanitarian activities, and so will not be adequately covered in programme evaluations.

Selection of literature to review

Following a review of gaps in the SOHS evidence base in October 2017, and taking account of the limited time available, the literature review focused on the following topics:

- cash transfers and vouchers
- livelihood support and social protection
- urban humanitarian issues
- the humanitarian–development nexus
- 'systemic' issues – those that went beyond specific agencies or programmes
- protection and the humanitarian system.

From the search process described below, the researchers identified around 50 key sources to inform a thematic synthesis on the list of topics above. The literature search was conducted using a variety of sources, including:

- Humanitarian Policy Group and Humanitarian Practice Network
- *Disasters* journal
- ALNAP
- Groupe URD
- Feinstein International Center (Tufts)
- Refugee Studies Centre
- Chatham House
- Other academic sources
- OCHA
- IRIN
- Other relevant publications, including NGO policy papers

A JSTOR search was undertaken with the following search string: ((humanitarian) OR (disasters)). Search results were limited to works addressing the topics above, published in 2015–17 and concerning current or recent humanitarian responses. Works of a speculative nature or covering topics that are well-addressed in evaluations were excluded.

Analysis of literature

The same coding system was used to organise the literature review material as was used for the evaluation synthesis, for consistency and simplicity. The synthesis process involved two elements:

1. Collating the material according to related findings on common topics.
2. Identifying findings that appeared to be broadly common across a range of evidence from the source material. Some meta-findings were also identified.

Again, the process was inductive and iterative, with provisional synthesis findings identified as the process went on, and extracts grouped under sub-headings (provisional findings or hypotheses) within each topic, according to whether they tended to confirm or contradict the finding in question. These were tested against the wider sample, with additional extracts being added as appropriate to strengthen the evidence base.

Constraints and limitations

Many of the same factors noted above for the evaluation synthesis also apply to the literature review. Indeed, the nature of the evidence is even more variable, being based on sometimes ill-defined questions and unclear methods of enquiry. However, a significant part of the literature reviewed itself consisted of a review of results from different studies, and so provides a useful (if not always fully reliable) meta-analysis on the topics in question. As the literature tends to take the form of 'illustrated argument', the potential for bias is clear. But the comparative strength of the literature review is that it allows a topic-based investigation across multiple crises and organisation types. In some areas, notably in the field of cash transfers and the comparative strengths and weaknesses of this modality compared to others (e.g. food assistance), the evidence base is relatively strong and some valid quantitative comparison appears possible. In other areas, the analysis is considerably more subjective.

One of the main constraints was available time. This was a limited and strictly topic-focused exercise, designed mainly to fill identified gaps in the evidence base for SOHS. As with the evaluation synthesis, there was considerable reliance on the judgment of those conducting the synthesis as to the relevance and strength of the evidence, as well as its interpretation.

Synthesis

Once the preliminary reports from the various elements of the research had been completed, outlining key points for each of the OECD DAC criteria and the strength and source of evidence for each, the ALNAP Secretariat team compiled nine reports, one for each of the criteria, containing all the points from the various sources. These reports highlighted where components agreed and where they disagreed. They also proposed alternative explanations for phenomena which had been observed in the components, aiming to challenge

> As the literature tends to take the form of 'illustrated argument', the potential for bias is clear. But the comparative strength of the literature review is that it allows a topic-based investigation across multiple crises and organisation types.

the explanations given by interviewees, as a way of interrogating the arguments presented in the preliminary reports. The ALNAP team and the consultants in charge of each of the components met for a two-day writing conference to discuss these reports, and in particular to:

- Consider the key points and agree on those they felt were sufficiently well evidenced to be included in the final report.
- Identify any evidence that they were aware of that contradicted these points or that suggested alternative explanations.
- Weigh the balance of information where the reports pointed to disagreement: attempt to explain or resolve the disagreement on the basis of the evidence collected.
- Consider alternative explanations, and the evidence for these, and determine how viable these explanations were.
- Identify important gaps in the information, including information required to address disagreements or alternative explanations, and any research that might address these gaps.

On the basis of this writing conference, the SOHS team agreed the main outlines of the report. The lead author then developed the report around this agreed structure. In doing so, he worked with a research assistant to identify research, other literature and additional interviewees to address important gaps, resolve contradictions in the evidence (where these had not been resolved in the writing conference), allow a more thorough assessment of alternative explanations or provide information that would enable points that were only weakly evidenced to be supported or rejected. The lead author also conducted a number of spot-checks comparing the original coded material to key points and strength of evidence, in order to validate the consultants' assessments.

In the final analysis, the main points included in the report were those for which there was strong or moderate evidence from a number of sources, and where there was very little evidence, or only weak evidence, to support alternative descriptions of the situation, or explanations as to the causes of the situation. Obviously, in some instances the balance of evidence was closer. Where this was the case, this is noted in the text. The text also includes points for which there was limited supporting evidence, but which are important because they challenge existing orthodoxies and may inspire further research. Where this is the case, the limited nature of the evidence is noted in the text.

> [T]he main points included in the report were those for which there was strong or moderate evidence from a number of sources, and where there was very little evidence, or only weak evidence, to support alternative descriptions of the situation...

Constraints and limitations

Two key constraints emerged in the synthesis phase, both of which relate to the nature of the information on which conclusions are drawn. The first is that the report, while aiming to discuss the system as a whole, is actually building up an assessment of the system from descriptions of its various disparate elements: from particular countries or organisations. This is problematic because there can be significant variety between one situation and another: any 'overall' assessment can obscure these differences, and end up describing generalities that are not true in many places. To the degree possible, the report addresses this by identifying elements that were common in the large majority of situations, and – where this was not the case – clarifying elements that were common only in one of the three contexts, or elements that appeared to be specific to a particular country or type of organisation. Nevertheless, the reader should be aware that the general performance assessments and trends identified in this report will not be true in all situations, from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe, and that any particular operation is likely to have at least some elements that differ appreciably from those outlined in the report.

By building up the sum from the parts, this approach also, arguably, misses out important elements of system performance – of those properties of the humanitarian system that are more than the sum of the parts. For example, the adequacy and added value of the collective processes (e.g. needs assessment and strategic planning) to which so much time and effort is devoted are only captured tangentially. Although the composite approach can shed light on these issues, the overall performance of the system as a system – and the ways in which that system is evolving – can only be partly captured by this approach.

The second key constraint has already been mentioned in the sections above – but holds good for the whole as well as for the parts. *The State of the Humanitarian System* report is largely based on perceptions – the perceptions of humanitarian professionals, of aid recipients and of academics and government representatives who work alongside or observe humanitarian activities. In some cases, this is exactly the right type of information on which to base an assessment. If we wish to know whether people feel that they are treated with dignity, then we are, essentially, asking about their perceptions of their lived experience. In other cases, it is much less useful. Perceptions are a poor basis on which to determine whether we are reaching all people in need, if one of the reasons we fail to reach these people is that we don't know they are there in the first place. Perceptions are also poor guides to phenomena such as excess mortality in a population, which tends to become visible only at a scale which is not visible to the individual observer. One of the troubling elements of the state of the system in 2017 is the number of things that it doesn't know, and doesn't find out (see box on information gaps in the humanitarian system).

Components and methods

Information gaps in the humanitarian system

In researching this edition of the SOHS, it became clear that many of the most important information gaps identified in previous versions have still not been filled. In particular:

- **The number of people in need of humanitarian assistance**. Estimates for the number of people in need have improved over the past three years: rather than being based primarily on the number of people in appeals for humanitarian assistance, Humanitarian Needs Overviews now separate 'People in Need' from 'People Targeted' (generally a lower figure). However, the figures for people in need are often extrapolated from weak or outdated population data. In addition, different humanitarian programmes use different classifications and understandings of need, making it more difficult to create an accurate global total.

- **The number of people dying in humanitarian crises**. For a number of reasons, it is still extremely unusual for humanitarians to obtain and use data for excess mortality in a population affected by crisis, particularly in non-camp situations. This makes it impossible to say whether humanitarian activities are having, or have had, any effect on keeping people alive.

- **The costs of humanitarian response at an organisational level**. Different organisations use very different approaches to accounting for funds, and these accounts are generally closed (at least at any level that would allow serious examination) This prevents any serious consideration of actual or potential efficiencies.

- **The longer-term impact of humanitarian response**. Very little research is done on the longer-term, positive and negative impacts of humanitarian responses on the lives, societies and economies where they take place.

***The State of the Humanitarian System* report and the World Humanitarian Summit**

For this edition of *The State of the Humanitarian System* report, ALNAP also developed two small research components to explore issues of performance (as defined by the DAC criteria) related to the WHS. The first, using a method modelled loosely on outcome harvesting, sought to understand how policy aims expressed in the WHS commitments are unfolding on the ground in two countries: Ethiopia and Lebanon. The second used an indicator-based approach to look at how the system might monitor progress on the WHS commitments, and how these indicators map onto the DAC criteria used to evaluate humanitarian performance. These elements are published separately, and more information on the methodology is available in these reports.

Endnotes for this chapter

1. FAO, OCHA, UNDP, UN Population Fund (UNFPA), UN Habitat, UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP and WHO.

2. Interviews in Colombia related both to 'natural' disaster and to conflict – but the majority were concerned with 'natural' disasters.

3. In Iraq: on quantity of aid, quality of aid, communication by humanitarians, ability to give feedback. In Afghanistan: on communication by humanitarians, ability to give feedback, being treated with dignity. There were no statistically significant differences by gender in CAR, Ethiopia or Kenya.

Components and methods

4

THE STUDY PERIOD

This chapter provides background and context to the report by outlining key events involving the international humanitarian system over the period January 2015–December 2017.

Complex emergencies

The civil war in **Syria** continued. Over 13 million people inside the country were assessed as being in need of humanitarian assistance in 2016 and 2017 (OCHA, 2015b; 2016d; 2017a), of whom almost 3 million were living in besieged or hard to reach areas (OCHA, 2017a). Despite a number of UN Security Council resolutions (S/RES/2139 (2014), S/RES/2165 (2014), S/RES/2209 (2015), S/RES/2268 (2016)) over the period, civilians were subject to indiscriminate attacks, sieges and blockades, shelling and bombing and chemical attacks (HRW, 2015; 2016; OCHA, 2015b). The war also became increasingly international. Russia significantly intensified its military and political support to the Syrian government, supplying fighter jets, other military equipment and some troops (ICG, 2015b). Iran also provided military and diplomatic support to the Syrian regime, while countries including the US, UK, Turkey and several Gulf States supported groups fighting the regime.

In neighbouring **Iraq**, the IASC maintained Level 3 (L3) humanitarian emergency status until the end of 2017. The takeover of significant territories by Islamic State and subsequent military operations against the group led to widespread human rights violations and the displacement of nearly 6 million people.[1] In 2017, some 11 million people were in need of humanitarian assistance.

Civil war broke out in **Yemen** in March 2015 following several months of political turmoil. The following July the situation was classified as an L3 emergency. With between 19 and 22 million people thought to be in need of humanitarian assistance over the period (OCHA, 2015a; 2016e; 2017b), the situation has been called the worst humanitarian crisis in the world (UN, 2018a). A cholera epidemic in October 2016 led to a million suspected cases – the largest in history (WHO, 2016a; 2018c) – and in early 2017 Yemen was one of four countries identified as facing impending famine (along with Somalia, South Sudan and Nigeria), with 8.7 million people at risk of starvation (UN, 2017) as a result of a naval blockade by Saudi-led forces and repeated denial of humanitarian access by all parties to the conflict (ICG, 2017a). As in Syria, there is significant international involvement, by Iran, Saudi Arabia and a number of Gulf States, as well as offshoots of al-Qaeda and Islamic State (ICG, 2015c).

Continued conflict in **South Sudan** saw widespread violence against civilians, including sexual violence, as well as increasing shelter, health, education and food security needs. The conflict also generated mass internal displacement and large refugee flows. Famine was declared in two counties in early 2017 following poor harvests, exacerbated by the impact of conflict on food production and exchange and displacement (ICG, 2017b). South Sudan also experienced a major cholera outbreak. While the number of people estimated to be in need of humanitarian assistance increased from 6 million to 7.5 million in 2016 and 2017, humanitarian responses were hampered by conflict, the very large distances involved and poor infrastructure.

With between

19 & 22 million

people thought to be in need of humanitarian assistance in the period, the situation in Yemen has been called the worst humanitarian crisis in the world.

Crises in the **Sahel** were driven by a convergence of factors, including extreme poverty and chronic vulnerability, the impacts of climate change and instability stemming from conflict and the activities of radical groups including Boko Haram (OCHA, 2016g). Between 2014 and 2016 a multi-year regional strategy was established for nine Sahelian countries[2] to tackle food insecurity and malnutrition, provide immunisations and other health services, deliver access to safe water and sanitation, support livelihoods and education and address the needs of displaced people (OCHA, 2017g). Although the strategy produced some results (ibid.), 24 million people were still in need of humanitarian aid in 2017. Conditions were particularly severe in conflict-hit areas of northern Mali and the Lake Chad basin. While famine in north-eastern Nigeria was largely averted by concerted humanitarian and government efforts (OCHA, 2018c), almost 11 million people were in need of humanitarian assistance in the Lake Chad basin (ibid.).

Chronic insecurity and high levels of humanitarian need persisted in **DRC**. Seven million people were estimated to be in need in 2015 as a result of internal displacement due to fighting, refugee inflows from neighbouring countries and recurrent cholera, measles and malaria outbreaks (ACAPS, 2018c). In August 2016, violence in the Kasais displaced some 1.3 million people and forced 30,000 to flee to Angola (ReliefWeb, 2018). The UN declared an L3 emergency in October 2017 (UN, 2018b), by which time the number of people in need had reached 13 million.

The L3 emergency response was deactivated in **CAR** in May 2015 following a ceasefire and the deployment of a peacekeeping mission, but progress towards peace and stability was uneven, and conflict escalated again from mid-2016 (IASC, 2018; OCHA, 2016f; 2017f; AP, 2014). Nearly half of the population (around 2.5 million people) were in need of humanitarian assistance, including protection and access to basic services (OCHA, 2015c; 2016f; 2017f). An internal UN report leaked in 2015 alleged that several soldiers serving as part of the French military contingent in the country had sexually exploited children (Laville, 2015; Morland, 2016). A subsequent investigation by the French authorities was closed two years later due to insufficient evidence (Magistrates dismiss sex abuse case against French soldiers in Africa, 2018; Morenne, 2017; Morland, 2016).

The humanitarian situation in **Afghanistan** deteriorated in 2015–17 as armed conflict intensified between Afghan forces and the Taliban and Islamic State. By the end of the period over 9 million people were in need of assistance (OCHA, 2016). The conflict has been characterised by repeated violations of IHL, including attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure. According to WHO data, between 2014 and 2016 'there was a 110 percent increase in the number of healthcare facilities attacked (from 25 to 53) and a 163 percent increase (from 72 to 189) on healthcare facilities closed by parties to the conflict' (OCHA, 2017).

Internal displacement as a result of the conflict in **Ukraine** remained high, at 1.8 million in 2017. Elderly people make up nearly 30% of the population in need of humanitarian assistance. Access to humanitarian aid and basic services was limited; freedom of movement remained severely constrained in non-government-controlled territories, and between these territories and government-controlled regions (OCHA, 2015; 2016a; 2017b).

In a historic development, the government of **Colombia** signed a peace deal with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) in September 2016. The demobilisation process was completed the following February, and in September FARC launched its own political party. Following 50 years of conflict, Colombia has the largest displaced population in the world (Latimer and Swithern, 2017). Elsewhere in Latin America, violence in El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala (the Northern Triangle) reached levels unprecedented outside of a war zone (MSF, 2017), including murder, kidnapping and extortion. In 2015, there were 6,650 homicides in El Salvador, 8,035 in Honduras and 4,778 in Guatemala (ibid.).

Violence against Rohingya people in Rakhine State in Myanmar escalated in 2017, forcing hundreds of thousands of Rohingya to take refuge across the border in Bangladesh (ACAPS, 2018d). UN and other humanitarian agencies were largely prevented from accessing Rakhine State by the Myanmar government.

'Natural' disasters and health crises

The earthquakes in **Nepal** in April 2015 were the deadliest and costliest 'natural' disasters over the period (Guha-Sapir, Hoyois and Below, 2016a). The death toll exceeded 8,800 (ibid.; OCHA, 2017) and the financial cost to the country was $5.2 billion (Guha-Sapir, Hoyois and Below, 2016b). More than 5.6 million people were affected, over 600,000 houses destroyed and another 288,000 damaged across 14 districts (OCHA, 2016j; 2017e). The humanitarian response was led by the government of Nepal and local civil society organisations, requiring international actors to adapt their ways of working and operate through partnerships and collaboration with local and national actors (Featherstone and Bogati, 2016; Grünewald and Burlat, 2016).

The *El Niño* phenomenon passed its peak by early 2016 but its effects were felt long afterwards. In East Africa, over 20 million people were made food insecure due to *El Niño*-related drought, with Somalia (threatened with famine in 2017), Ethiopia and Sudan the hardest-hit (OCHA, 2016b; 2016c). In Southern Africa over 30 million people were food insecure by early 2016 (OCHA, 2016c; 2016b; ReliefWeb, 2017c). Nearly 7 million people were in need of humanitarian assistance in **Malawi** in 2016, and 4 million in **Zimbabwe**. In the Asia-Pacific, countries most severely affected by *El Niño* included the Marshall Islands, Papua New Guinea, Vietnam, Timor-Leste,

Fiji and Vanuatu, which were simultaneously recovering from the impact of Tropical Cyclones Winston and Pam (OCHA, 2016c; 2016b). In Latin America and the Caribbean, *El Niño* resulted in drought conditions in some areas and heavier than normal rainfall in others, leading to increased food insecurity and the spread of diseases such as cholera, Zika, malaria, dengue and chikungunya (OCHA, 2016c). Countries most severely affected included El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti and Honduras (ibid.).

Hurricane Matthew impacted a number of **Caribbean** nations in 2016, and Hurricanes Irma and Maria, which hit within two weeks of each other in August–September 2017, caused significant damage. In mid-2017, 1.4 million people in Haiti – over half of those affected by Hurricane Matthew – remained in need of assistance.

The **Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) Outbreak** in **West Africa** continued. The outbreak was the largest in history, and the first where the disease affected densely populated urban centres. This led to unprecedented infection rates, particularly in Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone (US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2017). By the time the region was declared Ebola-free in June 2016 (WHO, 2016c), 28,616 cases and 11,310 deaths had been recorded (WHO, 2018a). Countries affected by the outbreak also suffered serious socioeconomic consequences. For example, Liberia lost '8 per cent of its doctors, nurses and midwives in the crisis, leading to a 111 per cent increase in maternal mortality and a 28 per cent increase in under age 5 mortality' (OCHA, 2016j). The crisis highlighted a number of shortcomings in the international humanitarian system, particularly in addressing a new or relatively unknown type of crisis, while also demonstrating the effectiveness of certain elements of the humanitarian architecture (DuBois et al., 2015; Harmer and Grünewald, 2016; House of Commons International Development Committee, 2016; Panel of Independent Experts, 2015). In December 2016, a final trial of an experimental Ebola vaccine confirmed that it provides high protection against EVD (WHO, 2016b). There were new Ebola outbreaks in DRC at the end of the period under study, with many lessons learnt from the previous outbreak being implemented.

> The Ebola Crisis highlighted a number of shortcomings in the system, particularly in addressing a new or relatively unknown type of crisis, while also demonstrating the effectiveness of certain elements of the humanitarian architecture.

Refugee contexts

In 2017, the **global refugee population** reached 25.4 million people[3] – the highest ever recorded, with the refugee population under UNHCR's mandate increasing by 65% over the previous five years. The number and proportion of refugees in protracted displacement also increased significantly, accounting for two-thirds of all refugees by the end of 2017 (UNHCR, 2016a; 2017b; 2018). Overall, 85% of refugees under UNHCR's mandate – 16.9 million people – were hosted in developing regions in 2017 (UNHCR, 2018).

4.8 million

Afghans were forcibly displaced (including internally displaced) at the end of 2017, with perhaps

2.5 million

more living in Pakistan and Iran in 2017.

The number of **Syrian refugees** grew steadily in 2015–17, reaching 6.3 million by the end of the period (UNHCR, 2016e; 2017d; 2017c; 2018). In 2015, **Turkey** surpassed Pakistan as the world's largest refugee-hosting country, with 2.5 million Syrians and around a quarter of a million refugees and asylum-seekers from other countries. By the end of 2017 Turkey was hosting over 3.5 million refugees, 90% of whom were in urban centres rather than camps (UNHCR, 2015c; 2016f; 2018g). In **Lebanon**, the Syrian refugee population was estimated at 992,000 at the end of 2017 (UNHCR, 2015b; 2018d), with a further 653,000 in Jordan (UNHCR, 2018c), alongside over 2.1 million Palestinian refugees. Restrictions on registration and employment meant that most Syrian refugees were forced to scratch a living in the informal economy, where they were vulnerable to harassment and abuse at the hands of employers. In Jordan, almost three-quarters of Syrian refugees were living below the poverty line at the end of 2017 (UNHCR, 2016c; 2018d).

Some 4.8 million **Afghans** were forcibly displaced (including internally displaced) at the end of 2017, with perhaps 2.5 million more living in Pakistan and Iran without refugee status. Some 365,000 refugees and 610,000 undocumented Afghans returned from Pakistan and Iran in 2017 (IOM/UNHCR, 2017; 2018). According to Human Rights Watch, returns from Pakistan amounted to coercion – and *refoulment* in some cases – by the Pakistani authorities (HRW, 2017). The EU signed an agreement with Afghanistan in 2016 to collaborate on returning Afghans found to be in the EU illegally, but this did not appear to have had a significant effect on the numbers being deported back to Afghanistan: 38,890 were ordered to leave in 2015, 30,325 in 2016 and 29,035 in 2017. The numbers for returned Afghans were much smaller: 3,290 in 2015, 9,480 in 2016 and 6,620 in 2017.

South Sudan overtook Somalia in 2016 as the third-largest source country for refugees after Syria and Afghanistan, with the number of refugees fleeing the country doubling over the course of a year, from 778,700 at end-2015 to over 1.4 million people at end-2016. By 2017, 2.4 million South Sudanese were refugees. Most fled to Uganda, Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya and DRC (UNHCR, 2017b). **Uganda**, which hosted 1.4 million refugees in 2017, a 44% increase over 2016, maintained its comprehensive framework for refugees, providing them with freedom of movement, the right to work and establish businesses, the right to documentation, access to social services and plots of land for shelter and agricultural production. However, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi, said in 2017 that the system was at 'breaking point' (Uganda at breaking point, 2017). In **Burundi**, political violence in 2015 forced over 400,000 people to flee the country (UNHCR, 2018a). The following year, violence in the Kasais in **DRC** led to large numbers of refugees crossing into neighbouring countries, pushing the total Congolese refugee population up from 537,500 to 620,800, alongside 4.4 million internally displaced persons (IDPs).

In **Kenya**, UNHCR has been implementing voluntary repatriation of Somali refugees since 2014. Critics argue that refugees are being coerced into returning to Somalia, which still faces a complex emergency, including severe food insecurity and violent extremism. The Kenyan government stopped recognising Somalis as *prima facie* refugees, closed the Department of Refugee Affairs and sought the closure of the Dadaab refugee camps. In February 2017, the Kenyan High Court blocked these efforts (Amnesty International, 2017; UNHCR, 2017a).

Escalating violence in Rakhine State in **Myanmar** led to the exodus of an estimated 650,000 Rohingya people into Bangladesh between August and December 2017, as well as significant displacement inside the country. The Bangladesh government is not a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention and does not recognise the Rohingya as refugees, regarding them instead as temporary migrants awaiting return to Myanmar (Wake and Yu, 2018).

Migrant arrivals in **Europe** peaked in October 2015. In 2015 and 2016, the number of first-time asylum applications in the EU doubled, to a record high of nearly 1.3 million each year. In Germany, the refugee population increased by 45% in 2017, to 970,400, making Germany the world's sixth-largest refugee-hosting country (and the only high-income country in the top ten). Most applications were from people from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan. At least 3,771 people died in 2015, 5,096 in 2016 and 3,139 in 2017 trying to cross the Mediterranean to Europe (UNHCR, 2018e). In 2016, the EU and Turkey signed an agreement intended to prevent irregular migration from Turkey to the EU. As part of this deal, all new irregular migrants crossing from Turkey to the Greek islands would be returned to Turkey. For every Syrian being returned to Turkey from the Greek islands, another would be resettled to the EU. The agreement appears to have reduced irregular migration: asylum applications dropped significantly in 2017, to 650,000. The EU also signed a Compact with Jordan addressing the movement of refugees from Syria, offering Jordan multi-year grants, concessional loans and relaxed trade regulations in return for allowing Syrian refugees greater access to education and employment (Barbelet, Hagen-Zanker and Mansour-Ille, 2018). A similar, smaller Compact was signed with **Lebanon**.

Overall, the issue of migration became highly politicised in Europe during this period, and the response to migrants became characterised by a mix of hostile attitudes and, in some states, an increasing lack of political will to fulfil legal obligations. European governments increasingly focused on preventing the movement of refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants into the EU. Humanitarian organisations found it hard to identify their role in a refugee emergency in high-income countries. There was an upsurge in volunteer movements and organisations set up by EU citizens to lead relief efforts in EU countries including Greece, Italy and France.

Violence in Central America was a major factor in the movement of thousands of people into **Mexico** and the **US**. In 2016 an estimated 500,000 people entered Mexico irregularly, mainly from El Salvador, Guatemala

and Honduras (UNHCR, 2016d). Arrivals, who were seldom registered as asylum-seekers, faced further violence from organised crime groups and smugglers in Mexico (ICG, 2017d; MSF, 2017). In 2017, the US was the world's largest recipient of new asylum applications, with 331,700. Admissions subsequently plummeted due to vigorous detention, deportation and deterrent policies (ICG, 2017d), a temporary ban on refugee admissions and enhanced vetting. A cap on refugee admissions limited the number of refugees that could be resettled in the country in 2018 to 45,000 (Hirschfeld Davis and Jordan, 2017).

Humanitarian policy

In March 2015, UN member states adopted the **Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction**. The framework established four priority areas for disaster risk reduction and set seven goals. The agreement, which runs for 15 years, is voluntary and non-binding. Key milestones for implementation of the framework were established at the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in May 2017. This was followed by the Cancun conference in Mexico, where key implementation milestones were operationalised.

The **World Humanitarian Summit** in May 2016 in Istanbul brought together 9,000 participants (OCHA, 2016l; 2017j). The summit was intended to discuss and agree on core commitments to help bring about reform of the humanitarian system. Unusually for a summit of this nature, the WHS did not follow an inter-governmental process, but built on consultations with both governments and civil society. At the summit, participants made 32 core commitments under five priority responsibilities covering conflict, civilian protection and the norms of war, displacement and migration, ending need and humanitarian financing. Together, these core responsibilities comprise the *Agenda for Humanity*, the framework laid out by the Secretary-General to improve humanitarian action worldwide. The summit was criticised for a perceived failure to address the increasing marginalisation of humanitarian and refugee law in international politics. It also did not set out any large-scale reforms and, as a civil society process, was not intended to create binding commitments. Even so, it appeared to provide important impetus for a number of initiatives including the 'Grand Bargain', a set of commitments and workstreams designed to make the humanitarian system more efficient, transparent and accountable.

Also in May 2016, the United Nations Security Council adopted **Resolution 2286** reinforcing the protection granted under IHL to medical facilities and healthcare personnel during armed conflict.

In response to the growing numbers of refugees and the increased prominence of migration as a political issue, UN member states adopted the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants in 2016. The declaration outlined a framework for addressing the global challenge of refugees (the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF)) and committed member states to adopting two global compacts – one on refugees and one on migrants. The CRRF, on which the refugee compact was to be based, aims for more equitable and predictable support to refugees, but does not change or add to existing legal obligations on states. The compact on migration was to 'set out a range of principles, commitments and understandings among Member States regarding international migration in all its dimensions' (United Nations, 2016a).

Endnotes for this chapter

1. This figure is cumulative. At the time of writing, the number was estimated at 1.5 million people (HRP, 2018). Previous HNOs and an OCHA displacement timeline document (OCHA, 2018b) suggest that the largest single figure at any one time was 3.42 million.

2. Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Gambia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria and Senegal.

3. The UNHCR number includes 2.2 million Palestinian people in Gaza and the West Bank. Elsewhere in this report, this population are counted as IDPs, and so the number of refugees is given as 23.2 million refugees.

5

NEEDS AND FUNDING

The period 2015–2017 saw both the highest ever numbers of people in need and the highest ever expenditure on international humanitarian assistance. As in previous periods, funding was inadequate to meet needs.

Humanitarian needs

In 2017, an estimated 201.5 million people in 134 countries were assessed as being in need of international humanitarian assistance.[1] Close to a quarter (23%) were living in just three countries – Yemen, Syria and Turkey. This exceeds the 2016 estimate of at least 164.2 million[2] people in need, 27% of whom were again concentrated in three countries, Yemen, Syria and Iraq. These countries received the largest amounts of international humanitarian assistance that year. The figures for 2016 and, especially 2017, are a marked increase on the 124.7 million people assessed as being in need in 2015, although this figure, as well as figures in the last SOHS (2012–14), are not directly comparable.[3] Even so, there does appear to have been a year-on-year increase[4] in the number of people in need of humanitarian assistance across the period. This was driven by complex crises[5] – crises triggered primarily by conflict as well as at least one other type of crisis (disaster associated with natural hazards and/or refugee situations).[6]

With conflict comes displacement, either within or between countries. From 2014 to 2017, the number of people forcibly displaced due to conflict, violence or persecution increased from 59.2 million to 68.5 million. Over the period, the total number of IDPs[7] rose by 6% (from 39.9 million to 42.2 million), and the total number of refugees by 33% (from 17.5 million to 23.2 million). Of the total displaced population, IDPs accounted for 62% in 2017 (down from 67% in 2014), and refugees 34% (up from 30%). Sustaining an established trend, most displaced people[8] were being hosted in middle- and low-income countries[9] (70% and 22% respectively in 2017). The period has seen incremental rises in the proportion of people hosted in lower-income countries (from 15% to 18% to 22% by 2017). High-income countries hosted less than 7% of displaced people across the three years.

Figure 3 / Displaced populations by host country income, 2015–2017
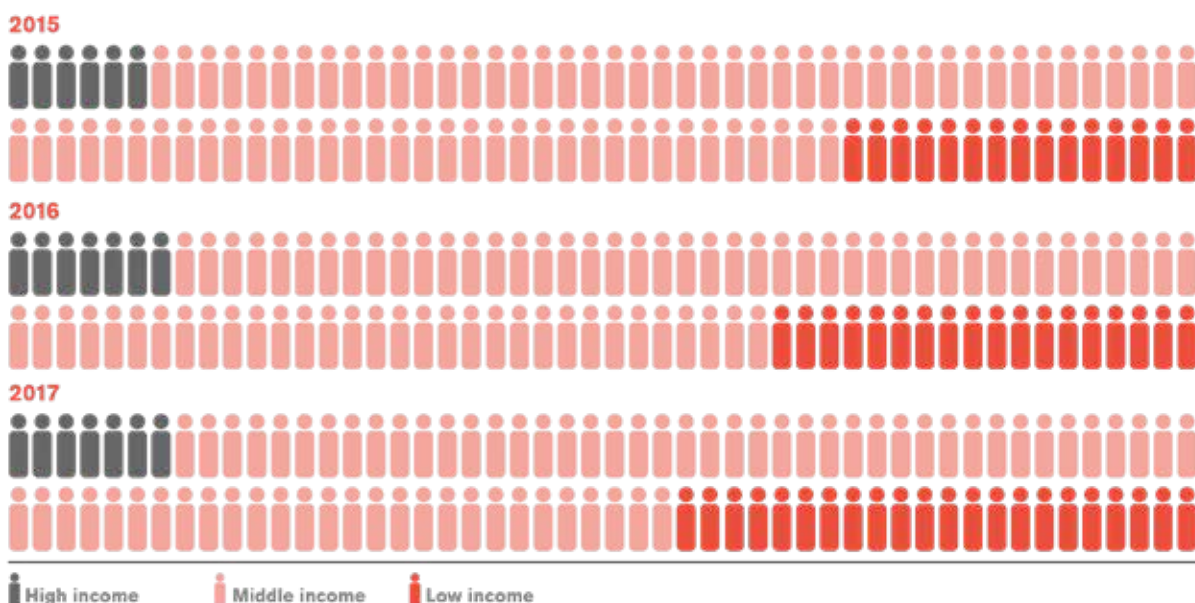
Sources: Development Initiatives based on UNHCR, UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) data.

Notes: World Bank classification has been used for income groups; the 'Middle Income group' aggregates Upper Middle Income and Lower Middle Income groups. Based on UNRWA data, Palestinian registered refugees are included as refugees for Jordan, Lebanon and Syria, and as IDPs for Palestine.

Figure 4 / Number of people in need and top three countries by region, 2017

23% of people in need in 2017 were living in just three countries: **Yemen, Syria and Turkey**

Italy

Ukraine

Europe 17.6m

Turkey 12.8m

Yemen 20.7m

Syria 13.7m

Iraq

Honduras

Guatemala

6.4m

North and Central America

Haiti

Middle East and North of Sahara 55.7m

201.5 million people in need of humanitarian assistance

South and Central Asia

Afghanistan

$15.5m

Pakistan

South America

5.8m

Venezuela

Bangladesh

Peru

Colombia

South of Sahara 99.6m

DRC

Far East Asia 900,000

Philippines

Oceania 100,000

Malaysia

Papua New Guinea

Nigeria

Ethiopia

Fiji

Palau

Thailand

Since 2011, the Middle East and North of Sahara[10] has accommodated more displaced people than any other region, with 14.2 million IDPs and 6.8 million refugees in 2017, followed by South of Sahara, with 13.8 million IDPs and 6.3 million refugees.

Figure 5 / Regions hosting displaced populations, 2008–2017
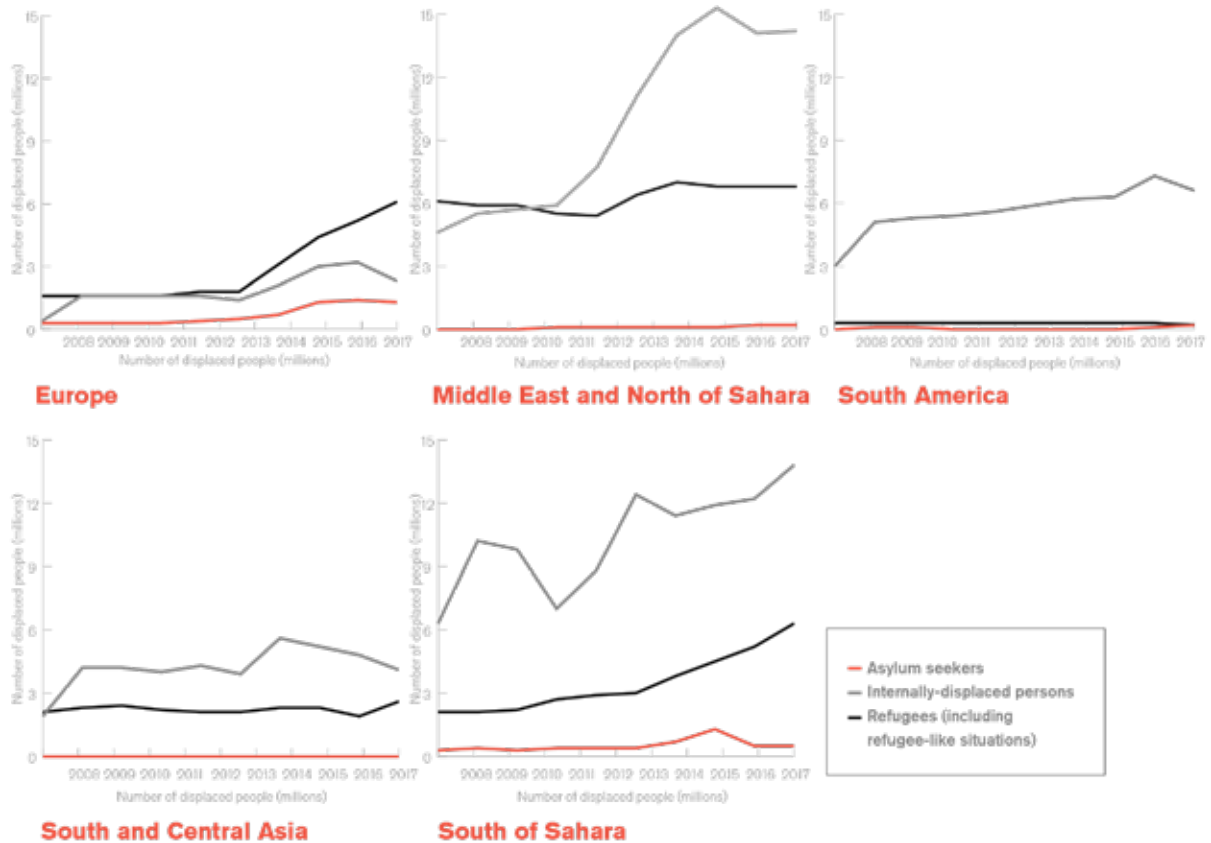
Source: Development Initiatives based on UNHCR, UNRWA, and IDMC data.
Notes: OECD country naming has been used for regions, except the Middle East and North of Sahara, which have been combined. According to OECD, Turkey is classified to be in Europe. Based on UNRWA data, Palestinian registered refugees are included as refugees for Jordan, Lebanon and Syria, and as IDPs for Palestine. Numbers for Oceania, Fas East Asia and North and Central America represented on average less than 2% of total forcibly displaced people for the period 2008-2017. The regions with the five largest displaced populations over the period 2008-2017 are shown in the chart.

Volumes of humanitarian assistance

The SOHS 2015 noted pronounced increases in international funding for responses to humanitarian emergencies. The high levels of growth seen in the previous period continued into 2015, with an increase of 16% in one year. As a result, the total volume of international humanitarian assistance increased significantly compared to the previous three-year reporting period: by 2017, total funding was $27.3 billion – the highest figure ever, and 23% higher than the equivalent sum for 2014. However, funding also appeared to have plateaued, remaining fairly stable for most of the period of the report: from 2015 to 2017, large annual increases were replaced by marginal growth of around 3% per year.

Figure 6 / International humanitarian assistance, 2013–2017
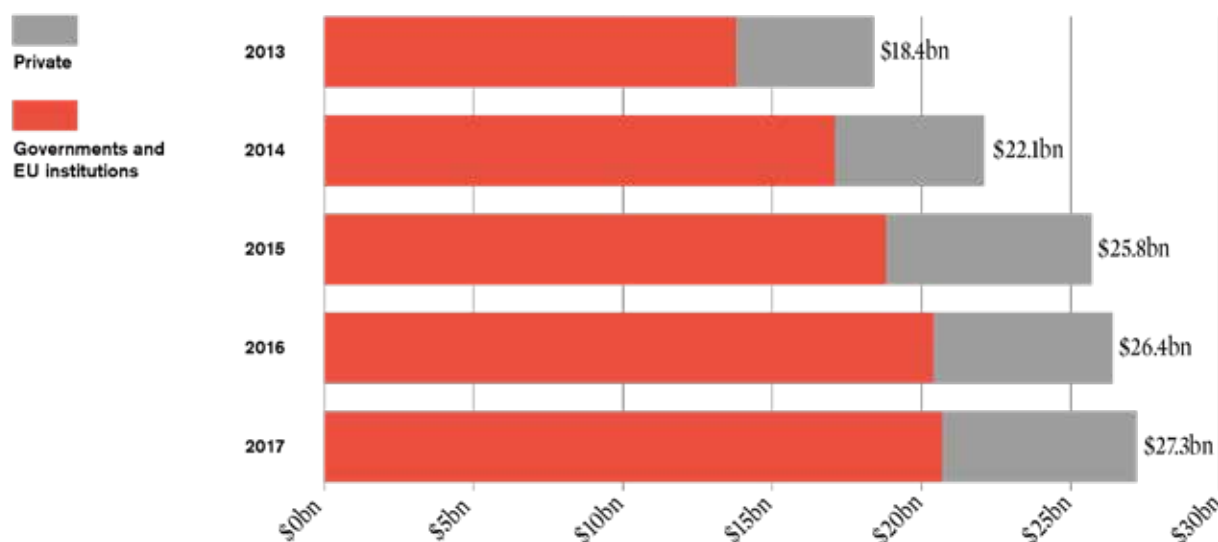
Private funding grew at a faster rate than institutional funding. Again, compared to the last SOHS period, private funding grew by 30%, and institutional funding by 21%. However, volumes of private funding vary year-on-year, with high-profile sudden-onset crises seemingly driving larger volumes. There was an exceptionally high level of private giving in 2015, possibly in response to the Nepal Earthquake and the Ebola Outbreak in West Africa. The growth in private funding was not enough to significantly change the balance between private and institutional funding as proportions of the total (see above).

Sources of humanitarian contributions

Funding from governments and EU institutions continued to form the majority of humanitarian funding. Overall, institutional contributions make up 76% of the 2017 total, 77% in 2016 and 73% in 2015. This is consistent with the pattern from the three years previously, where institutional contributions made up 75% of international humanitarian assistance in 2012 and 2013, and 77% in 2014.

The majority of institutional funding continued to come from a small group of donors. The largest 20 donors provided 96% of the institutional total in 2017, the same proportion as at the start of the period. Contributions from the three largest donors (the US, Germany and the UK)[11] increased from 53% of total international humanitarian assistance in 2015 to 59% in 2017, representing a further concentration of donors providing the lion's share of contributions.

Figure 7 / Humanitarian assistance from donor governments, 2017

US	$6,683m
Germany	$2,988m
UK	$2,518m
EU institutions	$2,247m
Japan	$843m
Sweden	$767m
Canada	$684m

Source: Development Initiatives based on OECD DAC, FTS and CERF.
Notes: 2017 data for OECD DAC is preliminary. Contributions of EU member states include an imputed amount of their expenditure (see chapter on components, methods and approach). EU institutions are also included separately for comparison and are shaded differently to distinguish them from government donors. Although Turkey is the largest donor on the basis of the humanitarian assistance it voluntarily reports to the DAC (providing $8,070 million in 2017), this largely comprises expenditure on hosting Syrian refugees within the country. As such, it is not strictly comparable with the international humanitarian assistance from other donors in this figure (which does not include expenditure on refugees in the donor country) and has not been included.

The SOHS 2015 was positive about the role that Gulf donors could play, particularly in light of the crises then emerging in the Middle East and North of Sahara. The surge in funding reported in 2015 was, however, short-lived, and by 2017 the UAE and Saudi Arabia, the two largest Gulf donors, had dropped off the list of the largest ten contributors of international humanitarian assistance.

How does the funding get there?

The long-standing trend of directing funding through UN agencies and INGOs in the first instance held throughout the current study period. In 2016, the most recent year for which data is available, the majority of government funding went to UN agencies as first-level recipients, which received $12.3 billion, equivalent to 60% of the total, the same proportion as in 2015. In contrast, the majority of private contributions – from individuals, trusts, foundations and corporations – were channelled through NGOs (87% of the total), while multilateral organisations received 10%, and the Red Cross/Red Crescent, 3%. These figures are broadly in line with the trend over the past five years.

Current reporting practices make it impossible to track funding down the transaction chain to aid recipients. The new functionalities provided by OCHA FTS have improved traceability, but data beyond first-level recipients is not yet reported comprehensively. Better reporting would help in understanding the volumes passed to implementing partners and the number of transaction layers in the chain, and would provide valuable

Figure 8 / Funding channels of international humanitarian assistance – first-level recipients, 2016

Source: Development Initiatives based on Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC), UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Financial Tracking Service (FTS) and UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) data and Development Initiatives' unique dataset for private contributions.
Notes: RCRC: International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. First-level recipient data from government donors and EU institutions uses OECD DAC Creditor Reporting System (CRS), UN CERF and UN OCHA FTS data. Calculations for total humanitarian assistance from OECD DAC donors use data from OECD DAC Tables 1, 2a and 'Members' total use of the multilateral system', so totals may differ. 'Public sector' refers both to the OECD definition and reporting to the FTS. OECD DAC CRS codes 'other', 'to be defined' and 'public–private partnerships' are merged to 'other'. Private funding figures use DI's unique dataset on private contributions for humanitarian assistance. Data is in constant 2016 prices.

insight into the quality of funding – how much is multi-year or unearmarked at each transaction layer. This is currently not visible.

The SOHS 2015, which covered the period prior to the WHS and the Grand Bargain commitment to 'localisation', noted limited progress in investment in local and national responders. Funding is only one aspect of localisation, but the Grand Bargain workstream target to channel 25% of total international humanitarian assistance 'as directly as possible' to local and national responders by 2020 (The Grand Bargain, 2016) seems unlikely to be met at current rates of progress.

Based on data reported to FTS, funding directed to local and national responders as first-level recipients rose in 2017 to $603 million, from $458 million in 2016.[12, 13] This means they received 2.9% of total international humanitarian assistance in 2017, higher than the 2016 share of 2% but still a long way short of the 2020 target. Most of this funding was directed to national governments (84%, or $509 million). This left local and national NGOs directly receiving $85 million, representing 0.4% of all international humanitarian assistance in 2017. Compared to 2016, volumes increased by just 0.1% ($6 million).

The Localisation Marker Working Group[14] interprets 'as directly as possible' to include funds passed through one intermediary – that is, to a second-level recipient. Using this definition, funding provided to local and national responders both directly and through one intermediary totalled $736 million in 2017, accounting for 3.6% of international humanitarian assistance reported to FTS.[15] This is a marginal increase on 2016, when the figure was $535 million, or 2.3% of total funding.

Contributions to pooled funds continued to increase, possibly thanks to the momentum generated around the Grand Bargain commitments. An emphasis on the need to provide more unearmarked funding to allow for quicker adjustments to changing needs, along with signatories' efforts to give funds 'as directly as possible' to local responders, may have led to an expectation that a number of Grand Bargain targets could be met through pooled funds.

In 2017, contributions to UN pooled funds were almost double what they were a decade previously, in 2008. Overall volumes reached a record high of $1.3 billion in 2017, up by 32% on 2015 levels. Funding to the CERF increased by 18% between 2016 and 2017, from $426 million to $505 million. While this represents the largest increase since its launch in 2006, both in volume and proportionally, it still leaves the CERF some distance from its $1 billion by 2018 target.[16] The majority of contributions (two-thirds) to pooled funds in 2017 came from five donors: the UK ($1.5 billion), Sweden ($721 million), the Netherlands ($553 million), Germany ($532 million) and Norway ($368 million).

Over 2015–17, contributions to the NGO-led pooled fund, the Start Fund, totalled an estimated $40 million. While the absolute volumes of funds available through this Fund are small compared to the global total, such mechanisms do enable direct funding to member NGOs.

Funding against need

The extent to which the consolidated funding requirements of UN appeals are met is often regarded as a proxy measure of the extent to which funding meets humanitarian needs (notwithstanding that additional funding flows beyond appeals may be used to reach the same populations). The collective requirement of UN appeals in 2017 was $25.2 billion, an increase of 24% ($4.9 billion) on 2014. Between 2012 and 2014, requests were largely constant around the $20 billion mark. The increase was primarily driven by larger requests for ongoing crises in Syria, Yemen, Somalia and Nigeria ($13.8 billion) and new appeals for Ethiopia and Pakistan ($1.8 billion).

Funding to 2017 appeals also increased, but at a slower rate than requirements. Total funding in 2017 was $14.9 billion, the largest ever, representing a 24% increase on 2014. However, despite these growing funding volumes there was a shortfall of $10.3 billion in funding against appeals – again the largest volume to date.

Figure 9 / Requirements against funding in UN-coordinated appeals (2008–2017)

This meant that appeals were 59.2% met in 2017, below the 2016 figure of 61% but above the 55% registered in 2015 (which saw the largest proportional shortfall to date, 45%). Only in 2016 did funding reach or exceed the proportion against requirements seen in 2012 (60% met), 2013 (65% met) and 2014 (62% met). There is no clear direction of travel in terms of securing funding against requirements.

The same appeals data allows some cross-country comparison of per person requirements against per person funding. Notwithstanding the data caveats around recording the number of people targeted within appeals, two

Figure 10 / Requirements and funding per targeted person in UN-coordinated appeals, 2017
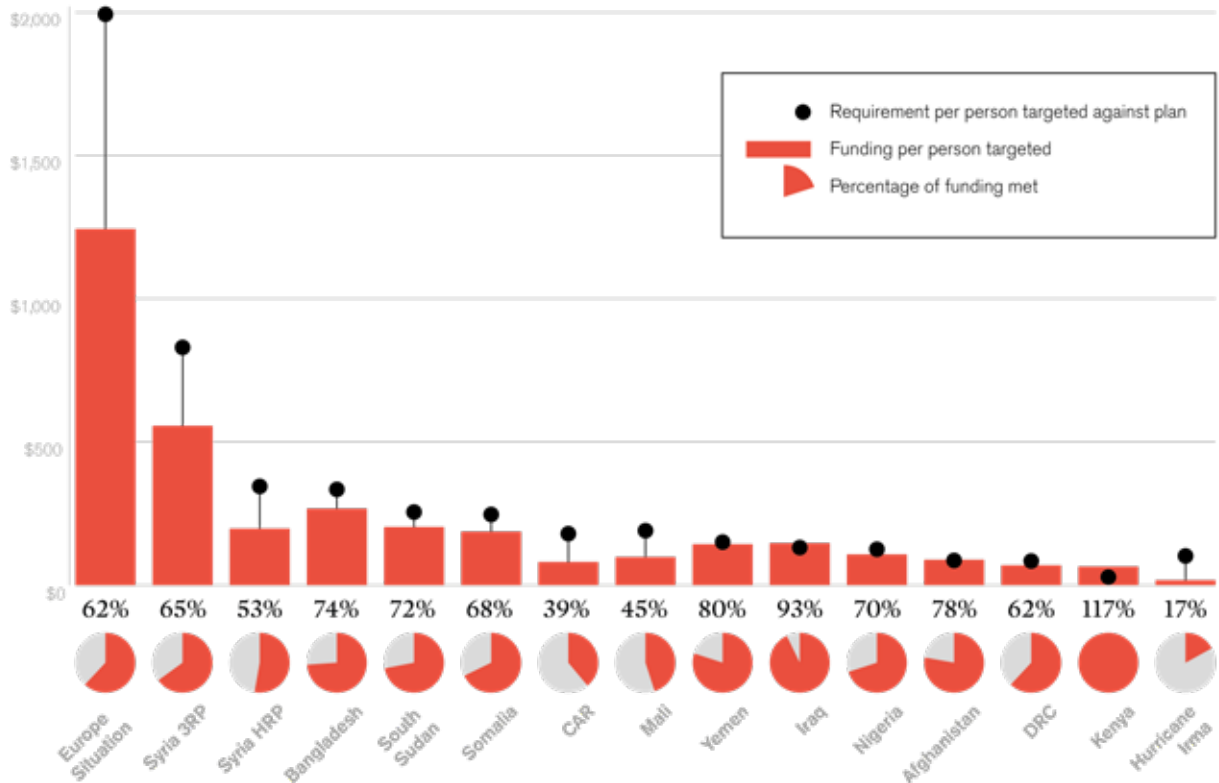
Source: DI based on UN OCHA appeals documents and Financial Tracking System (FTS).

Notes: Only appeals mentioned in the write-up have been visualised. For appeals documents, plan version with the requirements figure closest to that recorded on FTS is used. For Syria and Iraq HRPs, the figure for 'people directly targeted' is used. For Hurricane Irma the 'affected people' figure is used. For Syria 3RP the total figure for refugees in the area is used. For Niger Plan, the 'people in need' figure is used. Data in current prices.

things still stand out: the large difference in amounts requested per person from one appeal to another; and the very different degree to which these requests are met (from 17% to 117%). The average per person requirement across 2017 plans was $190,[17] higher than the previous SOHS's reported average of $179, while average funding per person targeted was $109,[18] marginally above the figure reported in the last SOHS.[19]

Where did humanitarian funding go?

Over the last decade, humanitarian funding has become increasingly concentrated among a small number of countries. In the period 2015–17, the concentration remained, but did not significantly increase. Based on the most recently available data from the DAC and FTS, the ten largest country recipients of international humanitarian assistance accounted for 60% of both the 2015 and 2016 international humanitarian assistance country-allocable[20] totals. Syria was the largest recipient country for the fifth year in a row, seeing a 23% increase on 2015, to reach $2.6 billion. Turkey saw the largest growth in volume of humanitarian assistance (up $604 million,

or 197%), followed by Iraq ($525 million, 59%) and Greece ($505 million). Greece and Turkey[21] featured among the ten largest country recipients for the first time due to levels of assistance to the refugee response in these countries. Volumes to Jordan and Lebanon fell by 23% ($224 million) and 20% ($160 million), respectively.

The SOHS 2015 report noted the persistence of chronic crises, and this trend did not significantly change in 2015–17. Most funding continues to be absorbed by long-term emergencies.[22] Of the total country-allocable international humanitarian assistance in 2016, the most recent year for which data is available, 86% was directed to long- and medium-term recipients.[23] Close to three-quarters (74%) of the 2016 total went to long-term recipients, higher than 2014, when this group received 71% of the total. Of the 20 largest recipients of humanitarian assistance, 16 were long-term recipients in 2016, compared to 15 in 2014.

Based on data reported solely to OCHA's FTS, analysis of 2017 funding by crisis, rather than by country only, displays a similar concentration from 2014 onwards. In 2013, the five largest emergencies accounted for 48% of total funding. This proportion has increased year-on-year since then, such that, by 2017, 56% of all funding went to five crises: Syria, Yemen, South Sudan, Iraq and Somalia. This progressive concentration of funding was accompanied by a gradual shift in the geographic focus of the top ten recipients,[25] from crises predominantly in South of Sahara to the Middle East and North of Sahara. Volumes of international humanitarian assistance to South of Sahara increased from $5.2 billion in 2008 to $7.2 billion in 2017 (38.4%), while countries in the Middle East and North of Sahara received progressively higher volumes each year, from $960 million in 2008 to $10.2 billion in 2017 (up 1,097%). The share of international humanitarian assistance going to these two regions increased from 9% to 48% in 2008–17. In South of Sahara, it fell from 50% in 2008 to 34% in 2017.

For the fifth consecutive year, the Syria regional crisis received the largest single-crisis proportion of funding in 2017, despite a 12% decrease in volumes of humanitarian assistance; it accounted for 28% of the total ($5.7 billion), the same share as in 2016. Yemen's share of humanitarian assistance increased by nine percentage points, from 2% in 2014 to 11% 2016.

Analysis of funding recorded in FTS (2017) by country, and coded by crisis type, shows that most (80%) is spent in countries experiencing conflict alone, or conflict combined with at least one other crisis type. Over half (51%) of all humanitarian assistance was directed to countries experiencing conflict and hosting refugees; 6% went to countries experiencing conflict and natural hazards; and 22% went to countries experiencing complex crises with elements of all three. Only 10% of funding was directed to countries coded as having a single crisis type (conflict alone, natural hazard alone or refugee alone) in 2017, and only 1% ($147 million) went to countries affected by natural hazards alone.

Figure 11 / Five emergencies[24] receiving the most international humanitarian assistance (2008–2017)
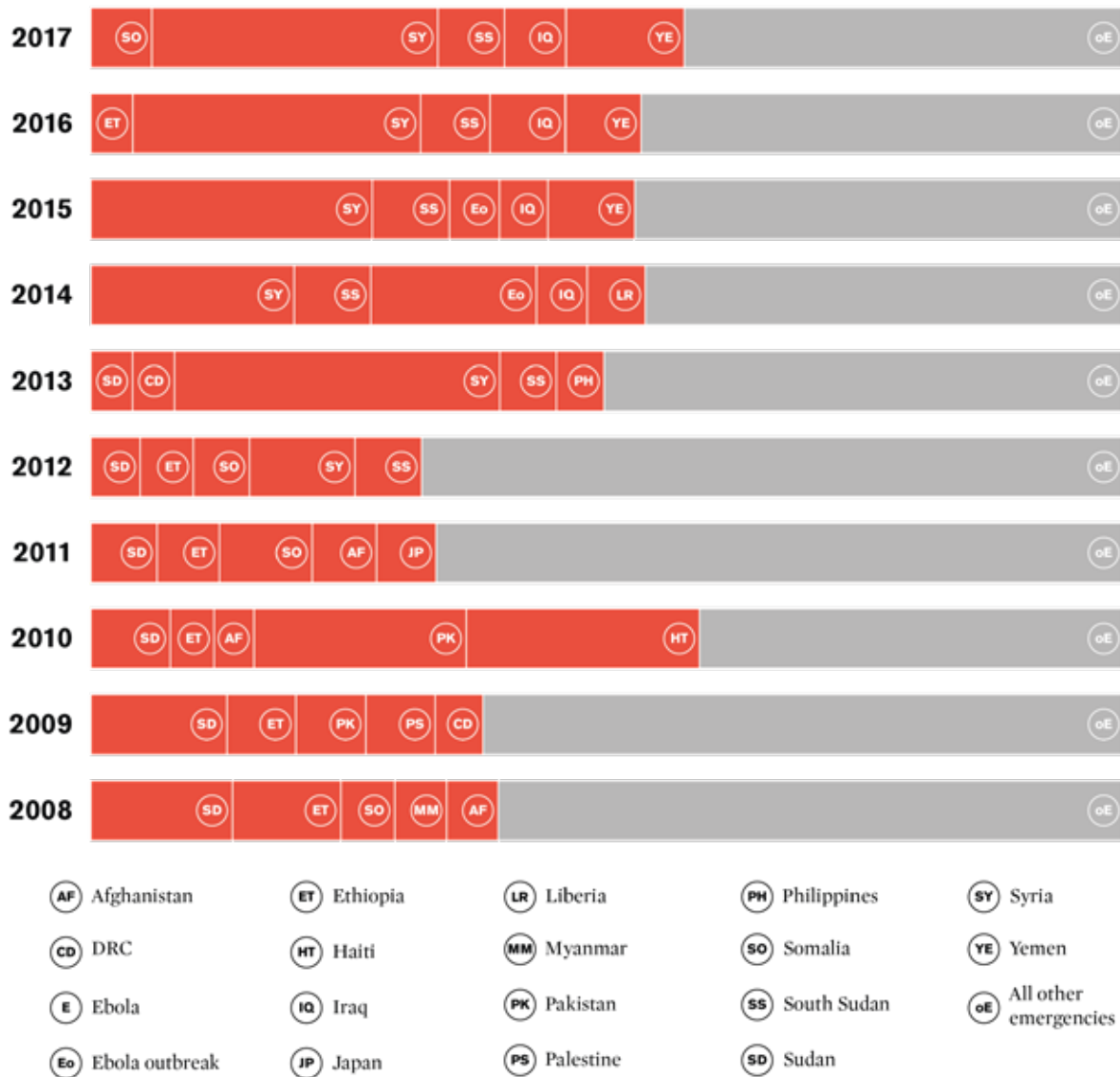
Source: Development Initiatives based on UN OCHA FTS data.

Notes: Bars scaled by volume of international humanitarian assistance reported. Totals are shown by crisis rather than country and, in the cases of Syria, Yemen and South Sudan, funding is for the regional crises. Data is in constant 2016 prices. Totals in this chart will differ from those calculated by country, rather than crisis, in figures 2 and 5, and from those sourced based on appeals only in figure 9.

What were funds spent on?

Appeals for refugee responses drove an increase in both requirements and funding under the Multi-Sector[27] category, which both requested and received the largest, and increasing, amounts over 2015–17 – up from $6.3 billion requested and $3.5 billion received to $7.5 billion requested and $3.9 billion received (20% and 10% of total appeal requirements, respectively). Coverage reached 60% in 2016, but decreased in 2017, to 51%. Food Security continues to attract the largest requests and receive the largest sector-specific contributions (that is, excluding undefined contributions or contributions spanning multiple

Figure 12 / International humanitarian assistance by crisis type, 2017[26]

Conflict and refugee hosting $9805m

Refugee hosting only US$1058m

Refugee hosting and 'natural' hazard $1262m

Conflict, refugee and 'natural' hazards $4242m

Conflict only $310m

'Natural' hazard only US$147m

Conflict and 'natural' hazard $1066m

sectors), while most other sectors see significantly less investment. Aggregate requirements for the Food Security sector increased from $4.7 billion in 2015 to $6.5 billion in 2017; 61% of requirements under Food Security were met in 2017, compared to 53% in 2015. Multi-Sector and Food Security accounted for the largest proportion of total requirements, consistently at 30% and 24% respectively. Overall, the largest funding increases (by percentage) over the period were for Nutrition (272%) and Protection (61%). The sector with the largest funding against requirements was Coordination and Support Services, at 84%. At the other end of the scale, Early Recovery had only 24% coverage in 2017. These two sectors have some of the lowest requirements.

Cash is reported as a modality, rather than a sector. The majority of cash that is reported is captured within Food Security, but the focus on multi-purpose cash means there is as yet no agreement on how to record these activities, whether as part of the existing Cluster classification or outside it.

Cash transfer programming is not yet comprehensively tracked, and current reporting allows for only partial global figures.[28] In 2016, an estimated $2.8 billion of humanitarian assistance was provided in the form of cash and vouchers,[29] representing a 40% increase on the 2015 estimate

Figure 13 / Requirements and funding per sector on UN-coordinated appeals – 2015, 2017
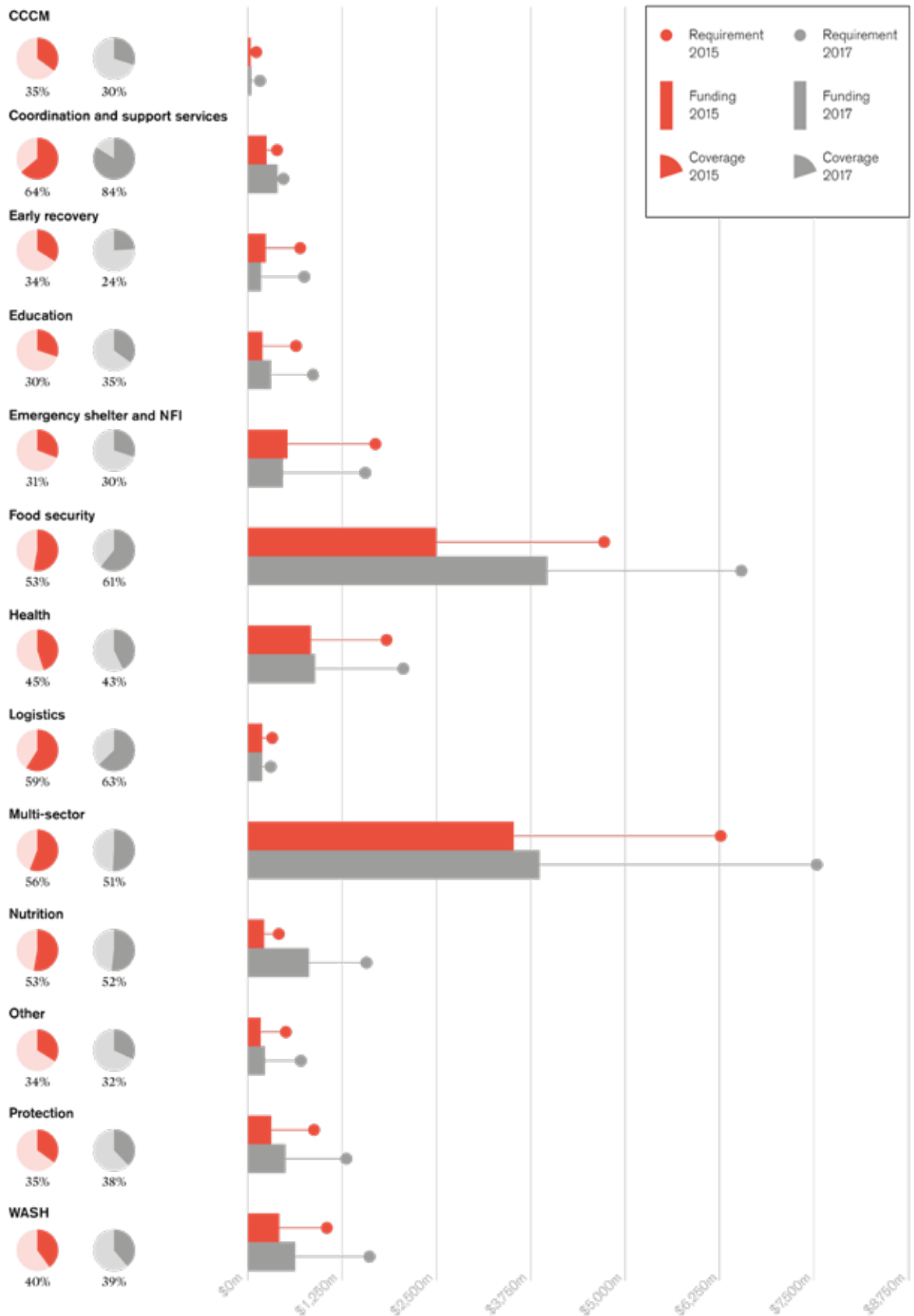
Source: Development Initiatives based on UN OCHA FTS data and UN OCHA Humanitarian Clusters criteria.
Notes: CCCM: Camp Coordination and Camp Managemen; NFI: Non-Food Items. 'Humanitarian clusters' have been categorised according to OCHA and IASC (Inter-Agency Standing Committee). A new category ('Multi-sector') has been created in order to allocate those activities which are related to more than one humanitarian cluster. Please note that those activities whose cluster is not specified on FTS have been categorised as 'Not specified', thus excluded in the final chart due to its nature and because they are not comprehensive. Refugee Response Plans (RRPs) in Burundi, Nigeria and South Sudan for 2017 are thus excluded as UNHCR provides financial requirements by Cluster/technical sector, but not funding data. Other includes agriculture, CWC (Communication with Communities) and Community Restoration. The total requirements for this sectors together represented less than 3% on average for the period 2015-2017. Data is in current prices.

of $2 billion. Consistency of reporting at recipient country level varies, making any aggregated figures for cash unreliable. However, we can say that, in 2017, 6% and 7% respectively of humanitarian assistance to Ethiopia and Nigeria was in the form of cash, while Zimbabwe, Dominica and Haiti reported 29%, 13% and 11% implemented as cash transfers.[30] Given the caveat on reporting above, no trends can be clearly identified, despite growing recognition of the value of providing cash transfers.

Figure 14 / Concentration of funding by region (2008–2017)

Middle East and North of Sahara

2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
$960m	$1,354m	$757m	$1,073m	$1,952m	$4,266m	$5,540m	$7,524m	$9,420m	$8,506m

Africa South of Sahara

| $5,203m | $4,746m | $3,760m | $5,010m | $5,211m | $4,602m | $7,962m | $5,997m | $6,973m | $7,200m |

Europe

| $44m | $22m | $16m | $35m | $85m | $161m | $514m | $726m | $1,489m | $1,668m |

South and Central Asia

| $1,570m | $1,769m | $3,867m | $1,394m | $1,100m | $867m | $981m | $1,332m | $1,084m | $1,085m |

South America

| $80m | $69m | $116m | $72m | $56m | $62m | $90m | $71m | $112m | $80m |

Far East Asia

| $405m | $302m | $117m | $810m | $159m | $705m | $388m | $115m | $121m | $85m |

Oceania

| $2m | $21m | $6m | $14m | $9m | $16m | $15m | $54m | $82m | $21m |

North and Central America

| $242m | $58m | $3,261m | $452m | $132m | $93m | $189m | $93m | $245m | $194m |

Needs & funding

Source: Development Initiatives based on UN OCHA FTS data.
Notes: Data is in constant 2016 prices. Totals are shown by crisis rather than country. Totals in this chart will differ from those calculated by country and from those based on UN appeals only in figure 9.

In Somalia, where reporting may be comparatively stronger than for other recipient countries, up to 17% of international humanitarian assistance as reported to FTS contains cash elements, determined on the basis of modality reported (cash or 'traditional' aid) and project descriptions. This splits further into 11% wholly or primarily cash-based, and 6% for which cash is one of multiple modalities.

The only data available that provides an indication of investment in disaster preparedness and prevention (DPP) is reported to the DAC. Looking first at 2016, $738.9 million of official[31] humanitarian assistance was directed towards DPP, representing 3.7% of donors' official humanitarian contributions that year, a 10% increase compared to 2014 volumes.

Additional non-humanitarian ODA grants are made towards flood prevention and climate change adaptation (CCA) and are similarly identifiable on OECD DAC. Over the 2012–16 period, both disaster preparedness and flood prevention increased at a smaller rate (up by 22% and 18% respectively) than climate change adaption (up by 68%). In 2016 volumes of ODA for flood prevention reached $92.0 million, while CCA contributions amounted to a significantly larger $8.6 billion. This analysis has not examined whether contributions of CCA have been directed either less or more proportionally to the largest recipients of humanitarian assistance.

In 2016, the largest donor to these three sectors (DPP, flood prevention and CCA) combined was the UK, accounting for $2.1 billion, or 23% of the total. This was closely followed by EU institutions ($1.8 billion or 19%) and Germany ($1.5 billion or 16%). The ten largest donors jointly accounted for 84% of the resources directed to DPP, flood prevention and CCA.

What other funding is available?

A wide range of financial resources flow within crisis-affected countries, both international and domestic. Within this, official humanitarian assistance represents only a small portion of the mix. In 2016,[32] official humanitarian assistance for the largest 20 country recipients represented 1.7% of total reported resources available. Within the same group of recipients, government non-grant revenues made up 63% of total resources. Of the international resources flowing into these countries, the largest was commercial long-term debt, such as bonds, private bank loans and private credit from manufacturers and exporters (12.5%); ODA (excluding humanitarian assistance) accounted for 6.9%.

Figure 15 / Resource mix in the 20 countries receiving the most international humanitarian assistance, 2016

Peacekeeping 0.8%
Overseas Development Assistance 6.9%
Long-term debt, official 0.7%
FDI 4.3%
Long-term debt, commercial 12.5%
Non-grant government revenue 63%
Remittances 8.7%
Humanitarian assistance 1.7%
OOFs 1.2%
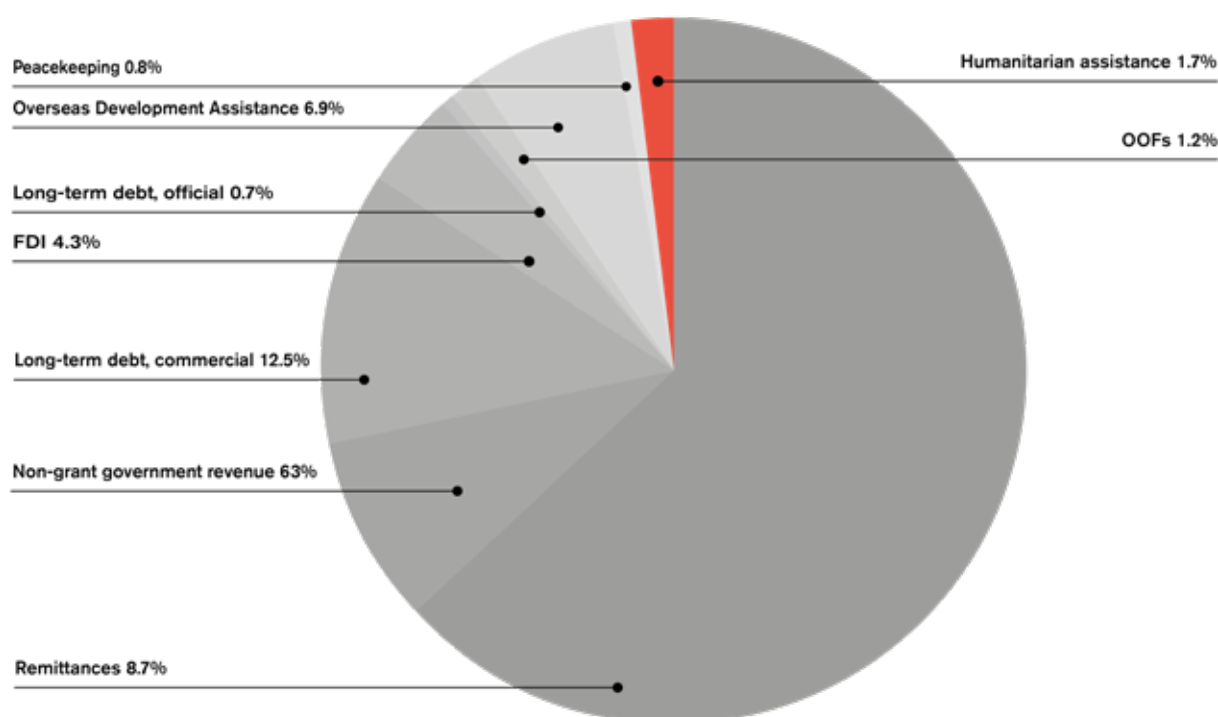
Source: Development Initiatives calculations based on OECD DAC, FTS, CERF, UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), World Bank and IMF data and data from peacekeeping budgets or funding snapshots.
Notes: OOFs: other official flows. Government revenue may include grants for Turkey and Yemen. Negative flows for net portfolio, short-term debt and foreign direct investment have been set to zero at the country level.

Aggregate figures conceal differences in the resource mix at country level. For example, volumes of remittances vary greatly across the largest recipients of humanitarian assistance, representing just 0.3% and 1.8% of all resources for Turkey and Iraq, while making up 26% and 37% for Pakistan and Nigeria.

Compared to the group of other developing countries,[33] the resource mix to the largest 20 recipients saw higher proportions of peacekeeping, non-humanitarian ODA and official humanitarian assistance flows (2.2% compared with 0.1%, 6.9% compared with 4.4% and 4.6% compared with 0.2%, respectively). While for both groups the proportion of long-term commercial debt was similar (37% for other developing countries and 34% for the largest 20 recipients), foreign direct investment made up a significantly higher proportion of the mix for other developing countries (26% compared with 12%).

Endnotes for this chapter

1. People in need by country is calculated selecting the maximum number of people in need by cross-referencing five different databases:
   a. primary source – ACAPS (people in need published in the most recent weekly report from 2017
   b. GRFC Population in Crisis (people in need gathered from *2018 Global Report on Food Crises*)
   c. *Global Humanitarian Overview 2018* report (people in need by country);
   d. UNHCR refugees, refugee-like situations and asylum-seekers
   e. UNRWA total of refugees (and IDPs in Palestine).
   The UNHCR and UNRWA data refers to the number of refugees (and IDPs) in hosting countries. As a result, this figure includes people in need numbers for countries beyond those with a UN-coordinated appeal and will therefore be higher than OCHA's *Humanitarian Needs Overview* estimate.

2. See endnote 1.

3. Figures pre-2016 are from countries with UN coordinated appeals only, and so will be lower than those for 2016–17, which also include countries that did not have an appeal.

4. While not directly comparable with the 2016 and 2017 estimates, in 2015 UN-coordinated appeals were identifying 124.7 million people in need of assistance globally, which by the end of the year had increased to 128.6 million.

5. Throughout the chapter, 'complex crises' refer to those which simultaneously experience at least two of the three crisis types – disasters associated with natural hazards, refugee situations or conflict. The only exception to this is in figure 12 (see note).

6. Just three countries in 2017 experienced disasters associated with 'natural' hazards alone. In 2016 the analysis identified nine countries affected by 'natural' hazards alone, primarily driven by *El Niño*.

7. Both reporting and methodologies for counting the numbers of conflict-driven internal displacement have improved in the current reporting period, which may have implications for the aggregate numbers used in the analysis.

8. 'Displaced persons' refers to IDPs, refugees, asylum-seekers and people in refugee-like situations.

9. Country income groups are based on four classifications: higher income, upper middle income, lower middle income and lower income, as defined by the World Bank based on gross national income per capita in US$.

10. These figures include displaced Palestinians.

11. See GHA, 2018: chapter 3 for further details.

12. Due to new functionalities introduced to FTS in 2017, analysis of funding to national and local responders is possible for 2016 and 2017, but not before that.

13. *The Global Humanitarian Assistance Report 2016* was showing $87.6 million going to national and local NGOs directly; these figures are not comparable to 2016 and 2017 analyses, which are based on an upgraded methodology.

14. IASC Humanitarian Financing Task Team, 2018. Localisation Marker Working Group: Definitions Paper, available at: https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/hftt_localisation_marker_definitions_paper_24_january_2018.pdf.

15. Analysis of funding through one intermediary was made possible by the new FTS flow model released at the start of 2017. It is therefore likely that more recent data is reported to a more accurate degree than that predating the new release. However, only around 22% of financing is reported beyond first-level recipients, and so this figure may contain a significant margin of error, either positive or negative.

16. The UN Secretary-General, subsequently endorsed by the UN General Assembly, called for the CERF to increase to $1 billion by 2018. See UN General Assembly Resolution, A/RES/71/127, available at: https://undocs.org/A/RES/71/127. See also UN CERF, 2017. Making the case for an investment in the Central Emergency Response Fund. Available at: www.unocha.org/cerf/sites/default/files/CERF/CERF_BriefingNote_20171108.pdf.

17. This calculation discounts two outliers: the Europe and North Korea appeals. The former has the highest requirements/person figures, while the latter has the lowest.

18. As above.

19. To calculate these averages, the Europe Situation Regional Response Plan was excluded from the analysis as an outlier, having requirements per person averaging $2,020 and funding received per person amounting to $1,244, above the next largest appeal in terms of both requirements and funding per person – the Syria 3RP ($857 and $557, respectively).

20. 2016 is the most recent year for which OECD DAC data on where humanitarian assistance goes is available. Country-allocable humanitarian assistance refers to data reported to the DAC that specifies a recipient country.

Needs & funding

21. The methodology used to identify assistance channelled to recipients includes flows of international humanitarian assistance directed to non-ODA eligible countries.

22. There currently does not exist a universally agreed definition of what constitutes a 'protracted crisis'.

23. Long-term recipients are defined as those who have received an above-average share of ODA as humanitarian assistance annually for eight years or more. Medium-term recipients are those that have received such a share for between three and seven years.

24. 'Emergency' and 'country' are not used coterminously; some emergencies are country-specific, whereas others cover more than one country but will be regarded as one country: for example the Syria emergency includes Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt.

25. 2010 was atypical in that two natural-hazard-related disasters (Haiti (23%) and Pakistan (20%)) featured among the largest five crises mobilising large volumes of international humanitarian assistance.

26. The analysis uses country-allocable only international humanitarian assistance figures and therefore totals will differ from aggregates calculated by donor or emergency in other analyses.

27. The regional and/or refugee response plans with a focus on displacement tend not to provide disaggregated data by sector, and so much of the reporting captures figures across the overall appeal.

28. Developments to UN OCHA's FTS functionalities will make it easier to track Cash Transfers Programming (CTP) and provide greater granularity on CTP data in 2018.

29. This figure is from CaLP and Accenture Development Partnerships (2018). The methodology builds on research by Development Initiatives in 2016 for ODI (Spencer, Parrish and Lattimer, 2016)

30. This is the percentage of flows on FTS with the modality cash-transfer programming out of total international humanitarian assistance the respective countries reported to FTS in 2017.

31. Official humanitarian assistance refers to assistance given by DAC donors and reported to OECD DAC. International humanitarian assistance comprises funding from non-DAC donors as well (see chapter on components, methods and approach).

32. 2016 is the most recent year for which data is available.

33. 'Developing countries' refers to the World Bank's classification.
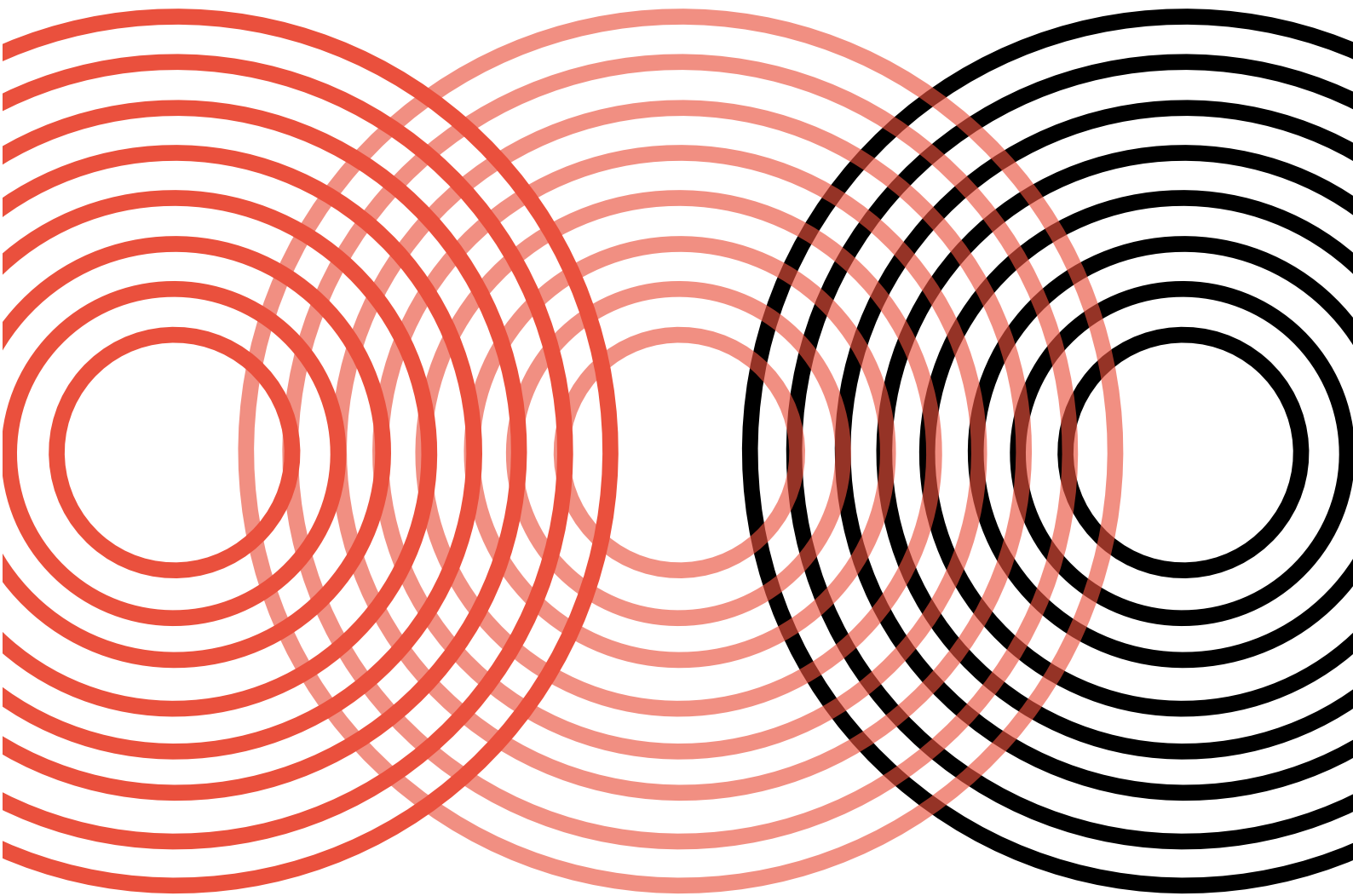
6

COMPOSITION OF THE SYSTEM

In 2017, the total combined field personnel of the humanitarian sector numbered approximately 570,000. This represents an increase of 27% from the last SOHS report (450,000 in 2013). Growing numbers of national humanitarian workers appeared to drive this increase, while the number of international (expatriate) staff remained stable. On average across humanitarian organisations, this growth in personnel did not keep pace with the overall rise in operational expenditure.

Overall trends

The total estimated number of humanitarian workers in the field has grown by 27%, from 450,000 in the last SOHS period to 570,000 (Table 9). Most of this increase was accounted for by national aid workers, while international staff numbers stayed roughly the same (figure 16).

The growth in personnel was not commensurate with the overall growth of operational budgets, which increased by 50% on average across organisations from the previous period. In short, over the period the sector became more capital-intensive in programming and more national in personnel.

Table 9 / Humanitarian personnel by organisation type

	UN agencies	NGOs (estimates)	Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement
SOHS 2018	**79,000** field personnel	**331,000** field personnel	**159,700** field personnel
SOHS 2015	**56,000** field personnel	**249,000** field personnel	**145,000** field personnel

Source: Humanitarian Outcomes (2018).
Notes: The figures shown are for the calendar years 2013 (SOHS 2015) and 2017 (SOHS 2018).

Figure 16 / National and international humanitarian field personnel
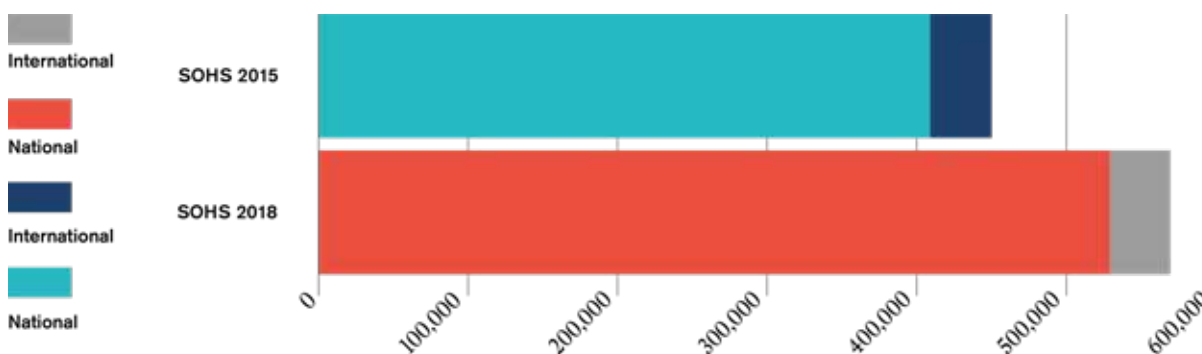
Source: Humanitarian Outcomes (2018).
Notes: The figures shown are for the calendar years 2013 (SOHS 2015) and 2017 (SOHS 2018).

These trends reflect the types of emergencies that currently comprise the work of the humanitarian sector. While protracted conflicts have for many years accounted for the bulk of international humanitarian response, this was even more marked during the current report period given the absence of very large-scale non-conflict emergencies and the system's focus on the needs of people trapped and/or displaced by major armed conflict in Syria, Iraq, Yemen and South Sudan.

Responding to conflicts of this nature tends to be more capital-intensive and relies more heavily on nationally recruited staff. Challenges around access also make conflict responses more expensive and less likely to involve expatriates: in South Sudan, reliance on air transport and mobile deliveries has increased the costs of the response without commensurate staffing increases, and in Syria conditions have dictated a greater reliance on national partners and hybrid national/diaspora organisations, with international organisations acting more as intermediary donors than implementers. Aid projects in these contexts tend towards simpler interventions, such as deliveries of food and hygiene items, requiring fewer and less technically skilled personnel (Stoddard, 2017).[1]

The concentration of humanitarian expenditure in a smaller number of countries (see chapter on needs and funding) may also have affected the number of new staff hires: agencies are likely to have fewer staff in a small number of large programmes than when they are spending the same amount on a larger number of small programmes. Increased activity in middle income countries, with educated populations and governments that expect agencies to hire locally, is also likely to have affected the number of nationally recruited staff.

Agency-specific findings

The bulk of financial resources continues to flow through UN agencies, much of it in grants to NGO implementing partners. However, NGOs' operational budgets grew at a slightly greater rate than UN agencies' (57% versus 51%). Conversely, UN agencies grew more quickly in terms of staff than NGOs (41% versus 33%).

The largest humanitarian actors within the UN system, both in terms of staff and humanitarian expenditure, remain, in descending order, WFP, UNHCR and UNICEF. All three grew, though growth was steepest for UNICEF, a function both of receiving more contributions for humanitarian response and an increase in the proportion of its budget allocated to humanitarian relief work as against development. Once again, the law of small(er) numbers cautions against drawing strong conclusions about these differences.

There was some slight movement among the sector's other dominant actors. MSF remains the largest humanitarian NGO in terms of operational expenditure and is now the largest humanitarian entity of any kind in terms of staff size, outstripping even the largest UN agencies in the number of staff dedicated to humanitarian response.

Figure 17 / INGO shares of humanitarian spend

SOHS 2018

| 'The big six' 23% | Other NGOs 77% |

SOHS 2015

| 'The big five' 31% | Other NGOs 69% |
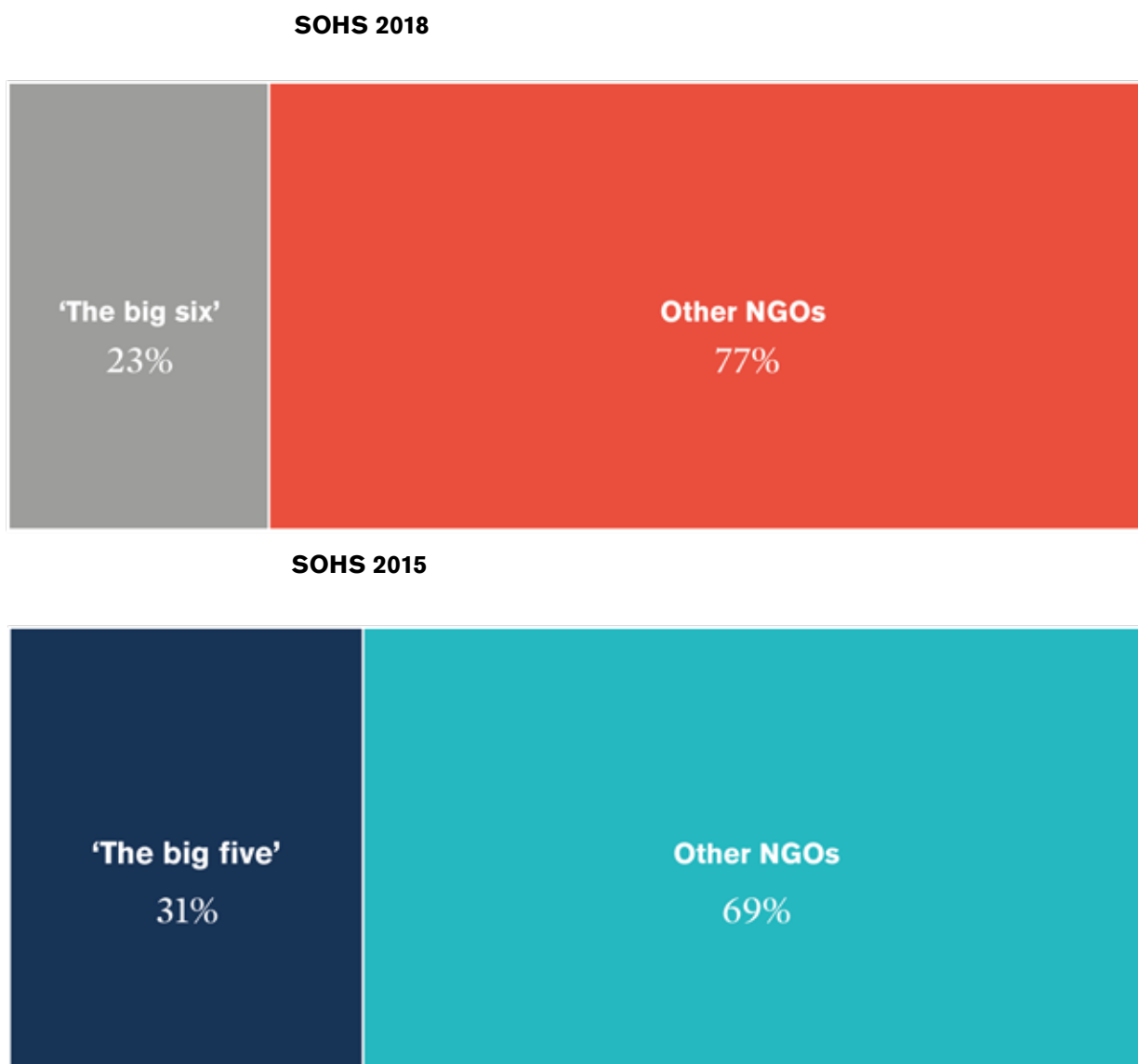
Source: Humanitarian Outcomes, Global Database of Humanitarian Organisations
Notes: These figures were sourced from annual reports and financial statements, supplemented with website information and direct queries to the organisations.

Six organisations or organisational 'families' (including MSF) accounted for nearly a quarter of the combined humanitarian spend. While the NGO sector is a little less lopsided than it was in 2013, when just five organisations accounted for 31% of expenditure, it is unquestionably still oligopolistic in composition.

Not all NGOs report in detail on the specific amounts spent in different emergency contexts, but a common feature of those organisations that grew the fastest during the period was significant programming in the Middle East, which has seen a surge in funding to meet humanitarian needs created by conflict and mass displacement. One striking example is the Norwegian Refugee Council, whose budget growth (33% in a single year, 2016–17) was

fuelled by expanding programmes in Somalia, Iraq and Syria/ the Syria region. In Syria in particular, the high volume of funding combined with sparse agency presence on the ground has seen greater amounts flowing to fewer agencies, with large individual growth effects. In the case of GOAL, for example, funding for its Syria response made up more than half of its global operational budget in 2017.

Growth was more modest among the Red Cross/Red Crescent organisations than for either UN agencies or NGOs. The Movement's international capstone organisations, IFRC and ICRC, experienced an average increase in expenditure of 46% between 2013 and 2017, and a 21% increase in field staff. Data for National Societies appears to show an overall decrease in expenditure (from $14.4 billion in 2013 to $13.8 billion in 2016). This flattens out the overall expenditure figure for the Movement, with combined spending of $15.7 billion for both periods. Staff numbers for the Movement as a whole grew by 10%.

It is possible that the dip in funding for National Societies is another reflection of the absence of large-scale non-conflict disasters during the period, which would normally swell the budgets of National Societies in affected countries.

Southern INGOs operating regionally or globally tend to be more active in development than in the humanitarian sphere, so the Humanitarian Outcomes model, which focuses on resources dedicated to humanitarian emergencies, is unlikely to capture major trends within this subsector. In terms of humanitarian resources, no Southern INGO stood out as experiencing notable change (i.e. growth far above or below the mean).

**Table 10 / Reported humanitarian expenditure,
SOHS 2018, 2015**

	UN agencies	NGOs	Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement*	IFRC/ICRC only
SOHS 2018	**$16** billion	**$16.8** billion	**$15.7** billion	**$1.9** billion
SOHS 2015	**$10.6** billion	**$10.7** billion	**$15.7** billion	**$1.3** billion
% change	**51%**	**57%**	**0%**	**46%**

*Red Cross/Red Crescent figures for 2016.
Notes: This chart captures expenditure as reported by agencies themselves. As a result, funding that goes from donors to a UN agency and then on to an NGO will be counted twice – once by the UN agency and once by the NGO. This explains why the total of reported expenditure is much higher than the total for humanitarian funding given in chapter on needs and funding.

> Very few national NGOs are represented in the tiers of organisations with budgets over $2 million, even those that have been in existence for many years.

Very few national NGOs are represented in the tiers of organisations with budgets over $2 million, even those that have been in existence for many years. The lack of organisational growth across a significant number of these organisations illustrates the continued 'contractor trap' most of them find themselves in. This involves chronic dependence on short-term projects, sub-granted through international counterparts, for which they typically must staff up during implementation and cut back again when the contract ends, creating large swings in staff size multiple times a year. With very limited direct access to international funding, and with contracts that provide little or no overhead that would allow for institutional growth, national NGOs are unable to reach the escape velocity that would put them on the same stable growth trajectory enjoyed by Western INGOs. An illustration of this can be seen in Afghanistan, where a humanitarian response has been ongoing for years and where needs are still high, but the number of operational national NGOs has been decreasing[2] alongside shrinking international funding and operational presence.

One area that has seen significant growth is that of 'diaspora NGOs', organisations founded by expatriates (and particularly by Syrian expatriates) to provide humanitarian assistance in their home countries. These organisations are generally registered in Europe or North America, but largely staffed by nationals of crisis-affected countries. International organisations unable or unwilling to operate in Syria have increasingly channelled their resources via these diaspora NGOs, creating significant growth among very young organisations such as the Union of Medical Care and Relief Organizations (UOSSM) and Hand in Hand for Syria.

Endnotes for this chapter

1. See, for example, www.saveresearch.net; (Stoddard, 2017).

2. Rather than growth in the local NGO sector, OCHA's '3Ws' mapping
    for Afghanistan shows an average decline of National NGO Common
    Humanitarian Fund partners between 2013 and 2018 of 8% (https://
    www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/afghanistan/3w).

Composition of
the system

7

PERFORMANCE OF THE SYSTEM

The 2015–2017 period was marked by important and rapid changes in the geopolitical landscape, with implications for the nature of humanitarian action and for the ability to conduct humanitarian responses successfully.

There were important improvements in some areas of performance – notably effectiveness. However, the ability to reach everyone in need and to work in accordance with humanitarian principles declined in this period.

The performance of the humanitarian system

This chapter assesses the performance of the international humanitarian system against the following OECD DAC evaluation criteria (for further explanation of the criteria, see the chapter on components, methods and approach):

Sufficiency

Coverage

Relevance & appropriateness

Effectiveness
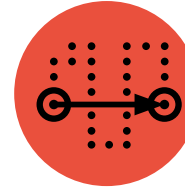
Efficiency
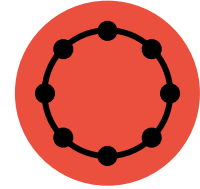
Coherence

Connectedness

Impact

And two additional criteria:

Complementarity

Accountability & participation

The icons below are used to show progress against each criterion when compared with *The State of the Humanitarian System* report 2015.

No progress

Limited progress

Improvement

Decline

SUFFICIENCY

As in previous editions of *The State of the Humanitarian System*, resources were not sufficient to meet needs.

Sufficiency

In brief

Despite concerns that economic and political conditions in major donor countries may lead to a fall in humanitarian funding, the period saw funding continue to rise (albeit at a much slower rate than in previous periods), reaching a new record of $27.3 billion in 2017. However, requests for funding also increased significantly over this period, and as a result there was no improvement in sufficiency: available resources were still not adequate to meet needs. Increased funding requests appear to reflect an increase in the number of people around the world needing humanitarian assistance. It may also reflect the increased costs of providing a greater variety of services to people in crisis, and the higher costs of providing services to urban and middle income populations. The degree to which funding was sufficient to meet needs also varied by country and activity – some sectors were consistently better-funded than others. Despite funding constraints, the recipient survey for this report suggested that levels of satisfaction with the quantity of aid received were fairly high.

To what degree are available resources sufficient to meet needs?

All of the sources used to compile this edition of *The State of the Humanitarian System* indicate that financial resources are insufficient to cover humanitarian needs. Over the three-year period, UN coordinated appeals were, on average, only 58% funded.[1] Almost three-quarters (72%) of respondents to the practitioner survey felt that funding was insufficient or far below needs, and evaluations often reported that programmes were under-funded (generally by 30% to 50%). In most of the case studies, and particularly Yemen, Kenya, the Lake Chad basin and Mali, humanitarians complained of inadequate funding, and suggested that this had negative effects on humanitarian programming. Key informants at HQ echoed these findings. As one said: 'I don't think anybody in the sector would name any single crisis that we could say we feel is adequately covered'.

The perception that humanitarian action is under-funded is not new. The results of the practitioner survey have been more-or-less consistent in 2012, 2015 and 2018, with over 70% of respondents believing that funding is below needs. The proportion of appeals funded has declined slightly – from 62.5% in 2010–11 to 62% in 2012–14 to 58% in the current reporting period (2015–17). This sustained inadequacy of funding may seem surprising given that, over the period, humanitarian funding continued to rise, and the system has never been better resourced. The problem – as figure 9 shows – is that, while funding has risen significantly over the last decade, the amounts requested for humanitarian activities have grown even faster: this was particularly evident in 2016–17, when UN appeals rose by 21% in a year when total funding increased by around 3% (Development Initiatives, 2018).

> "
>
> This sustained inadequacy of funding may seem surprising given that, over the period, humanitarian funding continued to rise, and the system has never been better resourced.

While inadequate funding is a problem across the sector, interviewees and survey respondents also suggested that resourcing was uneven, and that certain crises, and certain sectors, were less well-resourced than others. Figures for UN coordinated appeals bear this out: in all three years, some appeals received less than 20% of funding requested, while others received over 80% (see chapter on needs and funding). With respect to funding disparities between sectors, interviewees generally felt that education and protection in particular tended to be poorly funded (although there were some situations where this was not the case: in Lebanon, for example, interviewees suggested that a large amount of funding was going to the education sector). Again, available data bears this out: in the reporting period, education elements of UN appeals were between 30% and 36% funded, and protection 35% to 38% funded. These figures were lower than for most other sectors (although shelter tended to fare even worse, at between 26% and 32% funded).

In terms of the impact of insufficient resources on people in need, the picture was slightly confused. Overall, 43% of respondents in the aid recipient survey said that they were satisfied with the amount of aid they received, another 43% said that they were partially satisfied and 15% said that they were not satisfied. Women and men tended to respond in the same way.[2] This overall response is less negative than one would expect, given the figures around funding shortfalls, the findings of numerous evaluations and the views of many aid professionals. It may be partially a result of the countries where the survey was conducted: Iraq and Afghanistan were both well-funded at the time of the survey (although in Iraq the number of people who responded 'no' was far higher, at 26%, than in DRC, which was much less well-funded). It may also reflect how agencies deal with a lack of funding: by cutting where they work, rather than the amount they provide to people in areas covered. The respondents to the survey are, after all, people who have received or are receiving assistance. Or agencies may be cutting back on certain services and types of assistance that are not as highly valued by recipients, and so do not greatly affect their perception of sufficiency. At the same time, insufficient aid was mentioned as a problem by a number of recipients who spoke to the teams conducting country studies. Overall, 23% of respondents to the recipient survey said that the main challenge for people receiving aid in their area was not enough aid, and 16% said that the greatest improvement that aid organisations could make would be to provide more.

Factors affecting sufficiency

Funding availability
The two key factors affecting sufficiency are the amount of available funding and the scale of needs. Funding continued to increase over the period (albeit at a much slower rate than in the past), and in 2017 was estimated at a record $27.3 billion.[3] However, this did not meet needs as reflected in appeals. In addition, there are important questions as to how this funding was distributed. Both HQ and field staff often said that they believed money

Both HQ and field staff often said that they believed money was going to crises which were more strategically important for donors or more visible in the Western media.

was going to crises which were more strategically important for donors or more visible in the Western media. This political aspect of funding was mentioned particularly by those working on refugee and migration crises. The importance of political interests and the media in the allocation of aid has been underscored by research in the past (see for example Moeller, 2010; Van Belle, 2010). While a thorough review of the correlation between these factors and funding was beyond the scope of the SOHS, it is striking that the best-funded responses in 2015–17 were in countries where responses were both large and well publicised, such as Iraq, Afghanistan, South Sudan and Bangladesh. The least well-funded responses were smaller, and disproportionately in Central and Latin America and West Africa.[4]

A number of interviewees felt that donors were increasingly moving funding away from responses in Africa to crises in the Middle East: HQ interviewees mentioned DRC and CAR particularly as having suffered from a shift in donor attention to the Syrian regional response. Over the last decade, while there has certainly been a trend for the proportion of humanitarian expenditure in Africa to decrease and the proportion in the Middle East to increase (see figure 14), the actual amounts allocated to both Africa and the Middle East have increased. In some cases, the proportions going to particular African emergencies have also increased: in 2015, 2016 and 2017, DRC received a higher proportion of funds requested than it did in 2014.[5] At the same time, field staff in Chad and Mali also said that they had seen funding decrease, and that the funding that was available was focused on areas from where migrants might come.

Interviewees explained disparities in funding by sector in a number of ways. First, donors differ on where they draw the boundary around life-saving activities. The less well-funded sectors were considered outside this boundary by some donors, and so were not prioritised for resources. Second, less well-funded activities were often difficult to do well, requiring more complex, systemic interventions than other forms of humanitarian action. Third, results were often visible only in the long term and could be hard to measure, making activities difficult for agencies to 'sell' to donors. A number of interviewees felt that the sectoral nature of the system itself was a problem – if donors and agencies thought less about sectoral interventions and more about the whole package of inter-connected needs, the disparities between, say, funding for food security and for education would probably be reduced. During the study period, there has been increased interest and efforts towards building multi-sectoral responses, as well as a rise in the use of multi-purpose cash, which is inherently multi-sectoral.

The number of people in need

Estimates of the number of people requiring humanitarian assistance showed an increase in humanitarian need over the period (OCHA, 2016b; 2017c).[6] Interviewees offered a number of good reasons to explain this trend, and why it might be expected to continue. The increasingly protracted nature of many responses – particularly for refugees and IDPs – means that there is a large

and growing volume of chronic need. While the number of armed conflicts appears to have slightly decreased over the period (OCHA, 2016b; 2017c), some interviewees felt that the tactics of many combatants are increasingly geared towards inflicting violence on, and denying services to, civilians (UN Secretary-General, 2017: 1; 2018: 3). An increasing number of responses are occurring in cities (Boano and Martén, 2017; GAUC, 2016), which have high population densities and will tend to have higher caseloads in times of crisis. And climate change is increasingly undermining people's ability to cope, making them more vulnerable and more likely to become displaced.

Expectations of humanitarian action

A number of key informants suggested that our understanding of need, and so of sufficiency, is also conditioned by knowledge of needs and level of ambition. In other words, the more humanitarian actors know about needs, and the more needs they aim to address, the greater the strain on available funds. A few interviewees suggested that the issue was as much about the visibility of need as absolute numbers: the number of people in need globally may not have increased appreciably over the past decade, but better communications technology has made us more aware of them. In effect, the numbers in appeals have increased because humanitarians are aware of, and aiming to assist, a greater proportion of global need. Unfortunately, it is not possible either to prove or disprove this with the data available.

A related point, made by a number of interviewees, was that the humanitarian system has become more ambitious, and that increased requests for funding are – at least partially – a result of trying to do more. Humanitarian appeals continued to increase over the period 2015–17 because humanitarian budgets were expected to address both short-term needs and longer-term, structural challenges. Concerns were repeatedly raised about the widening scope of humanitarian action, and interviewees who discussed this saw it as an extremely serious problem: 'humanitarian aid will never be sufficient'; 'the needs are just too great'. For their part, field staff tended to focus less on perceived issues of mandate creep and more on the increased costs caused by developments in technology and practice. Several mentioned the increased importance of mental health activities and of protection around gender-based violence, and explained that these are both more expensive than 'traditional' activities and also more difficult to fund. Others spoke of the increased costs of providing advanced healthcare. This is also, potentially, a consequence of the location of humanitarian activities: as more responses take place in middle income countries, there are likely to be higher requirements for care for conditions such as diabetes and heart disease (Drummod et al., 2015). Responding to needs in urban contexts, in middle income countries or in economies in transition is often more complex and costly than in low-income agrarian societies (Grünewald et al., 2017). Similarly, responding to needs in areas with access constraints – particularly areas which are besieged or cut off – can be extremely expensive (Stoddard et al., 2016).

Over the period, estimates of

the number of people in need increased.

Interviewees attributed this rise to a number of factors:

The increasingly protracted nature of crises;

the tactics of combatants against civilians;

the rise of urban crises;

and climate change.

If humanitarian action was growing in ambition and working in more expensive locations, we would expect to see an increase in the cost per person assisted. Over the period there was, in fact, an increase of 6% overall in the amount of funding requested per person assisted. Moreover, this (fairly small) increase hides massive disparities between locations: to give one example, planned expenditure per recipient in Europe and Syria (areas which are growing as a proportion of humanitarian activity) were much higher than in most responses in Sub-Saharan Africa (see figure 10) and almost ten times that in the CAR. The figures appear to provide some support to the idea that humanitarian action is becoming more expensive.

Box / Financing in crisis settings

In the run-up to and following the WHS, there have been growing calls for reform of the humanitarian system, particularly in relation to responses to protracted and complex crises. Whether due to growing needs or to an insufficient and inefficient response, new sources of funding and finance have emerged, broadening the 'traditional' resource base of humanitarian assistance. Two main provider types have become more prominent since the previous SOHS study period: multilateral development banks and Islamic social giving. While not new in themselves, both are often referred to as 'innovative' in crisis contexts, either because they generate additional funds or because they make existing funds more efficient. Several multilateral development banks introduced concessional-like financing in crisis contexts between 2015 and 2017, focused on resilience and displacement. While no reporting tool exists to track contributions from these institutions in a timely manner, their own reports provide a starting-point for compiling estimates based on annual disbursements. Likewise, no single tracking mechanism currently measures volumes of Islamic finance, including *zakat*. It is estimated that at least $600 billion of *zakat* from Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) countries is potentially available annually, including for humanitarian response. Most notably, the IFRC is exploring the development of Sukuk social impact bonds, waqf and *zakat* endowment in partnership with the Global University of Islamic Finance (INCEIF) to understand the extent to which these instruments could support the RCRC Movement's activities in crisis settings, alongside existing resources.

Contributions to countries with UN-coordinated appeals, 2017 (US$ million)

World Bank	Colombia	1,687
	Nigeria	1,511
	Iraq	1,485
	Tanzania	1,205
	Bangladesh	1,152
	Pakistan	1,126
European Bank for Reconstruction and Development	Turkey	1,735
	Ukraine	834
	Greece	692
	Serbia	430
	Jordan	178
	FYROM	55
Asian Development Bank	Pakistan	3,339
	Bangladesh	3,197
	Sri Lanka	1,015
	Nepal	864
	Myanmar	592
	Afghanistan	486
African Development Bank	Cameroon	199
	Kenya	183
	Senegal	172
	Rwanda	144
	Uganda	110
	Ethiopia	102
European Investment Bank	Greece	18,108
	Turkey	17,984
	Serbia	2,690
	Ukraine	1,139
	Lebanon	406
	Jordan	356
Inter-American Development Bank	Colombia	1,060
	Peru	151
	Haiti	123
	Dominican Republic	115
	Bahamas	16

Source: Development Initiatives, based on institutions' annual reports.
Notes: Data in current prices. For IAB, EIB, AfDB and EBRD, amounts are disbursements for projects. World Bank and AsDB amounts are project approvals.

Performance of the System

Sufficiency

More funding instruments are also becoming available. In the current study period a number of tools were introduced, borrowed from the financial sector and redesigned to suit particular types of crisis. The majority were developed in isolation from existing mechanisms, and specifically for responses deemed less risky and more accessible to agencies that tend not to have an established presence in crisis environments. An emerging bundle of instruments can be deployed for responses to disasters associated with natural hazards and refugees, but far fewer are available for use in responses to conflict-driven crises.

One notable innovation is Forecast-based Financing (FbF). As part of the IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF), these mechanisms are used to forecast recurrent natural hazards. When a threshold is met, pre-positioned funds are released to support pre-agreed activities. Contingency funds are supplementary to core programming, and are tied to organisations with existing field operations and demonstrated contextual understanding. Warnings have been used to release funds for early action in Bangladesh, Mongolia, Peru, Togo and Uganda, and a further 17 countries are developing FbF protocols. FbF had an anticipated turnover of CHF1 million (approximately $1 million) in 2018. This is expected to increase in coming years.

Many refugee-hosting states, particularly more recent host states in the Middle East, are middle income countries (MICs) (see chapter on needs and funding). This can provide a foundation on which to build sovereign partnerships that can support government programmes for both refugees and host communities. Pledging conferences for Syria and the region saw a number of institutions scale up their responses, including the World Bank, the European Investment Bank (EIB), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB).

The EIB launched the Economic Resilience Initiative in 2016 to support host communities and displaced populations in the 'Southern Neighbourhood' countries and the Western Balkans. The initiative, which focuses on stimulating growth, creating jobs and improving infrastructure, aims to supplement existing 2020 lending targets of €7.5 billion by another €6 billion. Mechanisms include funding through existing channels, such as local banks; investment for infrastructure projects (essentially grants alongside loans); and lending to the private sector, including through grant-supported 'Impact Finance' instruments, such as private equity funds, local currency lending, risk-sharing instruments (where the EIB shares risks with local banks to encourage them to lend to small enterprises) and direct financing through debt or equity investments (as loans or through buying stocks).

> One initiative that suggests there is space to increase the range of financing options for humanitarian responses in conflict settings is the World Bank's partnership with the ICRC and FAO in developing the Humanitarian Impact Bond.

It is still difficult to create incentives to bring in non-traditional partners such as multilateral development banks and the private sector into conflict-driven crises. Although the World Bank has increased operations in conflict-affected states (see box on the World Bank in humanitarian contexts), no mechanisms specific to these contexts have emerged since the last SOHS report. One initiative that suggests there is space to increase the range of financing options for humanitarian responses in conflict settings is the World Bank's partnership with the ICRC and FAO in developing the Humanitarian Impact Bond (HIB). The HIB aims to encourage up-front private investment for ICRC services for people with disabilities in conflict-affected countries. The 'bond' is in fact a 'private placement', through which private investors provide funding for new rehabilitation centres, with donor 'outcome funders' committing to pay back investments after five years at rates dependent on ICRC services meeting outcome targets. As of September 2017, ICRC reports that $27.6 million had been raised via the bond to fund new physical rehabilitation centres in DRC, Nigeria and Mali over a five-year period. This figure is the amount pledged by the 'outcome funders' – Belgium (€8.6 million), Switzerland (CHF10 million), Italy (€3.2 million), the UK (£2.5 million) and the La Caixa Banking Foundation (€1.1 million), proportions of which they will make available in five years' time depending on performance. Amounts committed by social investors – which constitute actual operational funds – have not been disclosed.

Most of these instruments are still being trialled, and little is known about their scalability or adaptability. Each will provide its share of lessons, which should be captured and disseminated to promote further research, development and refinement. More work is also needed to overcome the insular manner in which these tools are being developed to identify the right combination of instruments to respond to multi-dimensional crises, bringing together preparedness, humanitarian response and longer-term investments, both public and private. • **LUMINITA TUCHEL, DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES**

Endnotes for this criterion

1. See chapter on needs and funding. Note that UN coordinated appeals
    are not an exact measure of need, and the level of funding is not
    an exact measure of sufficiency. Similarly, UN coordinated appeals
    are not the only appeals made for humanitarian relief, or the only
    appeals to which donors respond – and so additional funding is being
    channelled (for example through the Red Cross/Crescent Movement)
    to humanitarian crises. Nevertheless, the degree to which UN appeals
    are funded can be used to try to understand overall sufficiency, in
    combination with other sources.

2. Displaced people in the survey were more likely to be satisfied with the
    amount of aid they received – 51% to 38%.

3. This figure does not fully represent funding from diasporas, Islamic
    giving and other sources that are not easily captured at a global level.

4. In 2016, the best-funded responses were Burundi, Iraq, South Sudan,
    Afghanistan and the Mosul flash appeal (Iraq). The least well-funded
    were the Libya flash appeal, Gambia, Honduras, the Sahel and North
    Korea. In 2017, the best-funded were Kenya, Iraq, Niger, Afghanistan and
    Bangladesh, and the least well-funded Hurricane Irma (the Caribbean),
    Senegal, Cuba, Djibouti and Peru. The better-funded responses generally
    had far higher numbers of page views on ReliefWeb than the least well-
    funded (OCHA, 2016b).

5. In 2014: 46%; 2015: 55%; 2016: 60%; 2017: 57%. All figures from
    Development Initiatives *Global Humanitarian Assistance* reports.

6. Although these estimates should be used with some caution (see box
    on Information gaps), country-level estimates of people in need have
    improved significantly over the past five years, with clear distinctions
    between those in need and the (generally smaller number of) people
    to whom humanitarian agencies aim to provide assistance. However,
    the calculation and aggregation of these figures is still problematic
    and 'there are many gaps and inconsistencies'; 'the data should only be
    interpreted to indicate major trends and characterize major differences
    between emergencies' (OCHA, 2016b: 55, 62; see also ACAPS, 2016;
    Latimer and Swithern, 2017; OCHA, 2016b).

COVERAGE

This is the third edition of *The State of the Humanitarian System* to report that coverage is getting worse.

In 2015–2017, coverage was particularly poor in remote regions, in localities where there was a high perceived risk to humanitarian staff and in areas under siege. It was also poor for IDPs and refugees who were not resident in camps, and for irregular migrants.

"

The number of people affected by lack of coverage – particularly irregular migrants and people in areas under siege – increased over the period. There are signs that some humanitarian agencies have become less willing to operate in areas deemed to be high-risk, and that a number of governments are becoming more adept at using bureaucratic delaying tactics to prevent humanitarian agencies from reaching areas in need of assistance.

Coverage

In brief

This is the third edition of *The State of the Humanitarian System* to report that coverage is getting worse. In some cases, the humanitarian system has largely overlooked crises – generally because they take place in countries with authoritarian governments which prevent access, or because people in acute need fall outside the accepted scope of humanitarian action. In many cases, the problem is that particular areas or groups of people are missed out during humanitarian programmes. In 2015–17, coverage was particularly poor in remote areas with low population densities, in areas where there was a high risk (or perceived risk) to humanitarian staff and in areas under siege. Coverage was often poor for IDPs and refugees who were not resident in camps, and for irregular migrants. In general, marginalised groups – particularly minority ethnic and cultural groups and the elderly – were most likely to be overlooked.

While none of these problems are new (and several were noted in previous editions), the number of people affected – particularly irregular migrants and people in areas under siege – increased over the period. There are also worrying signs that some humanitarian agencies have become more risk-averse and less willing to operate in areas deemed to be high risk, and that a number of governments are becoming more adept at using bureaucratic delaying tactics to prevent humanitarian agencies from reaching areas in need of assistance.

To what degree do all people in need receive humanitarian assistance and protection?

Failures in coverage take a number of forms. The international humanitarian system can miss crises – and entirely fail to respond to crisis conditions which would, in other circumstances, be seen to merit a response. Alternatively, it can overlook or fail to reach certain geographical areas within a broader response, or it can fail to provide assistance and protection to certain groups, such as populations hosting refugees or IDPs, or people who are not physically able to access distribution points.[1]

The issue of coverage is difficult to assess because, almost by definition, humanitarian actors know much less about the areas where they are not present than about the areas where they are. They know even less about areas that they have not noticed as requiring assistance. This problem was particularly stark in the evaluation synthesis. Many evaluations concentrated on the degree to which programmes met the needs of identified beneficiaries: often, the number of identified beneficiaries had been revised down over the course of the programme, and little was said about those who had fallen off the lists.

Research for this report produced only very limited information on crises which were entirely overlooked. A very small number of key informants mentioned the failure to respond to the economic crisis in

Venezuela and the movement of Venezuelans into neighbouring states from 2015 onwards. Similarly, there were isolated mentions of the unmet humanitarian needs of people being trafficked, of urban populations displaced by gang violence (particularly in El Salvador) and of urban populations living with levels of malnutrition and disease morbidity high enough to warrant humanitarian intervention (Twigg and Mosel, 2018; WFP, 2017). All of these examples suggest that people may be overlooked by the humanitarian system because, while they have acute needs, they fall outside the boundaries of humanitarian action as it is commonly understood. The situation in Venezuela has tended to be seen as an economic rather than a humanitarian crisis. Gang warfare is generally seen as a criminal problem, not a humanitarian concern (unlike conflict with other non-state armed groups). Urban poverty is seen as a developmental issue.

> The situations in Venezuela and El Salvador, for example, suggest that people may be overlooked by the humanitarian system because, while they have acute needs, they fall outside the boundaries of humanitarian action as it is commonly understood.

Among the key informant interviews there were also isolated mentions of small crises – particularly small 'natural' disasters – being overlooked by the international humanitarian system, even when they occurred in places where the government was unable or unwilling to respond. While each individual disaster might affect a small number of people, the total involved globally could be significant. There were also mentions of national-level crises being covered up by authoritarian regimes, and where lack of media coverage, international political will and the affected government's reluctance to request assistance come together to ensure that large numbers of people are left without assistance. In North Korea, an estimated 70% of the population do not have enough to eat, while in Eritrea up to 2 million people may have been food insecure in 2016 – but it is impossible to know for sure (CARE International, 2017).

Key informants had much more to say about areas which had not been reached by ongoing responses. In general, interviewees described strenuous – and often largely successful – efforts to extend coverage as far as possible (for displaced people in Mosul in Iraq, or for Rohingya people fleeing Myanmar for camps in Bangladesh), but set these against an overall failure to reach all people in need. According to one manager at the HQ of an international NGO:

> We're quite proud of what we've done in Yemen, but we're scratching the surface. South Sudan is a black hole, we could be ten times the size. Syria … well, we have our hands full just in the few places we can get access, let alone the rest which need us more.

This tension between specific successes and general failure seems to be reflected in the practitioner survey, where 7% thought that their sector/operation had performed excellently in reaching all people in need, 33% thought that the response had been good, 37% fair and 23% poor.[2] While higher than might have been expected from the interviews, these responses for coverage were among the lowest ratings in the survey.

Gaps in geographical coverage were noted in almost all of the field studies, in all contexts: Greece, Lebanon, Chad and Cameroon (refugees and migration); Somalia, Afghanistan and Yemen (conflict); Haiti and Nepal ('natural' disaster). They were often referred to in evaluations – again in all contexts (Bousquet, 2015; Coste et al., 2016; Kebe and Maiga, 2015; More, 2016): a smaller number of evaluations suggested that attempts to achieve coverage had been broadly successful (for example, Díaz and Betts, 2017; Turnbull, 2016a).

In general, coverage appeared to be poorer for remote, sparsely populated areas. Conversely, there were a number of situations where coverage appeared to be poorer in urban areas – largely as a result of the difficulty of identifying households in need in dense and diverse urban environments (Patel et al., 2017; Smith and Mohiddin, 2015). In some of the field studies (notably Mali and Lebanon), informants felt that urban coverage was, overall, better than in rural areas because urban populations were on the whole wealthier, and so needs were lower, or because urban areas were closer to agency offices and stores, and more secure. It would seem unwise to generalise about coverage in urban areas: each situation presents a different picture of needs, vulnerabilities and access conditions.

As well as problems with geographical coverage, there was some evidence that humanitarian responses failed to reach specific categories of people.[3] In particular, the elderly, women and girls, disabled people and socially marginalised classes, castes or ethnic groups appeared to be less likely to receive assistance than others in their community. Some key informants at country level, and a small number of evaluations, suggested that women and girls may not receive aid as a result of aid agencies failing to consider social norms, family structures and distribution within the household (Bousquet, 2015; Chaffin, 2016; World Vision International, 2015). Similarly, key informants and evaluations noted that marginalised ethnic groups failed to receive aid in settings as diverse as Nepal, the Sahel, CAR (UNICEF, 2016) and Ukraine (Conoir et al., 2017). Recent research by IFRC suggests that elderly and disabled people may not be able to access aid because they cannot physically reach distribution sites, or because they may not be aware that aid is available, or may be left behind by families when they are displaced or they move to find better conditions (IFRC, 2018). Work by Ground Truth Solutions confirms that women are sometimes left out of aid distributions (in two of 11 surveys of crisis-affected people) and that the elderly and disabled are often left out (in eight of 11 surveys). A number of other factors related to powerlessness and marginalisation can lead to people being overlooked or not receiving assistance. These factors will differ depending on the social structure of the area: family size, nationality, lack of social networks and lack of official documents are all important reasons why particular sub-sections of a population may not receive aid (Ground Truth Solutions, 2018).[4]

Performance of the System

Coverage

Coverage in situations of conflict

Poor coverage was a consistent theme in interviews with humanitarians working in situations of conflict: this was echoed in the evaluation synthesis, where a large number of evaluations mentioned coverage and access issues. In the practitioner survey, 29% of respondents in conflict environments said that coverage was 'poor', compared with 18% of respondents in 'natural' disasters. The fact that the number of poor responses was not higher should remind us that there are many situations (although still a minority) where humanitarian staff feel that good coverage is being achieved, even under very challenging conditions. However, there are also particular areas and populations that are unlikely to be reached.

Unsurprisingly, the research – and particularly the evaluation synthesis and HQ key informant interviews – strongly suggested that areas with a combination of poor logistics and high perceived risk to aid workers were very under-served relative to needs (Syria, Northern Nigeria and Yemen were repeatedly mentioned), as were areas where, although there may be less conflict, governments prevented access (such as Rakhine State in Myanmar). Some interviewees at country level also said that less support went to areas controlled by non-state armed groups, particularly where these groups were seen as terrorists: 'civilians associated with terrorists suddenly become ineligible' for assistance. The failure to reach populations in besieged cities in Syria – a phenomenon that was particularly visible in 2015–17 – was repeatedly mentioned, by informants and in the literature (Stites and Bushby, 2017).[5] These findings were given further weight by the SAVE research conducted by Humanitarian Outcomes and GPPI, which showed that 'Considerably fewer humanitarian organisations ... respond to highly violent, conflict-driven emergencies, irrespective of funding available and the needs of the population' (Stoddard et al., 2016: 7), and that, within countries suffering from conflict, the majority of agencies tend to avoid areas perceived as being more dangerous – often those areas under the control of non-state armed groups. These conclusions are supported by a number of STAIT Peer Review mission reports.

Less visible, and perhaps less explicable, was the widespread failure to provide assistance to IDPs living outside camps. In many conflicts, the locations and needs of these people are 'largely undefined and unquantified' (Darcy, 2016b: 44), although very often there were far more IDPs outside than inside camps. Evaluations suggest that the urgent humanitarian needs of displaced people outside camps were largely unaddressed in responses in South Sudan and CAR, as well as elsewhere (Briggs, 2017; Maxwell et al., 2015; UNICEF, 2016). There were also concerns that, where the needs of IDPs were being addressed (for example in Yemen and Chad), similar needs among the host population were often overlooked (Niland et al., 2015).

> "
>
> Evaluations suggest that the urgent humanitarian needs of displaced people outside camps were largely unaddressed in responses in South Sudan and CAR.

Coverage in refugee and irregular migration situations

A quarter (26%) of respondents to the online questionnaire felt that coverage in refugee responses was poor. As with IDPs, concerns centred on refugees who were not in camps: this was a particular issue for Syrian refugees, and came up in field interviews and evaluations (Moughanie, 2015). Again as with IDPs, there was also concern over the failure to extend assistance to refugee-hosting communities (Garcia et al., 2015; Hagen-Sanker et al., 2017), and related concerns over social cohesion in communities where refugees were present. A number of agencies had taken steps to include host communities in programming (Church World Service, 2016; Drummod et al., 2015; Guay, n.d.).

A second concern related to coverage for refugees and irregular migrants was that of status: agencies not providing assistance to people because they did not have – or were not perceived to be likely to obtain – refugee status. This was raised in evaluations and in interviews in agency HQs and in refugee environments, particularly in Greece. Interviewees pointed out the importance of providing humanitarian support on the basis of need, and the consequent imperative to provide assistance and support to all migrants who needed it, irrespective of whether or not they were entitled to the additional protections of the 1951 Refugee Convention. The perceived discrimination against those who were not refugees (and, in some cases, their criminalisation) was generally seen to particularly affect young men and certain nationalities, such as Afghans and Iranians.

Performance of the System

Coverage

Box / Internal displacement: a humanitarian and development challenge

Millions of people flee their homes each year because of conflict, violence, development projects, disasters and climate change. The large majority remain displaced within their countries of residence. These IDPs often remain in situations of protracted displacement or face chronic displacement risks. They are among the most vulnerable people in the world, and face specific challenges arising from their displacement. Between 2015 and 2017, estimates of new internally displaced people globally averaged close to 30 million, though the actual figure is almost certainly higher.

The persistence of high numbers of IDPs is leading to a growing recognition that humanitarian assistance and protection will not be enough to significantly reduce the phenomenon, and that effective development responses will also be critical. While internal displacement was not included as a separate goal in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), progress on preventing and reducing internal displacement will be critical to achieving the SDG targets, and to meeting the UN Secretary-General's call to 'leave no one behind', made at the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016. Internal displacement is mentioned in the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, and has been recognised in other global processes, including the New Urban Agenda, GAUC and the Warsaw

International Mechanism for Loss and Damage under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, which in 2017 established a taskforce to develop recommendations for addressing displacement related to climate change. OCHA also looked at the impacts of protracted displacement in its 2017 study *Breaking the Impasse: Reducing Protracted Internal Displacement as a Collective Outcome.* Although the two global compacts on refugees and migration under negotiation in 2017 and 2018 do not address internal displacement, the 2016 New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants noted the need to prevent displacement and provide protection and assistance to IDPs. In 2018, UN actors, states and international NGOs launched the 'GP20 Plan of Action' to mark the twentieth anniversary of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement.

While the humanitarian needs of displaced people are of overriding concern to the international community, reversing current trends will require addressing the underlying social, economic, political and environmental factors behind displacement. More research on the complex and intersecting drivers of displacement, the link between internal and cross-border displacement and the economic and social impacts of displacement on IDPs, host communities and states, has been undertaken, and more will be needed if the phenomenon is to be fully addressed. Better data and analysis will also help inform the development of indicators to monitor progress on reducing displacement and IDP vulnerabilities at both the global and national levels. Efforts towards better cooperation on data collection and analysis, and initiatives to build government capacity to collect and use data, have improved the quality of the numbers, but significant gaps remain in data-sharing, interoperability and disaggregation. This makes it difficult to obtain information around specific vulnerabilities, including in relation to health, education and livelihoods. Addressing these data gaps will be a necessary first step in informing development approaches to reducing internal displacement. • **AVIGAIL SHAI AND LUISA MENEGHETTI, IDMC**

Factors affecting coverage

This edition of the SOHS asked aid practitioners what they felt the main constraints to coverage were in their programmes – although there were some differences between the responses from conflicts, 'natural' disasters/ health crises and refugee operations.

Of the 1,170 practitioners who completed the SOHS 2018 survey
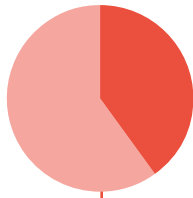
40%

saw bureaucracy as the main constraint to reaching people in need in refugee and irregular migration contexts.

Bureaucratic restrictions

This is the first time in *The State of the Humanitarian System* series that bureaucratic restrictions have been cited as the most important overall impediment to providing humanitarian support to people in need.[6] Interviewees reported having to obtain clearances from multiple government departments to enter certain geographical areas, long delays in visa processing and unclear and changing rules related to customs and imports. This may simply be part of the legitimate workings of a government, but in situations of internal conflict in particular, interviewees believed that restrictions were a conscious tactic on the part of governments or non-state armed groups to prevent humanitarian aid from reaching particular areas. The problem appeared to be particularly acute in Syria (Al Nabhy et al., 2017; Sule Caglar et al., 2016) and Yemen. Interviewees in Yemen were vocal about the challenges involved in obtaining permission to reach vulnerable communities. As one NGO staff member explained:

> when you arrive with a convoy, wherever you are, you need to deal with interior affairs, air security, political security, public security, local governments, until you reach officials responsible for distribution points.

Issues of bureaucracy also appear in relation to refugees and irregular migrants, where 40% of respondents saw this as the main constraint to reaching people in need. This may reflect the increase in the number of refugee operations taking place in middle- and high-income countries, where the machinery of government may be more present and more active. A number of key informants in Lebanon, for example, noted government policies and behaviour as a constraint to accessing certain groups. It may also reflect an increase in political concern around refugees, leading to less sympathetic treatment and more complex attention from host governments.

Bureaucratic restrictions were also the single most important constraint in 'natural' disaster contexts (25% of respondents reported this as the main constraint to accessing people in need). In the aid recipients' survey, an average of 25% of respondents said that corruption was the biggest challenge to receiving aid in their area – the most common response to that question. This is not necessarily corruption by government officials (it could equally have been by aid agency personnel), but the field interviews with aid recipients clearly indicated that the corruption they saw or suspected was taking place within the government bureaucracy.

Insecurity

Insecurity is regularly cited as a major problem in evaluations of humanitarian action in conflict (Clarke et al., 2015; Darcy, 2016; Duncalf et al., 2016; Global Affairs Canada, 2017; Lawday et al., 2016; Poulsen et al., 2015; UNICEF, 2015; 2016), and was a repeated theme in interviews. Interviewees also made the point that constrained access is not just about the delivery of aid – it also prevents assessment and understanding of needs (see also AAN Associates, 2016). In Afghanistan and DRC,[7] aid recipients saw

insecurity as the most important challenge to receiving aid, a reminder that violence and conflict is primarily a problem for the civilians caught up in it, both in its primary effects (leading to humanitarian need) and its secondary ones (making it harder to address those needs).

> Other sources suggest that agency behaviour, and choices, may be more of a problem, and that agencies and agency staff may be assuming that they can't work in insecure environments when in fact they can.

Organisational constraints

Several studies have suggested that aid organisations are deliberately avoiding areas deemed too high risk (Castellarnau and Stoianova, 2018; Healy and Tiller, 2014; Jackson and Zyck, 2017). In the practitioner survey for this report, only 6% of respondents said that agencies' reluctance to operate in remote locations/areas of need was the main obstacle to accessing all people in need. Other sources suggest that agency behaviour, and choices, may be more of a problem, and that agencies and agency staff may be assuming that they can't work in insecure environments when in fact they can. Many of the survey respondents who said that insecurity was the problem could, more correctly, have said that the problem was the reluctance of their agency to work in areas it perceives to be insecure. A number of key informants spoke of donors and agencies becoming more risk-averse in situations of conflict, and felt that this trend was getting worse (see also Castellarnau and Stoianova, 2018). The SAVE project has shown that the link between insecurity and access is complicated, and mediated by many factors that have more to do with the agency than with the environment: some agencies – a minority – are able to continue humanitarian operations in insecure environments because they consciously configure themselves to do so by developing independent logistics capacities, cultivating relationships with belligerents and local communities and securing funding with fewer donor restrictions over were they operate. They also, fundamentally, have to reconsider their attitudes to risk (Stoddard et al., 2016). SAVE researchers found that areas deemed to be high risk by humanitarian agencies were not always seen as dangerous by the people who lived there. Several STAIT missions have found that agencies are taking an overly conservative position on risk, or are failing to understand risk, and assuming that an entire country presents the same level of risk.

Organisational constraints to coverage are not solely a result of risk aversion, and do not only apply to conflict. One evaluation noted that:

> Once aid agencies had established projects and bases ... there was a natural tendency for them to stay there, so it was only the most dynamic agencies that continually sought to address unmet needs in new locations. Some agencies also tied themselves to centres where they were working before the crisis (Clarke et al., 2015).

Some interviewees suggested that, in a number of high-profile responses, they had been able to map the disparity between organisational operating areas and areas of need (the SAVE research backs this up (Stoddard et al., 2016)). ALNAP research also found that, unless directed by the government or confronted by a clear and highly visible crisis, aid agencies do not

routinely monitor new areas to assess whether they should move operations there. Where there are new crises, the key factor facilitating a fast response was pre-existing presence in the locality, suggesting that organisations are not well-equipped to move quickly to meet needs in new areas (Obrecht, 2018). This is supported by MSF's finding that, over the past five years, few if any agencies have responded to a new conflict crisis within the first few months (Castellarnau and Stoianova, 2018).

Funding

Despite the broad consensus that funds are insufficient to meet needs, funding does not appear to be the most important constraint to coverage. This was suggested by the results of the practitioner survey (where 18% of respondents said it was the most important constraint – less than bureaucracy or insecurity), and borne out by interviews: a number of humanitarian managers were at pains to point out that 'we are overly reliant on the idea that it's the money' that prevents effective coverage. However, as noted in the chapters on needs and funding and composition of the system, funding is not spread evenly across the humanitarian system, which means that, in some situations, lack of funding and decreases in funding undoubtedly had an impact on coverage. Field staff pointed to villages, communes or districts where they knew there were needs, but were unable to provide assistance.

Donor restrictions on operations

Only 6% of respondents in the practitioner survey suggested that donor restrictions were the main obstacle to reaching people in need. To the degree that interviewees talked about donor restrictions as a constraint to coverage, they tended to discuss one of two issues: earmarked funding and an inability to use funding flexibly to address new and emerging needs; and the impact of counter-terror legislation.

Where lack of flexibility was discussed, it was generally as a constraint to coverage at the global level – earmarking prevented funding from being moved from well-funded situations to less well-funded ones. Some interviewees noted that this issue was being discussed as part of the Grand Bargain, while also noting that they had not, as yet, seen less earmarking actually occurring. ALNAP research in DRC found that responses to people displaced by conflict were often delayed due to the need for donor approvals to shift resources from one area to another (Obrecht, 2018).[8]

Counter-terror legislation and related constraints were mentioned by some interviewees at headquarters level, and also by a small number working in crisis-affected countries.[9] Interviewees mentioned problems in making bank transfers (see the Yemen case study), hiring staff and partnering with certain organisations – the latter a very real constraint to achieving coverage where these organisations had access to areas international organisations found difficult to reach. In a survey by the Harvard Law School Program on International Law and Armed Conflict, respondents 'generally agreed

In a survey by Harvard Law School, the majority of respondents felt counter-terrorism laws failed to provide clear direction, and

88%
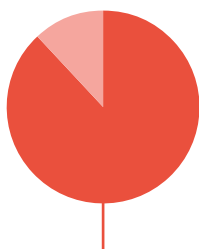
of respondents felt that further guidance would be helpful.

that counterterrorism laws have affected their work and the work of their organizations' (Burniske and Modirzadeh, 2017: 6). One informant suggested that agencies and donors working to address these issues have come to a 'stalemate':

> governments insist that humanitarians need to produce hard evidence that CT restrictions have a negative effect on their ability to respond, [but] ... to establish a direct correlation and hard evidence of such effects is an impossible task – there are far too many volatile variables.

The problem may also relate to the complexity of this legislation, and to limited understanding of the implications of the legislation among operational agency staff. In the Harvard survey, the majority of respondents said that the laws failed to provide clear direction, and 88% of respondents felt that further guidance would be helpful. This may explain why, over the reporting period, some agencies have established units to specifically address issues of compliance and the regulatory environment – an area into which discussions on counter-terrorism have increasingly been incorporated.

Logistics and accessibility

In some cases the main constraint to achieving coverage was simply a result of physical conditions: a lack of roads or infrastructure. Physical and logistical constraints were mentioned by 11% of respondents to the practitioner questionnaire, and by 18% of those in situations of 'natural' disaster. Poor logistics can also be a problem in situations of conflict: key informants in Yemen and Mali both spoke of the challenges of accessing communities in areas with no roads. Overall, 20% of people in receipt of aid said that physical access difficulties were the main challenge to receiving aid in their area – a response similar to that for insecurity.

Box / Humanitarian action in urban environments
Throughout the period covered by this edition of *The State of the Humanitarian System*, humanitarian actors have had to contend with an increasing number of urban crises, including the Ebola Epidemic in West Africa, urban conflict in Syria, Ukraine and Yemen and displacement in many cities worldwide. These crises challenge existing ways of working, which were generally developed in rural areas. Over three-quarters of the world's 685 million forcibly displaced people are in urban areas (Cosgrave et al., 2016), and more than 50 million people now live in conflict-affected cities (ICRC, 2017). With more than half of the world's population living in urban areas, and that number growing all the time (UN, 2016), humanitarian engagement in crises in urban areas is only going to increase.

Several new initiatives to improve responses to urban crises emerged over the period. The Global Alliance for Urban Crises (GAUC), a network originally established to inform the World

Humanitarian Summit and Habitat 3, brings together humanitarian actors, local government representatives and built-environment professionals. A number of donors and agencies also took steps to develop their capacity and understanding of urban crises. European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), which now has a Policy Officer dedicated to urban issues, undertook an internal review and released a policy paper in 2017 (European Commission (DG ECHO), 2017). The World Bank issued a policy note on forced displacement in cities (World Bank, 2017), and the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) funded a three-year learning initiative, the Urban Crises Learning Fund (see Sanderson and Sitko, 2017), in partnership with the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), which developed a large number of reports and tools aimed at improving response to urban crises.

While it is difficult to say whether humanitarian response in urban contexts has actually improved – and responses during the focus period for this edition of the SOHS have been criticised for many of the same issues that have come up in previous urban crises – humanitarian actors have at least tried new approaches and generated learning in a number of areas, including:

- The need to adapt analysis mechanisms for urban response, including needs assessment (Mohiddin and Smith, 2016), and the need to better understand the context as well as the crisis (Campbell, 2017).
- The impact of urban crises on infrastructure and services in cities (ICRC, 2015) and preparedness measures to mitigate this impact (Grünewald and Thakur, 2015).
- The need to understand and support social cohesion between displaced people and urban host communities (World Vision International, 2015).
- The importance of supporting and working alongside local governments and built-environment professionals (GAUC, 2016).
- The critical role of coordination at city and neighbourhood levels, both between humanitarians themselves and between humanitarians and local actors (GAUC, 2016; Sanderson and Sitko, 2017). • **LEAH CAMPBELL, ALNAP**

Performance of the System

Coverage

Groupe URD

Yemen: Life-saving assistance and beyond
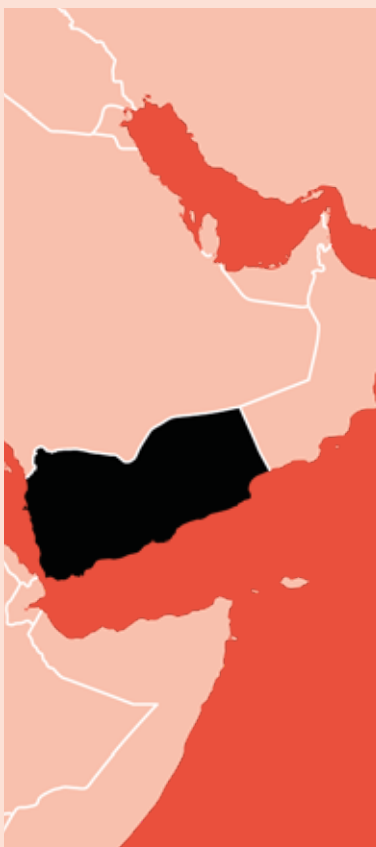
The war in Yemen is now the world's worst humanitarian crisis, with more than 22 million people – three-quarters of the population – in desperate need of aid and protection.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, speaking at a donor conference in Geneva, April 2018.

The conflict in Yemen between Houthi rebels and forces loyal to the government of Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi has displaced some 3 million people. It has also had a devastating impact on food security and livelihoods, the economy and the health and sanitation sectors, leading to crippling poverty and high rates of malnutrition and disease, including a cholera outbreak in April 2017 that led to almost a million cases and more than

2,000 associated deaths (WHO, 2018). Almost 2 million children (27% of the 7.3 million school-age children in Yemen) are unable to attend school, with more than 1,800 institutions affected by the conflict.

The humanitarian response

Delivering aid in Yemen is extremely challenging, with numerous constraints ranging from insecurity in frontline areas to administrative restrictions and the logistical difficulties associated with rough and mountainous terrain. All parties to the conflict have been criticised for increasing the suffering of civilians by impeding the delivery of humanitarian aid. Humanitarian workers have accused the Saudi-led coalition supporting Hadi's government of obstructing assistance, first by imposing a

blockade and then, when the blockade was partly lifted in November 2017, by excessively cumbersome procedures (UN Panel of Experts, 2018). Import restrictions and local blockages are affecting markets and hindering the delivery of critical supplies to people in need. Checkpoints and regular air strikes restrict the movements of humanitarian staff and goods. Humanitarian workers have been denied permits for internal travel, and access is impossible in areas deemed 'military zones'.

The UN Panel of Experts on Yemen has criticised all parties to the conflict for increasing the suffering of civilians by impeding the delivery of humanitarian assistance. According to the Aid Worker Security Database, between January 2015 and December 2017, 36 humanitarian staff were affected by security incidents, including 18 national staff killed and 12 aid workers kidnapped. Hospitals and other health facilities have faced repeated attacks, including airstrikes (MSF, 2016). In this context, international organisations have adopted very risk-averse policies; UN agencies are almost completely 'bunkerised', and many international organisations limit staff movements to a minimum, making proper assessments and surveys very difficult.

More broadly, efforts by governments and the EU to restrict terrorist funding have made transfers through the formal banking system extremely difficult, for national and international organisations, the private sector and the Yemeni diaspora. As well as hampering aid operations, these restrictions have contributed to the expansion of a black market,

the war economy and corruption, with serious implications for post-conflict reconstruction and economic rehabilitation.

Despite these constraints, life-saving operations have continued. Case fatality rates in the last cholera outbreak were low thanks to the combined efforts of local actors and the international community in responding to and containing the outbreak, and famine has so far been averted. Aid agencies have also engaged in active advocacy with conflict parties around IHL. This work appears to have contributed to a reduction in the number of medical facilities targeted between 2015 and 2018.

Rethinking approaches to community resilience

Basic preparedness measures are essential to cope properly in light of the multitude of risks Yemenis face, but very few resources are available for preparedness and prevention activities. As one aid worker put it in relation to the cholera outbreak: 'Because the intervention is short-term in nature, donors were not willing to continue funding the

"

Delivering aid in Yemen is extremely challenging, with numerous constraints ranging from insecurity in frontline areas to administrative restrictions and the logistical difficulties associated with rough and mountainous terrain.

facilities, so they were closed. For future outbreaks, which are likely, donors will need to invest again to get these facilities working'. This conflict also highlights the need for, and relevance of, new approaches to aid in fragile situations and middle-income countries. In a context where the economy is in transition and extremely dependent on key infrastructure and institutions, the consequences of their stopping due to the war are dire. More support to the health system and for the rehabilitation of basic infrastructure, such as water pumps, electricity plants and communications infrastructure, would have a major impact on daily life.

The crisis in Yemen shows no signs of abating. With basic infrastructure no longer functioning and the risk of further health crises and famine, the humanitarian sector has managed to limit the damage, but more attention and resources are required to rehabilitate infrastructure, support preparedness and address the blockages in the banking system. However, this will be of no avail if IHL is not respected. Unfortunately, the drastic reduction of ICRC presence in June 2018 and the second bombing of MSF-supported health infrastructure in Abs do not augur well in this respect. As such, regardless of the quality of technical programmes, they will be a drop in the ocean when set against the scale of the suffering in this terrible crisis. • VÉRONIQUE DE GEOFFROY, GROUPE URD

This write-up is based on a case study conducted for the SOHS 2018 by Groupe URD. The full case study can be found at: **sohs.alnap.org**

Endnotes for this criterion

1. The system can also reach people, but then fail to provide enough of the right type of support – for example, protection. This challenge is discussed in the section on relevance.

2. Responses from representatives of governments of crisis-affected countries were very similar.

3. Generally, the evidence was much stronger that humanitarian assistance did reach these people, but it did not address their specific needs – see section on relevance.

4. Unpublished data used to produce the cited report.

5. Between January 2014 and January 2017, according to successive reports of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council Resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014), 2191 (2014) and 2258 (2015), the number of people under siege in Syria increased from 240,000 to 700,000. It then declined in 2017, and by the end of the period stood at 420,000.

6. 26% of total responses overall: 21% of responses in conflict; 40% in refugee and irregular migration; 25% in 'natural' disasters. This made it the single most important constraint in refugee and irregular migration situations and in 'natural' disasters, and the second most important in conflict responses (after insecurity).

7. 32% in Afghanistan and 29% in DRC. Surprisingly, insecurity was seen as less of an issue in Iraq, where only 6% of respondents thought it was the most important challenge.

8. Donors aim to achieve a certain level of geographical coverage in-country, through a set group of partners. If a partner wishes to shift their work to another area, donors may refuse this, as it would reduce their geographical coverage in the country.

9. The small number of interviewees who discussed this may reflect the countries selected for case studies/interviews.

RELEVANCE & APPROPRIATENESS

The humanitarian system generally provided relevant assistance in acute, life-saving situations, but was less good at understanding and meeting priority needs for protection and in protracted emergencies. There were some limited improvements in the period.

The humanitarian system was good at addressing priority needs where they related to life-saving assistance. For some interviewees this did not present a problem... For others, there were concerns that this focus was too narrow, particularly given that much humanitarian work takes place in protracted crises.

Relevance & appropriateness

In brief

The humanitarian system is generally able to identify and prioritise those activities most important in keeping people alive in acute crisis (health assistance, clean water and particularly – according to affected people themselves – food). Humanitarian agencies are generally less good at identifying and programming for the most relevant protection activities, or meeting priority needs once the initial phase of the crisis has passed. The system is also generally poor at understanding the specific vulnerabilities of particular population groups. For example, it often fails to ensure that assistance is relevant to the needs of elderly or disabled people. There have been some improvements – at a policy level at least – in making responses more relevant to women.

Weaknesses related to relevance in protracted emergencies, and to understanding and responding to the vulnerabilities of specific population groups, were mentioned in the 2012 and 2015 editions of the SOHS and appear to be unchanged. However, there do appear to have been some improvements related to relevance over the last three years. Assessments have improved (although monitoring remains very weak) and the increased use of multi-purpose cash grants has allowed some aid recipients to decide on their priorities for themselves.

To what degree do interventions address the priority needs of aid recipients?

The evaluation synthesis painted a positive picture for the criterion of relevance,[1] while pointing to a number of specific problems. The majority of practitioners responding to the survey thought that they were successful in prioritising and addressing the most urgent needs.[2] They also thought that they were more successful in this area than in any other aspect of performance. Key informants agreed that humanitarian interventions had, in general, responded to the most important needs (saying, for example, that famine had largely been averted in Somalia and South Sudan by the prioritisation of specific types of assistance). However, they tended to add one extremely important caveat: that the humanitarian system was good at addressing priority needs where they related to life-saving assistance. For some interviewees, who viewed the overall goal of humanitarian action as saving lives, this did not present a problem.

One donor representative explained:

> the humanitarian system is working hard to ensure that people in most need are provided with what they most need. I know that in some situations the people in need in surveys say they want other things that aren't maybe life-saving assistance ... but I do feel that more or less the humanitarian system is providing what's needed with the limited resources that are there.

For others, there were concerns that this focus was too narrow, particularly given that much humanitarian work takes place in protracted crises and middle- or high-income settings, where priorities may go beyond simply keeping people alive. According to one UN manager at HQ:

> Are we meeting the needs of the Rohingya? Yes, we have them all in a camp, but is that meeting their needs? They want to go home, they want their rights, and we're not meeting those needs whatsoever. We can give a roof over their head, but that's it.

When asked whether the assistance people received addressed their most important needs, 39% of aid recipients in the survey said yes, 48% said partially and 13% said no. These responses were better than previous surveys, and appear comparable to those in the practitioner survey.[3] However, answers on this criterion were less positive than those for several other criteria,[4] and 30% of aid recipients said that the most important area for improvement for aid agencies was in providing the type of aid most needed.[5] In the country studies, the majority of recipients who discussed this topic felt that they had received the right type of aid, though they generally noted that the quantity had been insufficient.

The views of people in the recipient survey are illuminating when it comes to understanding how they perceive priority needs. Overall, when asked what sort of aid was most needed, most respondents said food,[6] followed (in order) by cash/vouchers, education, health, shelter and clean water and sanitation.[7] However, needs are also context-specific. Of the five countries surveyed, only two (Kenya and Ethiopia) shared the same top three priority needs.[8] This suggests that the core set of life-saving needs are similar across emergencies, but that the specifics of what is needed (food assistance, clean water, cash) can vary markedly from one situation to another.

When asked by Ground Truth about needs that had not been met, it was striking how many people said shelter and housing.[9] Food and healthcare were also both important unmet needs.[10] Cash was the most important unmet need for people in Iraq, but was less prominent elsewhere (Ground Truth Solutions, 2018). Again, these responses suggest that the basic package of humanitarian assistance is relevant for many people in many places, but that the relative importance of elements within this package may change from place to place, and over time (shelter, for example, may become more prominent over time as other needs are met).

It is also important to recognise that the specific activities carried out in each of these elements – health, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), shelter – may also vary significantly from one place to another. Interviewees across a number of sectors spoke of how the needs of Syrian refugees, and of urban besieged Syrians, differed from those of rural people in South Sudan: the nature of health problems, and relevant responses, were very different; rehabilitating urban water infrastructure was a very different job from digging wells; and urban populations often require rental support or

---

Of the 5,000 aid recipients who took part in the SOHS 2018 survey,
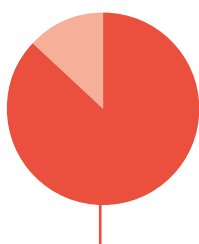
87%

responded 'yes' (39%) or 'partially' (48%) when asked whether the assistance received addressed their most important needs. These responses were better than in previous surveys.

support for land tenure or in disputes with landlords, rather than shelter construction (see box on humanitarian action in urban environments).

The Ground Truth data also highlights the fact that there are a number of humanitarian needs beyond saving lives which people feel are important, and which are not being addressed. Some of these appear to relate to livelihoods: water pumps in Afghanistan; access to credit in Haiti. A need for employment opportunities occurs (often along with education) in almost all the contexts. Refugees also report needing help with language lessons and legal processes.

Meeting the specific needs of vulnerable population groups

Overall, the research strongly suggests that humanitarian actors are not particularly good at meeting the specific needs of women, the elderly, disabled people, LGBT people and other groups who may have specific priority needs in addition to basic life-saving interventions, or who may require aid to be provided in a different way. Responses from women and men to the relevance question in the ALNAP survey[11] were very similar, as were responses from women and men to Ground Truth's questions around relevance (Ground Truth Solutions, 2017). However, the country studies, evaluations and key informant interviews suggested that the aid system still believes that it is poor at meeting the specific needs of women in crises. In some cases, agencies fail to get the basics right: not addressing essential concerns such as menstrual hygiene or safety in latrine areas. In others, assumptions are made about the needs of women, and imposed with very limited, if any, consultation with the people concerned. Some programme staff interviewed in the country visits suggested that this failure to consult is partly a result of a broader failure to engage with crisis-affected people, and partly a result of the cultural position of women, who often find it more difficult to be heard or have their opinions valued in their own societies. There are tensions here between the humanitarian imperative to address the specific needs of the vulnerable and the need to be respectful of the culture and values of crisis-affected communities.

Evaluations and interviews both noted that, in the 2015–17 period, the situation of women and girls had received more attention than in the past, at least in policy terms. Donors more consistently asked for information on how agencies were addressing gendered needs, and there was more activity on the issue at HQ level. The next step is making a reality of this work on the ground. Specific obstacles that were mentioned included the fact that information is still not routinely disaggregated by gender (and age), and a lack of tools to help design programmes that address the specific needs of women. These needs – and the broader gap between policy and practice – were also pointed out in the 2012 edition of *The State of the Humanitarian System*, and have obviously not been fully addressed.

The situation was less positive with respect to other groups with specific needs and vulnerabilities. Interviewees consistently mentioned elderly people and people with disabilities not receiving the same level of attention as women and girls at the policy level, and being overlooked

in programming. The latest edition of the *World Disasters Report* explains in some detail the disproportionate effect that disasters have on elderly people and people with disabilities. It also suggests that humanitarian actors generally do not address this group's specific needs – for example, assistive technology or particular diets (IFRC, 2018).

In general, the picture that emerged was one of a system that is not good at understanding or addressing the specific vulnerabilities of different groups of people in different contexts. Where differences within a population are addressed, this is often through predetermined activities for predetermined 'vulnerable groups'. Assessments to identify the actual vulnerabilities of different groups of people within a specific context are still uncommon. This is another area where little progress appears to have been made since earlier iterations of *The State of the Humanitarian System*.

Meeting protection needs

> [People here] don't really understand the term 'priority needs'; for them, what counts most is security and not being attacked, not having their goods stolen by bandits ... and humanitarian aid can't bring them that.
>
> – Local government official

Only 6% of people responding to the recipient survey suggested that protection was the form of aid they needed most.[12] However, this may reflect a lack of familiarity with or understanding of the term 'protection'.[13] A number of interviewees, both at HQ and in humanitarian operations, made the point that the largest crises of the period (those in the Middle East) were primarily crises of protection, yet protection funding as a proportion of requirements remained low.[14] Some advances were made in 2015–17, particularly at policy level: protection was included in the Syria Strategic Response Plan (SRP) (and subsequent Humanitarian Response Plans (HRPs)) from 2015, and in 2016 the IASC adopted a policy on protection requiring Humanitarian Country Teams (HCTs) to develop a strategy to address the most urgent risks. Peer reviews facilitated by P2P, however, suggest that many country teams are struggling to operationalise these strategies.

As a result, concerns remain that insufficient attention is paid to protection needs in the context of people's overall needs. Given the breadth of protection needs in many contexts (from bombing civilian populations to child labour and domestic abuse), there are also concerns that agencies and HCTs are failing to identify clear priorities to address the most relevant and pressing protection needs in any given context (Ambroso et al., 2016; Hidalgo et al., 2015; Turnbull, 2015) and that, in at least some cases, humanitarians are resorting to 'readymade approaches' (Niland et al., 2015) rather than basing their interventions on an understanding of people's specific requirements. The difficulties of identifying and prioritising relevant protection activities were also a theme of P2P reviews in Chad, Haiti and Iraq.

> The system is extremely poor at monitoring, and so agencies can fail to understand how the needs and priorities of affected people are changing over time.

Meeting protracted needs

Several key informants noted that the system is not very good at meeting people's priorities as they evolve over time, from emergency response to protracted relief activities. This should not be surprising: as the system seems to be most effective at meeting acute life-saving needs (and some would argue that this is what it was designed to do), it is less skilled, and less well-designed, to address chronic need. Beyond this, a number of constraints make it difficult to move from an emergency footing to protracted responses. The system is extremely poor at monitoring, and so agencies can fail to understand how the needs and priorities of affected people are changing over time. Funding structures can also be a constraint: until recently, humanitarian financing has tended to come in short cycles (of one year or less), encouraging repetitive, short-term programming and leaving little space to consider emerging priorities. Humanitarian agencies may not have the skills, staffing or procedures to address the situation once the immediate crisis phase has passed.

There have been some limited improvements in this area over the period covered in this edition of the SOHS. Several donors have begun to experiment more widely with multi-year funding (a trend encouraged by the World Humanitarian Summit and Grand Bargain), although interviewees and published studies suggested that this was not, as yet, leading to much change on the ground (FAO et al., 2017; Taylor et al., 2017a). There has also been increased interest in adaptive management, and in adaptive programming more generally.

Meeting 'new' or unexpected needs

A limited number of evaluations suggest[15] that the system struggled to understand and meet priority needs in the Ebola Crisis in West Africa. For many of the agencies involved this was a new type of emergency demanding 'innovative thinking' (Adams et al., 2015: 16) and presenting 'unprecedented challenges and risks for which ... [the] multi-sector emergency model was not well adapted' (UNICEF, 2017: 53). Initially, many humanitarian agencies were not clear on whether this was a humanitarian emergency at all, or whether it was outside the scope of life-saving work. Having determined that they did have a role, agencies still struggled to identify priority needs (such as support to safe burials). The European Migration 'Crisis' appears to have posed similar challenges of unfamiliarity.

Relevance/appropriateness in different crisis contexts

Although needs differed from one situation to another, the aid recipient survey did not show any significant difference in the degree to which people in the three contexts (conflict, disaster and refugee/migrant) felt that their most important needs had been addressed. Humanitarian actors, however, faced different constraints in these different contexts. Evaluations suggest that assessment and monitoring were more difficult in situations of conflict than in disasters or refugee situations. The humanitarian system was also

> The Ebola Epidemic reminded humanitarian actors that there is a far broader set of less common disasters, and that the 'standard package' needs to be reassessed to ensure relevance to these events as well.

particularly poorly equipped to provide the physical protection that was often a primary need in conflicts (although the presence of peacekeepers had allowed for the creation of 'Protection of Civilians' sites in South Sudan and CAR, and there had been some success with community-based protection). Wars in middle-income, urban environments created new priority areas (requirements for dialysis, or repairing large water purification plants) which were difficult to address. Limited access to conflict areas appears to have led agencies to favour the simple delivery of items over more complex, process-oriented activities such as health and protection, which may have been more relevant to people's needs (Stoddard et al., 2016). Refugee and migration situations, particularly in Europe, exposed new – or newly acknowledged – needs for physical protection during the Mediterranean crossing, and for protection from violence at the hands of people-traffickers. A number of agencies increased their legal support and support for irregular migrants in dealing with bureaucracies. In 'natural' disasters – arguably the basis for the standard model of assistance, and for which the humanitarian system is best designed – the Ebola Epidemic reminded humanitarian actors that there is a far broader set of less common disasters, and that the 'standard package' needs to be reassessed to ensure relevance to these events as well.

Box / Cash in humanitarian response

The policy and practice of cash transfers have evolved since the publication of the last edition of *The State of the Humanitarian System*. In 2015, the High Level Panel on Humanitarian Cash Transfers made recommendations on increasing the scale, efficiency and quality of cash (High Level Panel on Humanitarian Cash Transfers, 2015). In 2016, 53 signatories to the Grand Bargain formally committed to increase the use and coordination of cash programmes. Since then, many humanitarian actors have made strategic commitments to expand cash programming, either through equal consideration of all modalities for every response, or through quantitative targets for cash as a share of total relief (Smith et al., 2018). While a broad range of organisations have adopted one or both of these approaches, some concerns have been raised that the quota approach can interfere with other Grand Bargain commitments to increase unearmarked funding, or that focusing too much on scale-up can undermine consideration of key contextual factors that determine appropriateness (Smith et al., 2018).

The most recent available figures show growth of 40% in the use of cash, from $2 billion in 2015 to $2.8 billion in 2016. As a share of total humanitarian aid, this represents an increase from 7.8% in 2015 to 10.3% in 2016. Caution is called for, however: figures for total humanitarian aid and total cash delivery come from separate sources (Smith et al., 2018), and two-thirds of the total cash delivered in 2016 came from just two sources, WFP and UNHCR. Even so, there

does seem to be a broad movement towards cash, with 89% of Grand Bargain signatories reporting activities in this area during 2018, making it one of the highest-performing Grand Bargain workstreams overall (Metcalfe-Hough et al., 2018).

A range of challenges also emerged over the reporting period, centred around capacity, quality, monitoring and coordination:

- Organisational capacity, including systems and human resources, remains a barrier to the increased use of cash (Smith et al., 2018).
- Common quality standards and guidelines for cash delivery – including common outcome indicators for multi-sectoral cash programmes – are yet to be agreed (Smith et al., 2018).
- Systematic monitoring is hampered by a lack of agreement on which costs to count and how much programme detail to record regarding modality and conditionality (Metcalfe-Hough et al., 2018).
- Coordination is ad hoc and contested, which can result in gaps, duplications and tensions between actors, as well as hindering the use of common mechanisms for assessment, delivery and monitoring (Knox Clarke and Campbell, 2016; Steets and Ruppert, 2017).

Despite these challenges, the growth of cash presents a significant opportunity. Its disruptive potential has been linked with a number of reform areas, including humanitarian coordination mechanisms, the strengthening of social protection systems and accountability to affected populations. By forcing organisations to ask strategic questions about their functions and interrelations, cash has the potential to cut across established practices and incentive structures within the humanitarian system (Smith et al., 2018).

• NEIL DILLON, ALNAP

Factors affecting the relevance & appropriateness of humanitarian action

Assessment

Evaluations and key informants suggested that there had been advances in thinking and practice around assessment over the past three years (see Darcy, 2016b; Mowjee et al., 2016; Taylor et al., 2017b; UNHCR, n.d.).[16] In particular, they noted improvements in assessment methodology and in the technical quality (and so accuracy) of agency assessments. They attributed these advances to factors including the work of specialist groups such as ACAPS, the importance placed on the Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) in the programme cycle, and the increased focus on the topic as a

result of the WHS and Grand Bargain processes. However, less than half (48%) of respondents to the practitioner survey felt that assessment was good or excellent, and there were consistent criticisms around the design and use of assessments, and suggestions that the humanitarian sector still has some way to go in this area.

Interviewees suggested four main areas of concern. The first was around the scope of assessments: a sense that they are generally designed to reflect the 'traditional' model of life-saving humanitarian assistance, and so focus on food, health, WASH and so on. As a result, they may fail to capture needs as they are experienced by affected people themselves (such as a need for mobile phones to stay in touch with relatives): 'our assessments don't allow for flexibility and capturing what's most needed'.[17] The second criticism was that, while there has been significant methodological improvement, there has been much less methodological convergence over the period. Different agencies continue to use very different approaches, which are not easily compared or harmonised with one another (see Clarke et al., 2015; Darcy, 2016b). Some interviewees suggested that the introduction of the HNO process had been helpful in bringing agencies together to create a common understanding of need, while also agreeing that there is a long way to go. And there were examples of good practice in common/joint assessment from a number of countries (see also Metcalfe-Hough et al., 2018). But the Grand Bargain commitments to '[p]rovide a single, comprehensive, cross-sectoral, methodologically sound and impartial overall assessment of needs for each crisis' and '[c]oordinate and streamline data collection to ensure compatibility, quality and comparability' appear hard to achieve: 'in 2017 there was limited evidence of the major political or institutional shift in culture and operating practice that is required' (Metcalfe-Hough et al., 2018: 45). The problem of assessment highlights, once again, the challenges of collective action in a highly atomised system.

The third main concern was that, in some cases (particularly where funding does not meet anticipated levels) assessments do not really inform what happens: decisions are instead made on the basis of funding availability, the ability to access certain populations or donor preferences for certain sectors. One respected observer of the humanitarian system contrasted the increased quality of assessments with what they saw as their declining use by decision-makers: 'time and time again you see information ... just simply ignored'. Evaluations, however, were less negative on this point: while there were examples of assessments not being used – or not being fully used – (Clarke et al., 2015; Darcy, 2016; Hidalgo et al., 2015; Lawday et al., 2016), evaluations also described a good number of programmes based on assessment evidence (Abdula, 2017; Advisem Services Inc., 2016; Ambroso et al., 2016; Betts and Coates, 2017; Conoir et al., 2017; ICF, 2016; UNICEF, 2016; Wihaidi and Wehaidy, 2016).

Relevance of humanitarian programming is compromised by an inability to clarify and agree strategic priorities, both at the level of individual agencies and – more often – at the inter-agency, 'whole of response' level.

Finally, there was a sense that the system has over-concentrated on 'one-off' assessments as the key tool for understanding need, and that these assessments are not well adapted to fluid, rapidly-changing situations: they provide a picture of need at a single point in time, but this picture is slow and cumbersome to collect, and can quickly become inaccurate and out of date as the situation changes (see also Campbell and Knox Clarke, 2018; Knox Clarke and Campbell, 2016). While recognising progress in needs assessment, interviewees – particularly those engaged in humanitarian programmes at country level – suggested that the system should concentrate more on monitoring over time and on understanding the specific vulnerabilities of different population groups, rather than trying to establish whether there was a need for, say, food or shelter, and should invest more in monitoring, to understand needs over time. The same point was made in a number of evaluations (Clarke et al., 2015; Lawday et al., 2016; Peacocke et al., 2015; Sida et al., 2016; Steets and Derzsi-Horvath, 2015).

Strategy

A number of interviewees and evaluations suggested that the relevance of humanitarian programming is compromised by an inability to clarify and agree strategic priorities, both at the level of individual agencies and – more often – at the inter-agency, 'whole of response' level. Without clear priorities, each agency provides what it is best able to supply. Agencies can also be more easily swayed by political concerns: in one example, local politicians pushed for food aid because it was politically popular, although not necessarily the priority for the most vulnerable people. A lack of strategic prioritisation across the response was noted in a number of evaluations (Darcy, 2016; Lawday et al., 2016) and P2P reviews, where it often seemed to be a result of failure by individual members of the HCT to look beyond the mandates of their organisations and identify overarching priorities for the response as a whole.

Conversely, interviewees noted that, where there was a focus on prioritising the type of relief required (as in South Sudan), aid was both more relevant and more effective. Previous research by ALNAP suggests that clusters and HCTs find it easier to identify clear priorities where there are high levels of acute need, and more difficult in longer-term situations where needs may be more complex and diverse. In these cases, a 'bottom-up' approach to building strategy – based on monitoring activities to see what is working, rather than making prior judgements about what should be done, may be more successful (Knox Clarke and Campbell, 2015a; 2016).

Cash-based programming

Cash-based programming allows people to choose what they need most (as long as this is available in a market), rather than having these choices made for them. Key informants were excited by the possibilities of cash, and it was often mentioned in discussions of relevance. Where aid recipients discussed cash with the case study research team, they often made the point that cash allowed them to buy what they most needed. This is not to suggest that cash is a magic bullet: evaluations showed that beneficiary preferences for cash or vouchers over in-kind assistance vary according to context[18] (this is backed up by the findings of the aid recipient survey, the data gathered by Ground Truth and research by the SAVE consortium), and people's priorities may not be met through market mechanisms, either because the market is not functioning, or because what people need, for instance infrastructure or services, is not generally available in the market (see more in box on cash in humanitarian response).

Organisational skills, mandates and structures

A number of key informants suggested that the system fails to meet priority needs because it is supply-driven. Agencies tend to push for their particular sector or specialisation to be prioritised, rather than being led by the priorities outlined in assessments. This makes it difficult to establish common strategies for the response. Within sectors, agencies tend to favour what they understand and have used before, irrespective of the degree to which these activities meet priority needs.

It was hard to triangulate this claim. The issue was not raised by any interviewees in the country case studies, and only three of the evaluations reviewed (two of which related to responses in Pakistan (Khan, 2015; World in Consulting Ltd., 2015)) explicitly mentioned responses being determined by supply rather than demand. The P2P reports were more direct, suggesting that agency mandates and priorities had strongly influenced the response in a number of situations, including CAR, Somalia and Iraq. Only one evaluation mentioned the problem of supply-driven responses in the context of activity selection.

While the general set of standard responses appears to be relevant in many contexts, it is entirely possible that a supply-driven approach comes into play in choosing between the standard responses – in determining the relative priority given to, say, shelter, healthcare and food. While the formal country coordination architecture (of HCT, Clusters and inter-cluster mechanisms) should address this issue, the inter-cluster mechanisms which would be expected to guide this prioritisation are often not particularly effective (Knox Clarke and Campbell, 2016). It is also very possible – even likely – that agencies use tried and tested formulae for response, both to avoid risk and because they do not have staff skilled in specific technical areas. This has been noted in DRC (Obrecht, 2018). More generally, the lack of skilled technical staff, particularly at field level, is a recurrent theme of

evaluations in all emergency contexts. In contexts where standard responses are less relevant, or where people need additional or different types of response, these problems will have an even greater effect on relevance.

Objective and perceived needs

One issue central to the discussion of relevance is the degree to which humanitarian actors meet needs as they are experienced by people in need themselves. Failing to ask people what they need (discussed more in section on accountability and participation) risks agencies not understanding, and not addressing, priority needs; conversely, an objective judgement of needs – such as nutritional measurement – might uncover needs that are not obvious to affected people themselves. In one case:

> many families discovered malnutrition through the programme: they just saw that their children were 'thin, cranky' but were not aware that they were malnourished. So, once children were treated, they realized the relevance and importance of the programme. But, before that, they had not realized the need for it, neither that an emergency had happened in the area. So, the assistance provided corresponded to real risks and vulnerabilities ... but not always to perceived priorities (Ferretti, 2017 p.10).

Mohamed Azakir/World Bank

Lebanon: Between stability and stagnation
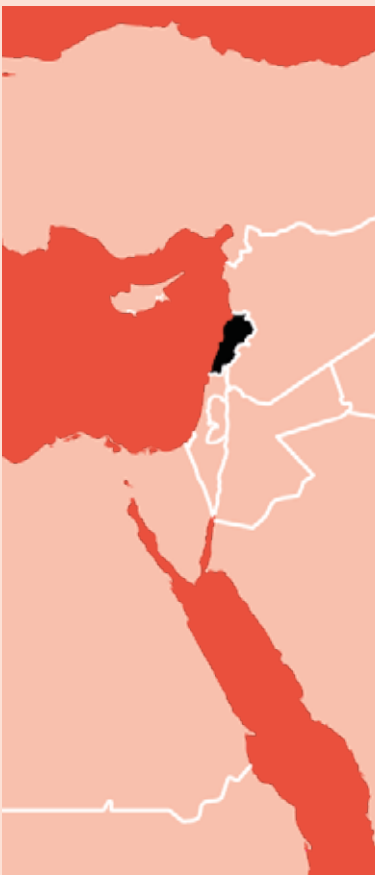
We speak about refugees every single day. The politicians, the media and, of course, the humanitarian actors ... We have this feeling that they are everywhere, and they are actually. But we barely ever hear their voice.

Humanitarian worker in Lebanon.

The influx of Syrian refugees into Lebanon since 2011 has created a massive migration crisis. The country is currently host to the highest percentage of refugees per capita in the world, putting immense pressure on its already fragile infrastructure and basic services. The relationship with Syria has not been easy. The country's historical involvement in Lebanese internal affairs and the civil war between 1975 and 1990 has led to a great deal of resentment in some segments of the population. The links between the Syrian government and Lebanese political actors (notably Hezbollah) and Lebanon's strategic position in a very turbulent region have only increased the complexity of the crisis. The decades-long presence of a large Palestinian refugee population is another source of political and economic instability. Concerned that history does not repeat itself, the Lebanese government has vetoed the establishment of camps for Syrian refugees, and has prevented any assistance or other support that might encourage the refugees to stay.

Lebanon is an unusual humanitarian environment in that physical access to the affected population is relatively easy: the country is very small, with a developed communication

infrastructure and relatively few security concerns. It is also a very attractive base for international humanitarian employees; working and living conditions are good, it is comparatively safe, goods and leisure activities are numerous and agency staff can bring their families with them.

From an international to a locally led response

A large number of Lebanese civil society organisations (CSOs) have been involved in basic service provision for years, and have been some of the first actors to respond to the refugee crisis. While initially perceived by international actors as lacking neutrality and impartiality, by 2014, when the international response shifted towards targeting host communities, international NGOs began to regard local CSOs as natural subcontractors, even equal partners. While there is still competition between Lebanese organisations and international NGOs over funds, leadership and visibility, tensions have eased as attention has turned towards how 'aid localisation' will evolve in the coming years. The government has restricted work permits for foreign humanitarian staff, and many Lebanese have taken up these positions. Despite often having no previous humanitarian experience, one UN representative felt that 'the operation has benefited from a very high level of education when it comes to national staff. So, this also has contributed to very high standards in terms of quality'.

The government's position towards Syrian refugees has been ambivalent. On the one hand, it has discouraged them from settling for the long term, while on the other requiring the response to their needs be integrated into national health and education systems. The authorities have also helped in

the design of a response that goes beyond a classic humanitarian operation. Only around 20% of Syrian refugees live in informal tent settlements, with the rest spread among host populations in urban and peri-urban areas. The Lebanese situation is therefore a hybrid situation that is to some extent closer to an internal displacement context, despite significant legal constraints on Syrians in terms of residency and work.

Towards a single cash-based response

This very particular environment – a protracted crisis with refugee and host populations in an expensive middle-income country – has encouraged the humanitarian system to innovate and adapt. One of the most significant changes has been the gradual evolution of cash-based assistance towards a single cash system. This began at the end of 2015, when the major cash providers introduced a single e-card incorporating the various forms of cash transfer available (with varying amounts and payment frequencies, unrestricted cash versus cash for food, etc.). In 2017,

"

The Lebanese situation is therefore not a 'classic' refugee crisis, but rather a hybrid situation that is to some extent closer to an internal displacement context, despite significant legal constraints on Syrians in terms of residency and work.

donors decided to guarantee Syrian refugees an unconditional monthly fixed amount of cash assistance for three years. The creation of this single cash system is considered one of the greatest recent humanitarian achievements, not only in Lebanon but also more generally within the humanitarian system as a whole. These changes are based on a longer-term approach and vision for both refugees and host communities, as explained by a donor representative:

We've always said, if we're going to try to reform the cash assistance sector, it can't just be for the next two, three years. It has to be a longer-term goal, with some kind of social safety net system for the most vulnerable.

The invisible wounds of conflict

After seven years, the exceptional situation of refugees has merged with normality. Refugees are scattered among vulnerable host populations with similar needs, adding to the complexity of the response and the risk of tensions between and among communities, for instance around access to healthcare. Some of the most vulnerable appear to be overlooked because they are very isolated, because of their status or because of their specific needs (the elderly, people with disabilities, Palestinian refugees and refugees living in small and isolated informal settlements). As one INGO representative explained:

I have an example of a family who lived in a building in Tripoli, with an elderly person who hadn't gone out since arriving in Lebanon and probably didn't have the [physical] ability [to do so]. It was a building with flights of stairs, probably no facilities in

the bathroom, nothing, and this person had no wheelchair. Those people become a bit transparent, but there are contextual and structural difficulties: locating people, managing to follow [up on] them.

In a country where the wounds of past wars are still healing, refugees from Syria have been welcomed with compassion. Over time, however, the psychological trauma of the war is being forgotten. With their relatives at home still in danger and prospects for the future in ruins, Syrians have to live with the stigma of being refugees and the shame of being dependent on aid. These traumas are rarely spoken about openly, making them difficult to identify and address. Aid interventions need to integrate more localised decision-making with the affected population, particularly with young people, who have been violently propelled into adult life, carrying a heavy load supporting their families but unable to get on with their lives, get married and start a family of their own.

From stability to longer-term development?

Seven years after the Syrian crisis began, and with no resolution in sight, its impact on Lebanon continues to grow. It is very unlikely that every refugee from Syria will be able to return home, at least in the near future. While the aid response has helped to establish a degree of stability in the here and now, the question remains how the transition can be made to longer-term development. If stability is not to become stagnation, future aid programmes will need to adopt a political vision of society, embracing the specific dynamics of this context and aiming for social transformation. Refugees may be at the centre of current debates and of the aid response, but they continue to be excluded from decisions that will have an impact on their lives. They, along with other vulnerable people in Lebanon, will need to be given a voice. • **NAWAL KARROUM, GROUPE URD**

This write-up is based on a case study conducted for the SOHS 2018 by Groupe URD. The full case study can be found at:
sohs.alnap.org

Adam Patterson/DFID

Endnotes for this criterion

1. Affected people were asked their opinion on the relevance of activities in 19 cases: in 15 (Aberra et al., 2015; Coombs et al., 2015; ST Hidalgo et al., 2015; Mutunga et al., 2015; Peacocke et al., 2015; Shepherd et al., 2017; Chaffin, 2016; Kebe and Maiga, 2015; Khan, 2015; Okeyo et al., 2017; Samuel Hall, 2015; Stone et al., 2015; Sunwoo and Cascioli Sharp, 2015; Ullah, 2015; Yila, 2017) they said that interventions had met their needs at the time. In four they said that activities had not (Ferretti, 2017; Lawday et al., 2016; Okeyo et al., 2017; Sanderson et al., 2015).

2. In the practitioner survey, 13% of respondents said that their sector's ability to prioritise/address the most urgent needs was 'excellent', while 45% said that it was 'good'; 11% felt that performance in this area was 'poor'. The combined positive score of 58% was the highest for any of the criteria.

3. 2015: 27% yes, 46% partially, 24% no; 2012: 33% yes, 41% partially; 25% no. The recipient and practitioner surveys cannot be directly compared because they use different scales (three point and four point) and have different wording. However, it is noticeable that, if the middle of the three scores in the recipient survey were split equally into two, to approximate the middle two 'good' and 'fair' results in the practitioner survey, then the overall positives in the two surveys would be 58% and 63%, and the overall negatives would be 42% and 37%. In both, the lowest-scoring answer would be similar: 10% for the recipient survey, and 13% for the practitioner survey.

4. Unlike the practitioner survey, where this criterion scored well against others.

5. Surveys by Ground Truth are even less positive (although hard to compare, because they use a five-point scale and the question is somewhat different). The Ground Truth questions tend to ask whether aid covers basic needs – putting more emphasis on quantity, and less on relevance.

6. The importance of food as a relief item is borne out in research by the SAVE consortium, where it was the 'most needed' form of assistance in both Afghanistan and Somalia, according to surveys of affected people.

7. Food was the most important need in both conflict and non-conflict environments, followed by cash (in conflicts) and health (in natural disasters).

8. Food, health and education, in that order. In the other countries, the results were: Afghanistan – cash, education, food; DRC – food, cash (equal), education; Iraq – food, cash, shelter.

9. This was the main unmet need among respondents to Ground Truth surveys in Haiti and Afghanistan and among Syrian refugees in Istanbul, and the second among Syrian refugees in Lebanon. This may suggest that the need for shelter becomes more prominent over time, as other needs are met either by the activities of people themselves, or by the interventions of government or humanitarian actors.

10. Food was among the top three unmet needs in Haiti and Afghanistan, among Iraqi IDPs and refugees and for Syrian refugees in Lebanon; healthcare was among the top three for refugees and IDPs in Iraq, and in Somalia and Lebanon.

11. The question was: 'Did the aid you received address your most important needs at the time?'.

12. Protection was not cited as a 'type of aid most needed' in the SAVE surveys in Afghanistan or Somalia, but 48% of respondents in South Sudan cited it as such.

13. This would not be surprising given the challenges humanitarian practitioners face in agreeing on a shared definition of what 'protection' is.(FAO et al., 2017; Global Protection Cluster, 2017).

14. On average, 36% over the three years.

15. The evidence is not particularly strong: key informants did not discuss this element of the Ebola crisis.

16. There were also a significant number of evaluations that indicated that assessments were of adequate or good quality, without suggesting that this was an improvement on previous years: see for example Abdula, 2017; Advisem Services Inc., 2016; Ambroso et al., 2016; Betts and Coates, 2017; Conoir et al., 2017; ICF, 2016; Lawday et al., 2016; UNICEF, 2016; Wihaidi and Wehaidy, 2016.

17. UN manager, UN.

18. Affected people/recipients expressed a preference for cash in Duncalf et al., 2016; IFRC and KRCS, 2015; Kenya Red Cross, 2017; Watson et al., 2016), and for in-kind support in Ibrahim et al., 2016 and Lewins et al., 2016). In Downen et al., 2016 and Samuel Hall, 2015, opinions were more mixed.

ACCOUNTABILITY & PARTICIPATION

In 2015–2017, there was significant activity to improve accountability and the participation of crisis-affected people in humanitarian programmes. More aid recipients were consulted and able to provide feedback. However, the information they provided seldom resulted in major changes.

A focus on information collection as an approach to participation made many people feel that the issue was becoming bureaucratised and seen as a 'box-ticking exercise'. There were more ambitious examples of 'handing over power' in humanitarian programming, but these were generally isolated, and did not lead to changes in the system as a whole.

Accountability & Participation

In brief

Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) combines a large and growing number of activities related to regulating the relationships and power imbalances between people affected by crisis and humanitarian agencies. This report focuses on two areas in particular: participation in decision-making by affected people, and the degree to which humanitarian agencies are held accountable for the decisions they make on behalf of affected people.

Much of the activity related to improving participation in the reporting period centred around establishing systems of consultation – particularly in assessments and feedback systems. Growing activity in this area was noted in the 2015 report, and increased further in 2015–17, reflected in an increased number of respondents in the recipient survey saying that they had been consulted on the assistance they received. However, this is a limited form of participation, and is further limited by the fact that the views of crisis-affected people collected in these ways do not seem, in most cases, to have been influential in creating or changing humanitarian plans. The focus on information collection systems as an approach to participation also made many people feel that the issue was becoming bureaucratised and seen as a 'box-ticking exercise'. There were more ambitious examples of 'handing over power' in humanitarian programming, but they were generally isolated, and did not lead to changes in the system as a whole.

The picture was similar with respect to accountability. There was an increase in reporting mechanisms, but on their own these are not sufficient to improve accountability. There was also some progress on making people aware of their rights and entitlements, but very little on mechanisms for redressing grievances or imposing sanctions. Despite high-level attention to the issue of sexual abuse and exploitation, there was still a lack of joined-up activity on the ground.

Defining accountability and participation

Accountability and participation is not included in the OECD DAC criteria for humanitarian performance, possibly because the engagement of crisis-affected people in humanitarian responses is considered to be a means to achieving better programmes (by increasing the relevance and impact of programming, for example), rather than an end in itself. Many humanitarians, however, would argue that accountability and participation are objectives in themselves: that no matter how well a programme performs in other areas, it cannot be judged as performing well unless crisis-affected people have meaningful control over decisions, and are able to hold humanitarian actors to account for the decisions they make on their behalf. As a result, we have added accountability and participation as a new criterion in this edition of the SOHS. The criterion refers only to accountability to, and participation of, people affected by crisis (and not wider forms of accountability, such as to donors or to the affected state).

Accountability has been the subject of much debate and some confusion. Several key informants suggested that the term 'AAP' is used to mean different things by different people (see also Donino and Brown, 2014), including communication of information to crisis-affected people; the ability of affected people to make complaints about, or suggest improvements to, aid programmes; the ability of affected people to design and implement their own activities; and the prevention of sexual exploitation and other abusive behaviour by aid workers. Key informant interviews also suggested that discussions on AAP are being expanded to cover aspects of 'localisation'. What all of these activities have in common is that they concern the relationship between the people in a crisis and the people who aim to assist them – a relationship that contains large disparities of power.

ALNAP's work on this topic generally distinguishes between two key areas: the ability of crisis-affected people to make or influence decisions about the use of external funding ('participation') and the ability of crisis-affected people to hold humanitarian actors to account for decisions that are made on their behalf ('accountability') (Knox Clarke and Obrecht, 2015; Obrecht et al., 2015). These areas differ significantly – in ambition, in rationale and in the mechanisms and approaches that would be required for them to be fully achieved. However, at present many AAP activities aim to address both.
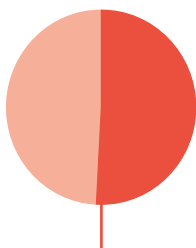
To what extent are affected people able to participate in/influence decisions that affect them?

Although this area has continued to receive attention at both the policy and operational levels of the humanitarian system, the period 2015–17 did not see any large-scale shift in decision-making power away from humanitarian organisations and towards people affected by crisis. In the recipient survey, a slim majority of respondents (51% overall) reported that they had been consulted on what they needed prior to distribution. On the face of it this is a remarkable figure (particularly given the fact that there was no significant difference between men's and women's responses), suggesting that one in every two people had been involved in some form of assessment: responding to questionnaires, being interviewed or participating in community meetings. It is also a significant increase on the 2015 (33%) and 2012 surveys (34%).

In the evaluations, including people in assessments and targeting exercises (deciding what people receive and who should receive it) appeared to be the most common approach to enhancing participation (Khan, 2015; Moughanie, 2015; Poulsen et al., 2015). It was also presented as an example of participatory programming by interviewees in several case studies. However, answering a questionnaire on needs or participating in an interview are very limited forms of participation, particularly when answering questions entails a choice between predetermined options. As one UN official explained: 'Do we include affected populations in design? No. Do we include them to find out needs? Yes. Are we allowing for needs to be broadly expressed? No. Are we allowing it to be addressed by a tick in the box? Yes'.

Of the 5,000 aid recipients who took part in the SOHS 2018 survey,

51%

reported they had been consulted on what they needed prior to distribution. This suggests

1 in 2

people had been involved in some form of assessment.

There are, of course, good reasons for standardising assessment tools, but doing so does not add greatly to the empowerment of crisis-affected populations, and may further reduce their sense of dignity and agency. One local NGO staff member explained an assessment process as follows: 'they come to their houses and do the assessments, asking about their expenses, their debts, how many times do they eat meat. Some, they think this is … humiliating for them'.

A second approach to consulting affected people – and one which appears to have become more widespread over the 2015–17 period, is the provision of feedback mechanisms as part of project implementation. In many cases, these mechanisms are designed (or used) to provide feedback (inputting into decisions) and make complaints (holding to account), and thus have both accountability and participation functions. In the recipient survey, a slightly higher number answered yes than no (36% to 32%) to the question 'were you able to give opinions on programmes, make complaints, and suggest changes to the aid agencies?'. This is a significantly higher number of positive responses than in the 2015 survey (where 19% of respondents said yes and 44% said no) and a lower number of negative responses to 2015, where 37% said yes and 55% said no. Overall, there were no statistically significant differences according to the gender of respondents, although there were statistically significant differences in Afghanistan and Iraq. The responses of refugees and people affected by 'natural' disasters were very similar to each other (the responses of people in conflict were slightly less positive: 29% yes, 32% no). There was no statistically significant difference in responses between people who received support from international and from national organisations.

Suggesting a change is one thing; having that suggestion acted on is another. Case study interviews with aid recipients and humanitarian staff indicate that, in a limited number of cases, agencies had made changes as a result of feedback, but that generally these were quite small (changing the items in a food distribution, for example). Similarly, the review of evaluations provided some examples of changes as a result of consultation or feedback, such as adjustments to food baskets (Duncalf et al., 2016), the design of transitional shelters (IFRC, 2015) and winterisation activities in refugee camps in Syria (Austin, 2016). One evaluation gave examples of more substantial changes being made as a result of feedback (Al Nabhy et al., 2017), but this seemed to occur in only a small minority of cases. In general, interviewees in the case studies – particularly aid recipients – were pessimistic about their ability to influence, let alone determine, how humanitarian assistance was designed and delivered. In Ground Truth surveys in Haiti, Afghanistan and Lebanon, only one in nine respondents believed that their opinions were actually taken into account (Ground Truth Solutions, 2017). Subsequent surveys in six countries also gave low scores for responsiveness (Ground Truth Solutions, 2018).

Of the 1,170 aid practitioners who completed the SOHS 2018 survey,
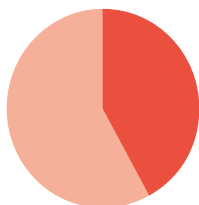
42%

felt that the participation of affected people was good or excellent.

But only…
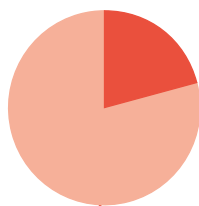
21%

of practitioners felt that aid recipients held influence or control over decisions.

Humanitarian practitioners were similarly dubious about the ability of affected people to influence decisions. Only 42% of respondents thought that the participation of affected people in their programmes was good or excellent. While this was an improvement on 2015 (when the score was 33%), it was still one of the most negative results in the survey. Even lower, however, were the results when practitioners were asked about the degree of influence or control aid recipients had over decisions. Here, the combined score of 21% was the lowest of any in the survey, again suggesting that, while a growing number of mechanisms are available to give crisis-affected people a voice, they are limited and do not constitute a legitimate consultation, let alone a transfer of control. The system appears to have got stuck at the feedback stage: roughly two-thirds of the key informants who discussed accountability felt that little, if any, progress had been made in this area over the previous three years.

Some interviewees pointed to positive developments, including the potential for technology to allow people to express opinions more visibly, and the role of cash in giving people more choice (the improved agency and control cash can offer were also appreciated by aid recipients interviewed in the case studies). They also discussed increased pressure from donors – in particular USAID – to report on measures to engage people in projects. A few mentioned the Core Humanitarian Standard and Ground Truth Solutions as initiatives that might support change in the future, and the revised HCT Terms of Reference, which highlight accountability to affected populations and prevention of sexual abuse as mandatory issues for all HCTs.

Set against this was a repeated concern that participation was becoming a professionalised, technical exercise rather than a value or commitment. Some mentioned that there had been a proliferation of guidance, but that this was not fully operationalised on the ground – a point that has also been made in a number of STAIT/P2P peer reviews. It was noticeable how many key informants talked of AAP as a 'box-ticking exercise'. This 'professionalisation' of accountability, turning it into 'a big thing', had in some cases made humanitarian workers cynical about the whole idea. One local NGO staff member told interviewers: 'We joke that you put the letters CB before everything, so we have many things, now it's all community-based and the same things that you always used to do, we just add the letters, community-based'.

At the same time, the case studies and evaluations suggested a number of organisations for whom the accountability agenda is a core commitment (Grünewald and Schenkenberg, 2016; Wihaidi and Wehaidy, 2016). Interviewees from affected populations were clear that some agencies were more interested in taking their views into account than others. These agencies are experimenting with approaches that go beyond assessments and feedback mechanisms, often providing grants to community groups and allowing them to take the lead in decision-making, rather than 'participating' though information collection mechanisms. However, many informants spoke of 'pilots' or 'islands': promising activities that, while good in themselves, were unlikely to create change across the system.

How important is participation?

One important outcome of the recipient survey is that it demonstrates a statistically significant correlation between the degree to which people are consulted on a programme, or are able to give feedback about a programme, and the degree to which they feel they are treated with respect and dignity. People who had been able to give feedback were 3.5 times more likely to say that they had been treated with dignity and respect than people who had not been able to do so, and people who had been consulted were 3.1 times more likely to say that they had been treated with dignity and respect than people who had not.

The correlation is striking and important, but we should be careful about the conclusions that we draw from it. We cannot say with certainty that putting feedback mechanisms in place will lead to people feeling more respected: the figures show that relationship, but they do not show that one element causes the other. Similarly, we cannot assume feedback mechanisms and consultation are necessary to ensure that people are treated in a dignified way. One of the highest scores in the survey for dignity (76%) was in Iraq, which scored lowest on questions related to consultation and ability to provide feedback (37% and 15% yes responses, respectively). Other factors – such as the demeanour of aid staff, the efficiency of processes (such as the length of time which people are made to wait for distributions) and respect for local culture – support feelings of dignity, and these go well beyond feedback processes (Holloway and Fan, 2018).

Certainly, some of the people interviewed for this report did not feel they had been consulted about the aid they received, but they were not especially concerned. There may be a number of reasons for this. People in a crisis have other priorities, and may not want to spend time providing information or making decisions. They may also not want to appear critical. Or as one local NGO informant suggested, 'participation is a culture in itself. People need to be able to know how to participate and have practiced it to be able to do it. This is a culture we don't have much'. The idea that participation may be more highly valued in some cultures than others received some slight support in the case studies – interviewees in Haiti were consistently more unhappy about being denied the opportunity to make decisions than interviewees in Yemen, for example. This is an area that would benefit from more study. What is important here is the idea that participation is largely about agency, and so should entail choice. In some cases people may choose not to participate, without feeling that this affects their dignity. Even so, while we should be careful not to project assumptions, there can be little doubt that many people, in many places, prize participation (and see also Ground Truth Solutions, 2017).

Participation also seems to correlate with better programming. In the recipient survey, there was a statistically significant correlation between consultation and feedback on the one hand, and the relevance and quality of programming on the other. People who reported that they had

People who gave feedback were **3.5** times more likely to say that they had been treated with dignity and respect than people who had not. People who were consulted were **3.1** times more likely to say that they had been treated with dignity and respect than those who had not.

been consulted and were able to provide feedback were around two to three times more likely to give positive responses around the relevance and quality of the aid they had received than those who had not.

The link between greater participation and the quality of programming was particularly evident in the Ebola response in West Africa. The initial response demonstrated the shortcomings of an overly technical approach that relied on external expertise at the expense of the knowledge and understanding of the societies facing the epidemic. This meant, for example, that '[t]he early instructions on so-called safe burial – rigid and unworkable – were, in that context, a textbook manual for unsafe burial that then had to be overcome by working with local religious and community leaders' (DuBois et al., 2015: 31). In that context at least, seeing people's behaviour as a problem, rather than as a key to the response, hampered effective action and cost lives (DuBois et al., 2015; Moon et al., 2015; IRC, 2016f).

Factors affecting participation

Clarity around concepts and approaches

As noted above, evaluations and interviews at HQ and in country offices demonstrated a very broad understanding of what terms such as 'accountability' and 'participation' actually mean, and how external actors can most effectively establish systems that give affected people a meaningful say. While there will never be one 'right' way to achieve participation, key informants suggested that confusion in these areas prevents the development of expertise and sharing of knowledge.

One concrete operational area where this confusion can have important implications is the decision on who participates, and who represents whom. Informants suggested that it is unrealistic to expect everybody in a community to participate in decision-making: there will generally need to be some representative structure. However, this raises the question of who does the representing. Should it be the established community authorities? Or representatives of marginalised groups? Either choice has significant consequences (potentially beyond the boundaries of the programme), and it can be difficult to make a decision without clarity on why participation is being encouraged.

Time

The most frequently cited constraint to establishing more participatory programmes – at least among practitioners interviewed as part of the case studies – was time. As one national NGO staff member put it: 'When it is about emergency, usually you have, what, three days? A week, if you're lucky, to draft everything. So, it's not really easy to really involve people'. It is interesting how often time was raised as a constraint, even in situations which were not rapid-onset, and where agencies had been in place for many years. Some interviewees suggested that the need for

rapid proposals was driven as much by agency and donor timescales as it was by needs on the ground, and, to the degree that it is a constraint in longer programmes, shortage of time may be related to business processes and priorities rather than the urgency of the situation itself.

Flexibility in funding and programming

One element that determines the degree of participation – and particularly the degree to which feedback is used – is whether agencies are able and open to changing their initial expectations or plans on the basis of input from affected people. At present, neither practitioners nor affected people involved in humanitarian operations believe that agencies are flexible enough: there were many concerns over needs being determined and programme design shaped by donor priorities and the perspectives of aid professionals, rather than by the views of affected communities (see also Darcy, 2016a; Lawday et al., 2016; World Vision International, 2015). It is hard to judge the degree to which this is based on attitudes of 'expert' superiority, or whether it is based on the external constraints imposed by donor contracting processes or the structures and processes of the agencies themselves. The tendency for agencies to specialise in particular sectors renders them unable to respond to requests from affected people that fall within a different sector, or no clear sector at all. Since much donor reporting focuses on outputs over outcomes, many agencies are also unable to significantly change the activities they carry out within a sector, if this leads to a significant change in the outputs being provided (Obrecht, 2018). Within the study period, some donors began to experiment with more open partnership agreements (see section on relevance) to allow agencies to move more flexibly between outputs and activities in order to achieve an overall outcome. However, despite increased donor endorsement of accountability to affected populations (including a requirement passed by the US Congress in 2015 that all foreign aid projects provide opportunities for feedback, DANIDA and other donors' strong support for the CHS and the 'participation revolution' in the Grand Bargain), implementing agencies note that these expectations are in direct tension with the donor push for greater efficiency and the implicit desire for speed and scale in humanitarian response (see also Obrecht, 2018).

Culture

Participatory programming – and accountability to affected populations in general – is fundamentally about power. To be effective, it requires an understanding of how power is constructed and expressed in a given situation. In the case of participatory programming, in particular, it also aims to disrupt and change existing dynamics of inequality.

The distribution of power – the basis on which power rests, and the ways in which it is distributed – is a core element of the culture of any society, and differs from one society to another. As a result, key informants were clear that participatory programming is only likely to be effective where an agency has

the skills to understand the power dynamics of a particular society. It is also hard to transfer approaches that work in one place to another, with another culture. Participatory activities need to be bespoke, which sits uneasily with the standardisation of tools and programmes required to ensure some degree of consistency and efficiency across humanitarian organisations.

Incentives

Participatory programming also means giving power away, with decisions currently taken by agency staff instead being in the hands of affected people or their representatives. A degree of resistance to change is an inherent part of the culture of all organisations (Knox Clarke, 2017), and in this case resistance may be reinforced by concerns about loss of power and control (CHS, forthcoming; Steets et al., 2016). Key informants from the Red Cross, NGOs and the UN were all clear that real participation would require a paradigm shift that the humanitarian system is currently not prepared to make.
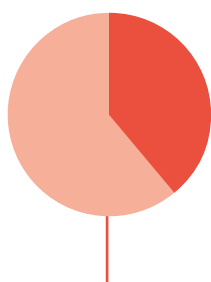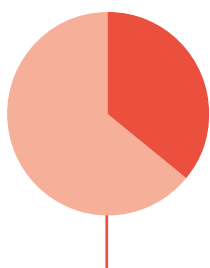
To what extent are aid recipients able to hold humanitarian actors to account for decisions made on their behalf?

In order for aid recipients to be able to hold humanitarians to account for the actions taken on their behalf, at least three elements need to be in place: people need to know what they should expect from the humanitarian response and whether this is, in fact, what is happening; they need to have a way to complain when these expectations are not met; and there needs to be some mechanism for redress or sanction. In the recipient survey, 39% of people said that the organisations providing them with humanitarian assistance had communicated well about their plans and activities: again, there was no statistical difference in the survey between those who had received assistance from governments, national NGOs or international agencies. These results suggest that there is significant room for improvement in communicating with people in crisis about the assistance and support they can expect. Practitioners broadly agreed: only 36% of respondents said that their organisation was good or excellent at providing information to aid recipients and allowing them to lodge complaints. It is probably not surprising that the case studies provided a number of examples (in Kenya, Yemen and Haiti) of people being unaware of what they should receive, or when and how they should receive it. At the same time, the case studies also provided a number of examples of organisations actively attempting to communicate with recipients in order to raise awareness of their entitlements and make them aware of their rights.

Turning to the second element supporting accountability – reporting mechanisms – key informants suggested that there had been a significant increase in complaints mechanisms over the reporting period, and this was supported by the evaluations. The practitioner survey also suggested that there were more complaints mechanisms, showing an increase from 30% to 36% in positive responses between 2015 and 2017. Key informants suggested that the growth in such mechanisms may have been driven, in part, by the expectations of donors.

Of the 5,000 aid recipients who took part in the SOHS 2018 survey,

39%

reported that organisations providing them with assistance had communicated about plans and activities well.

36%

of practitioners broadly agreed, reporting that their organisation was good or excellent at providing information.

At the same time, the case studies suggested that there were a number of situations where complaints mechanisms had still not been put in place, and this was confirmed in evaluations (Baker et al., 2016; House, 2016; Patko, 2016). Evaluations also suggested that, even when mechanisms were in place, affected communities were unaware of them (Advisem Services Inc., 2016; Turnbull, 2016) or unable to access them (Baker et al., 2016; IFRC and KRCS, 2015). In many cases, mechanisms may exist, but they are not working as intended. Broadly, findings from the evaluation synthesis and from the interviews echo those of a Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) evaluation of activities in Yemen: 'Engagement sometimes, but not always, includes an adequate, standardised and well-communicated complaint process. Hotlines are common (though often used for requests rather than complaints), as are complaint boxes and the option of channelling a complaint through a member of the community committee' (Al Nabhy et al., 2017: 21).
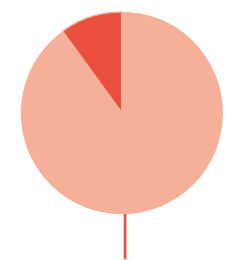
The third element one might expect to see as part of an effective accountability system is some method for redress and/or sanction: essentially, if the humanitarian agency has not provided people with their entitlements, it will put things right – and if the behaviour constitutes a particularly flagrant breach of expectations, individuals or organisations will be sanctioned. This element appears to be the weakest of the three: it is not addressed in the evaluations (which tend to look for the presence or absence of mechanisms, rather than how they work), and was not mentioned by key informants or in the case studies. It is, then, not surprising that only around 10% of respondents (averaged across three countries) in Ground Truth Solutions surveys trusted complaints mechanisms to deliver (Ground Truth Solutions, 2017).

One important failing in the area of accountability relates to sexual exploitation and abuse. The sexual exploitation of crisis-affected people by aid workers represents an extreme example of the conscious abuse of power, and provides a basic test of how effective the system can be in holding individuals and organisations to account for violations of law and ethical principles. The issue received increased attention, particularly at the UN: in 2016 the Secretary-General appointed a Special Coordinator on improving the UN response to sexual exploitation and abuse, and the following year presented a strategy to the General Assembly 'to improve the Organization's system-wide approach' to the issue (UN Secretary-General, 2017b: 1). Movement on the ground was, however, slow. The reports of P2P missions were clear that this area saw only limited progress over the period 2015–17. In some cases, reports suggest that 'agencies and NGOs have specific policies and mechanisms to support a PSEA agenda, including codes of conduct that are mandatory for humanitarian workers to sign and abide by; whistle blowing opportunities; and support assistance to survivors' (STAIT (P2P), 2016a: 9), but it is not clear how well these policies are being implemented. At the inter-agency level, there appeared to be even less attention to the problem. While in some cases '[t]he RC/HC and DHC ... stressed the importance of preventing sexual exploitation and abuse by

Only around
10%
of Ground Truth survey respondents trusted complaint mechanisms to deliver some form of redress.

humanitarian staff and partners [and] ... elevated PSEA successfully onto the humanitarian agenda' (P2P, 2017: 15), attention to the issue seemed to rest very much on individual efforts, rather than broad systemic commitment. In other situations, '[t]here was an almost complete absence of discussions during the OPR mission on the humanitarian community's obligations to the Protection against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) agenda'. The report goes on to say that 'the fact that it was rarely mentioned, is mentionable in itself' (STAIT (P2P), 2016a: 16). In the SOHS research, only four of 120 evaluations considered agency performance on this issue, and only five key informants mentioned abuse of affected people as a problem. All five felt that the issue was being largely ignored.
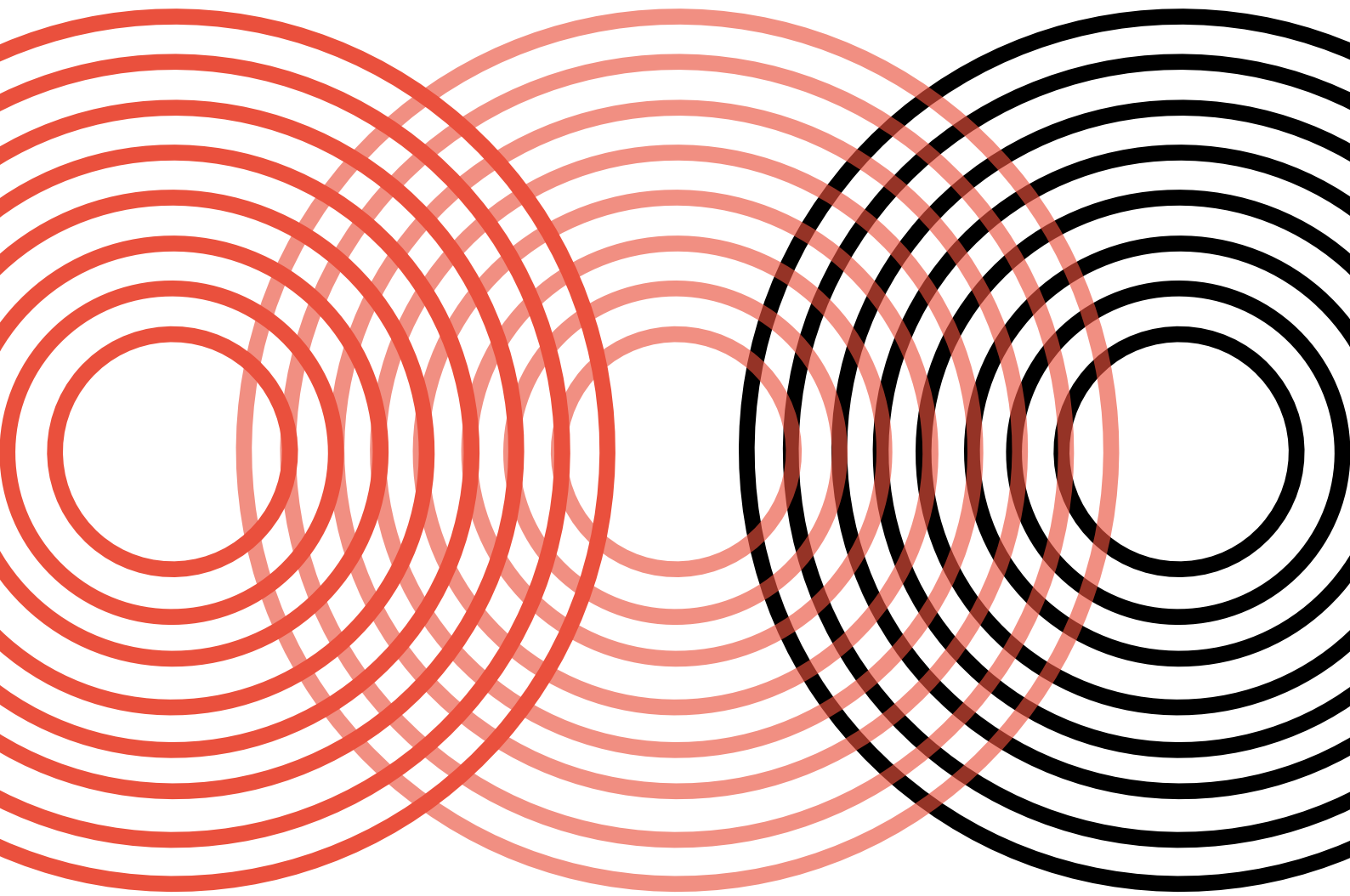
THE PERSPECTIVES OF AID RECIPIENTS

One of the most important ways of assessing the performance of humanitarian assistance is to ask people in crisis to evaluate the support they receive. The perspectives of aid recipients have played a significant role in grounding the findings and analysis of all three State of the Humanitarian System reports.[7] This section takes a focused look at what we heard from aid recipients in our research for the 2018 report, and highlights key sets of insights from this data.

The way the humanitarian sector consults aid recipients has changed dramatically since ALNAP's first survey in 2012. Not only are individual humanitarian agencies doing more to collect feedback from aid recipients, but there are also more system-wide approaches to surveying crisis-affected people. Accountability initiatives such as the Humanitarian Accountability Partnership (now the CHS Alliance) and Ground Truth Solutions have led to an increase in surveys of aid recipients. These surveys inform both operational decisions and humanitarian policy, for example the implementation of the Grand Bargain.

This section draws on the mobile survey data gathered by GeoPoll for ALNAP and the field-level interviews with aid recipients, as well as Ground Truth Solutions' Human Voice Index (HVI – a database that includes all of their large perceptual surveys) and the CHS Alliance self-assessment data for 2017.

Figure 18 / SOHS aid recipient aggregate survey responses – SOHS 2012, 2015 and 2018
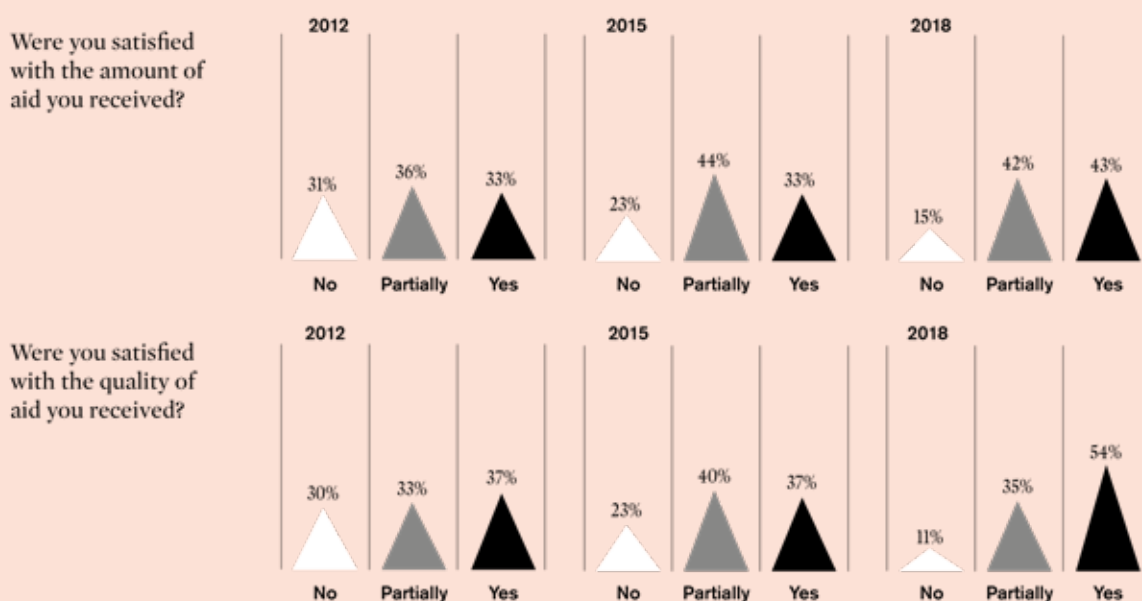
Notes: The countries covered by the SOHS aid recipient surveys are as follows: 2012: DRC, Pakistan, Haiti and Uganda; 2015: DRC, Pakistan and the Philippines; 2018: DRC, Kenya, Ethiopia, Afghanistan and Iraq.

INSIGHT 1: Overall, aid recipients see aid getting better

Overall, aid recipients in 2017 reported higher levels of satisfaction with the quality, quantity and relevance of the aid they received, compared with 2012 and 2015.[8] A much higher percentage of aid recipients also reported being able to give feedback on programmes, and that they were consulted prior to an aid distribution. In face-to-face interviews, aid recipients were concerned with the quantity of assistance provided, but generally indicated that the support they received was relevant to their needs and highly appreciated (deviations from this trend were most evident in Haiti). Interestingly, given current debates around the 'localisation' agenda, we found no meaningful distinctions between different types of aid actors in terms of how aid recipients assessed performance (this is discussed in more detail in section on Accountability and participation).

Positive appraisals by aid recipients were also found in the first baseline assessments carried out by the CHS Alliance on how well its members were performing against the nine Core Humanitarian Standards. The ratings aid recipients gave either matched or were more positive than the self-assessed ratings that agencies gave themselves on eight of the nine standards. Aid recipients were particularly positive about the relevance of the aid provided and the competence of aid agency staff.

> **"**
>
> 'it's not enough,
> but it makes
> a difference'
> **AID RECIPIENT, KENYA**

Figure 19 / SOHS aid recipient survey responses for DRC – SOHS 2012, 2015 and 2018

Were you satisfied with the amount of aid you received?

	2012			2015			2018		
No	10%			28%			10%		
Partially		24%			45%			46%	
Yes			57%			27%			45%

Were you satisfied with the quality of aid you received?

	2012			2015			2018		
No	10%			26%			11%		
Partially		26%			39%			38%	
Yes			64%			34%			51%
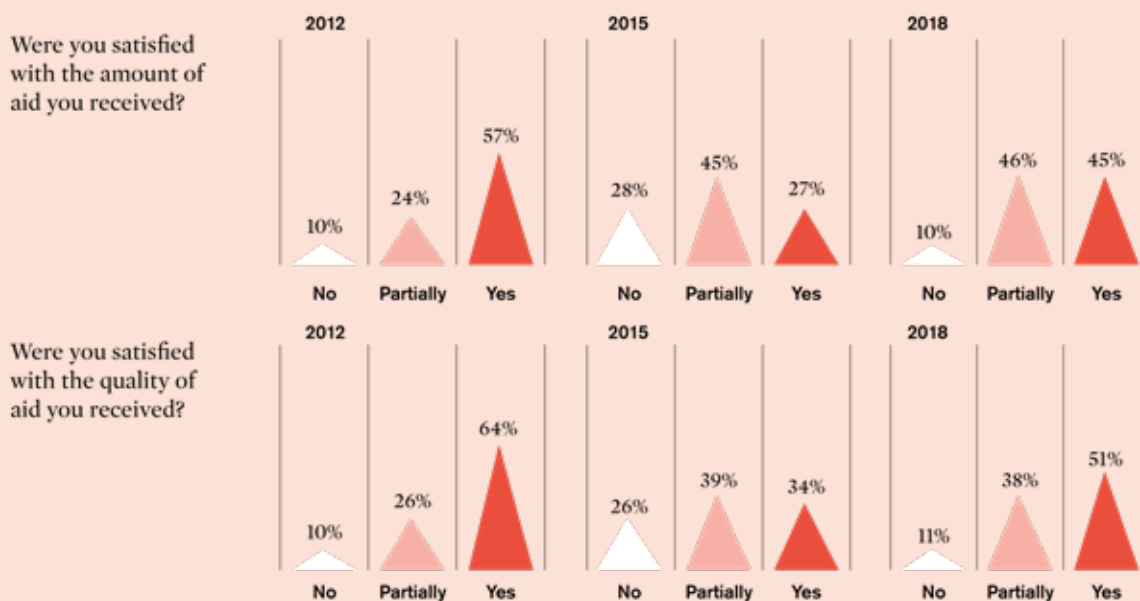
Notes: Figures have been rounded to the nearest percentile.

Figure 20 / Assessments against the Core Humanitarian Standard – Scores by commitment

Commitment	Key actions	Performance indicators
Communities and people affected by crisis have access to the humanitarian assistance they need at the right time	2.68	2.92
Communities and people affected by crisis are not negatively affected and are more prepared, resilient and less at-risk as a result of humanitarian action	2.75	2.85
Communities and people affected by crisis know their rights and entitlements, have access to information and participate in decisions that affect them	2.60	2.61
Communities and people affected by crisis have access to safe and responsive mechanisms to handle complaints	2.23	2.46
Communities and people affected by crisis receive coordinated, complementary assistance	2.92	2.54
Communities and people affected by crisis can expect delivery of improved assistance as organisations learn from experience and reflection	2.58	2.75
Communities and people affected by crisis receive assistance the assistance they require from competent well-managed staff and volunteers	2.88	3.42
Communities and people affected by crisis can expect that the organisations assisting them are managing resources effectively, efficiently and ethically	2.86	2.87

■ Key actions   ■ Performance indicators

Source: Core Humanitarian Standard

Notes: Aggregated assessments of 15 CHS Alliance members, as of December 2017. For each commitment the upper bar reflects the average self-assessment scores for Key Actions from CHS Alliance members (CHS Requirements at project level) while the lower bar shows the average ratings given by aid recipients served by the CHS Alliance members. The ratings from aid recipients were collected by CHS Alliance members themselves rather than through an independent party.

Figure 21 / Comparison of feedback, consultation and respect responses – SOHS 2018 aid recipients survey

	No	Partially	Yes
Are you treated with respect and dignity? / Were you able to give feedback?	32 / 8	22 / 21	68 / 36
Are you treated with respect and dignity? / Were you consulted on what you needed prior to distribution?	48 / 8	21	68 / 51

■ Are you treated with respect and dignity?   ■ Were you able to give feedback?
■ Are you treated with respect and dignity?   □ Were you consulted on what you needed prior to distribution?

Notes: While consultation and feedback mechanisms strongly correlated with the degree to which people felt respected, many aid recipients who were not able to provide feedback also reported that that they had been treated with respect, and some aid recipients who provided feedback did not feel treated with respect.

INSIGHT 2: Overall trends don't tell us what is happening in a specific response

Given the many years of attention and effort invested in improving accountability to affected populations in the humanitarian sector, it is heartening that performance is improving in the eyes of aid recipients. However, while the aggregated data indicates an overall positive trajectory, aggregated trends are not always reproduced within individual countries, which means that global trends can mask, or run counter to, trends within individual countries or crises.

For example, in the DRC, the only country that has been featured in all three SOHS surveys, there has been an overall decline in satisfaction among aid recipients from 2012 to 2017. Aid recipients were less satisfied in 2017 than they were in 2012 with the quantity of aid (57% in 2012 and 45% in 2017) and the quality of aid (64% in 2012 and 51% in 2017), and fewer reported being able to offer feedback (55% in 2012 and 47% in 2017).

Yet aid recipients in DRC in 2017 were more positive about performance compared to 2015, when the humanitarian response was considered quite poor by aid recipients and there were significant declines in satisfaction from 2012. These changes illustrate how humanitarian performance is fluid, not linear: levels of satisfaction can change dramatically, either up or down, and may be shaped by contextual factors affecting aid delivery at particular points in time.

INSIGHT 3: Accountability and participation mechanisms make a difference

Aid recipients are more likely to feel respected and view aid as relevant and high-quality if they are consulted and have the opportunity to provide feedback or complain. The GeoPoll surveys, for example, showed a strong relationship between feedback and consultation and how aid recipients perceived the quality of the aid they received. This correlation was even stronger with regard to feelings of dignity and respect (see more in section on Accountability and participation).

INSIGHT 4: The majority of aid recipients feel respected by aid providers

In the survey, 68% of aid recipients said that they were treated with respect and dignity by aid providers. Similarly, in survey data gathered by Ground Truth Solutions in 2015–2017, the average score for 'respect' was the highest for any question on the survey.

INSIGHT 5: There are a number of ways in which agencies can demonstrate respect for aid recipients

While consultation and feedback mechanisms strongly correlated with the degree to which people felt respected, many aid recipients who were not able to provide feedback also reported that that they had been treated with respect, and some aid recipients who provided feedback did not feel treated with respect. Similarly, in the Ground Truth data, high scores for respect were not accompanied by high scores for being able to voice opinions. This indicates that other factors beyond feedback and consultation mechanisms can come into play in shaping whether aid recipients feel respected, and how they assess the quality of aid. More research and evidence is needed on what these factors might be, and how aid agencies can move beyond feedback mechanisms to improve their relationships with aid recipients.

Figure 22 / Biggest challenges to receiving humanitarian aid – SOHS 2018 aid recipient survey

Not enough aid
23%

Don't know
3%

Corruption
25%

Other
8%

Insecurity
and violence
21%

Difficulty
with access
20%
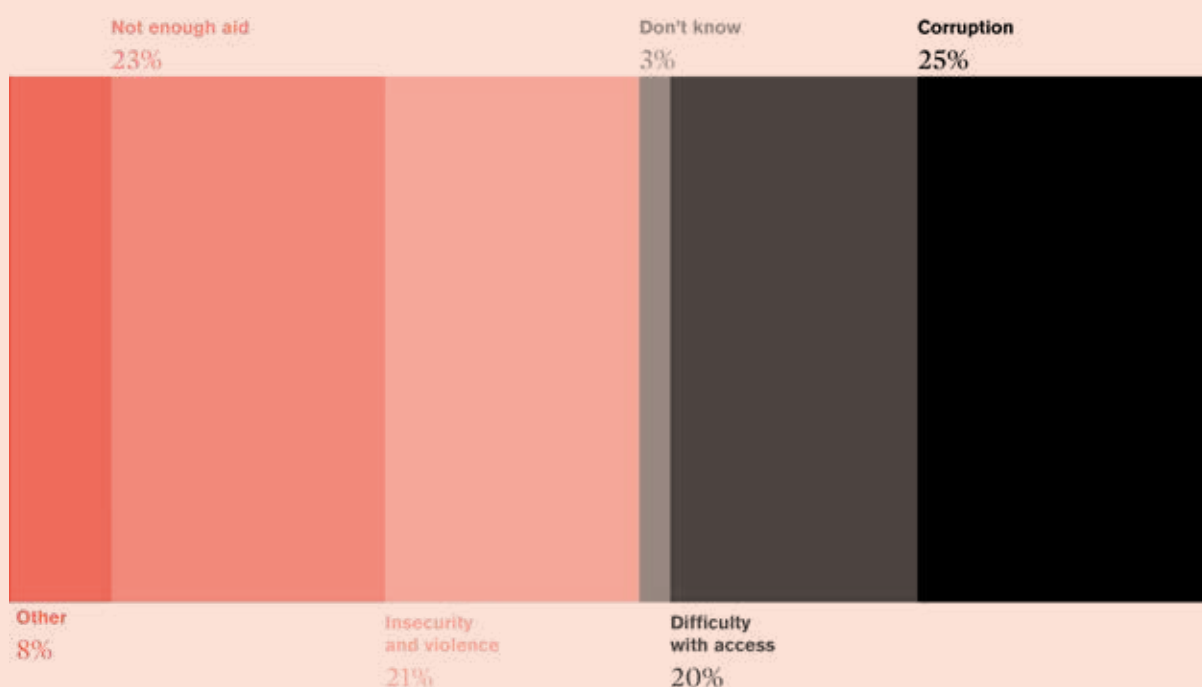
Notes: Responses to the question: 'What is the biggest challenge to people receiving aid in your area? 1)Insecurity and violence 2)Corruption 3)Not enough aid 4) Difficulty with access 5)Other 6) Don't Know'. Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole percent.

Figure 23 / Affected people's relative views of different aspects of humanitarian assistance – Ground Truth Solutions

Safety	0.9
Respect	0.9
-0.1	Aid Fairness
-0.3	Outcomes
-0.5	Recipient Independence
-0.5	Aid Appropriateness
-0.6	Recipient Voice

Source: Ground Truth Solutions (GTS)

Notes: GTS perception surveys with affected people in Lebanon, Iraq, Somalia, Afghanistan, Haiti and Uganda provide information about affected people's views on different aspects of the humanitarian assistance and how it affects their lives. The chart above shows to what extent each of the listed performance dimensions deviate from the global mean scores. In other words, it captures to what extent specific aspects of the humanitarian response are rated relative to each other. Positive scores suggests that those aspects of humanitarian assistance work relatively well compared to average scores, whereas negative scores suggest a need for improvements.

> Aid recipients felt that support does not always reach the most vulnerable and can exclude children and youth, women, elderly people, poor people and people with disabilities.

INSIGHT 6: Aid recipients identified a number of problems with humanitarian aid, including corruption, access constraints, unmet needs and poor targeting

Finally, while aid recipients are broadly satisfied with the basic aid they receive, they also identified a number of problems and areas for improvement. A majority of survey participants chose corruption as the most significant obstacle to aid delivery, followed by the limited amount of aid available, insecurity and problems with accessing aid. A review of aid recipients' answers to open-ended questions, carried out by Ground Truth Solutions for ALNAP, found that the most common concerns raised by aid recipients over 2015–17 across seven countries were information provision, unmet needs and targeting. Unmet needs cited by aid recipients ranged widely across different countries, from food and cash to housing and employment opportunities. With respect to targeting, aid recipients felt that support does not always reach the most vulnerable: when asked which groups are excluded from assistance, respondents mentioned children and youth, women, elderly people, poor people, people with disabilities, the ill and people without information about assistance. • **ALICE OBRECHT, ALNAP**

European Union 2018

Bangladesh: What future for the Rohingya?

Nearly 700,000 Rohingya people have fled to Bangladesh since August 2017, escaping human rights violations, discrimination and violence in Rakhine State in Myanmar. Villages have been razed, parents and relatives killed in front of traumatised children and women and girls raped and abused. These latest arrivals have joined hundreds of thousands of Rohingya from previous refugee inflows dating back to the 1970s. With a population of more than 800,000, the Balukhali-Kutupalong refugee camp in Cox's Bazar is the largest in the world. Altogether, UNHCR believes that a million Rohingya are living outside Myanmar. Those still in Myanmar are effectively

denied citizenship, and their movements and access to land, education and public services are restricted.

The Bangladesh Government responded to the latest influx by opening its border with Myanmar, allocating land for shelter and providing assistance. However, it does not consider the Rohingya to be refugees, rejects the possibility of local integration and wishes to see their swift return to Myanmar. Several repatriation plans are being discussed, but the conditions for a safe return of the Rohingya to Myanmar are still not in place. UNHCR and most other UN agencies have not been able to access Northern Rakhine since the crisis began in 2017. Despite the government's ambition to see a quick
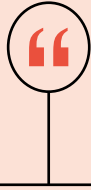
> " Neither the international community nor the Bangladesh Government seems to have a plan to address these people's longer-term needs.

resolution, refugees themselves strongly oppose return until conditions are safe and there has been accountability for abuses suffered at the hands of the Myanmar authorities and army. However, neither the international community nor the Bangladesh Government seems to have a plan to address these people's longer-term needs.

Another massive yet disorganised humanitarian response

A number of people interviewed as part of the case study told us that the early response did not meet basic standards of quality, as the government and local and international agencies struggled to cope with the very large numbers of people entering the country. While quality has subsequently improved, the location of the refugee camps still poses massive challenges. Camps are in low-lying areas at high risk of flooding and landslides. At the time of the study, there appeared to be little in the way of preparedness activities for the forthcoming rainy season, and refugees were extremely anxious about the effects of torrential rain.

Major gaps remain

During the initial months of the response priority was given to life-saving assistance, food security, shelter and WASH over mental health support. However, depression, anxiety and other mental health issues are common, and there is a clear need for consistent mental health and psychosocial support to help the refugees cope with their experiences and begin to heal.

Protection is another challenge. There are questions about safety in the camp, particularly for women and girls, with frequent reports of abuse and exploitation, including within the Rohingya community itself. Victims of gender-based violence may well be dealing with pregnancy and childbirth.

Refugees are not being heard

The Rohingya response in Bangladesh is also failing to meet mandated accountability standards. Refugees are not systematically involved in needs assessments or programming activities, and there is talk of aid agencies being disrespectful towards and excluding them from decision-making.

Language barriers make communication difficult, as neither Bangladeshi nor international staff generally speak Rohingya. Literacy levels are low among the Rohingya, so complaints boxes are not very effective, but as the government does not allow refugees to have Bangladeshi SIM cards or mobile phones other standard approaches to accountability, such as agency hotlines, are also largely redundant. Cultural norms restrict women's involvement in many areas of life, and make it hard for them to raise complaints. There have been accusations that some of majhis (traditional leaders), who should represent the community, have withheld beneficiary cards and demanded money from refugees.

No short-term fixes

With return to Myanmar – at least in the short term – looking unlikely, donors and aid actors are now advocating for longer-term approaches in the refugee camps and with host communities. The future of Rohingya refugees depends on investment in the Cox's Bazar district and Bangladesh as a whole. To achieve a sustainable solution, a major shift in policy will be required, easing pressure on Bangladesh, enhancing refugee self-reliance, expanding access to third-country solutions and supporting conditions in the country of origin to allow a safe and dignified return.• **CHARLOTTE HEWARD, GROUPE URD**

This write-up is based on a case study conducted for the SOHS 2018 by Groupe URD. The full case study can be found at: **sohs.alnap.org**

> " The Rohingya response in Bangladesh is also failing to meet mandated accountability standards. Refugees are not systematically involved in needs assessments or programming activities, and there is talk of aid agencies being disrespectful towards and excluding them from decision-making.

Factors affecting accountability

Design of accountability systems: completeness

In order to work effectively, formal complaints mechanisms require elements to collect, assess and potentially verify complaints; store them in a confidential manner; input them into decision-making; identify redress; and respond to the complainant (Bonino and Jean, n.d.). Currently, many mechanisms appear to focus on the collection of complaints, and put less focus on other elements: as a result, many existing systems are not particularly effective. In one – not untypical – example, 'the few complaints/suggestions registered are marked "management look into it" – but it became apparent that there is no internal reference system by which "management" is to be approached, and even less taking action' (Leber, 2015: 20; see also Advisem Services Inc., 2016; Duncalf et al., 2016; House, 2016; Kenya Red Cross, 2017; Oxford Policy Management, 2015; Turnbull, 2016a). This constraint may reflect a structural challenge in humanitarian agencies: accountability systems are often the province of monitoring and evaluation sections in organisations, and are not 'owned' by the organisations' leaders in country (CHS, forthcoming).

Design of accountability systems: cultural appropriateness

A number of evaluations and interviewees suggested that the systems humanitarian organisations put in place were not appropriate for the societies in which they were working. At its simplest, this could be a reliance on using written complaints in societies with low levels of literacy (Adams et al., 2015; Schofield, 2016). Both evaluations and interviewees suggested that, in many contexts, the best way to encourage people to make legitimate complaints was to spend time with them: 'Really, the best thing is to be present. Complaint boxes don't really work' (see also More, 2016; Wihaidi and Wehaidy, 2016).

Establishing a cultural 'fit' is about more than literacy. Just as some cultures may have differing ideas of participation, so the idea of making direct complaints about powerful people or organisations can run against cultural norms (Leber, 2015). It can also be dangerous: one UN interviewee said that 'refugees in Jordan and Lebanon are in a very precarious legal situation and so their willingness to talk might not be what it might be'. Interviewees suggested that, if complaints mechanisms are to be effective, they must be established on the basis of an understanding of how accountability works within the particular society where the humanitarian operation is taking place. This would involve a variety of designs and formats, tailored to local conditions.

Currently, many mechanisms appear to focus on the collection of complaints, and put less focus on other elements: as a result, many existing systems are not particularly effective.

Design of accountability systems: integration

The accountability mechanisms discussed in the evaluations and by interviewees in case studies overwhelmingly aimed to address the relationship between the humanitarian agency and individuals receiving support from the agency. They were not embedded in existing mechanisms in a society for holding power to account, and ignored the role of the state and other customary structures in addressing grievances. However, a number of aid recipients suggested that people would take a complaint to the local authorities or traditional leaders rather than directly to the agency itself. Moreover, they might be concerned about going to the agency because this might be seen to question the judgements of community leaders and local hierarchies. This suggests that, in many situations, humanitarian accountability mechanisms might be more effective if they built on existing mechanisms within the community (including legal and government systems) rather than establishing new and separate ones.

Resources

Given the complexity of these issues, it is not surprising that effective accountability requires resourcing: funds need to be available, and staff have to know how to establish and maintain accountability systems. Over the period, it seems that more funding became available for AAP (for example, for common platforms in Nepal, Yemen and CAR). However, limited resources were identified as a constraint in Yemen, Haiti and Greece. As one INGO manager explained: 'some donors want to give us project money for this which is great but it gets more difficult when this is just an additional requirement which has to come out at the expense of something else'. A lack of resources was also identified as a problem in some evaluations (Adams et al., 2015; Schofield, 2016).

Coordination

While an increased focus on accountability is to be applauded, the fact that so many agencies are establishing mechanisms in the same places can lead to overlap and confusion: 'if you were a community member, you really had to understand how the heck we were structured to even begin to know how to then feed in [your] respective complaint'. A number of countries have begun to address this issue by creating common feedback and complaint mechanisms, but there is still room for improvement. All the P2P reports reviewed for this research mentioned that common accountability systems were lacking, often adding that there was no mechanism to feed information from multiple agency mechanisms into the decision-making of HCTs. At the time of the P2P missions active steps were being taken to develop common mechanisms in CAR and Iraq, and the system in Iraq is now fully functioning.

Incentives

The importance of issues of power to participation and accountability has been noted above. However, with respect to accountability the problem may go beyond a lack of incentives to change to encompass powerful incentives not to change. One factor that may affect the degree to which agencies are prepared to invest in accountability mechanisms (mentioned, admittedly, by only a small number of interviewees) is the response of donors and the general public when the mechanisms start to work. Any effective mechanism should identify problems for which the agency, and individuals, should be held accountable. This can raise difficult questions. One interviewee with long experience in the UN explained: 'they [humanitarian agencies] are absolutely not ready to get scrutinised from a public eye. They are absolutely not ready for this for one reason and one reason only, negative competition. That they will not be able to withstand public scrutiny that is linked to financial allocation process. Any negative remarks or any negative findings could jeopardise the next funding and so from a humanitarian system perspective, this is something that should be addressed'.

Endnotes for this criterion

1. The ALNAP survey is with mobile phone owners, which might skew the results towards those more capable of engaging with aid agencies. Nevertheless, this would not explain the improvement between this and previous surveys.

2. The question was: were you consulted by the aid group on what you needed prior to distribution?

3. The question was: were you able to give your opinion on the programme, make complaints and suggest changes?

4. Those who were consulted were 3.77 times more likely to give a yes response to the quality of aid question compared to those who said no to consultation. They were 3.05 times more likely to give a yes response to the relevance of aid question. Those who were able to give feedback were 2.12 times more likely to give a yes response to the quality of aid question than those who were not. They were 1.83 times more likely to give a yes response to the relevance of aid question.

5. Including a consultation in preparation for the World Humanitarian Summit: https://www.agendaforhumanity.org/sites/default/files/resources/2017/Jul/COMMUNITY_CONSULTATIONS_ON_HUMANITARIAN_AID_-_OVERALL_FINDINGS.pdf.

6. See more at: http://www.oecd.org/dac/conflict-fragility-resilience/docs/Grand-Bargain-briefing-note-June-2018.pdf.

7. The aid recipient survey data collected for the State of the Humanitarian System Report is taken from a sample of humanitarian crises for each iteration of the report. Due to year-on-year variations in the geographical location of crises, different countries were sampled for 2012, 2015, and 2017. The 2012 survey covered Pakistan, Haiti, DRC and Uganda; 2015 covered Pakistan, DRC and the Philippines; 2017 covered DRC, Iraq, Afghanistan, Kenya and Ethiopia.
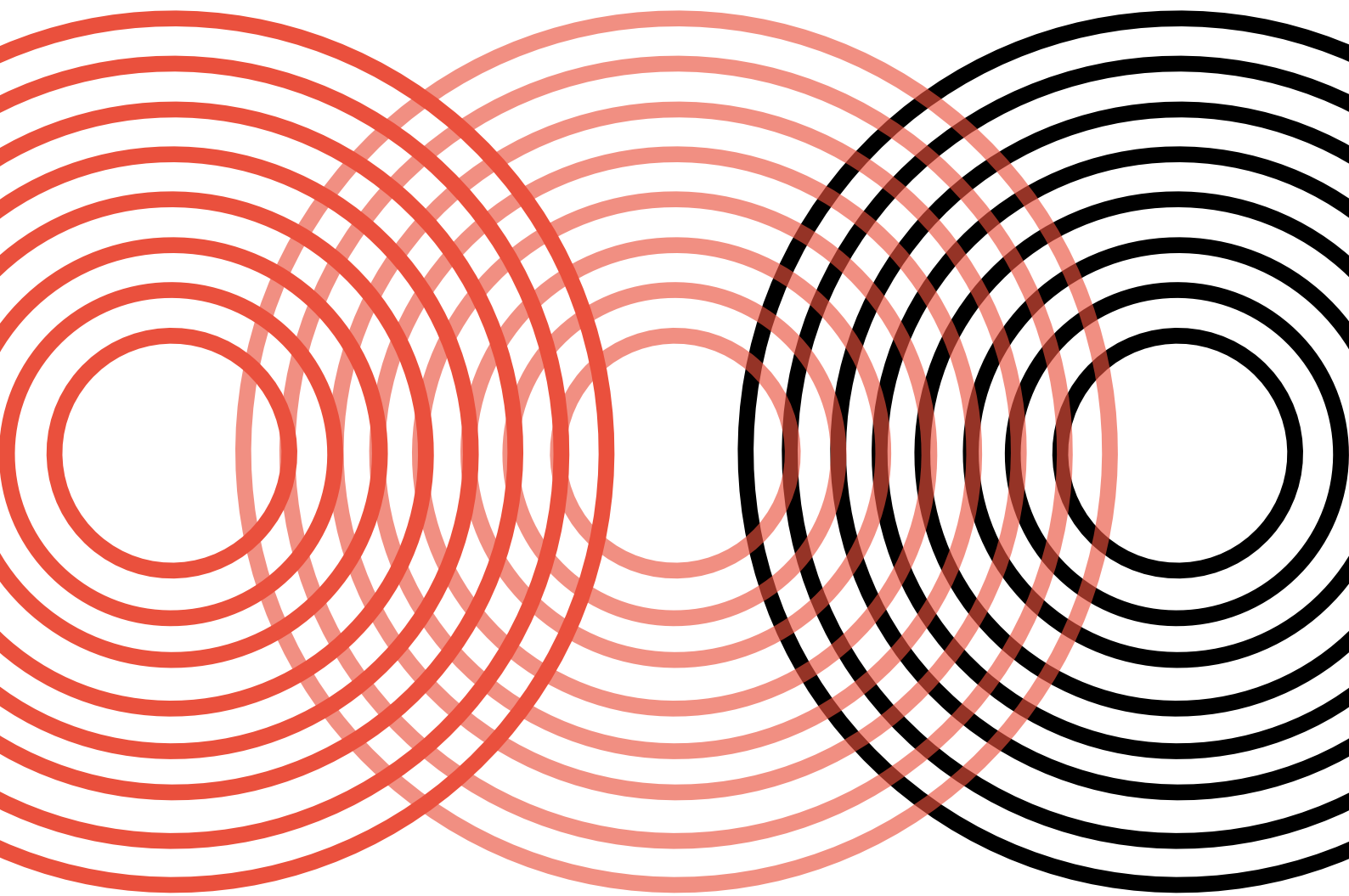
EFFECTIVENESS

In 2015–2017, humanitarian responses got better at meeting life-saving objectives, but made less progress in meeting resilience and long-term objectives. Surveys suggested that the quality of responses also improved.

"

The humanitarian system improved in this area since 2015, notably in its response to food insecurity in complex environments and more broadly in saving lives in non-camp situations. Progress on meeting protection objectives was mixed. The system was less effective at addressing longer-term and resilience objectives.

Effectiveness

In brief

The humanitarian system was generally effective in meeting life-saving objectives in 2015–17. It appeared to have improved in this area since 2015, notably in its response to food insecurity in complex environments, and more broadly in saving lives in non-camp situations. Progress on meeting protection objectives was mixed, though the system did record some notable successes in this area. The system was less effective at addressing longer-term and resilience objectives.

The timeliness of responses improved, albeit not across the board. There was a much faster response to indications of famine in the Horn of Africa than there had been in 2011, and there were timely responses in highly visible rapid-onset disasters such as the Earthquake in Nepal and the movement of Rohingya people into Bangladesh. Responses were slower in less well-publicised crises in countries with a long-term humanitarian presence. A final, and significant, area of improvement was in the quality of responses.

To what degree do humanitarian activities meet their stated objectives?

Measuring effectiveness

It is more difficult than it should be to say whether humanitarian activities are effective. Many of the evaluations reviewed for this report did not make a clear statement about whether or not objectives had been achieved. There are a number of reasons for this: objectives are often not clearly set during programme design, or they change over the course of a programme or use indicators that are not good measures of achievement (often standardised indicators expected by the donor). In many programmes, objectives are expressed as outputs (number of people receiving assistance, or planned activities delivered) rather than as outcomes. This means that agencies focus on – and measure – what is being done, not results such as lives saved or decreased incidence of disease. Some programmes set objectives that consider the results of activities, but these are often aspirational and extremely unlikely to be achieved. This confusion around objectives was also evident when talking to humanitarian staff in the country studies: on several occasions, they were unclear about the specific objectives of their programmes. Similarly, several headquarters-level interviewees expressed frustration at the vagueness of targets and the lack of evidence around measuring success.

It is also difficult to assess the effectiveness of combined humanitarian activities in response to a particular crisis. Like individual country plans, the objectives and targets in inter-agency HRPs tend to concentrate on numbers receiving assistance, not the effect of assistance on mortality, disease morbidity or the human crisis. To a degree, this is understandable. It is difficult to measure many outcomes: collecting epidemiological data (such as disease morbidity or mortality) on a population requires a monitoring system, is resource-intensive

and necessitates a long-term commitment. Even in the rare cases where data is available,[1] it is still difficult to establish the contribution of humanitarian action in bringing down disease morbidity or mortality. Nevertheless, as the issue of saving lives is at the heart of the humanitarian endeavour, it is surprising that more is not being done to understand the scale of the problem, or the degree of success in addressing mortality.
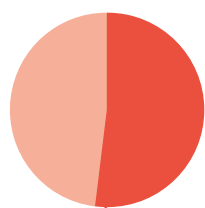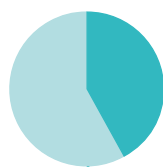
Meeting life-saving objectives

A little over half (52%) of respondents in the practitioner survey felt that the achievement of objectives was good or excellent, showing a continued trend of improvement from previous surveys (36% in 2012; 42% in 2015). The figure was a little higher for government respondents: 60% said that achievement of objectives was good or excellent. There was general agreement across the various sources[2] that life-saving objectives were generally being achieved, although key informants felt this was true mainly in rapid-onset emergencies. Other – non-life-saving – objectives (and specifically those related to longer-term recovery and resilience activities) were generally not met, or only partially met.

In the single-agency evaluations, the majority of those that mentioned achievement of objectives suggested that activities and outputs had been delivered according to the initial targets.[3] As noted above, far fewer evaluations considered the effects of meeting these targets, but where they did these were also generally positive in terms of basic needs: helping people to survive or stabilising food consumption. The pattern was the same with the multi-agency evaluations of whole responses. In response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis, a review of evaluations suggested that 'most ... agencies delivered well considering the operational constraints they were faced with' (Darcy, 2016). Evaluations, key informants and interviewees concurred that meeting these targets had saved lives. In CAR, the inter-agency evaluation concluded that 'the response contributed enormously to relieving the crisis, saving the lives of many Central Africans, reducing suffering and preventing much worse outcomes' (Lawday et al., 2016). Key informants pointed to success in meeting life-saving objectives[4] in a number of other contexts, including the 'four famines' (South Sudan, Somalia, Yemen and Nigeria); the Ebola Crisis; the response to the Rohingya Refugee Crisis; and the exodus of people from Mosul in Iraq.

Where these claims can be verified by data on mortality and disease morbidity, they appear to be solid (although unfortunately at the time of writing only limited research and evaluation had been conducted on responses in Bangladesh, Somalia and South Sudan). Mortality among displaced Rohingya decreased significantly between September and October 2016, returning below crisis levels at a time when many were entering refugee camps in Bangladesh (MSF, 2017; 2018).[5] Despite widespread concerns that there would be a cholera outbreak in the camps,[6] humanitarian efforts appear to have prevented an epidemic (Qadri et al., 2018).

Of the 1,170 practitioners who completed the SOHS 2018 survey

52%

felt that the achievement of objectives was good or excellent.

A continued trend of improvement from previous surveys:

42%
in 2015, and

36%
in 2012.

In Somalia, the UN declared that there was potential for famine in February 2017, and three months later, after a significant 'scale up' among humanitarian agencies, famine had been averted. This was in stark contrast to the slow response in 2011. The two situations are not entirely comparable: humanitarian access was better in 2017 than in 2011, and the Somali government played a more significant part in the 2017 response. In 2017, humanitarian actors also had the example of 2011, and were determined not to repeat it. However, the international system appears to have responded more rapidly and effectively, and so to have played a significant role in the prevention of famine (Dubois et al., 2018; FSNAU/Fewsnet, 2017; Grünewald, 2018) and to have successfully controlled a concurrent cholera epidemic (Crook, 2018).

In South Sudan, the picture was less positive (and the data less reliable: Maxwell et al., 2018). Famine was declared in certain parts of the country in February 2017, and there was a rapid, large-scale humanitarian response. By May, famine in these areas had been addressed or prevented (IPC, 2017b), but only for a few months: by September famine had returned to some areas and the overall food security situation was significantly worse than it had been a year before (IPC, 2017a).

The Ebola Crisis posed a very different challenge to the international humanitarian system. Again, despite a number of very evident challenges and failures, the humanitarian response (as part of a much broader effort by governments and civil society) contributed to the basic objectives of reducing deaths and stopping the epidemic. While there have been many criticisms of the response (see for example Bradol, 2017; DuBois et al., 2015; International Rescue Committee, 2016f; Moon et al., 2015; Panel of Independent Experts, 2015), there seems to be consensus that the overall programme, involving health education, case finding, testing contacts and isolating those who were symptomatic, while late, averted a 'catastrophe' (DuBois et al., 2015; House of Commons International Development Committee, 2016). Indeed, a number of reports have suggested that the formal humanitarian system, with its developed funding and coordination mechanisms, would have performed better than the systems which were initially put in place, and should have been deployed earlier in the response (DuBois et al., 2015; Panel of Independent Experts, 2015).

The evidence we have suggests that the humanitarian system, at the very least, made a significant contribution to preventing famine and halting epidemics of Ebola and cholera. These are huge achievements, and they suggest that the humanitarian system may be improving over time on the criterion of effectiveness – at least as it refers to the fundamental activity of saving lives. To understand this improvement, it is necessary to go back a few years. In the period 1985 to 1995, advances in humanitarian practice led to the development of a fairly standardised approach to humanitarian response. By 2004, a review of data on mortality suggested that this approach, where it could be consistently applied, had been effective in curbing excess mortality. However, full application was almost

> What is notable about the cases of Somalia and – possibly – South Sudan and the Ebola response is that the humanitarian system may be improving effectiveness in non-camp settings.

invariably in camp situations, where humanitarian actors had a higher level of supervision and control. The review concluded that: 'Since 1995, mortality rates in camps have rarely been more than double the emergency threshold of one death per 10 000 per day. In long-established refugee camps, mortality rates are systematically lower for refugees than for the surrounding host population' (Salama et al., 2004: 1803). Humanitarian effectiveness – as it related to preventing loss of life – was much worse in non-camp settings, because of problems achieving coverage (often as a result of poor access), and because humanitarian activities were failing to address underlying health problems. Another review in 2010 came to similar conclusions (Spiegel et al., 2010). What is notable about the cases of Somalia and – possibly – South Sudan and the Ebola response[7] is that the humanitarian system may, slowly and incrementally, be improving effectiveness in non-camp settings. Certainly, a number of interviewees (as well as respondents to the questionnaire) seemed to believe that the system was becoming more effective.

We should also note that these achievements, while important, are often modest compared to the scale of need. In particular, a focus on preventing famine, while necessary to save large numbers of people from malnutrition and death, does not mean that all deaths have been prevented. Famine is the worst level of crisis on the International Phase Classification (IPC) scale (level 5), but it is not the only level at which people die. At the next level down, 'emergency', 20% of the population have 'large food consumption gaps resulting in very high acute malnutrition [but less than 30% global acute malnutrition (GAM)] and excess mortality [but less than 2/10000]'. In both Somalia and South Sudan, the numbers of people at level 4 increased over 2017 (ACAPS, 2017). Unsurprisingly, crisis-affected people in the case studies said that, while they appreciated the aid they had received, they did not feel that it had been effective in creating food security. Beyond this, an exclusive focus on famine can divert attention from other important causes of mortality (Checchi et al., 2018).

Meeting objectives related to protection

In 2015, the *Independent Whole of System Review of Protection in the Context of Humanitarian Action* (Niland et al., 2015: 11) identified 'a significant gap between rhetoric and reality on protection' in humanitarian action, and laid out a number of challenges around the definition and understanding of the term, the humanitarian structures tasked with tackling issues of protection and the skills, processes and programmatic responses by which humanitarians addressed protection concerns.

The period 2015–17 saw both an increase in protection needs, and in attempts to address these shortcomings. A number of 'meta-evaluations' have considered protection in specific agencies. Their results were mixed. In one agency, between one half and two-thirds of protection activities met their objectives (Betts, Blight et al., 2016; Taylor et al., 2017b). In another,

the proportion meeting objectives was significantly lower (UNICEF, 2017b). Evaluations and key informants point to a number of positive examples of protection activities in individual programmes (Blake and Pakula, 2016; Dewast and Glette, 2016; Econometría, 2016; ICF, 2016), as well as some failures (Ambroso et al., 2016).

At the level of the system as a whole, the reporting period saw both highly visible failures by the international community to ensure the protection of civilians from violence, as well as some successes. In CAR '[t]he response achieved sporadic, but modest-to-good results in protection programmes ... Protection consisting of preservation of life and relief of suffering was generally an area of strength' (Lawday et al., 2016: 56). In South Sudan, 'despite resource constraints, protection agencies have carried out good quality work in terms of monitoring rights abuses, providing follow-up services for identified victims of abuse and promoting community-based approaches to the prevention of protection violations' (Clarke et al., 2015: 38). A new element in the South Sudan response was the establishment of protection of civilians (PoC) sites in UN peacekeeping bases. As a result of changes in policy at the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), these bases are likely to become a feature of future responses where DPKO is present (Briggs, 2017). Similarly, while many interviewees identified a general failure to protect migrants in Europe, a number (as well as a number of evaluations) also saw refugee protection in the Syria region as having been successfully pursued by UNHCR and others, even without the protective umbrella of the Refugee Convention (Hidalgo et al., 2015; Sule Caglar et al., 2016). Protection of refugee rights in these contexts appears, however, to have become more difficult over the period 2015–17.

Interviewees – particularly those involved in programmes on the ground – were often aware of an increased interest in protection among donors and within their agencies, and of activities aimed at protection. They generally felt that these programmes were meeting their specific objectives, but often pointed out that protection needs were so many and diverse that these activities could not meet them all. A number of interviewees also questioned – or failed to see – a distinction between assistance and protection: rather, basic humanitarian assistance was seen as meeting the most fundamental needs of people affected by crisis, and as such also meeting their most important protection needs.

The interviews help clarify a number of constraints around implementing effective protection programmes. The first is the sheer breadth of needs – the 'multidimensional aspect' of protection (UNICEF, 2016). This is well illustrated by one community leader, who 'emphasized the need for "global protection" of rights, including those of nationality, freedom of movement, access to justice [and] peace and security'. Protection activities in many situations go from mine action to prevention of sexual violence and abuse. Different groups – and individuals – within the population have different protection needs. In the protection field, perhaps

Meeting some protection objectives may require uncomfortable compromises between the values of the humanitarian actor and those of the society in which the crisis occurs.

more than anywhere else in humanitarian engagement, it is possible to have programmes which are effective in meeting their narrow objectives, but which are not relevant to meeting overarching priorities (see section on relevance). Over the last three years, the system has continued – slowly – to develop approaches to this problem: attempting to identify and prioritise key protection concerns in the development of HRPs; taking a more bespoke approach to meeting the protection needs of particularly vulnerable individuals (Conoir et al., 2017); and supporting community-based protection initiatives (Niland et al., 2015). There was also frequent recognition of the importance of 'do no harm' as a minimum requirement of programming: taking protection into consideration in programme design, and trying not to make the situation worse. This was particularly noticeable in the case studies.

Some protection challenges are embedded in deep-seated cultural attitudes towards issues such as power, gender and ethnicity:

> It is about cultural changes: child marriage for example ... the impact won't happen in one or two years. It's long-term. The problem is the environment. It is great to work on protection, but if the family still needs money, the child will still work. The child will still get married young.

Meeting some protection objectives may require uncomfortable compromises between the values of the humanitarian actor and those of the society in which the crisis occurs. It will also require the sort of long-term social engagement for which humanitarian actors are generally poorly equipped.

A third constraint to meeting objectives is a lack of skilled staff in the many areas effective protection responses require. This constraint was identified, particularly, in evaluations (Grünewald and Schenkenberg, 2016; UNICEF, 2016); it is not unique to protection activities, but does seem to be a particular challenge here.

Meeting objectives related to longer-term action: risk reduction, resilience and early recovery

The degree to which the humanitarian system meets objectives related to recovery and resilience is central to the criterion of connectedness, and so is discussed in detail in the section. Essentially, there is little evidence that humanitarian action in the period 2015–17 was effective at addressing the issues that contribute to vulnerability and need in crises. The main exception to this was in relation to vulnerability to 'natural' disasters, where action was taken as part of a broader plan involving government and development actors. In other contexts, the Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation (IAHE) of the response in CAR is typical in suggesting that '[o]perational actors ... achieved ... poor results in livelihoods and recovery ... [and] missed the opportunity to use the great surge of capacity to address the country's protracted crisis' (Lawday et al., 2016: 55).

How timely is humanitarian action?

The issue of timeliness – whether aid reaches recipients when they need it – was interesting in that it was an area where humanitarian practitioners were less positive than the people in receipt of aid. Only 41% of practitioners thought that the speed of response was good or excellent – a number very similar to the 2015 survey. Government representatives were more positive: 57% believed that the speed of the response was good or excellent, and 69% of respondents to the aid recipient survey were satisfied with how quickly aid arrived.

One area where timeliness undoubtedly improved was in response to drought in the Horn of Africa. Several interviewees in the Kenya case study contrasted the response in 2017 to the extremely slow response in 2011 (while also suggesting that the 2017 response still took three months from the declaration of an emergency). Responses were rapid in Somalia (Crook, 2018; DuBois et al., 2018) and South Sudan. At the same time, several interviewees noted that, while the response to food insecurity had been rapid, an earlier response might have prevented the situation from deteriorating so far in the first place. The emphasis on timely response, rather than effective prevention, means that 'you're not solving the problem because you're late, you're always late. You're always too late and too little'.

Interviewees were also positive about the speed of response in the aftermath of the earthquake in Nepal and in response to the Rohingya people coming into Bangladesh. The general consensus – as in the 2015 edition of this report – was that humanitarian responses are timely in highly visible rapid-onset crises, and where there are fewer constraints on access. In contrast, interviewees in Yemen, Afghanistan and Mali all said that responses had been slow. Several HQ interviewees also spoke of a lack of timely response by international actors[8] to large-scale displacements in DRC and food insecurity in Northern Nigeria. Again, this echoed the 2015 edition of *The State of the Humanitarian System*. The timeliness of responses to flare-ups in longer-term situations also does not appear to have improved.

The system failed to respond in good time to the two atypical crises during the period: the Ebola Outbreak in West Africa and large-scale migration into Europe. In the case of Ebola, poor early warning, a desire by some governments to play down the seriousness of the crisis, slow disbursement of funds, a lack of understanding of the situation and of potential responses and low risk appetite among agencies and staff all contributed to a response that, while massive and ultimately effective, was several months later than it should have been (DuBois et al., 2015; House of Commons International Development Committee, 2016; Panel of Independent Experts, 2015). A subsequent response to an Ebola Outbreak in DRC in 2017 appears to have been much more rapid, but it is not clear that the two outbreaks are comparable. In the case of the large and increasing number of irregular migrants arriving in the EU from 2015, 'people were stunned and didn't really know what to do as it was a completely new situation'. While many civil society groups mobilised fairly rapidly, the majority of established humanitarian organisations took some time to decide whether they should respond, and what that response should be.

From the perspective of many people affected by crisis – particularly protracted crisis – reliability and continuity are more important than speed: being timely is less about the initial response, and more about the response continuing to arrive when people expect it to. This point emerged in a number of interviews during the case studies, and in several evaluations (Clarke et al., 2015; Drummod et al., 2015; Sida et al., 2016).
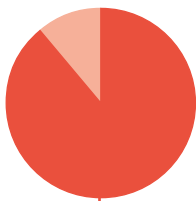
Do humanitarian activities meet acceptable levels of quality?

During the period, there was continued interest in the use of standards within the humanitarian community, with a revision of the Sphere standards and external assessments of a number of agencies against the Core Humanitarian Standards. In the aid recipient survey, a majority (54%) of respondents were satisfied with the quality of aid provided, and a further 35% partially satisfied: aid recipients were more satisfied with quality than they were with the quantity or relevance of aid. Responses were significantly more positive than in 2015 or 2012.[9] A majority of humanitarian practitioners surveyed (55%) also thought that the quality of responses was good or excellent, again an improvement on 2015 and 2012.[10] There were no significant differences across emergency type, although responses from those working in refugee contexts were slightly less good. Responses from government officials were a little better than from practitioners, and also showed improvement from the previous survey (60% good or excellent, up from 39% in 2015).

The majority of key informants who discussed the topic felt that quality standards were generally used and met, and that the situation was on the whole improving. Evaluations were less illuminating on the quality of humanitarian programmes than one might expect: only a minority of the evaluations reviewed considered whether programmes had met quality standards. Some agencies appear to consider standards more routinely in evaluations than others.[11] Of those evaluations that did consider the topic, the majority suggested that standards (generally Sphere, but also a number of agency-specific standards) had been incorporated in programming.[12] It appeared, on the limited evidence available, that standards had been more difficult to apply in the Ebola response, because many activities were atypical (Adams et al., 2015; UNICEF, 2017a), and in the Syria response (Darcy, 2016; Turnbull, 2015), which had raised questions around the applicability of quality indicators to middle-income populations. A sizeable minority of key informants also pointed to problems with the standards. Several informants mentioned that quality assurance was particularly difficult in work related to protection and gender. A few also discussed the growing importance of standards in situations where a large number of new actors (local actors, but also international financial institutions) were entering the sector. Interviewees working in the case study countries concentrated mainly on constraints to quality, in particular the impact of reduced funding: this was mentioned in Afghanistan, Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya and Chad.

Of the 5,000 aid recipients who completed the SOHS 2018 survey

89%

were satisfied (54%) or partially satisfied (35%) with the quality of aid they recieved.

Factors affecting the effectiveness, timeliness and quality of humanitarian action

Funding

The availability and predictability of funding had a major impact on the quality and timeliness of aid. In the practitioner survey, inadequate funding was seen as the single largest problem hindering humanitarian response.[13] Key informants at headquarters and interviewees in the case studies gave numerous examples of programmes failing to meet quality standards because not enough funding was available: in some cases, where there were new influxes of displaced people, or where funding was cut from one year to the next, they said that the quality of responses (in terms of meeting technical standards) had actually declined over the period.

The evaluations, in particular, emphasised the importance of the speed of funding in meeting needs in a timely fashion: in several cases, delays in making funding available had led to delays in initiating operations (see for example Darcy et al., 2015; Grünewald et al., 2016). Slow and delayed funding has been identified as a key constraint to timely response in every previous edition of *The State of the Humanitarian System*, which have also noted delays even in those facilities, such as the CERF, which exist to 'kick-start' a more rapid response. In the period 2015–17, CERF allocations appear to have become faster (Baker, 2015; Mowjee et al., 2018), although delays can occur in the submission process, particularly when combined proposals from multiple agencies 'move as fast as the slowest member' (Stoddard et al., 2017: 23). In addition, Country Based Pooled Funds (CBPFs) 'are improving year by year and becoming reasonably efficient and effective funding mechanisms', although they differ significantly in timeliness and efficiency from one country to another (ibid.). In 2015–17, the START fund made rapid funding available for NGOs, and the Rapid Response to Movements of Population (RRMP) progamme in DRC has helped to 'smooth' the funding of critical responses. However, all these facilities are relatively small, and should not be seen as replacements for rapid funding through more conventional channels, which is, generally, slow (Stoddard et al., 2017). It is also important to note that many interviewees, especially at country level, felt that funding delays were part of the larger, bureaucratic process involved in initiating a response: funding can come late because of a desire not to appeal for funds until the crisis is already widespread and visible, or because of slow assessment and planning procedures. A number of evaluations also mentioned the challenge of interrupted funding leading to breaks in programming (Clarke et al., 2015; Drummod et al., 2015; Mowjee et al., 2015; 2016).

At the same time, and in addition to dedicated rapid response funds, there was a move towards increasing the timeliness of funding by integrating humanitarian action – and expenditures – into existing development and welfare activities: the idea being that, in particularly bad years, pre-existing mechanisms could be rapidly expanded or realigned to meet the needs of people affected by the crisis. Donors – and particularly

USAID – have been using crisis modifiers (an approach to development programming that allows for rapid shifts in targeting to address emergency needs if they arise during the development programme) in areas regularly affected by drought for many years, and in some cases these have been able to accelerate humanitarian responses (Peters and Pichon, 2017). In 2015 a significant new crisis modifier, the PHASE fund, was launched in the Sahel. At the same time, a number of governments and agencies further incorporated vulnerable populations into existing social protection programmes: in Kenya, for example, the government manages the Hunger Safety Net Programme (HSNP), a scalable cash transfer programme piloted in 2011 that provides regular household payments to a core set of vulnerable households, and can be expanded to a wider number of households in case of an emergency.[14] The HSNP was used in 2017 to address drought. It didn't work perfectly, as some humanitarian agencies disagreed with the level of payment that was set or the households being targeted (Obrecht, 2018),[15] but it nevertheless offers significant potential for improving the coordination and coherence of humanitarian action in these countries, by connecting this to existing state support systems.

Leadership

Leadership – the function of identifying what needs to be achieved, and then developing and implementing strategy to achieve it – is critical to effectiveness. Failures in this area were noted as a key constraint to effectiveness in the 2010 pilot report for *The State of the Humanitarian System*, and while some aspects of the situation appeared to have improved between the 2012 and 2015 reports, practitioners still see both coordination and leadership as important factors in either helping or hindering effective response.

In the humanitarian system, the distinction between leadership and coordination is not always clear. Leadership – as defined above – occurs at multiple levels. The sources used for this report tended to concentrate on two types of leadership.[16] The first was the leadership of individual agencies at the country level. The second was the inter-agency leadership of the whole response provided by the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) and the HCT, or (in refugee responses) by the UNHCR representative and Refugee Consultation Forum.[17] As the latter form of leadership, particularly in non-refugee responses, relies almost entirely on the voluntary participation of independent agencies,[18] the HC has no form of command or control. As a result, this 'inter-agency' leadership is perhaps more realistically thought of as a form of coordination.

At the level of the individual agency, slightly less than half of practitioners (48%) responding to the survey thought that leadership was good or excellent, a very similar result to that in the 2015 survey. Both the 2012 and 2015 editions of *The State of the Humanitarian System* described initiatives to improve the leadership skills of individuals, but it appears that these initiatives are not leading to significant changes across the system as a whole. Evaluations and interviews show, for example, that agencies are still

Failures in leadership were noted as a key constraint to effectiveness in the 2010 pilot report.

While SOHS 2012 and 2015 note improvements, practitioners still see both coordination and leadership as important factors in either helping or hindering effective response.

often unclear about what specific interventions are meant to achieve – a key leadership failure. It is also not clear that issues identified in the 2012 edition, particularly risk aversion and an overly procedural approach, have been addressed, possibly because these are as much structural as individual problems, and would require more than training or capacity-building.

With respect to inter-agency leadership, 45% of respondents to the practitioner survey thought that leadership by the HC/Resident Coordinator (RC) was good or excellent.[19] A lack of clear, common vision and effective strategy for the response, while by no means universal, was worryingly evident, and a common feature of evaluations in all context types (Conoir et al., 2017; Darcy et al., 2015; Global Affairs Canada, 2017; Grünewald et al., 2016; Hidalgo et al., 2015; UNICEF, 2017a) and of P2P reports.[20]

Some of this may be attributable to the calibre of individuals in leadership positions. This was an area of improvement in the 2015 SOHS report, but a number of key informants still noted that individuals had been appointed as HCs who had very limited humanitarian experience, or did not appear temperamentally suited to a form of leadership that relies on consensus rather than coercion (although informants also identified a number of individuals whom they thought were particularly successful).

A more significant constraint to effective multi-agency leadership (in non-refugee situations) is the ability of the HCT to work as an effective group. Many interviewees were keen to point out that 'leadership' in humanitarian contexts – and particularly at the level of the whole response – is generally a function of the HCT, rather than of a specific individual. The quality of leadership 'depends on where you are ... on how good the team on the ground is'. Key informants identified a number of effective teams with members able to work together around a strategic view of the situation in a country, and to see beyond the specific viewpoints and interests of their own agency. However, this is not the case everywhere, and may not be the case in the majority of countries: evaluations frequently criticised HCTs for providing weak strategic leadership, and the weaknesses around common strategy identified in the P2P reports were invariably a result of the inability of the team to identify or work to common objectives. HCTs are commonly affected by competition among their constituent agencies for resources and visibility, a problem which, according to some key informants, is exacerbated by the differing priorities of donors. Splits within the HCT may also be a result of the broadened scope and expectations of humanitarian programmes, which are increasingly expected to include, or relate to, developmental and stability objectives.

There are also structural constraints to the HCT effectively fulfilling a leadership role. A common finding of P2P reviews is that the leadership function is too centralised in the HCT, and too distant from operations. The Whole of Syria review found that 'the single framework for the Syria response needs to be balanced with devolved decision-making authority to the hubs in regard to their own operations'. In Niger, '[p]lanning of humanitarian operations ... is essentially centralised in Niamey (in a top

down manner) ... It is necessary to ... take [into] account inputs from the field in strategic planning (use a bottom up approach)'. These findings, like those of ALNAP consultation and research (Knox Clarke, 2014; Knox Clarke, 2013; Knox Clarke and Campbell, 2015a), strongly suggest that a rethink is required of how 'leadership' can be achieved in a structure where leaders have limited control.

Coordination

As noted above, in an 'atomised, voluntarily coordinating, multi-actor system' (ALNAP, 2015: 106), it is hard to identify where leadership ends and coordination begins. But wherever that line is drawn, it is clear that successful inter-organisational coordination plays a key part in effectiveness (as well as in ensuring coverage and efficiency) (Salama et al., 2004; Spiegel et al., 2010). The Cluster system, in particular, has succeeded in reducing gaps and overlaps and in improving the quality of humanitarian response (Knox Clarke and Campbell, 2015b).

Effective coordination was central to the success of the Somalia response (DuBois et al., 2018; Grünewald, 2018), and an important factor in South Sudan (Baker et al., 2017). Reviews of the Ebola response also suggest that it would have been more effective had the Cluster system been put in place earlier (Panel of Independent Experts, 2015). In general, interviewees at country level wanted to see humanitarian coordination systems established where they were not already present.[21]

Practitioners believe that coordination is improving, but also that there is a long way to go: 48% of those who responded to the survey felt that coordination was good or excellent – a fairly low figure, but an improvement over previous years.[22] They suggested that it was one of the three areas that had shown most improvement over the last three years,[23] and also that it was still one of the two 'biggest problems hindering effective humanitarian response'.[24] Interviewees, evaluations and literature also identify a set of common problems with the IASC coordination architecture.

Interviewees – including crisis-affected people – noted a lack of coordination at the ground level: coordination activities tended to take place in the capital city, and were more often concerned with the 'big picture' than with the specifics of implementation.

As importantly – at least when considering the criterion of effectiveness – the weakest element of the coordination architecture was often at the inter-Cluster level. This led to operations that were 'siloed': while coordination worked well within a sector, coordination between sectors was less effective. At the same time, the focus on sector-based clusters often left some areas (particularly cash assistance) poorly coordinated.

Some key informants spoke of a 'cookie cutter' approach to coordination, which established the same basic architecture without reference to the needs in that context, and without reference to existing government coordination systems. This point was made in previous editions of *The State of the Humanitarian System*, and has consistently cropped up in

ALNAP research (Knox Clarke and Campbell, 2016). However, a number of interviewees suggested that the situation was improving, and that more context-specific coordination mechanisms were being put in place.

The time investment required by coordination is a perennial problem. According to one interviewee from a national NGO in Lebanon:

> There are too many meetings. There's not enough work on ensuring the effectiveness of those meetings ... meeting syndrome, like the solution to every problem is a meeting. That's not the case. So we do not have the resources to participate in all these meetings.

In the practitioner survey, 47% of respondents said that the demands of the humanitarian coordination mechanism in their setting were either far too high (16%) or somewhat too high (31%). This does not represent any significant change from 2012 or 2015: the situation may not be getting worse, but it is also not improving. As the quote above suggests, the time requirement is one of a number of constraints that have prevented local and national organisations from participating in coordination mechanisms.

Taken together, the evidence suggests that there is a need for coordination, and that the coordination system, as it is established, is both fundamentally useful and in need of significant improvement. It has been improving over time – the Somalia and South Sudan responses mentioned earlier both appear to have benefitted from more effective coordination and collective action – but improvements are slow. In this context, several HQ interviewees suggested that they had been disappointed that coordination had not been included in the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit.

Any improvement in leadership and coordination will, at some point, have to address the fundamental question: how is leadership and coordination meant to work in a system composed of independent actors? The last edition of *The State of the Humanitarian System* suggested that 'HC leadership mechanisms ... have all been improved though determined efforts to wring the most out of the non-authoritative position' (ALNAP, 2015: 107), suggesting that little more could be achieved through voluntary coordination approaches. However, there do not seem to be any other credible options to this approach. For an HC or HCT to exercise any form of command or control over other agencies – even UN agencies – would require very significant structural reform of the UN system. While the idea of structural reform appeared popular in the run-up to the World Humanitarian Summit (Knox Clarke and Obrecht, 2015), it did not feature on the Summit's agenda, and so a command and control approach to coordination is no more possible now than it was in 2015. Despite this, recent attempts to improve coordination and joint leadership appear to be based on this logic (Knox Clarke and Campbell, 2016), even while the structure and culture of the system prevent this. There is still a mismatch between the nature of the problem and the nature of the solutions being developed to address it.

Any improvement in leadership and coordination will, at some point, have to address the fundamental question: how is leadership and coordination meant to work in a system composed of independent actors?

Addressing coordination problems will probably also require considering the role of donors, and the degree to which they are able to coordinate among themselves. This issue was raised in the 2010 pilot of *The State of the Humanitarian System*, and is another area where there does not appear to have been significant improvement.

Preparedness

In a number of countries preparedness activities improved the timeliness, and to a degree the quality, of humanitarian responses. In almost all cases, these activities were related to 'natural' disasters in countries with fairly stable government structures – there were very few examples of preparedness in conflict situations. This continues the trend seen in the 2012 and 2015 editions of the SOHS of gradual improvement concentrated largely on stable states affected by periodic 'natural' disasters. Evaluations suggested that preparedness activities had improved responses in Nepal and Haiti. Interviewees talked about successes in the Philippines, Mali, Nigeria (although this was disputed – several interviewees said that the scale-up was slower than it should have been) and – in particular – Kenya, where government-led preparedness activities contributed to an earlier response. There were also suggestions that resilience programmes had enhanced humanitarian presence, and so the ability to scale-up rapidly in the event of a crisis (Grünewald, 2018).

Despite these successes, preparedness was not a 'magic bullet', and did not work everywhere: preparations for epidemics of communicable disease in Sierra Leone do not appear to have had a significant effect in improving the timeliness or quality of the Ebola response (DuBois et al., 2015).[25] It was also not as effective as it might have been in all cases: humanitarian actors in Haiti and Colombia felt that preparedness had been compromised by a lack of funding and political commitment. And, as noted above, there was very little effective preparedness activity related to conflicts and violence – there seems to have been little movement in this area since 2015. A further shortcoming – and area for improvement – was the inclusion of vulnerable people in preparedness activities. In a number of the case studies, members of crisis-affected communities told interviewers that preparedness activities had not reached them, and that, as a result, they did not feel personally prepared for future crises.

Organisational factors and staffing

A number of factors inherent to the aid organisation itself influence the effectiveness, timeliness and quality of the humanitarian action that it undertakes. The research suggested that it is unwise to generalise about types of organisation: there was no statistical difference in the aid recipient survey between international actors, national NGOs and governments on the quality or timeliness of their responses. However, there appear to be significant differences between individual organisations. Crisis-affected people interviewed as part of the case study (particularly in Haiti and Yemen) were clear that they saw differences between individual

---

Interviewees talked about successes in the Philippines, Mali, Nigeria and Kenya, where government-led preparedness activities contributed to an earlier response.

humanitarian agencies, particularly in terms of aid quality. Evaluations also point to quite large differences in timeliness and quality between agencies. As noted above, agencies appear to vary with respect to the degree that they regularly use quality standards – with more established UN entities, INGOs and national NGOs more likely to use standards in programme design and implementation. Evaluations also suggest that those agencies which had – and used – mechanisms to learn from previous experiences were able to implement higher-quality responses (Hidalgo et al., 2015; IFRC, 2015; Shepherd et al., 2017). However, it appears that only a minority of agencies are effective at this type of learning: 31% of respondents to the practitioner survey said that organisations in their setting were good or excellent in using the results of monitoring, evaluations and relevant research to improve programmes.

A consistent pattern in previous editions of the SOHS has been the importance for effectiveness of having experienced staff, with the right technical skills, in place throughout the response. This is still the case (Clarke et al., 2015; Darcy et al., 2015; Garcia and Bassil, 2016). In the practitioner survey, 59% of respondents said that the quality of aid personnel where they were working was good or excellent: a fairly high score compared to other responses, and very similar to the 2015 survey. However, lack of skills and experience appear to have been a constraint in a number of emergencies, including the largely volunteer-led response to the European Migration 'Crisis' (Saliba, 2016). Rapid turnover of staff is still a constraint to effective response, and informants expressed concern about the lack of skills in key areas such as WASH and urban response.

The ability to ensure that skilled staff were available was also key to ensuring timely responses – a number of evaluations noted delays while staff were recruited or deployed from elsewhere. Rapid recruitment and redeployment were often part of a conscious orientation on the part of certain organisations to be more flexible, and to build rapid response capacity – and those agencies which had focused on this area generally managed more timely responses (AAN Associates, 2016; Bayntun and Zimble, 2016; Betts et al., 2015; Clarke et al., 2015; Mutunga et al., 2015). Other elements of rapid response included good situational awareness and the ability to 'read' emerging situations (Darcy et al., 2015), mechanisms to finance activities before donor support became available (for example, Mutunga et al., 2015), ensuring that clear, flexible operating procedures were in place (Shepherd et al., 2017) and using cash in preference to in-kind relief, and so avoiding long delays during procurement (Grünewald, 2018). In some cases, having an existing programme on the ground helped improve the speed of the response (AAN Associates, 2016; Darcy, 2016; Kebe and Maiga, 2015), although a number of agencies found it difficult to transition from existing developmental programming to emergency response (Darcy, 2016; Shepherd et al., 2017).

Effectiveness in different contexts

In general, all of the sources agree that achievement of objectives is better overall in 'natural' disasters than in either conflicts or refugee and migration situations (although the system appears to be fairly good at addressing life-saving objectives in the latter). There are a number of possible reasons for this. Unconstrained, consistent access is a requirement for the basic life-saving 'package', and this type of access is particularly hard to secure in conflict environments. Protection activities, where objectives are generally difficult to achieve, are often particularly important elements of refugee, migrant and conflict responses. Evaluations suggest that humanitarian work is generally more effective where conducted in partnership with, or under the umbrella of, the government: this is more likely to be the case in 'natural' disasters and in refugee-hosting situations. Humanitarian operations are more effective in 'closed' environments, such as camps; objectives are harder to reach with dispersed and highly mobile populations.

Timeliness is worst in conflict situations – the humanitarian system appears to have made progress in timely response to drought and to large-scale movements of refugees. Progress on timely responses to drought – and to other 'natural' disasters, such as earthquakes – appears to be partially attributable to improvements in preparedness. There has been very limited work on preparedness for conflict and for related population movements, although there has been some progress in making funding available more rapidly.

Endnotes for this criterion

1. In fact, the amount may be declining: a recent review (Blanchet et al., 2017) points to a lack of epidemiological work in humanitarian contexts: the work it does refer to is all pre-2010. CRED, the main centre for collecting global epidemiological data on disasters, was unable to maintain resource support for its complex emergency database (CE-DAT) past 2015, which provided the only epidemiological data on mortality and morbidity from complex crises and conflicts.

2. Although some HQ interviewees, in particular, were less positive, particularly about saving lives in protracted crises.

3. For example Aberra et al., 2015; Coombs et al., 2015; Hidalgo et al., 2015; Leber, 2015; Lewins et al., 2016; Schofield, 2016; Shepherd et al., 2017; Watson et al., 2016.

4. In some cases, these life-saving objectives had not been made explicit in mortality/disease morbidity/malnutrition targets, but 'life-saving' was understood by informants to be the basic objective of the response.

5. MSF data on crude mortality rates was collected by date, not by location, and so it is not possible to say conclusively that mortality rates decreased when people crossed the Bangladesh border (although this is a fair assumption). It should also be noted that the elevated mortality rates between 25 August and 25 September were largely a result of violence against the Rohingya, and so the decrease in mortality was to a large extent a result of people not being exposed to violence.

6. See for example https://www.rte.ie/news/2017/1010/911127-rohingya-cholera-outbreak/; https://reliefweb.int/report/bangladesh/racing-prevent-cholera-rohingya-refugee-camps; https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/10/cholera-vaccination-campaign-kicks-rohingya-camp-171011140127195.html.

7. Although not the CAR response, which focused on IDP sites and enclaves – 'camp-like' settings.

8. In many cases, local NGOs and civil society organisations responded much more rapidly.

9. In 2015: 30% satisfied, 32% partially satisfied; in 2012: 37% satisfied, 32% partially satisfied.

10. 2015: 49%; 2012: 41%.

11. Most Oxfam and UNICEF evaluations considered the use and achievement of quality standards, for example.

12. Aiken and Dewast, 2015; Clarke et al., 2015; Darcy, 2016b; Downen et al., 2016; Hidalgo et al., 2015; Levers, 2016; Peacocke et al., 2015; Shepherd et al., 2017; Stone et al., 2015; Turnbull, 2016b; Duncalf et al.,

2016; Gardner et al., 2016; Hidalgo et al., 2015; Stigter and Morris, 2016; Turnbull, 2016a.

13. 17% of respondents answered inadequate funding, making this the most common response.

14. Another good example is Ethiopia's Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP).

15. In particular, there were challenges around setting payments at a level where they would meet food needs in a situation of widespread food insecurity (when costs are higher), and disagreements around the degree to which payments should be based on need (measured by food insecurity indicators) and targeted at those most in need, or should be made more broadly to the population as a whole.

16. There was much less discussion of the role of the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator or of the IASC principals – potentially an area to explore in future reports.

17. See UNHCR, 2013. There are also guidelines for 'mixed' situations, where both refugees and non-refugees are present in a humanitarian crisis (OCHA and UNHCR, 2014).

18. The situation in refugee emergencies is different. UNHCR has specific accountabilities under the Refugee Convention, and also tends to have more control over funding than the HCT in non-refugee emergencies.

19. The responses were slightly better in 'natural' disasters – 50% – and slightly less good in refugee contexts – 40%. However, in the latter there was a problem with the question, as it referred to HCs (who might not be present) rather than to the UNHCR representative.

20. Including Ukraine, Iraq and Somalia.

21. This tendency – to want humanitarian coordination mechanisms where they are not present – has been noted elsewhere (Knox Clarke and Campbell, 2015).

22. In 2015, 42% thought coordination was good or excellent; in 2012 only 36% thought the same.

23. Behind 'collaboration with host governments and local organisations' and 'programme quality'.

24. 8% of practitioners said that coordination was the main problem, behind only funding (17%), and ahead of insecurity and limited access.

25. Just as preparedness for drought conditions and associated food insecurity did not significantly improve the performance of humanitarian actors in the Horn of Africa in 2011: the mere existence of contingency plans does not guarantee that they will be used in a timely way.

EFFICIENCY

In 2015–2017, the system saw some limited gains in efficiency, mainly at the operational level. However the larger constraints to efficiency that come from duplication within the architecture of the humanitarian system were not successfully addressed.
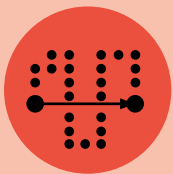
The system is not inherently inefficient, but there are numerous areas where efficiency could be improved, and the continued shortfall between needs and resources makes this a pressing area for action.

Efficiency

In brief

A shortage of budgetary information and a lack of valid comparisons with other service providers make it difficult to say, overall, whether humanitarian aid is efficient or not. However, the limited information available suggests that the system is not inherently inefficient, particularly when providing goods and services to remote and sparsely populated areas. At the same time, there are numerous areas where efficiency could be improved, and the continued shortfall between needs and resources makes this a pressing area for action. The period 2015–17 saw modest progress, largely through the increased use of preparedness and early warning mechanisms, increased integration of humanitarian activities into social safety nets, increased use of technology and cash programming, and moves to establish common procurement mechanisms and supply chains. There was less progress on the systemic and structural barriers to efficiency – such as overlaps between agencies and multiple, often duplicatory, reporting requirements to different donors.

Defining and measuring efficiency

The criterion of efficiency considers the relationship between inputs and outputs (such as the number of boreholes dug or tonnes of food delivered), aiming to achieve the highest quantity of outputs for the lowest quantity of inputs. Cost efficiency is distinct from cost effectiveness, which considers the relationship between inputs and results (such as decreasing malnutrition in a population). It also differs from Value for Money, which may consider the relationship between inputs and a number of criteria (connectedness, effectiveness, accountability) – depending on what is believed to have 'value'.

Efficiency is both an important and a limited criterion for judging the performance of humanitarian action. Important, because resources are far below needs and so must be spread as far as possible. Limited, because the measurement focuses purely on outputs, and not on broader achievements, such as lives saved. There is little hard data available with which to measure efficiency (Darcy, 2016b; Drummod et al., 2015; UNICEF, 2017b).[1] In most operations, very few performance indicators are allocated specifically to measuring efficiency (Logistics Cluster, 2018). Establishing any measure of the relationship between specific inputs and specific outputs (for example between a specific donor grant and a borehole) is complicated by the fact that programmes usually produce a variety of outputs, making it more difficult to allocate costs to any specific one (Doocy et al., 2015). It becomes even more complicated where – as often happens – a project is funded by several donors, each using a different accounting model.

> "

Under the Grand Bargain, many agencies have agreed in principle to move towards comparable cost structures. However, some INGOs have expressed concern that the purpose of providing transparent cost structures was not clear.

A further challenge lies in the nature of efficiency as a relative rather than an absolute measure. Calculating it 'generally requires comparing alternative approaches to achieving the same outputs, to see whether the most efficient process has been adopted' (DAC, n.d.: 21). It can be difficult to compare the relationship between inputs and outputs for similar activities – even within the same agency – because of differences in scale and context between one programme and another. Comparing between agencies is even more challenging, as different agencies use very different accounting models for their costs. During the reporting period, some work was done on this area by donors such as DFID, but this has not been made public, and neither key informants nor the literature reviewed for this report offered any examples of this type of comparison. Under the Grand Bargain, many agencies have agreed in principle to move towards comparable cost structures, which would allow for a better understanding of efficiency. However, the second independent assessment of the Grand Bargain noted that 'some INGOs expressed concern that the purpose of providing transparent cost structures was not clear, and the amount of work potentially involved in achieving this means there has been little appetite to take forward this commitment' (Metcalfe-Hough et al., 2018: 42).

Comparing humanitarian agencies with other types of organisation seems to be more difficult still. The nature of humanitarian contexts, and of humanitarian responses, means that other actors may not be present to allow a comparison. Many humanitarian operations take place in areas which are extremely remote, with limited transport and storage infrastructure. Simply getting supplies to these areas is expensive – in many cases too expensive to make it economical for other actors to do so. Activities are also prone to high levels of risk and uncertainty, and these have – to the degree possible – to be priced into the operation, often significantly increasing costs. A good example of the challenge of pricing risk is given by the Logistics Cluster's 2017 lessons learned report for Yemen: small local ships were available for hire at a price far below that of internationally registered cargo vessels, but using them to transport relief supplies was judged too risky in that it potentially increased costs over the operation. However, not using these ships led to large extra up-front costs (Logistics Cluster, 2017). Over-specification (using materials, such as ships, that are more expensive) and redundancy (having contingency stocks, or more storage or personnel than are necessary, in case of massive surges in need) are standard elements of 'high reliability' organisations which operate in situations of extreme risk. Preparing for eventualities that may never happen does, however, add costs, and makes judgements of efficiency harder. It would be instructive to compare the costs of humanitarian actors with those of the military providing services to civilians in similar contexts (as part of stabilisation efforts, for example), but the figures do not appear to be available to support this type of analysis.

Until recently, there has been very little guidance on how to calculate efficiency in humanitarian operations (Bailey, 2014; Maxwell et al., 2013; Obrecht, 2017). This may be slowly changing (Baker et al., 2013). Few agencies routinely collect and use data on efficiency, although they may provide some information to donors who request this as part of project proposals. However, the bulk of the work done on efficiency takes the form of one-off studies, often focused on the relative efficiency of cash compared to other modalities of assistance (in-kind or vouchers) (ADE, 2016; Bailey, 2014; Doocy et al., 2015, International Rescue Committee, 2016e), and occasionally on other elements of humanitarian assistance (Grünewald and Burlat, 2016; Grünewald and Schenkenberg, 2016; International Rescue Committee, 2016b; 2016d).

To what degree are humanitarian activities conducted with the lowest possible costs?

In the practitioner survey, 9% of respondents thought that performance around 'efficient use of resources' was excellent and 44% thought it was good, making this one of the better-performing criteria as perceived by humanitarians involved in operations – although, as already noted, these results necessarily reflect perceptions based on limited 'hard' data.

As noted above, it is currently impossible to say with the data available whether the humanitarian sector is inherently efficient or inefficient compared to other sectors. However, the very limited data that is available – mainly through analysis of cash transfers – suggests that the relative efficiency of humanitarian agencies compared to private sector actors[2] is context-dependent. In some circumstances humanitarians may be more efficient than market actors inasmuch as in-kind deliveries lead to better performance in terms of calorific consumption or scores on Food Consumption Indicators than do equivalent values of cash transfers or vouchers which have been converted to food available at local market prices (Hoddinott et al., 2013).[3] Some evaluations have identified situations where food in kind was cheaper, once costs had been taken into account, than food in local markets, suggesting that humanitarian agencies were at least as efficient as the local private sector in food purchase and transportation (Drummod et al., 2015; Hidalgo et al., 2015). A working hypothesis would be that the humanitarian sector is able to provide outputs more cheaply in remote areas with low population density and poor infrastructure, while the private sector can provide commodities more cheaply where markets are functioning well, particularly in areas with higher population density and better infrastructure.

In the period 2015–17, humanitarian actors made a concerted effort to improve efficiency through the Grand Bargain. The Grand Bargain increased the focus on a number of areas which were seen to be inefficient, or where progress on efficiency was already being made – in particular, on cash programming, increased use of technology, reduction of duplication between agencies and simplified and harmonised reporting requirements between donors.

Performance of the System

Efficiency

It is probably safe to assume that cash is more efficient in situations where there are large well-functioning markets (such as cities) and where transfers are to large numbers of people.

Cash programming is often seen as more efficient than in-kind delivery, and from the agency perspective this is true: the evidence shows strongly that it is cheaper to deliver $100 of cash than $100-worth of food (at wholesale prices) (ADE, 2016; Bailey, 2014; Doocy et al., 2015; Doocy and Tappis, 2017). It is also likely that, in many cases, cash is more efficient from the point of view of the crisis-affected person: for the same expenditure by the agency, they can buy more goods with cash than they would receive in kind. However, while assumed by a number of key informants and interviewees, this is much less well evidenced.[4] There is, according to one expert, 'a frustrating lack of data' on the efficiency of cash from the point of view of cost per output received by the affected person.[5] Noting the evidence around the relative costs for private sector and humanitarian transport above, it is probably safe to assume that cash is more efficient in situations where there are large, well-functioning markets (such as cities) and where transfers are to large numbers of people. Given this, the estimated doubling of the use of cash as a transfer modality in 2014–16 (Smith et al., 2018) and moves to streamline delivery through electronic transfers and single platform delivery mechanisms suggest that efficiency gains are being made.

More broadly, although largely anecdotally, significant efficiencies have been produced through the use of technology: biometric technology for the registration of aid recipients and – although only at the pilot stage – blockchain technology to reduce the costs of using mediating institutions such as banks. These and other areas appear to have great potential, but this will most effectively be realised only if large numbers of agencies adopt the same platforms and approaches. In 2015–17, the majority of approaches to technology and innovation were 'ad hoc and uncoordinated' (Metcalfe-Hough et al., 2018: 42). Another area that several interviewees suggested had been given impetus by the Grand Bargain, and where they felt some initial progress was being made, was in the development of common procurement and supply chains for UN agencies.

Factors affecting efficiency

Scale

There is good evidence that larger programmes produce efficiencies of scale. One of the most comprehensive efficiency studies to date was produced by the International Rescue Committee (IRC) as part of its Best Use of Resources Initiative. The study, which covered a range of sectors and activities, found that '[s]cale is important. Because of the "fixed" nature of program management costs, large scale (in terms of quantity of latrines built within a program) latrine-building efforts made programs cost much less per person-year of access achieved' (IRC, 2016b: 1), while in child protection case management, 'the scale at which programs operate has major impact on the cost per child served' (IRC, 2016a: 1). Similar findings were made with respect to legal aid and cash transfers (IRC, 2016c; 2016e). An Overseas

Development Institute report on ECHO funding likewise found that 'larger projects benefitted from a critical mass of investment in support services and structures. This meant that ... support costs did not increase in proportion with the scale of activities after a certain point' (Mowjee et al., 2017: 14). The importance of scale is also one of the main conclusions of a major evaluation of transfer modalities conducted by ECHO, which found that it is 'a key driver of cost efficiency' (ADE, 2016: ii).

The structure of the humanitarian system

The structure of the humanitarian system itself is seen as a major cause of inefficiency. The fact that the system is composed of a large number of agencies with overlapping agendas can lead to the duplication of costs, while reducing the scale (and hence the efficiency) of activities by dividing them among various different actors. Duplication occurs at all levels, from donors to activities on the ground. Despite some discussion in the run-up to the World Humanitarian Summit on the practicality of merging or reconfiguring UN agencies to reduce duplication and competition (Knox Clarke and Obrecht, 2015), there was little appetite at the Summit for radical reform, and instead donors and agencies agreed, as part of the Grand Bargain, to reduce duplication and management costs within the existing structure. Some progress has been made by the UN in this area, particularly on procurement.

One obstacle to efficiency particularly remarked upon by key informants, and which has received some attention in the literature, is the requirement to provide large numbers of different reports, in different formats, to different donors (Penoy et al., 2016; Stoddard et al., 2017). The issue was central to the International Council of Voluntary Agencies' (ICVA) 'Less Paper More Aid' campaign and, again, is part of the Grand Bargain. A common template was developed in 2016, but key informants and interviewees generally felt that little progress had been made subsequently in Grand Bargain discussions: the independent review judged that the issue had reached an 'impasse' in 2017 (Metcalfe-Hough et al., 2018).

At the level of operations, the Cluster approach was developed in part to reduce duplication between agencies. Previous ALNAP research suggests that it has been broadly effective (Knox Clarke and Campbell, 2015a; 2016), and country-level interviews for this report, as for the two previous editions in 2012 and 2015, confirmed this. However, both the interviews and a number of evaluations suggest that coordination mechanisms are not always themselves particularly efficient, notably in their use of time (Darcy, 2016a). This may reflect a move away from operational coordination – making sure that programmes do not overlap – to the production of information for the creation of country strategies, Humanitarian Response Plans and the like (Knox Clarke and Campbell, 2016). In 2015–17, the Cluster-based coordination system struggled to provide effective platforms for coordinating cash assistance (Bailey and Harvey, 2017; Knox Clarke and Campbell, 2016; Steets and Ruppert, 2017b). A number of interviewees

talked about duplicatory, fairly small-scale cash programmes, often seemingly conducted in competition by different agencies.

The humanitarian system is not only atomised, it is also layered. Money often passes through a number of organisations as it moves from donor to output, and this obviously creates the potential for inefficiencies as funds are consumed to support the machinery of the agencies involved at each stage. ODI research in relation to ECHO grants (Mowjee et al., 2017) illustrates the difficulties of understanding the path that funds take from donors to crisis-affected people: projects are very different, and so the amounts received by end users vary wildly, from 2% to 91% of the total grant amount.[6] The same report considered the amount of money lost in intermediate 'layers', and concluded that the different organisations involved appeared to be providing different and complementary services, adding value at different stages of the project, rather than wastefully duplicating one another's activities. Other research on this topic also suggests that intermediate actors can add value, but cautions that, where this does happen, it may not be 'commensurate with the transaction costs generated' (Stoddard et al., 2017: 20).

Timing

A number of key informants and evaluations (Logan et al., 2015; UNICEF, 2017a) make the point that responses that occur at the peak of a crisis are typically more expensive for the same results[7] than earlier, more preventive action. As a result, there has been some focus on preparedness as a way to improve efficiency (Logistics Cluster, 2018; Meerkatt et al., 2015). The problem here is that, if the anticipated event does not happen, the costs of preparedness can be wasted. One way of addressing this is to focus on 'no regrets' options: that is, preparedness activities which produce outputs that are useful regardless of whether a specific crisis occurs. Another possibility is to focus on areas where the cost of a crisis would be inordinately high (e.g. major cities at risk of earthquakes), or on areas where the chances of a crisis occurring are particularly strong (e.g. the Horn of Africa). A number of researchers have tried to examine the cost-efficiency of earlier response in these areas (Cabot Venton, 2018; Cabot Venton et al., 2012; Catley and Cullis, 2012). One study suggests that an early humanitarian response in Kenya, Ethiopia and Somalia would save an estimated $1.6 billion over a 15-year period. Another $1.5 billion could be saved through social safety net programming, compared to the provision of food assistance. However, in considering these findings it is important to remember that they are estimates of potential cost savings, based on predictive models involving a number of important assumptions.[8] While it seems that certain types of early response could lead to significant cost savings, there is little empirical evidence that early response has saved costs.

> "
> While it seems that certain types of early response could lead to significant cost savings, there is little empirical evidence that early response has saved costs.

A number of studies have shown that local procurement (where it can be achieved at scale) can be cheaper,

particularly for low-value non-processed products such as food, but also commodities, including building supplies.

Local or international?

The final factor often seen as affecting efficiency is the degree to which goods and services are obtained in the country where the crisis has occurred, or are obtained on international markets and transported to the crisis. There are two main elements to this: the procurement of goods and the relative efficiency of international as opposed to local organisations as service providers. A number of studies have shown that local procurement (where it can be achieved at scale) can be cheaper, particularly for low-value, non-processed products such as food (Catley and Cullis, 2012; Lentz et al., 2012), but also other commodities, including building supplies (Matopoulos et al., 2014).

With respect to the share of assistance provided by national and local institutions, the picture is a little less clear. There appears to be only limited evidence in this area (perhaps because national authorities do not regularly publicise expenditures, while national NGOs do not in most cases receive the levels of support that would allow a direct comparison). Investing in the capacity of national and local government should be a cheaper alternative in the long term (Grünewald and Burlat, 2016; Grünewald and Schenkenberg, 2016); one would expect national NGOs to be able to provide assistance more cheaply were they the same size as an international NGO or UN agency, but few national NGOs are this large and so will not benefit from the efficiencies of scale outlined above. It is also dangerous to assume that national response is somehow the 'budget option', and that national and local NGOs should necessarily accept paying lower wages or spending less on equipment or security in order to keep costs down.

Efficiency in different contexts

In the responses to the practitioner survey, 60% suggested that efficiency was good or excellent in 'natural' disasters, compared to 51% in situations of conflict and only 48% in refugee contexts. The other sources do not give any clear indication of why this should be. It may relate to improvements in preparedness and to the increased use of social protection mechanisms in 'natural' disasters (although social protection systems – and cash – are also being used in a number of refugee contexts). Alternatively, the siloed nature of responses may be more cumbersome and inefficient in conflict and refugee contexts, where life-saving activities almost invariably turn into longer-term service provision and livelihood support.

Box / Innovation in the humanitarian system

The SOHS 2015 report highlighted the growing role of innovation in humanitarian action, noting that '[t]he concept of innovation itself, as an organisational aspiration and area of activity, has taken root in the humanitarian system' (ALNAP, 2015: 102).

In the years since, innovation 'labs'/'hubs' have continued to be established, with some organisations closing or scaling down their innovation units, and others creating or expanding theirs. Several organisations have developed learning materials and training to support better and more consistent innovation, with an increased focus on field-level and operational innovations. While it is difficult to verify this because of a lack of baselines, funding for humanitarian innovation appears to be increasing, with several high-profile competitions and challenge funds launched by UN agencies and donors, including the USAID–DFID–Grand Challenges Canada fund, a $15 million fund to support 'innovations that enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian assistance' over a five-year period from 2018–23. Support for field-level innovation is increasing through individual organisational initiatives such as the UNHCR Innovation Fellowship programme, as well as multi-organisational initiatives such as the Response Innovation Labs, established after the Nepal earthquake in 2015, and START Network Innovation Labs.

There have been several significant innovations in specific areas. Finance has seen the lion's share of bold, potentially game-changing ideas. The ICRC launched the first social impact bond for humanitarian action, generating a €22 million investment in humanitarian response over a five-year period. Several actors are exploring risk financing for humanitarian action, including the World Bank, whose increased engagement in humanitarian settings is expected to drive further financial innovation. Blockchain, relatively unknown in the sector just a few years ago, is being piloted by several agencies as a tool for more efficient and transparent financial transactions between donors, suppliers and affected populations.

The health sector accounted for a third of all innovation outputs from 2015–17, followed by food security and early recovery (Elrha, 2017). Despite increasing recognition that innovation is broader than simply ICT, ICT-focused solutions continue to offer some of the most notable innovations. OCHA's humanitarian exchange language (HXL) project, mentioned in the SOHS 2015, has continued to grow its user base and is now supported by a newly-established Centre for Humanitarian Data in The Hague. Humanitarian agencies are developing new digital tools and applications to collect and share information with crisis-affected people to carry out diagnostic and assessment tasks, and to deliver assistance. Some agencies are exploring Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) and artificial intelligence, but these technologies are not in mainstream use, in part due to national regulations and ethical concerns.

> "
>
> A global review of innovation found that most innovation activity is focused on crises driven by natural hazards rather than conflict, despite the fact that conflict generate a greater proportion of the humanitarian caseload.

Few innovations have truly taken hold, however, raising questions as to how innovation can be taken to scale for wider impact. A global review of innovation activity and funding from 2015–17 found that funding for humanitarian innovation is mostly going to organisations headquartered in Europe and North America (Elrha, 2017). The same review found that most innovation activity is focused on crises driven by natural hazards rather than conflict, despite the fact that conflicts generate a greater proportion of the humanitarian caseload. Innovation activity in humanitarian settings is still largely a-contextual and driven by the interests and perspectives of international agencies (Ramalingam, 2016).

The failure to bring innovations to scale is driven by multiple factors, none of which has been deeply explored, as humanitarian actors have instead focused more on early-stage innovations and piloting. Research and the growing experience of innovators in the sector (Ramalingam et al., 2015; Deloitte, 2015; Gray and McClure, 2015; Elrha, 2017) are driving a consensus that the scaling gap is a core challenge that must be addressed if the sector is to reap the full benefits of innovation. Several scaling initiatives have been established to address this challenge, including the UNHCR–UNICEF accelerator for humanitarian education innovations and the Humanitarian Innovation Fund's (HIF) Journey to Scale programme. The World Humanitarian Summit also saw the creation of a multi-agency member-based organisation, the Global Alliance for Humanitarian Innovation, to address the collective and systemic barriers to scale more explicitly. By the time the next SOHS report is published, ideally these efforts to take innovation to scale in humanitarian action will have made progress, though, as noted in the 2015 edition, 'it will be an uphill battle' (ALNAP, 2015: 103). • **ALICE OBRECHT, ALNAP**

Performance of the System

Efficiency

Endnotes for this criterion

1. Although some key informants (KI) felt that this data could be obtained through interviews and other approaches, if there were an interest in doing so.

2. At the national and local level, in-kind aid is always dependent on the private sector for the production of commodities; the question is where in the supply chain humanitarians can most efficiently engage.

3. There could be a number of reasons for this – including purchasing choices made by cash recipients – so it does not conclusively show that food is more expensive locally than when imported.

4. As Bailey (2014: 11) explains: '[generally] the calculation does not take into account that the cost of the food aid to an aid agency might have been more expensive or cheaper than the cost of goods on local markets. If the food costs an aid agency more to procure compared to local prices, the efficiency of cash approaches would be even greater. If not, food could emerge as more efficient. Whether or not a transfer is cheaper depends on whether an aid agency, for reasons of economy of scale and access to goods at global prices, can procure goods more cheaply than the local market can provide them, while factoring in associated costs like transport and storage, contamination and wastage'.

5. WFP's system of Omega values attempts to address this by comparing the nutritional value of different food baskets and the cost of providing them (Bailey, 2014). The point also underlines the importance of market assessments in deciding between cash and in-kind distribution.

6. The 2% and 91% were outliers: 'The projects at both extremes were a number of UN agency projects with clear reasons for the unusual levels of Tier 1 costs. The UN agency project with 91% Tier 1 costs involved the purchase and transport of vaccines to Ethiopia, with no other costs included. In the project with 2% of Tier 1 costs, the UN agency purchased cholera supplies as part of another project'. However, even leaving these two projects aside, the range was just under 70%.

7. Timing is arguably as much about cost-effectiveness – costs to results – as it is about cost-efficiency – costs to outputs. However, many inputs cost more to procure and transport at the peak of a crisis than at an earlier point.

8. For example, assumptions about how people would behave if they received assistance earlier.

COHERENCE

Against a background of decreased respect for IHL and Refugee Law, and with increased pressure to link humanitarian action to activities related to security and migration, humanitarian agencies found it more difficult to align their actions with humanitarian principles, and to build support for IHL.
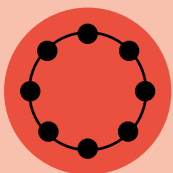
"

Increased security concerns have forced difficult choices between staff safety and the provision of assistance to people in need, and security and developmental agendas at policy level have made it more difficult to provide humanitarian aid in an impartial and neutral manner. Humanitarian actors are also concerned that they are becoming more involved in attempts by states to control flows of migrants and refugees.

Coherence

In brief

The criterion of coherence is used in this report to indicate the degree to which humanitarian agencies follow core humanitarian principles,[1] as well as the degree to which their actions encourage support for IHL and refugee law.[2] There is a sense among humanitarian agencies that this has become more difficult over the period: increased security concerns have forced difficult choices between staff safety and the provision of assistance to people in need, and security and developmental agendas at policy level have made it more difficult to provide humanitarian aid in an impartial and neutral manner. Humanitarian actors are also concerned that they are becoming more involved in attempts by states to control flows of migrants and refugees.

Humanitarian advocacy and negotiation has seen a number of successes – particularly at the country level – and has improved in a number of ways since the SOHS 2015 report. Donor states – often supported or lobbied by other humanitarian actors – have combined to create agreements to support IHL. However, these agreements appear to have had limited effect on the ground. The reporting period saw numerous flagrant breaches of IHL and refugee law. While this is not new, there are indications that the situation has got worse since 2015. Interviewees also suggested that states that had previously supported the international legal regime are increasingly taking actions that suggest this support is weakening.

To what degree are humanitarian efforts coherent with core principles and IHL?

The four core principles of humanitarian action are:

- **Humanity:** human suffering must be addressed wherever it is found. The purpose of humanitarian action is to protect life and health and ensure respect for human beings.

- **Impartiality:** humanitarian action must be carried out on the basis of need alone, making no distinctions by nationality, race, gender, religious belief, class or political opinion.

- **Neutrality:** humanitarian actors must not take sides in hostilities or engage in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

- **Independence:** The autonomy of humanitarian objectives from any actors' political, economic, military or other objectives.

Of the 1,170
practitioners who
completed the
SOHS 2018 survey
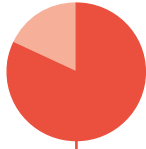
82%

said their agencies
were good or
excellent at
following the
principle of
humanity,

75%

responded good
or excellent
with respect to
impartiality,

73%

with respect to
neutrality, and

68%

with respect to
independence.

Practitioners responding to the survey were fairly positive about the degree to which their agencies and operations followed these principles: 82% said that their agencies were good or excellent in following the principle of humanity; 75% responded good or excellent with respect to impartiality, 73% with respect to neutrality and 68% with respect to independence. These results did not differ significantly from one context to another, and were very similar to responses in 2015. Results from people affected by crisis were similar in that they also suggested that agencies uphold the principle of humanity more effectively than the others, although responses were slightly less positive: 68% of respondents in the beneficiary survey said that they felt treated with respect by aid providers,[3] and in recent Ground Truth surveys the mean score for this was higher than for any other criterion (Ground Truth Solutions, 2017). If we use 'treating crisis-affected people with respect' as a proxy for following the principle of humanity, then humanitarians appear to be doing fairly well here. Ground Truth also asked affected people about the degree to which they think that aid is fair (a proxy for impartiality). Responses are less positive, but at 2.7/5 were still better than for most other areas (Outcomes; Recipient Independence; Aid Appropriateness; and Recipient Voice).

In the period 2015–17 there were several high-profile attempts to make humanitarian action more principled. In the 2017 self-reporting exercise following the World Humanitarian Summit, 20 organisations noted that they had taken steps to train staff in the principles or to further embed them in their programming (David et al., 2017). In the case studies, many interviewees working in humanitarian operations (in all three contexts) said that they applied – or attempted to apply – the principles, and gave numerous examples of how they did this.

A significant majority of those who discussed the principles felt that they were relevant and important to humanitarian action. As one NGO worker put it: 'it's part of our DNA ... we aren't there to make money, we are there to deliver aid according to the principles'. Interviewees working in situations of conflict – as well as a number of key informants – made the point that the principles are not only a value system, but also an important operational tool. In the words of an NGO manager: 'Losing impartiality, neutrality, would be the worst mistake we humanitarians could make ... we have access to places only because we do good work and people know we don't have a political position'. Interviewees – particularly on the ground – were also under no illusions as to how difficult principled aid work can be. Several discussed the principles as ideals to aim for, recognising that they would seldom, if ever, be fully achieved. Others talked of daily negotiations and attempts to balance principles against concrete constraints, such as denial of access. What emerged was a constant attempt to hold to the principles in the midst of shifting political pressures. This mirrors the findings of other recent research, which suggests that '[a]dherence to the core humanitarian principles involves contradictions and compromises' (Haver and Carter, 2016: 10).

Some interviewees (albeit a relatively small number) specifically questioned the principle of neutrality. These interviewees tended to be involved in explicitly political social justice work advocating for the rights of marginalised ethnic or caste groups. In previous ALNAP research, one local NGO explained: 'I think we have to be impartial, being neutral paralyses us. Being neutral places you in zero, and that is paralysing. Being impartial does not paralyse you but you have a position, you have a voice, you have something to say. Some INGOs say they are neutral. Well we are not, we are impartial, we are in favour of the families, the victims, which does not leave me at zero. I have a position, I have a discourse' (Saavedra, 2016: 40). Discussions around neutrality are not new: it was not included in the 2014 Core Humanitarian Standard because '[m]any humanitarian organisations that actively engage in both advocacy related to justice and humanitarian action do not believe that they are able to fully adhere to this principle' (CHS Alliance et al., 2014: 5). At the same time, experts in this area stress that advocacy – as long as it is even-handed and addresses threats to rights from all parties – is entirely neutral. The growth of citizens' groups providing assistance to irregular migrants in Europe may have added to this debate, at least in the European context.

Several key informants also suggested that, as national and local organisations gain more influence in the sector, the humanitarian principles may be increasingly questioned, either because they are cultural constructs of a 'Western' system, and as such not appropriate to other cultures, or because many national and local NGOs are explicitly political. Interviews for the case studies, however, showed how difficult (and perhaps unhelpful) it is to make this sort of generalisation. A number of interviewees from local authorities and civil society organisations suggested that they fully agreed that humanitarian action should be conducted according to the principles. As one local government official said: 'they are very close to our own cultural and religious beliefs. What we don't understand is why, in the name of the principles, the NGOs avoid us'. Research in Afghanistan, Somalia and Syria has found that local actors use a number of ethical frameworks (including Islamic principles and the Hippocratic Oath) to separate humanity from politics (Haver and Carter, 2016). On occasion, people in crisis themselves may question the value of the principles. In at least one evaluation 'parts of the population … did not see the use of armed escorts as a problem. They preferred to receive secured assistance than see it delayed or cancelled for the sake of "independence"' (Lawday et al., 2016: 20).

The evidence for this report – and in particular the case studies – show that the humanitarian principles (in practice) are not unerringly applied, nor do they command instant respect. They are better thought of as norms to be considered, argued over and understood in context. From this perspective, localisation does not in itself challenge principled action, but it certainly increases the number of voices in the discussion. Rather, the main challenges to coherence in the period 2015–17 appear to have come from another direction entirely – increased pressure from states (including donors) to align humanitarian action with broader policy objectives.

> In Syria, UN agencies were criticised for being too close to the government in Damascus, and government control over aid created significant challenges to impartiality and neutrality.

Humanitarian principles in conflicts

The nature of conflict – the fact that humanitarians are working in a highly contested environment and will generally need to work to some degree with all sides to ensure access to civilians – makes application of the principles a constant challenge (Betts, O'Grady et al., 2016; Magone et al., 2011). In the period covered by this report, humanitarian actors – and particularly the United Nations, which as an intergovernmental body does not have the option of 'avoiding' the state – found this a problem in a number of contexts (Drummod et al., 2015; UNICEF, 2017). In Syria, UN agencies were criticised for being too close to the government in Damascus, and government control over aid created significant challenges to impartiality and neutrality (Drummod et al., 2015; Martínez and Eng, 2016).

Humanitarian agencies also attempted – often unsuccessfully – to balance the operational demands of security and principled action. Lack of respect for IHL – including attacks on clearly marked medical facilities in Afghanistan, Yemen and Syria, including by military forces belonging to members of the UN Security Council – compelled agencies either to withdraw or to turn to international forces to provide security (Lawday et al., 2016). Attempts by donors and the UN to use humanitarian action to address developmental and stabilisation concerns also created difficulties, particularly where the Humanitarian Coordinator 'double-hatted' as the Resident Coordinator, a position that tends to work closely with government.

Concerns among humanitarians that they are being co-opted to support the strategic interests of major donors are, of course, nothing new, but there was a sense among some key informants that this trend was becoming more pronounced. The head of one NGO considered that 'openings for an independent humanitarian voice to defend the norms of humanitarian action have definitely constricted over the past few years, and you feel in government that there is just less space for defending those values when they are set against foreign policy objectives and security agendas'.

Humanitarian principles in refugee and migration contexts

In the period 2015–17 long-standing concerns about co-option by donors in situations of conflict extended to humanitarian action to support refugees and irregular migrants. One head of a humanitarian network said: '[it has] become more and more difficult to use principled response in relation to a donor when it has migration-related, counter-terrorism related political constraints and priorities'. This was, perhaps, an inevitable consequence of the rise of public and political interest in migration issues in many donor states. While a number of prominent organisations clashed publicly with donor states, criticising policy and taking action – such as maritime activities to save the lives of irregular migrants in the Mediterranean – that put them at odds with European and other governments, there was a concern that, overall, humanitarians were becoming 'actors in

a containment strategy'. One director of an INGO said: 'I do feel that aid agencies are depleted as an extension of foreign policy of Western governments. For example: the EU–Turkey compact for refugees and migrants – with humanitarian agencies and EU actors very much deployed to prevent people from moving and to accomplish domestic policy agendas … contravenes humanitarian principles'. At the same time, the large number of civil society groups supporting refugees and migrants in Europe did so without reference to the humanitarian principles, either because they were not aware of them, or because they did not feel they were relevant.

The humanitarian principles in 'natural' disasters

While challenges to coherence were more persistent, and perhaps more acute, in armed conflicts and refugee contexts, a number of informants also talked about the challenges that attempts to address the 'humanitarian–development divide' (see section on connectedness) were creating, or could potentially create, to working in 'natural' disasters. There was a concern that developmental approaches would lead to aid being given on criteria other than immediate need, and a more generalised concern around working with governments to achieve developmental objectives. Governments are political, and political considerations will always be an important priority. As one evaluation reported: 'as Haiti was in the middle of an election campaign [at the time of Hurricane Matthew], and is a country where political and financial manoeuvres are commonplace, the need for humanitarian space and principled action is obvious' (Grünewald and Schenkenberg, 2016: 11). One particular challenge to principled humanitarian action noted over the period was the growing use of social safety nets as part of humanitarian response. Research indicated a desire by governments that aid be spread as broadly as possible (the principle of equity), contrasting with the humanitarian principle of impartiality, by which assistance is given only to those who need it most (Grünewald and Schenkenberg, 2016; Obrecht, n.d.).

To what degree are humanitarian actors effective in encouraging support for IHL and International Refugee Law?

Humanitarian evaluations have very little to say on the degree to which agencies have been successful in encouraging states and non-state armed actors to abide by their obligations and providing support to mechanisms to ensure accountability. This is a difficult area to evaluate because, as one donor explained, 'much of it will remain invisible because it all had to be done very discretely in the background'. It is also difficult to know how much worse a situation might have been without negotiation and advocacy. According to one UN staff member in a country programme: 'there's been a tempering at points of stuff that the [government] would have otherwise done on clamping down on the UN'. Even where there are visible effects, it is extremely difficult to know how, and how much, advocacy and negotiation contributed to combatants' decisions.

Interviewees and key informants pointed to specific local activities that they believed had been successful in influencing state authorities or armed groups in Yemen, Somalia and Greece. A small number of key informants pointed to the importance of negotiating with the governments of affected states in securing access to areas of famine in South Sudan, Somalia, Yemen and Nigeria. The ICRC project 'IHL in Action' describes successful examples where humanitarian intervention has strengthened adherence to IHL. As the authors note: '[d]espite numerous violations of the law, compliant behaviour shows that existing rules are adequate and can significantly reduce human suffering'.[4] With respect to refugee law, a number of evaluations note UNHCR's success in advocating for the rights of refugees in the Syria emergency (Darcy, 2016b; Hidalgo et al., 2015). This is particularly notable given the fact that key refugee-hosting countries such as Lebanon and Jordan (and, in another context, Bangladesh) are not signatories to the 1951 Refugee Convention.[5]

Key informants also discussed the impact of campaigning and advocacy on donor governments, pointing to work such as Oxfam's campaign on UK arms sales to Yemen; InterAction's 'Civilians Under Fire' initiative (which contributed to Executive Order (EO) 13732 outlining measures to limit civilian casualties from US airstrikes, and to elements of the 2017 National Defense Authorisation Act (NDAA), adopted in November 2017 to address civilian casualties); and MSF's public denunciations of attacks on hospitals. Compared to the SOHS 2015, advocacy activities have improved, inasmuch as there appear to be more of them (although this is hard to measure) and their goals are clearer. However, given the multiple elements involved in, say, UK arms sales to Saudi Arabia, interviewees were not sanguine about how much could be expected of this work: '[the UK is] lobbying the Saudis very hard ... but in truth, that might be point number nine on an agenda which starts by talking about the London Stock Exchange and then goes all the way through all of the other houses and then eventually ... [there might be] something about humanitarian access'.

Over the period, governments that are donors to the international humanitarian system continued with (and in some cases achieved advances in) efforts to buttress IHL. These include support to Resolution 2 of the 32nd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent on strengthening compliance with international law; continuing support for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 2286 (2016) on the protection of medical care in armed conflict; support for the Austrian-led initiative to achieve a UN declaration on the use of explosive weapons in populated areas; continued support to the International Criminal Court (ICC); and discussions with Gambia and South Africa, which may have contributed to these two states remaining within the ICC.

Implementation and enforcement of these and other instruments have proved more difficult. Security Council resolutions on Syria appear to have made very little difference to the situation on the ground: while they may have improved access in some instances, they have had almost no effect on

Compared to the SOHS 2015, advocacy activities have improved, inasmuch as there appear to be more of them (although this is hard to measure) and their goals are clearer.

broader protection issues (Hartberg et al., 2015). The Security Council, in Syria and elsewhere, appears blocked by differences among the five Permanent Members (P5), and attempts by France and Mexico to secure agreement that P5 members will not use their veto in cases of mass atrocities have not succeeded. One possible positive element in an otherwise depressing story of failure is the continued support by many states for UN General Assembly Resolution 71/248 (2016), which established the international, impartial and independent mechanism (IIIM) to assist in the investigation and prosecution under international law of those responsible for the most serious crimes in the Syrian conflict. The IIIM has received the majority of funding requested for its 2018 budget and has begun work on case files.

In general, however, progress on the use of mechanisms to encourage commitment to IHL and refugee law, and particularly on activities to hold people and states to account for breaches of IHL, has been poor over the period. The second core responsibility of the World Humanitarian Summit was to 'Uphold the norms that safeguard humanity'. In the annual progress report for 2017, the WHS secretariat concluded that this area had been 'left behind', and that a 'global effort to enhance the protection of civilians in conflict should be pursued with urgency. Serious violations of international humanitarian law continue to create unacceptable human suffering in armed conflicts. Obligations to protect civilians and allow humanitarian access are plagued by a failure to respect them and by a culture of impunity around violations' (David et al., 2017: 9).

Box / Promoting compliance with IHL

International Humanitarian Law (IHL) seeks to ensure that wars are fought within limits, restricting the 'means and methods' of warfare, and protecting those who are 'not or no longer' participating in hostilities (ICRC, 2004). There can be a variety of reasons why a party to a conflict – a state or non-state armed group – does not stay within those limits, including wilful disregard for, lack of familiarity with or inability to comply with the law (Svoboda and Gillard, 2015). While there are a range of ways to promote compliance with the law, from dissemination and training to naming and shaming violators, pursuing individual criminal and state responsibility, targeted sanctions and helping violating parties to remedy their wrongdoing, in recent years attention has focused on accountability, and in particular individual criminal responsibility.

The primary responsibility for investigating alleged violations of IHL lies with states. States are responsible for incorporating IHL into their criminal and military law, and for prosecuting suspected violations. All states have signed the 1949 Geneva Conventions and are bound by customary IHL (as are non-state actors), and most (there are some significant exceptions, such as the United States, Turkey, Israel, Iran and Pakistan) are party to the 1977 Additional Protocols.

However, the extent to which these obligations have been translated into domestic law differs, and the political will to prosecute suspected violations varies by government and circumstance. That doesn't mean this never happens: the United Kingdom carried out the Baha Mousa inquiry to examine the conduct of British forces in Iraq, resulting in the dismissal and jailing of a British soldier on the grounds of inhumane treatment of a prisoner. But domestic trials or inquiries are unlikely to be conducted by states that wilfully violate IHL.

At the international level, the ICC prosecutes individuals for war crimes, genocide, crimes against humanity and aggression, and ad hoc tribunals such as the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda focus on crimes committed within a certain context. But, despite the establishment of the ICC, there is still no international court with compulsory jurisdiction to hear allegations of violations of IHL by states. The UN Security Council has applied targeted sanctions (arms embargoes and travel bans, and freezing assets) against parties and individuals involved in serious IHL violations, but their effectiveness in changing behaviour is less than positive (Targeted Sanctions Consortium, 2013), and when used in isolation they are often insufficient or ineffective (La Rosa, 2008).

Many discussions around IHL focus on obtaining accountability, rather than encouraging compliance to prevent violations (Svoboda and Gillard, 2015). Approaches that encourage compliance include the listing process used by the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict (CAAC), which claims to have been instrumental in the release of 115,000 child soldiers since 2000. Parties found to have committed one of five 'trigger' violations against children are listed in the annex of the Annual Report on CAAC. The UN Security Council then requests an Action Plan of 'concrete, time-bound steps' to bring listed parties into compliance with IHL. As of May 2018, 28 parties have signed Action Plans and 11 Action Plans have been implemented fully, resulting in the parties being delisted (Gamba, 2018). To promote ownership of the law among actors unable to sign treaties, Geneva Call works with non-state armed groups to sign a Deed of Commitment (DoC) to respect humanitarian norms, and be held publicly accountable for doing so. So far, 52 armed groups have signed a DoC banning anti-personnel mines (with at least one destroying its stockpiles), 26 on protecting children in armed conflict and 24 on the prohibition of sexual violence and gender discrimination (Geneva Call, n.d.).

• **TIM HARCOURT-POWELL, ALNAP**

Factors affecting coherence

Level of ambition

A number of commentators have suggested that it is unrealistic – and even naïve – for humanitarian agencies that are largely funded by donor governments to claim that they act independently and impartially: after all, the availability of funds at a global level (and so the ability to act) is not dependent on need alone, but on a number of other considerations, including foreign policy (De Geoffroy et al., 2015; Obrecht, 2017; Dalrymple and Smith, 2015). As one donor put it during the interviews: 'if it's part of a political organisation like we are then you're not entirely neutral on all of these things ... the choices you make in terms of where you put the money and where you pay the most political and humanitarian attention is not neutral'. Similarly, while agencies may attempt to act in a neutral way, 'when international assistance is given in the context of a violent conflict, it becomes part of that context and thus also of the conflict' (Anderson, 1999: 1). This has been repeatedly demonstrated in Syria, where one study concluded that 'by bringing external resources into life-or-death situations characterized by scarcity, aid agencies inevitably become implicated in war's inner workings' (Martínez and Eng, 2016: 171).

Humanitarian agencies also need to be realistic about the influence they can exert over states and non-state armed actors when attempting to increase adherence to IHL. Some interviewees felt that the inclusion of these issues on the agenda of the World Humanitarian Summit had given the impression that the humanitarian system could somehow bring about improvements in the way combatants behaved, and that this had obscured the real problems: one donor suggested that 'it would just be inappropriate and I don't know, lying, if we presented it as we could do this through a better humanitarian system'. Advocacy, negotiation and dialogue have achieved both local gains and a number of broader successes, but humanitarian agencies alone are highly unlikely to be able to change geopolitical realities.

An increasingly hostile geopolitical environment

Many of the key informants who discussed this topic felt that some humanitarian donors are becoming more overtly political, making it harder to work in ways consistent with humanitarian principles. Interviewees said that politics had influenced the areas that received funding (comparing Aleppo to Mosul), the degree to which donors were prepared to criticise parties to conflict (particularly in Yemen) and the increase in funding to stabilisation activities in countries such as Mali. Some felt that an alternative system was being established, based around funding streams devoted to securitisation and the prevention of migration, separate from and possibly in competition with the existing system, and untroubled by any requirement to observe humanitarian principles.

Advocacy, negotiation and dialogue have achieved both local gains and a number of broader successes, but humanitarian agencies alone are highly unlikely to be able to change geopolitical realities.

Performance of the System

Coherence

Most interviewees who discussed the topic also felt that respect for IHL and refugee law had declined, citing attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure in Yemen, Syria, Afghanistan and Myanmar; the use of rape and alleged use of starvation as a weapon of war; the use of prohibited weapons; and attacks on humanitarian workers. These concerns are echoed in the Secretary-General's reports on the protection of civilians in armed conflict (UN Secretary-General, 2017a; 2018), which speak of 'a broader trend of blatant disregard for international law in armed conflict' (UN Secretary-General, 2016; see also OHCHR, 2016; Svoboda and Gillard, 2015). Increasingly, humanitarian actors are working in situations where neither government nor non-state armed groups are prepared to follow IHL, and where many non-state armed groups see humanitarians as 'Western' and are not prepared to grant them access (Clarke et al., 2015; Darcy, 2016).

Some key informants felt it important to see this issue in perspective. An academic who has studied IHL commented: 'Whether or not violations of IHL are more severe now than they were, I don't know. It harkens back to an era that is often mythical where things were great. Civilians have always been targeted. Rape has always been used as a weapon of war' (Changing the Narrative on International Humanitarian Law, n.d.). A relentless focus on the negative might, in fact, make the situation worse: 'The perception that IHL is always violated and therefore useless is not only wrong, it is also dangerous. Yes, violations do occur. However, such a negative and dismissive discourse renders violations banal and risks creating an environment where they may become more acceptable' (Changing the Narrative on International Humanitarian Law, 2017). It may well be the case that, taking the longer view, the story of IHL is one of gradual but significant improvement (Yvette et al., 2015). However, in the shorter timescale of this report there does seem to have been a marked change, not necessarily in the number of contraventions, but in terms of a lack of support for the international, rules-based order among powerful states. As the executive director of one NGO explained: 'There is increasingly talk in our space about erosion of IHL ... To be honest, I do see that erosion ... because you've had sort of pariah abusive governments before, but you increasingly have abusive governments who are backed up by permanent members of the Security Council'. In this, the governments on the Security Council may be echoing the views of their populations. An ICRC survey of citizens of P5 countries (ICRC, 2016) compared results from 2016 and 1999. It showed decreased belief in the utility of the Geneva Conventions; decreased desire for the international community to intervene to help stop violations; and growing acceptance that civilian death is an inevitable part of war and that it is acceptable to torture enemy combatants for information. Key informants suggested that this lack of support for IHL among powerful states led to a belief among other governments that they could act with impunity. One individual who had been involved in negotiations with a

> 'The perception that IHL is always violated and therefore useless is not only wrong, it is also dangerous. Yes, violations do occur. However, such a negative and dismissive discourse renders violations banal and risks creating an environment where they may become more acceptable'.

government around the protection of medical facilities during a civil war said: 'we were desperately trying to get them to do anything to keep them over the line on IHL for all the reasons that are well-known and then the Americans bombed [the Kunduz trauma centre in Afghanistan] and ... they just were like, who are you kidding? ... I guess it's an exposure of the hypocrisy that's always been there but it's never been quite so public and well-known'. One interviewee referred to the seven vetoes Russia had used on draft resolutions related to Syria over the period, and suggested that this had had the effect of making the international order seem impotent.

Key informants, and research, also suggest that respect for refugee law has eroded among many of the countries that had been active and vocal supporters of refugees' rights in the past: one UN official said: 'I have watched the international refugee protection system be steadily undermined over the last year ... [I am] horrified really to see that the architects, state architects of the very system who formulated and pushed it and got it accepted were themselves in clear violation of it. And that they have lost any moral high ground'. Informants were particularly critical of the EU–Turkey deal on Syrian refugees. According to research by ODI, the agreement, as well as border control measures introduced by Australia and other states, 'sent a message to other countries hosting refugees that providing protection to people fleeing persecution is optional and subordinate to domestic priorities', and had contributed to 'a clear trend in the erosion of refugee protection on a global scale' (Hargrave et al., 2016: 22).

Increased links between humanitarian and development/stabilisation activities
As noted above, and in the section on connectedness, the period 2015–17 saw a general movement towards increased links between humanitarian and development (and sometimes peacekeeping) work. This trend may well be related to the political and financial concerns of donors, but has also been endorsed by many humanitarian agencies. While it brings a number of potential advantages, key informants and interviewees suggested that it also involves humanitarians more closely in (government-led) development planning, and that this can affect their ability to work in an impartial manner.

Lack of understanding/commitment on the part of humanitarian staff
A number of evaluations suggest that humanitarian staff and leadership do not fully understand the humanitarian principles and IHL, and so are unable or unwilling to apply and advocate for them (Lawday et al., 2016; Sida et al., 2016). However, this is by no means the case everywhere: in particular, many interviewees in the case studies showed significant engagement with and understanding of the humanitarian principles. They discussed IHL less often, perhaps reflecting its significantly greater complexity and the specialist legal knowledge required to understand and relate it to humanitarian programming.

Endnotes for this criterion

1. As defined in the Code of Conduct for the *International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement* and NGOs in Disaster Relief (which does not specifically cite the four terms humanity, impartiality, independence and neutrality) and in UN General Assembly Resolutions A/RES/46/182 and A/RES/58/114.

2. This is a slightly different, narrower definition than that provided in Beck, 2006, which suggests that evaluators 'focus on the extent to which policies of different actors were complementary or contradictory' (p. 33).

3. The response did not differ in a statistically significant manner for different types of aid provider.

4. See https://www.icrc.org/en/document/ihl-action-respect-law-battlefield.

5. Turkey is a signatory, but there is a geographic limitation to its ratification which means that those fleeing states outside Europe are excluded.

CONNECTEDNESS

In 2015–2017, humanitarians had some success in linking their activities to development, generally when working as part of larger, government-led programmes. More development actors began working in fragile contexts, but it remains to be seen how the humanitarian system will engage with these organisations.

"

The humanitarian sector is increasingly engaging with the underlying problems of poverty, vulnerability and conflict. These activities have been effective when working with governments to address vulnerability to recurrent 'natural' disasters. In other contexts, activities have been less successful.

Connectedness

In brief

Connectedness is one of the areas that has seen significant movement over the last three years. Key informants, interviewees and – to a lesser extent – evaluations and literature suggest that the humanitarian sector is increasingly engaging with the underlying problems of poverty, vulnerability and conflict. There is evidence to suggest that these activities have been effective in some cases – particularly when working with governments to address vulnerability to recurrent 'natural' disasters. In other contexts, there is much less evidence that these activities have been successful.

Some agencies and practitioners question the relevance of the concept for humanitarian action, and argue that humanitarians should focus on life-saving activities. There is also concern that increased attention to resilience may divert funds from these activities. Beyond these concerns, the main constraints to successful action relate to links, relationships and coordination with development actors. While development actors are frequently present, humanitarian counterparts have generally not been good at handing over programmes, and joint planning and implementation is difficult. In many cases, particularly in conflicts, this reflects a lack of development planning and structures within governments.

At the same time, the international community (beyond the humanitarian system) has begun to engage more robustly with the challenges of poverty and insecurity in fragile states. For many years, humanitarian actors complained that development actors did not involve themselves in these contexts. In the period 2015–17, this changed. Significant amounts of funding and assistance were allocated – bilaterally or through international funding institutions – to states experiencing conflict or hosting large numbers of refugees. It remains to be seen how humanitarian actors will adapt to these changes in the operational and funding environment.

To what degree does humanitarian action take longer-term and interconnected problems into account?

Changes in policy, structures and finance

There has been notable activity at the policy level: key informants suggested that this had been catalysed by (and reflected in) the World Humanitarian Summit process. The Secretary-General's report *One Humanity, Shared Responsibility* spoke of transcending 'humanitarian–development divides': 'Humanitarian actors need to move beyond repeatedly carrying out short-term interventions year after year towards contributing to the achievement of longer-term development results' (UNGA, 2016: 34). At the WHS, UN agencies signed a commitment to action agreeing to a 'new way of working' intended to meet people's immediate humanitarian needs, while at the same time reducing risk and vulnerability (OCHA, 2016b: para. 1). The agreement

> Policy change [on resilience] has been backed by increased funding, and funding that is better adapted to meeting longer-term, more developmental needs.

was also endorsed by the World Bank and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM). The issue of the humanitarian–development relationship was subsequently included as a workstream in the Grand Bargain (although this workstream closed in early 2018, it continues as a formal initiative of the WHS).

These issues have also received increased attention in humanitarian literature and research (see Berg and Seferis, 2015; Stites and Bushby, 2017), and individual donors and agencies have developed and promoted strategies aimed at addressing longer-term vulnerability to crisis, generally through the frame of resilience. Institutions including USAID, DFID, DFAT, the World Bank, the UNICEF, the WFP and the FAO have all implemented organisational strategies in this area, and in several cases have set up specific units to support them.

Policy change has been backed by increased funding, and funding that is better adapted to meeting longer-term, more developmental needs. Case study interviewees in some countries reported that (possibly as a consequence of policy changes) it was easier to obtain financing for resilience objectives. Since 2015, under the Grand Bargain, donors and agencies have also committed to increasing multi-year planning and funding (Derzsi-Horvath et al., 2017; Metcalfe-Hough et al., 2018; Taylor et al., 2017b), which in theory is better adapted to longer-term activities. According to a recent review: 'Multi-year humanitarian financing is an established and growing donor practice', although it 'still represents a relatively small proportion of total humanitarian funding and has not yet reached the critical mass necessary to shift incentives and drive transformative change' (FAO et al., 2017: 5).

Key informants and interviewees in the country case studies expressed some concern that increased resilience funding might serve to move money from humanitarian budgets to cover cuts in development funding. This concern is echoed in the literature (FAO et al., 2017), although there is no hard evidence to suggest that this is happening. While the period 2015–17 saw increased pressure on development financing, it also witnessed the entry of a key development financer – the World Bank – into the humanitarian funding landscape (see box below).

Box / The World Bank in humanitarian contexts

Over the period 2015–17, the World Bank played a more prominent role in humanitarian contexts. The Bank uses a range of funding, from itself, its branches – the International Development Association (IDA) and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) – and government donors, to support a diverse portfolio of instruments, many of which are currently being trialled.

The Global Crisis Response Platform (GCRP), established in 2016, acts as a network of Bank departments to provide a range

of financing in crisis-affected or at-risk contexts. Instruments span preparedness, prevention, response and recovery. The Bank estimates that around \$110 billion[1] was committed over 2006–2016 in crisis-affected countries, representing over a quarter of IBRD and IDA commitments combined (27.4%). Of the Bank's available suite of instruments, two are described in more detail here: the Global Concessional Financing Facility (GCFF) and the Somalia Emergency Drought Response and Recovery Project.

The Global Concessional Financing Facility

The GCFF, officially launched at the 2016 UN General Assembly, provides development support on concessional terms specifically to middle-income countries hosting refugees. The World Bank both hosts and functions as a supporting implementing agency within the GCFF, with a target of raising \$6 billion in concessional financing over the five years following its inception. Of this, \$1.5 billion is to be provided as grants.

In 2017, ten donors committed a total of \$515 million[2] to the GCFF, for Jordan and Lebanon, of which \$357 million had been contributed by the end of the year. Two-thirds of the contributed funding (\$244 million) had been approved for implementation through three 'Implementing Support Agencies' by the end of 2017, with the World Bank channelling the majority of this funding (87%, or \$212 million).[3] The GCFF states that, for every dollar provided by supporting countries, \$3–4 can be unlocked in concessional loans. Contributions through the GCFF to Jordan and Lebanon supplement grants given in the form of humanitarian assistance to these countries, which combined stood at \$1.7 billion in 2017.[4]

The Somalia Emergency Drought Response and Recovery Project

On 30 May 2017, the World Bank approved a \$50 million emergency project[5] – the Somalia Emergency Drought Response and Recovery Project (SEDRP) – to scale up the response to drought in Somalia. The project, a partnership between the Bank, the ICRC, the Somali Red Crescent and FAO, targeted about half a million people, the majority of whom were in areas deemed inaccessible to international humanitarian agencies. Initial activities aimed to provide high-impact, rapid interventions, including the provision of food, water, cash, health services and essential household items, to be followed by programmes to support productive assets, production capacity and livelihoods (including through cash-for-work programmes).

• LUMINITA TUCHEL, DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

Performance of the System

Connectedness

There has also been an increase in the level of development funding available to support refugees and host communities outside the funding channels of the humanitarian system. In February 2016, governments signed the 'Jordan Compact' for refugees whereby, in return for a package of grants, loans and preferential trade agreements, the Jordanian Government agreed to provide Syrian refugees with access to services (notably education) and employment. The idea is to 'turn "the Syrian refugee crisis into a development opportunity" for Jordan by shifting the focus from short-term humanitarian aid to education, growth, investment and job creation, both for Jordanians and for Syrian refugees' (Barbelet et al., 2018: 2). The sums involved are separate from, and much greater than, humanitarian spending: 'pledges of $12 billion in grants and more than $40 billion in loans for the region up until 2020' (CGD and IRC, 2017b; IRC, 2017), compared to $3.2 billion for the humanitarian response inside Syria and for refugees in the region' (ibid., quoting Huang and Ash, 2017). A smaller EU–Lebanon Compact was also agreed in 2016, and there are ongoing discussions on similar mechanisms in other countries.

Changes in programming

Some key informants stressed that it might take time to see changes in policy translate into changes on the ground: one INGO manager at HQ explained that 'it is slow moving. It takes a long time for a good idea in New York to translate to what our partners are doing in South Sudan'. In fact, the case study research suggested a continuation of the trend identified in the SOHS 2015 report: much humanitarian programming now includes elements of connectedness – at least with respect to addressing economic vulnerabilities. The increase since the last reporting period is also suggested by surveys in 2013–14, when there seemed to be much less of this type of programming (see for example WHS, 2014).

Multi-year Humanitarian Response Strategies and Plans have been introduced in several contexts, including Cameroon, Sudan, the DRC and the Occupied Palestinian Territories, with collective outcomes to be jointly attained by humanitarian and development actors. The majority of key informants and case study interviewees who discussed these inter-agency approaches felt that they had not, to date, led to much change in terms of activities. One particularly important multi-year, multi-agency approach during the period was the Sahel Regional Humanitarian Response Strategy, which alongside its life-saving activities, aimed to help vulnerable people cope better with shocks. A review of the programme suggests that, while the strategy provided a good basis to build partnerships with governments and civil society, and allowed space for additional tools (particularly cash programming), 'the integration of humanitarian and development programming remains a challenge' (OCHA, 2017a: 9). It had not been possible to build resilience in adverse situations (where there was insecurity or climate shocks), although where 'the absence of violence coincided with two relatively good rainy seasons ... progress and success can be seen' (ibid.: 12). A formative evaluation of multi-year response

'It takes a long time for a good idea in New York to translate to what our partners are doing in South Sudan'

INGO MANAGER AT HQ

planning suggests that 'strategic objectives tend to be general statements of intent, framed in such a way that defies easy measurement and often with no measurement mechanism in place' (Taylor et al., 2017: 9).

At the single agency level, many of the case study interviewees said that their organisations were working according to longer-term country strategies addressing both immediate humanitarian needs and resilience or developmental objectives. In all of the countries visited, some humanitarian agencies were involved in programming to address the underlying causes of humanitarian need. These activities were being undertaken both by national and international organisations, in conflict and refugee contexts as well as in situations of 'natural' disaster. Interviewees mentioned a wide range of approaches, including broader targeting of relief supplies to preserve assets and livelihoods, the provision of small-scale infrastructure to support economic activities, livelihoods diversification through training and grants, linking humanitarian efforts to social protection mechanisms and expanding access to basic services (particularly health and clean water).

In some cases, agencies appeared to be operating on a traditional 'relief to development continuum' logic, where humanitarian assistance transitions to development activities once the crisis is over.[6] The failure to effectively plan for or conduct this transition was a consistent thread in evaluations (Conoir et al., 2017; Gardner et al., 2016; More, 2016; UNICEF, 2016). That said, a large number of interviewees described programmes conducting humanitarian and longer-term activities at the same time, and the importance of parallel, rather than phased, approaches is a common theme in evaluations (Drummod et al., 2015; Turnbull, 2016a; UNICEF, 2016) and in the literature (Omar et al., 2016).

Although a large number of agencies are now conducting 'resilience-style' activities, there are very real questions as to whether these are having significant effects. Only 33% of respondents to the practitioner questionnaire felt that performance related to connectedness between humanitarian, development and/or peacekeeping activities was excellent or good, making connectedness the worst-performing criterion in the survey.[7] In Ground Truth surveys of crisis-affected people 'the overwhelming majority of respondents do not feel that the aid they receive empowers them to live without support in future' (Ground Truth Solutions, 2017: 9), and this measure scored worse than most other questions.[8]

Evaluations and other research – as well as interviews with practitioners on the ground – suggest that only a minority of resilience efforts have enabled vulnerable people to prepare for future shocks. Successful initiatives tend to relate to 'natural' disasters (cyclical drought in the Horn of Africa, and to a lesser degree hurricanes in Haiti and earthquakes in Nepal), and have been undertaken as part of a broader, government-led strategy (Béné et al., 2016; IFRC, 2015; More, 2016). Where this is not the case, there is little evidence to suggest that resilience approaches have been effective (Barbelet and Wake, 2017; Cabot Venton et al., 2015; FAO et al., 2017; Levine, 2018; Maxwell et al., 2015; Stites and Bushby, 2017). Granted,

Of the 1,170 aid practitioners who completed the SOHS 2018 survey,
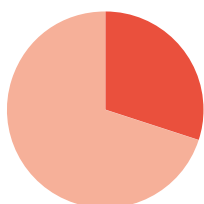
33%

felt that performance related to connectedness between humanitarian, development and/or peacekeeping activities was excellent or good, making it the worst performing criterion in the survey.

resilience is hard to measure, but evaluations show a fairly consistent 'theme of relatively strong relief responses but much weaker responses to more structural problems' (Darcy, 2016a: 17) – or, as one interviewee put it: 'Despite the new concepts ... of resilience, or the nexus; all that jargon ... we aren't really any further forward, either in knowing what to do or in being more effective'.

Connectedness in situations of conflict

As noted above, several agencies were involved in resilience activities in countries such as Yemen and the DRC. There is, however, only very limited evidence on the nature or success of this form of programming in conflict contexts: a recent review noted that 'relatively few sources examine resilient livelihoods in the face of conflict' (Stites and Bushby, 2017: 7). What evidence there is shows that investments in microfinance, infrastructure development and agricultural/livestock support have had a weak, or at best mixed, record. Targeting to effectively support the resilience of the most vulnerable is a consistent problem, and obtaining funding for these types of activities can also be difficult depending on the strategy of the donor involved (Stites and Bushby, 2017). Certainly, some interviewees in the case studies had found it difficult to access funds for these sorts of activities. One manager of an INGO in Yemen explained: 'it is very hard to convince donors [to pay for projects with longer-term, resilience components] ... how can [you] ensure the sustainability of schools or farms that can be gone with an air strike?'. At the same time, as the P2P report for the Whole of Syria response notes, humanitarian solutions are expensive ways of addressing infrastructure problems (STAIT (P2P), 2015: 26).

A number of other factors militate against successful resilience programming in conflicts. The P2P reports suggest that the approach is hard to operationalise in these contexts, and there is little established good practice on which to build. More fundamentally, the conditions that appear to have supported more successful work in 'natural' disasters do not exist in conflicts. Humanitarian actors do not understand the underlying risk of and vulnerability to violence in the same way as they understand vulnerability to drought, say, and national, government-led plans do not exist. In Afghanistan and Yemen, agency staff explained that it was not possible to support broader national frameworks for resilience because there were none.

The evidence collected for this report on resilience work in conflicts is consistent with the findings of the two major evaluations of conflict responses published by the IASC in this period, in South Sudan and CAR. In the former, despite the focus on livelihoods in the HRP, resilience work 'lost out in practical terms to the narrow focus on life-saving interventions', and as a result 'was relatively modest and unlikely to offset reliance on ... food aid to any significant degree' (Clarke et al., 2015: 60, 39).[9] In the latter '[o]perational actors ... achieved ... poor results in livelihoods and recovery' and 'missed the opportunity to use the great surge of capacity to address the country's protracted crisis' (Lawday et al., 2016: 8–9).

Addressing economic vulnerability is by no means the only approach to tackling the root causes of humanitarian need in conflict. Just as important – and largely overlooked by humanitarians – are the areas of conflict prevention and peace-building. Peace-building and conflict prevention receive some attention in the literature (Maxwell et al., 2015; Omar et al., 2016), but there appears to be less focus – or at least fewer publications – on this than in the past (particularly compared to the immediate post-Cold War period in the 1990s). Evaluations are almost silent on the topic: only three of the 120 looked at in the review consider peace-building, perhaps because this is seldom an objective in humanitarian responses. Similarly, it was not generally an area discussed by key informants. While a wide variety of organisations made commitments at the WHS related to preventing and ending conflict, this was the least popular of the five areas for action, with the smallest number of commitments and the fewest organisations involved.[10] A 2017 review of action on the WHS commitments concluded that 'few self-reports indicated a stepping up of efforts to resolve or prevent conflicts' (David et al., 2017: 8). International humanitarian workers interviewed for the case studies in Afghanistan, the DRC and Yemen suggested that they did not engage with work to address the causes of conflict because they did not know the actors involved, were not sure of the role their organisation might play and did not see this type of work as an organisational priority (a finding underlined by recent research suggesting that UN humanitarian agencies found 'understanding their role in sustaining peace ... challenging', and that this tended to lose out to other agendas and operational priorities (Pantuliano et al., 2018: 9)). In these contexts, work in this area was being done by national NGOs, which saw it as a natural extension of their humanitarian activities. The situation was different in Mali, where donor and government strategies tended to link humanitarian work to development, security and migration. Here, a number of interviewees expressed concern about the politicisation of humanitarian aid, and saw the growing links between humanitarian action and peace-building as potentially compromising humanitarian impartiality.

While international agencies generally seemed to ignore or avoid work that explicitly aimed to build peace, they were aware of the fragility of the contexts in which they were operating, and sought to design humanitarian interventions in such a way as to not put people at further risk. This awareness was also (and perhaps particularly) visible in refugee and migrant contexts, where a number of interviewees spoke of the importance of addressing tensions between migrants and host communities. This concern – often discussed under the term 'social cohesion' – also appeared in a number of evaluations (see for example Hidalgo et al., 2015; Sule Caglar et al., 2016), and seems to be an increasingly important part of the policy discourse around refugees and migration.

Connectedness in refugee and migration contexts

A number of high-level initiatives during 2015–17 sought to address the longer-term needs of refugees and migrants. While these activities have often taken place in parallel to, rather than as part of, humanitarian action, they are significant in scale and, potentially, in their implications for the way humanitarian agencies work. The issue of connectedness has always been an important part of the response to refugee situations: addressing the long-term needs of refugees is a fundamental element of the durable solutions approach, in the form of activities to support the voluntary repatriation of refugees, facilitate their resettlement in a third country or assist them in integrating into the economy and society of the country to which they have fled.

Over the last three years, as a result of the large and growing numbers of people fleeing violence and conflict, considerable pressure has been placed on the international refugee system and the implementation of durable solutions has become increasingly challenging for those who have been granted refugee status. Similar problems around addressing longer-term need also apply to the very large numbers of people moving to Europe, the US, Australia and elsewhere who require humanitarian assistance in the short term, and the ability to live with dignity in the longer term. Given the ongoing nature of many conflicts that have produced refugees – including those in Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan – only a small percentage of refugees have opted for voluntary repatriation (UNHCR, 2017).[11] Although the numbers of refugees being resettled in third countries reached a 20-year high in 2016 (ibid.), there are questions as to whether these numbers are even keeping up with the natural growth of refugee populations, as children are born to refugee parents. The number of people being resettled also decreased in 2017 (UNHCR, 2018) as governments cut resettlement quotas: in many countries an increase in nativist discourse in politics seems to be making resettlement harder, and leading wealthy nations to take in fewer people. At the same time, the third plank of the durable solutions approach – integration in the country of first asylum – is becoming more difficult as a number of countries hosting large numbers of people fleeing conflict – overwhelmingly countries in the global South – become less welcoming.[12]

Interviewees in Lebanon noted that the main problem in addressing the longer-term needs of refugees was government policy, in particular the exclusion of refugees from formal employment. As one INGO interviewee put it: 'the blockage isn't ... development partners coming in and saying, "Yeah, we'll fund this for years and years and years". It's the government'. Local government interviewees agreed that they did not want to see integration: 'There is no solution in Lebanon, Syrian refugees should go back to safe areas in Syria. If this is not possible for now, they should be moved to safe camps supervised by the government ... with shelter, WASH and educational services ... Syrians [should] not compete with Lebanese on job opportunities'. In Greece, integration was also difficult, again because of barriers to entering the labour market,

'The blockage isn't ... development partners coming in and saying, "Yeah, we'll fund this for years and years and years". It's the government'.

INGO INTERVIEWEE

> International actors have also tried to breathe new life into the concept of durable solutions, and explore new ways for states to collaborate to meet their obligations to refugees (e.g. the UN's New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants in 2016).

with refugees finding it very hard to obtain the necessary permits. Overall, practitioners working in refugee and migration contexts felt that 'difficulties in working with government' was a much more important constraint to addressing the 'humanitarian/development divide' than those working in 'natural' disasters or conflicts.[13]

Donors and others have attempted to address the challenges presented by large refugee populations in the Middle East for some time, and with particular urgency following the large-scale migration flows into Europe. In 2014, the EU established a Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis (the 'Madad fund') to provide support to Syrian refugees and host communities (largely in Jordan and Lebanon) through programmes focusing on education, livelihoods, health, socio-economic support and water and sanitation. International actors have also tried to breathe new life into the concept of durable solutions, and explore new ways for states to collaborate to meet their obligations to refugees. In September 2016, the UN General Assembly adopted the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, which committed states to establishing two global compacts – one on refugees and one on migration – by September 2018. With respect to refugees, the declaration, which is based around a Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF), essentially reaffirmed states' obligations under the existing legal architecture, rather than proposing additional obligations. Critics have suggested that the declaration lacks ambition and that its language is weak (ICVA, 2017). Many were disappointed that the CRRF was not used in the Rohingya Crisis (although it was implemented in 13 countries in 2016–17). There is also disappointment that the additional resources required from donors have been less than hoped in situations such as Uganda. That said, the CRRF does appear to have helped refugees access state facilities (particularly for health and education) in a number of countries (UNHCR, 2017).

As noted above, one concrete example of new thinking around longer-term refugee needs that is already in implementation is the Jordan Compact. An early review of the Compact concludes that, while 'considerable progress has been made, challenges remain' with regard to access to education and to work opportunities for refugees. These challenges essentially stem from the fact that the Compact is 'a narrow agreement that does not adequately reflect reality on the ground' (Barbelet et al., 2018: 1, 6). The Compact did not benefit from the views of refugees (or, indeed, from the humanitarian and other agencies that work for them)[14] in its design – a defect that, the review's authors suggest, should be remedied in future agreements.

It remains to be seen how many humanitarian agencies (beyond UNHCR) will engage – or attempt to engage – with these initiatives. Several key informants were clear that humanitarian actors are attempting to reconfigure their refugee programming in order to bring humanitarian and developmental concerns more closely into line. Similarly, a number of evaluations note that UN agencies in particular are aligning their work with government policies for long-term support to migrants and refugees (Darcy

et al., 2015; Moughanie, 2015; Peacocke et al., 2015). Humanitarian actors have been involved in integration-related activities for refugees, particularly in cash assistance and linking this assistance to social safety nets.[15] However, this work is starting from a low base: 'livelihoods and developmental approaches to forced displacement remain ad hoc and sidelined in aid agencies' responses to refugee crises' (Barbelet and Wake, 2017: 23), and many agencies may decide to maintain a focus on acute needs. At the same time, donor and host governments may conclude that the humanitarian system is not the most effective channel for addressing these issues, and rely instead on government-to-government agreements or on other actors to implement developmental activities.

Box / Irregular migration

Efforts to manage international migration have long sought to reduce irregular mobility and unsafe migratory practices, such as smuggling and trafficking, by targeting their underlying socio-economic drivers.[16] While such development-led, 'root-cause' strategies are not new,[17] they have gained significant momentum through the post-2015 development agenda. Key milestones include the Global Forum for Migration and Development and the UN High-Level Dialogues on Migration. The 2016 New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants and subsequent 2018 Global Compact for Migration promote a global commitment towards promoting 'safe, orderly and regular migration' aligned with the 2030 SDGs, in part by addressing the root causes of irregular migration.[18] Similar efforts have also featured prominently in EU policies following the so-called European Migration 'Crisis'. Measures include a €2 billion EU Emergency Trust Fund (EU-TF) and the 2016 EU Partnership Framework on Migration, which established bilateral agreements between Europe and 'priority countries of origin and transit'. Both initiatives are controversial, in part due to the use of conditional aid to compel third countries to cooperate with European migration management priorities.

More broadly, while major knowledge gaps remain around the causes of irregular migration, a growing evidence base has begun to challenge a number of long-held assumptions underpinning the 'root cause' debate. Data suggests, for instance, that greater development in lower-income countries may in fact increase, rather than depress, rates of migration. And research into the lived experience of migrants draws the important distinction between unsafe and irregular migration – the latter of which can, in certain contexts, represent best-alternative livelihood and protection strategies for migrants themselves.

Consensus surrounding the New York Declaration and the Global Compact has also made clear the need to balance efforts to reduce irregular migration with corresponding steps to expand regular migration pathways.[19] This is in tension with increasing restrictions on legal pathways, particularly the closure or narrowing of routes for

obtaining legal visas in Northern states. The EU's Malta Declaration has imposed restrictions on migration flows and returns between Libya and Italy, and an increasing reliance on detention, family separation and returns at the US–Mexican border all point to a hardening of border control policies worldwide.

Against this background, ongoing dialogue emerging from the Global Compact process continues to struggle with questions of state accountability towards irregular migrants' fundamental rights, including *non-refoulement*.[20] Irregular migrants displaced by adverse conditions (severe poverty and food insecurity, environmental change or denial of basic social services) are often difficult to distinguish from refugees in contexts of mixed migration. They are also outside the definition and associated protections set out in the 1951 Refugee Convention. Efforts, including the Nansen Initiative's agenda for extending protections to migrants affected by climate-induced displacement, seek to address this protection gap, but significant work remains. • **JOSIAH KAPLAN, GLOBAL MIGRATION AND DISPLACEMENT INITIATIVE, SAVE THE CHILDREN INTERNATIONAL**

Factors affecting connectedness

Commitment

Connectedness is unusual among the OECD DAC performance criteria in that there is disagreement as to whether it should be used as a measure of humanitarian performance at all. The debate over whether, to what degree and how humanitarian action should connect to developmental action and peace-building has a long history (see de Waal, 1997; Rieff, 2003). Over the period covered by this edition of *The State of the Humanitarian System*, there appears to have been a move towards an approach to humanitarian action which explicitly considers developmental and peacebuilding approaches, and – in some cases – actively works towards these ends. This found particular expression in the World Humanitarian Summit and the UN Secretary-General's report *One Humanity, Shared Responsibility*. However, many humanitarians remain sceptical about the desirability of the 'explicit elision of humanitarian and development goals into a single global challenge ... wrap[ping] humanitarian action into the wider project of the SDGs in a totalizing ambition to "end needs"' (ICRC, 2016b: 3). From this perspective, the WHS objective of ending needs 'threaten[s] to dissolve humanitarian assistance into wider development, peace-building and political agendas' (MSF, 2016: 2). Critics point, in particular, to the risk that humanitarian funding will be diverted away from saving lives, and that greater connectedness will damage the ability of humanitarian actors to behave in an impartial and independent manner. Questions over the degree to which humanitarian agencies should be involved in longer-term activities emerged in a number of evaluations (Darcy, 2016a; Taylor et al., 2017b;

Performance of the System

Connectedness

UNICEF, 2016), and in some key informant and case study interviews. At the same time, many critics also recognise that the humanitarian system is a broad church containing many approaches: there is no need for one single, canonical understanding of 'humanitarian'; 'People in armed conflicts and disasters are not best served by a single humanitarian machine. Principled diversity that cooperates to meet people's needs will serve them better' (ICRC, 2016a). While the system as a whole may become more connected to other international systems (such as the development system), specific agencies will not assess their own performance by the degree to which they achieve developmental objectives.

Clarity around concepts and approaches

One key informant from the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement described the attempt to relate humanitarian and development activities as 'still embryonic and a bit of a mess'. While there appears to be greater clarity over the meaning of key concepts such as resilience than there was at the time of the last SOHS report, evaluations still noted confusion over what resilience means, and how it might be achieved (Hidalgo et al., 2015; Lawday et al., 2016; Taylor et al., 2017b; UNICEF, 2016). Some interviewees also mentioned that their efforts in this area were hampered by a lack of tools and programming approaches – there is still significant work to be done in building evidence on practical ways to achieve effective resilience programming in humanitarian contexts. This point was also made by participants in the Grand Bargain workstream on this issue: 'Some signatories also expressed frustration that this issue had been framed as an HQ-based conceptual problem, when the Grand Bargain should focus on how the nexus can be operationalised at country level' (Metcalfe-Hough et al., 2018: 61).

Structures

Just under a third of respondents (29%) in the practitioner survey cited coordination mechanisms and planning processes as the single most important challenge in linking humanitarian and development programming. The figure was highest in 'natural' disaster-type settings, at 36%, but this option also received the most responses in conflict settings, above funding and difficulties in working with governments. This was also a constraint discussed by key informants, who added that, even where structures were in place, important actors (for example private sector entities performing development activities under contract to donors) did not attend, and there were often disagreements over who did what. One INGO director suggested that 'humanitarian and development was born at a time when it was clear what was humanitarian and what was development. And the development of the UN bodies reflected that and maintain the political power which they are unwilling to give up'. Different cultures can also make coordination challenging: an INGO staff member, observing this from the ground, suggested that 'humanitarians have their own way of doing things ... they want to go quickly, get rapid results,

---

Of the 1,170 aid practitioners who completed the SOHS 2018 survey,
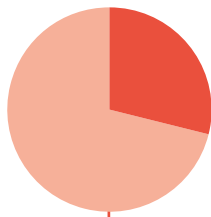
29%

cited coordination mechanisms and planning processes as the single most important challenge in linking humanitarian and development programming.

they are obsessed by speed. Development actors work to different timescales; so you don't get too many coordination meetings between humanitarian and development actors'.

In 2016 and 2017, OCHA and a number of other agencies concerned with this issue began to investigate how humanitarian coordination mechanisms might be better structured to address these challenges. However, given the number of functions that the existing humanitarian architecture is expected to fulfil, it may not be easy to expand the scope of coordination mechanisms while maintaining a strong focus on operational humanitarian coordination.

Tensions between connectedness and humanitarian principles

As noted above, engagement with developmental and political agendas will generally bring humanitarian agencies into closer contact with the host state and – often – with the broader geopolitical programmes of donor states, and may lead humanitarian agencies into conducting activities which go against humanitarian principles. While this is often seen as a problem particular to conflicts, these tensions can equally occur around 'natural' disasters. As one evaluation of activities in Haiti explained: 'The common tension between ... humanitarian and development processes is frequently the missing link between what people need (i.e. the concern of humanitarians) and what the government wants (i.e. the driver for development frameworks). Especially in a politically-charged context like Haiti, this tension is no small issue' (Grünewald and Schenkenberg, 2016: 44). Involvement in development processes would challenge both the principle of impartial provision of assistance based on need alone, and the principle of independence from government direction.

Most key informants and interviewees focused on the challenges to humanitarian principles that could arise when engaging with governments or donors to implement connected approaches in conflict. In the case studies, this was a particular concern in Mali – perhaps because humanitarian agencies there were often encouraged to support humanitarian, resilience and peace-building objectives simultaneously. As one NGO interviewee put it, including stabilisation activities was 'a total contradiction of humanitarian principles'. Key informants tended to take a more global view of the system as a whole, expressing fear that humanitarians would be 'co-opted': 'as the system gets more and more political, then it loses its teeth in the real life and death protection situations'.

Key informant interviews also pointed to the importance of nuance in this discussion. The problem should not be seen simply as one of 'principled humanitarianism' versus 'unprincipled stabilisation'. Humanitarian action already struggles to work according to the principles. There are always tensions in operationalising the principles – between speaking out over protection abuses and maintaining access to provide physical assistance, for example – and the challenges raised by increased connectedness only make these tensions more acute.

The problem should not be seen simply as one of 'principled humanitarianism' versus 'unprincipled stabilisation'. Humanitarian action already struggles to work according to the principles and there are always tensions in operationalising them.

Performance of the System

Connectedness

Scale, breadth and the role of government direction and planning

As noted above, humanitarian actors appear to have been most successful in supporting the resilience of crisis-affected people where they were able to do so as part of a much larger, more comprehensive strategy. A recent evaluation suggests that resilience efforts have been too small to make a difference, and that a 'narrow focus on household level assets was ... ineffective' in building resilience (Levine, 2018: 4). The evaluation goes on to say that household resilience needs to be understood in a broader economic context, where access to land, education and economic opportunities are all critically important in establishing resilient livelihoods. Both the scale and nature of resilience activities, then, generally require that they be led by the state if they are to be successful. It is no surprise that humanitarians were able to contribute most successfully to resilience where they worked with effective state structures preparing for 'natural' disasters. Interviewees in states undergoing internal conflict tended to say that the state was not engaged in development activities, and – even where humanitarians prioritised resilience – there were no larger plans or strategies to which they could connect. In refugee contexts, the attitude of the host state was also critical – but here the problem was less the lack of a development strategy than a desire not to support or encourage activities that might lead to refugees becoming more integrated into social and economic structures. Where activities had been developed outside government planning processes and structures, agencies struggled to hand over to the government at the end of their funding period (Advisem Services Inc., 2016; Duncalf, 2015).

Resources

Questions remain as to how much the humanitarian system can achieve with existing resources in situations where development actors are not present. A number of interviewees expressed concern that humanitarian funding, at the global scale, would never be able to address developmental needs. However, the number of situations where humanitarian agencies are the only service providers, and are expected to substitute for the state and for other development actors, may be declining. Development actors – and particularly development finance – are increasingly present in humanitarian contexts, and a relatively small number of respondents to the practitioner survey (6% overall, and 6% in conflicts) said that the lack of development actors was the main constraint to addressing the humanitarian/development divide in their setting.

At the level of the individual country or programme, the concern was more about obtaining funding for resilience work. While more funding has become available, and this appears to have led to an increase in work on the ground, many interviewees, particularly in

conflict situations, talked of the difficulties of obtaining funding, and 25% of practitioners responding to the survey said that short-term funding was the main challenge they faced in addressing the humanitarian/development divide. A lack of sufficient, multi-year funding was a particular constraint for the Sahel Regional Humanitarian Response Strategy (OCHA, 2017a). Another theme that emerged from key informants and interviewees was that more resilience funding was being made available because donors were becoming less willing to fund responses to cyclical or recurrent emergencies, and that resilience funding was being used to phase out of humanitarian commitments. There is, however, very little empirical evidence on the relationship between resilience and humanitarian funding. One evaluation found that, in Ethiopia, resilience investments had not compromised funding for humanitarian relief (Levine, 2018), but further analysis in this area would be helpful.

Marco Dorino/ UN Photo

Mali: Between hope and despair

One day, the war will come to an end and the Festival of the Desert in Timbuktu will resume

Chief of a Tuareg faction north of Timbuktu.

Mali used to be known for the beauty of its desert, the hospitality of its people and its '*cousinage à plaisanterie*', a peaceful social contract between its communities. Today, however, tensions are high and many areas are no longer accessible to outsiders. The current crisis, and the constraints affecting humanitarian operations, are a source of great concern. Ongoing unrest is the result of a combination of historical factors, unequal development between the south, north and east of the country and unresolved issues raised by the conflict in the 1990s. Libya's implosion in 2011 and

the subsequent flow of armed groups and weapons into Mali, alongside the rise of domestic and international radical groups, has led to spiralling conflict. Military operations by France and the UN helped the government regain control of its territory and a peace agreement was reached in May 2015, but genuine peace still seems a long way off: a new crisis has flared up in the central region of the country, fuelled by competition over land, grievances around state corruption and violence by the armed forces.

In early 2016, many observers regarded Mali as a crisis nearing its end, and anticipated a smooth transition from humanitarian response to development. Instead, it has gradually transformed into a highly complex and explosive conflict, with insurgents

establishing bases in the arid lands along the country's borders. It is unlikely that a military response will succeed in resolving the crisis, but political negotiations are making little headway. Malians want and need justice and good governance but, caught in the midst of this multi-faceted crisis, they are losing hope. With donor fatigue growing, regular droughts and resilience eroded by years of conflict, this is an increasingly challenging context.

Reaching the population: a key challenge

Security remains a major barrier for aid organisations. Until recently, the humanitarian community was able to work almost everywhere in the country, but as the situation has deteriorated access has become more difficult. While NGOs have attempted to adjust their strategies to continue providing assistance, Western aid workers now rarely travel to the north of the country because of the risk of abduction or robbery: break-ins and vehicle theft in the north account for more than 80% of attacks against NGOs in the country. Although access is possible, including through the use of UN aircraft, the UN mission in Mali is a political entity and humanitarian organisations are reluctant to use UN logistical assets for fear of compromising their perceived neutrality.

Most international aid workers stay in Bamako or are based in bunkers cut off from the field. This effectively transfers risks to African expatriates, national staff and local NGOs, which are supposedly less visible and are, as one humanitarian worker put it, 'less valued in the hostage market'. While a practical solution, this is neither ideal nor particularly ethical.

Large parts of northern and central Mali are neglected: in areas north of Timbuktu, east of Gao and in the central Niger Delta, it takes hours to travel short distances on sandy desert roads or on muddy tracks in flooded areas. The population is very widely dispersed and the insurgents are extremely mobile. Working in low-density areas north of the river Niger is difficult and costly, and the majority of assistance goes to the most accessible and secure areas. As one Malian livestock specialist explained: 'These are huge, practically empty areas, with a few settlements at water points. It can take hours or days to cover the harsh sandy or rocky terrain that separates villages and settlements'. In areas where humanitarians are present the impact is generally positive, albeit insufficient and largely unsustainable. Livestock programmes connected with human health are reasonably effective, and a significant amount of assistance has been funnelled into providing free healthcare, though the system depends on external assistance and it is

> "
>
> Until recently, the humanitarian community was able to work almost everywhere in the country, but as the situation has deteriorated access has become more difficult.

unclear what will happen when the aid stops and the pre-war practice of cost-recovery resumes.

The difficulty of providing 'protection'

Providing protection is also a complex challenge in northern and central Mali. On their own NGOs are often unable to do much, as this is either the responsibility of the state or is managed by traditional local systems that international agencies are generally not familiar with. Civilians are regularly attacked by armed groups or find themselves caught in fighting between opposing groups, and sexual violence is a serious problem. Human rights organisations have underlined how the national army and police have regularly behaved ruthlessly, leading to widespread distrust of 'men in uniform'. Specialised NGOs have worked hard to document abuses and violence by the army and have engaged in advocacy to mitigate them, but in the absence of sanctions impunity remains the norm. Donors have tried to support the Protection Cluster and its partners, but resources and specialised personnel are lacking and state institutions are very weak in large areas of the north and centre of the country, which remain practically lawless.

Humanitarian principles in the vicinity of a UN integrated mission

Humanitarian organisations have to manage their relationships with state institutions with great care. Being perceived as too close to the authorities can be interpreted as a loss of neutrality and independence, which can put NGO staff

directly at risk. NGOs also want to avoid appearing too close to the UN integrated mission in the country, MINUSMA, or even sometimes to the UN in general. The armed groups active in much of the north and centre of the country tend to target military forces. As one NGO staff member stressed: 'the danger for humanitarians is being too close to these military forces, and being in the wrong place at the wrong time'.

With around $1 billion spent on military operations each year by the UN,[21] the situation remains unsettled and the future uncertain. In the absence of sustained development efforts, basic needs are still not being met and will only grow as a result of a rapidly deteriorating food security situation, triggered by a crisis in a pastoral economy already weakened by the impact of insecurity resulting from the conflict and the deteriorating law and order situation. Faced with these conditions, combined with increasing insecurity and the challenge of working in parallel with a range of different armed forces (from France, the UN and regional states), humanitarian actors are going to need a great deal of imagination and stamina. Staff security will depend on the ability to negotiate with all stakeholders, and a continued commitment to demonstrating respect for humanitarian principles.

While it is likely that humanitarian resources will decline, new funding mechanisms are being deployed with the aim of bridging the gap with development. It remains to be seen whether these are agile enough, or whether development donors will be sufficiently flexible to enable the response to adapt to such a fast-changing and unpredictable environment. For the time being, sustainable peace in Mali, and the Tuareg Chief's hopes that the Festival in the Desert will resume, appear a long way off.• **FRANÇOIS GRÜNEWALD, GROUPE URD**

This write-up is based on a case study conducted for the SOHS 2018 by Groupe URD. The full case study can be found at: **sohs.alnap.org**

Marco Dorino/ UN Photo

Endnotes for this criterion

1. World Bank Group Global Crisis Response Platform, 24 August 2016 (http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/334721474058771487/pdf/WBG-Global-Crisis-Response-Platform-08252016.pdf).

2. This includes investment income.

3. The other implementation support agencies are the Islamic Development Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, which received 11% ($27 million) and 2% ($4.6 million), respectively, of GCFF disbursements.

4. Data sourced from FTS only, and not based on DI's international humanitarian assistance calculations.

5. See more at: http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/fragilityconflictviolence/brief/fact-sheet-the-world-bank-groups-response-to-the-famine-crisis.

6. This seemed to be particularly the case in Côte d'Ivoire, where there was a general sense in the interviews that, with the end of hostilities, the country was in a 'recovery phase'.

7. This question was not asked in the 2015 survey, so it is not possible to make a comparison over time.

8. The other questions were on sense of safety felt by aid recipients, relevance and fairness of aid and degree of participation.

9. Although the authors note that, as there was little monitoring data, these findings are 'impressions'.

10. 8% of commitments were in this area, compared to 34% related to development and resilience work.

11. Although the annual number more than doubled over the period, to 667,400 in 2017 – but it still did not keep pace with the rate of new displacement (UNHCR, 2018). There are also real concerns that not all of these repatriations were voluntary.

12. For example: the government of Kenya issued a directive to close Dadaab refugee camp in 2016; in Turkey, President Recep Erdoğan had suggested that Syrian and Iraqi refugees might be granted citizenship, but this was met by popular opposition, and by early 2018 the Turkish government was leaning more heavily towards voluntary return; and in Lebanon, a number of evaluations suggest that governments and the public are becoming less receptive to Syrian refugees.

13. 19% said that this was the major constraint to addressing the humanitarian/development divide, compared with 14% in conflicts and 12% in natural disasters.

14. UNHCR was consulted in the final stages.

15. For example, WFP and the Turkish Red Crescent's engagement in the Emergency Social Safety Net programme in Turkey.

16. 'Irregular migration' refers broadly to movement outside the regulatory norms of sending, transit or receiving countries, including irregular entry, residence or employment (IOM, 2011). The term is disputed; while irregular movement frequently involves unsafe migratory practices, including smuggling and trafficking, it can also represent a livelihood and protection strategy for migrants.

17. For example, Article 13 of the 2000 Cotonou Agreement.

18. See New York Declaration, Para 11–12; and Global Compact for Migration, Final Draft, 11 July 2018.

19. This point was made in the UN Secretary-General's December 2017 report *Making Migration Work for All*, and migration dialogues such as the 2014 Khartoum Process.

20. Examples include the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention Against Torture, the Migrant Workers Convention and, for children, the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

21. See https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/mission/minusma.

COMPLEMENTARITY

The importance of local humanitarian response and the links between the international system and national actors were key themes in 2015–17. Relations between international humanitarians and governments continued to improve overall. There was less progress in enhancing the role of national and local NGOs.

> There was widespread agreement on the need to increase the amount of funding going directly to national and local NGOs, to support these organisations to develop their capacity and to build more genuine partnerships. Progress has been limited.

Complementarity

In brief

While relationships between international actors and the governments of crisis-affected countries vary significantly from one situation to another, the general trend of improving relationships noted in the SOHS 2015 report has continued. Relationships are generally good in countries where the state takes a lead role in the coordination and implementation of humanitarian activities. In situations where government bodies are less engaged in implementation relationships have also improved, but there is often less communication and transparency than governments would like. Problems have also emerged in rapid-onset emergencies, where there is still a tendency for humanitarian surge deployments to ignore local capacity. The poorest relationships appear to be in states where the government is involved in major internal conflicts and in refugee-hosting situations, and there is a growing tendency for states to use bureaucratic impediments to prevent the impartial provision of assistance and protection.

The 2015–17 period saw greatly increased focus on the role of national and local NGOs in humanitarian response. Various policy initiatives were given significant impetus by the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit and follow-up activities. In particular, there was widespread agreement on the need to increase the amount of funding going directly to national and local NGOs, to support these organisations to develop their capacity and to build more genuine partnerships. While a number of donors and operational agencies have taken action in these areas, overall progress since the Summit has been limited.

The state, civil society and the international system

Affected states are expected to play the primary role in responding to humanitarian crises, with the international humanitarian system engaging only where the state and civil society are unable (or unwilling) to provide impartial humanitarian assistance. In practice, this is generally not an either/or arrangement, and in many cases government agencies, civil society and international organisations will all be engaged in humanitarian activities.

In the period 2015–17, the importance of national and local actors was evident in a number of high-profile crises. Government and civil society organisations were critical in the response to Ebola in West Africa (Campbell et al., 2017; DuBois et al., 2015; Polygeia, 2016), and a large proportion of the response in areas of Syria outside government control has been provided by civil society groups (Svoboda and Pantuliano, 2015). In refugee situations, host governments and civil society have long played a central role. In the reporting period, this was demonstrated in many countries, perhaps most notably in Turkey, which spent $8 billion in 2017 on hosting refugees.[1]

The importance of the state and civil society in humanitarian response was underlined by the recipient questionnaire, where 22% of respondents said that the government had been the main source of aid, and 23% that civil

In refugee situations, host governments and civil society have long played a central role.

In the reporting period, this was demonstrated most notably in Turkey, which spent

$8 billion

in 2017 on hosting refugees.

The State
of the System

Complementarity

society organisations (religious groups, local/national NGOs and Red Cross/Red Crescent National Societies) had been the main source of aid. Another 9% said that family abroad was the main source of aid, and 5% businesses. This compared with 34% who said that international humanitarian organisations had been the main source of aid (19% INGOs, 12% UN and 3% the ICRC).[2] The results did not differ greatly between people affected by conflict and by 'natural' disaster, challenging the idea that 'in most conflict-affected contexts ... the bulk of the humanitarian response continues to be provided through international assistance mechanisms' (Darcy, 2016a: 7).

A number of authorities, evaluations and key informants have argued that humanitarian response by the affected state and civil society should be faster, more relevant and more effective than international responses (see Particip GMBH et al., 2016; Sumaylo, 2017; Taylor and Assefa, 2017; Wall and Hedlund, 2016a). Case-based research bears out these assumptions – to a degree. Overall, national and local responders, particularly NGOs, do seem to offer advantages in terms of the relevance of aid (Cohen and Gingerich, 2015; Featherstone, 2014; Ramalingam et al., 2013; Svoboda et al., 2018), though there are exceptions; in South Sudan, for example, questions have been raised around the extent to which civil society organisations were aware of the specific needs of women (Tanner and Moro, 2016). The picture with respect to timeliness is less clear: in some cases, national responses are significantly quicker (Svoboda et al., 2018; Tanner and Moro, 2016), and in others they are not (Featherstone, 2014; Ramalingam et al., 2013). There is also some research to suggest that responses are most effective when international and national agencies work together (Featherstone, 2014; Ramalingam et al., 2013). Organisations based in affected countries may have more interest in recovery and longer-term resilience, and may be in a better position to provide support over longer periods (Featherstone, 2014; Sumaylo, 2017), though securing funding for this type of work can still be a problem.

Interestingly, though, and in contradiction to some of the sources above, the results of the recipient survey for the SOHS did not really support the idea that any type of organisation (national or international, state or non-government) is inherently 'better' at fulfilling the criteria than any other. While there were some statistically significant differences between the performance of governments on the one hand and humanitarian organisations (national and international) on the other, these effects were small: those who received aid from humanitarian organisations were slightly more likely to be positive about the quality and quantity of that aid, and slightly less likely to be positive about the speed of aid than those receiving aid from other sources.[3] Most interestingly, there was no statistically significant difference between responses on the quality, quantity, relevance or speed of aid between those who received assistance from local NGOs and those who received assistance from international agencies (international NGOs or UN). Nor was there any difference in the degree to which people were consulted or were able to give feedback.[4]

> "
>
> The results of the aid recipient survey did not support the idea that any type of organisation is inherently 'better' at fulfilling the criteria than any other.
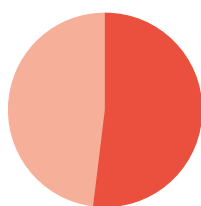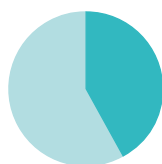
A number of potential benefits to more localised or national responses are not easily captured using the existing OECD DAC criteria. As one report notes: 'humanitarian aid is not just the assistance delivered, it is also the process … what makes local actors different is their understanding – and operationalizing – of the principle that humanitarian response is … a social interaction'. The report suggests that we should ask 'whether it is appropriate that international benchmarks of effectiveness are the sole criteria for evaluating response' (Wall and Hedlund, 2016: 16). For this edition of *The State of the Humanitarian System*, we have attempted to address this point by considering complementarity – the degree to which '[h]umanitarian action recognizes and supports the capacities and accountability of national and local actors' (Bourns and Alexander, 2016: 42) – as an additional criterion for assessing the performance of the humanitarian system. This recognises that, for many, achieving national ownership of humanitarian programming is not only a means to more effective programmes (in terms of saving lives in the short term), but also an important end in itself.

To what degree does the humanitarian system recognise and support the capacities of the host state?

Over half (52%) of respondents to the practitioner survey felt that the participation/consultation of local actors (including government actors) was good or excellent. This shows a steady increase from 2015 (42%) and 2012 (38%). Practitioners also cited cooperation with host government authorities and local organisations as one of the three most improved areas over the period 2015–17. The relatively small number of government respondents were more positive still: 62% felt that collaboration was good or excellent (though this was a slight fall from the 67% giving the same result in 2015, albeit the question was worded slightly differently). Similarly, a significant majority of the evaluations that considered the relationship between international humanitarian agencies and governments (including a number of evaluations in conflict contexts) suggested that these relationships were broadly positive.[5] Some noted attempts by donors to support collaboration with the governments of affected states (Global Affairs Canada, 2017; Mowjee et al., 2016; Ovington et al., 2017). In the case studies, government representatives suggested that collaboration was very good in Kenya, and 'very good, fraternal and professional' in Côte d'Ivoire.

The majority of government representatives interviewed suggested that relations were generally good, but that there was room for improvement. These interviewees tended to be working in countries where humanitarian activities were taking place within an overall framework established by the government, but where the government was not active in planning or implementing specific operations (this appears to be the most common model of government/humanitarian relationship, to judge by the responses to the practitioner survey).[6] There would typically be less contact between humanitarian and

---

Of the 1,170 practitioners who completed the SOHS 2018 survey

52%

felt that the participation/ consultation of local actors was good or excellent. A steady increase from previous surveys:

42%

in 2015, and

38%

in 2012.

Humanitarians seem to be particularly unlikely to engage with the state in the early stages of large-scale or rapid-onset crises. In reference to planning the Ebola response one UN manager noted: 'We had to get so much done in that 2.5 day period, had the governments been there I don't think we could have accomplished it'.

government actors in these countries than there was in Kenya or Côte d'Ivoire, where humanitarian staff and government employees work alongside one another. Interviews suggested that, in these situations, government representatives were more likely to identify specific problems in the relationship (see also Betts, Blight et al., 2016; Betts and Coates, 2017; ICF, 2016; World Vision International, 2015). In particular, government interviewees felt that internationals should be more open with sharing documentation and plans (Nepal, Afghanistan), and should be clearer about where funding was coming from. Reviewing evaluations of L3 humanitarian responses, one author concludes that 'the overall impression ... is that more can be done ... than is currently acknowledged' (Darcy, 2016a: 32). Humanitarians seem to be particularly unlikely to engage with the state in the early stages of large-scale or rapid-onset crises: as one UN manager noted, with reference to planning the Ebola response: 'We had to get so much done in that 2.5 day period, had the governments been there I don't think we could have accomplished it'.[7] Even in countries where relations are generally good, there has been a tendency for incoming surge deployments to ignore existing partnerships and relationships, particularly in large-scale responses.

For international agencies, the most challenging issues in relations with governments were where they prevented access to particular areas, or prevented agencies (often NGOs) from working, either directly or – increasingly – through the imposition of bureaucratic constraints. This was frequent in conflict environments such as Yemen and Syria, and was also a problem in a number of refugee-hosting contexts (see section on coverage). The cases and evaluations also provided examples of humanitarian actors actively avoiding contact with the state. In Yemen, government officials appeared philosophical about this, recognising the difficulties NGOs faced in working with two 'governments'. In Mali, local government officials recognised the importance of humanitarian principles, but questioned whether this meant they should be excluded from humanitarian action. Evaluations suggest that some agencies have also bypassed governments in a number of 'natural' disasters (Blake and Pakula, 2016; Darcy, 2016; Ovington et al., 2017). It should also be noted that a small number of NGO interviewees felt that it was the government that was avoiding them, rather than the other way around: the government was disengaged, and quite happy for humanitarian actors to provide services that it was either unable or unwilling to supply itself.

One area that has received attention as part of the wider discussion on state/humanitarian relationships is coordination. There has been criticism that the humanitarian coordination architecture does not take sufficient account of the state, and may exclude government agencies or duplicate existing government mechanisms (Knox Clarke and Campbell, 2016; Lawday et al., 2016; Hanley et al., 2014; Swithern, 2015). Here again, the situation appears to be gradually improving: 52% of government staff surveyed felt that their engagement in coordination mechanisms was good or excellent, up from 33% in 2015.

Factors affecting complementarity of governments and international humanitarian agencies

The capacity of the state

One of the most important factors in determining the relationship between the state and humanitarian actors is the capacity of the government to lead, or at least actively participate in, a humanitarian response (Advisem Services Inc., 2016; Bousquet, 2015; Coombs et al., 2015; Darcy, 2016a; Gardner et al., 2016; Grünewald et al., 2016; Stone et al., 2015; UNICEF, 2015; 2016; Watson et al., 2016). This is often a matter of resources. Some crisis-affected states may lack the finances, staff and structures to coordinate or participate in a response. Alternatively, governments may temporarily lack capacity because of the crisis itself: local authorities in Nepal suggested that this was the case immediately after the earthquake in 2015. However, capacity does not always correlate directly with resources – it is also related to experience of crisis response. A number of interviewees suggested that some governments in middle and high income countries had proved ineffective in crises because they did not have significant experience of similar situations.

A number of interviewees (generally from national and international NGOs) also mentioned corruption as an important factor in making state bodies less effective, or more difficult to work with. Corruption is also mentioned in a number of evaluations (Al Nabhy et al., 2017; Clarke et al., 2015; Duncalf et al., 2016), and in the recipient survey. According to one recent report, 'corruption is deeply entrenched in the economy and systems of governance' in many humanitarian contexts (Harmer and Grünewald, 2016: 4). The report goes on to caution, however, that 'humanitarian resources are not only manipulated by governmental actors and national NGOs, but also as a result of the practices of international agencies' (ibid.: 4).

The changing context and nature of humanitarian action

Some key informants suggested that improvements in collaboration may largely be a result of changes in where humanitarian action was taking place – specifically, a move to working more in cities (where state institutions tend to be stronger) and in middle income countries. They noted that collaboration with government was often a result of government pressure: in contrast to the 'push' to work with civil society, there were few humanitarian initiatives that focused directly on improving links with states (the Disaster Response Dialogue, one such initiative, closed in 2015).

The increased emphasis on longer-term resilience activities has also inevitably brought humanitarian agencies into closer contact, and led to stronger working relationships with government bodies, as well as with intergovernmental organisations such as the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank, which work more consistently with governments.

> Interviewees suggested that some governments in middle and high income countries had proved ineffective in crises because they did not have significant experience of similar situations.

The State of the System

Complementarity

Differing approaches by different humanitarian agencies

As one evaluation notes: 'Implementing organisations vary significantly in their approaches to engaging with government. Some ... partner with and provide material support to health and water authorities, and seek to build capacity of government facilities and staff ... At the other end of the spectrum, some organisations work as separately as possible, engaging only where needed to obtain the necessary permits' (Al Nabhy et al., 2017: 15). This is partly a matter of organisational strategy, but also reflects the variety of organisations in the humanitarian system. UN agencies are intergovernmental bodies, governed by states and generally expected to work alongside the mechanisms of the state. The members of the IFRC are auxiliary bodies, with specific roles in disaster mandated by the law of the particular state where they work. NGOs are civil society organisations, and may be wary of state control (Al Nabhy et al., 2017; Downen et al., 2016; Stone et al., 2015), though NGOs that also engage in development work are likely often to have long-standing relationships with elements of government.

The triangular relationship between state, people and external agencies

One particular example of how the nature and priorities of humanitarian agencies – and particularly NGOs – might influence their dealings with the state arose in situations where there appeared to be a tension between working with the government and working with the community (More, 2016; UNICEF, 2016). In some cases, agencies might be concerned that government bodies do not legitimately represent the concerns of the crisis-affected community, and so attempt to work with the community directly. In others, NGOs might default to working with community groups or traditional representatives at the local level, not through any particular desire to avoid the state but rather as part of regular working practices.

Humanitarian principles

A key constraint for many actors in working with governments is the fear that doing so will lead them to contravene humanitarian principles.

A key constraint for many actors in working with governments is the fear that doing so will lead them to contravene humanitarian principles. As noted in the section on connectedness, this is a particular problem in situations of intra-state conflict, but political interference in humanitarian programmes has also been seen in a number of 'natural' disasters/health crises and refugee situations (DuBois et al., 2015; Featherstone and Bogati, 2016; Grünewald and Schenkenberg, 2016; Hidalgo et al., 2015). However, interviewees in the case studies made it clear that, even where the state was keen to suborn humanitarian aid for political ends, it was generally impossible to completely avoid contact: at the very least, government assent was required to allow access to crisis-affected communities. In most cases, the choice for humanitarian actors is not whether to work with the state, but how. Interviewees and evaluations suggested that, even in the most politicised environments, it was often possible to find interlocutors within government structures who would work to enable humanitarian aid to be provided in an impartial manner (AAN Associates, 2016; Clarke et al., 2015; Lawday et al., 2016).

Knowledge and comparability of systems and structures

A final factor affecting collaboration was the degree to which international actors understood government structures (the opposite may also be true, but did not feature in evaluations or interviews). A number of evaluations pointed out that humanitarian actors did not know which elements of government they should engage with (Austin, 2016; Darcy et al., 2015; Sule Caglar et al., 2016), overlooked local or municipal governments (Citiés Unies France, 2016) or assumed that the government was a more monolithic entity than it in fact was.

To what degree does the humanitarian system recognise and support the capacities of national and local NGOs and civil society organisations?

A number of international humanitarian organisations have called for more authority and funding to be transferred to civil society organisations in crisis-affected countries (Cohen and Gingerich, 2015; Poole, 2014). In 2015, a group of NGOs initiated the Charter for Change (C4C), a set of commitments to change the way INGOs related to and worked with national organisations. These calls were given added momentum by the World Humanitarian Summit process,[8] and subsequently by the Agenda for Humanity and the Grand Bargain. The inclusion of the issue in the WHS and Grand Bargain arguably moved the discussion from one focused primarily on the relations between international and national NGOs to one which aimed to link Southern organisations directly to donors, and reposition these organisations as more central actors in the humanitarian system.

Many of the commitments made in the C4C, WHS and Grand Bargain relate to increasing the funding that goes to national and local NGOs, supporting capacity development and working in more collaborative and less contractual ways. Overall, the progress reports for these various global initiatives (Charter for Change, 2017; David et al., 2017; Metcalfe-Hough et al., 2018) suggest that awareness of the issue has increased, and many international organisations see it as a priority: '"reinforce, do not replace, local and national systems" has become the norm in policy discussions' (David et al., 2017: 63), and there is 'a strong interest and appetite for progressing the Grand Bargain commitments' (Callaghan and Harmer, 2017: 5). This has led to changes in policy in a number of organisations – including some donors – and some changes in funding and coordination. However, these have not been as comprehensive as many in the sector may wish. The independent review of the Grand Bargain concluded that, in 2017, this agenda had made 'some progress', but that 'donors have struggled' (Metcalfe-Hough et al., 2018: 38). Some humanitarian agencies have made significant changes, while others have changed very little. Overall, the Grand Bargain review concluded that '[m]any signatories, particularly aid organisations, asserted that the localisation commitments are a high-level policy priority and important progress was made in some areas. However, negotiations on key definitions were prolonged and there is limited evidence of what collective progress the individually reported actions add up to. There is also a general sense among signatories that the desired end goal of "localisation" is unclear' (ibid.: 34).

The State
of the System

Complementarity

In the practitioner survey, only 19% of respondents thought that 'the ability of local NGOs to access direct funding from international donors' was good or excellent – a very low figure, and one which showed very little change on 2015 (when it was 16%) and below 2012 (25%). The local and national NGOs that responded to the question were slightly more positive than the average – 24% thought that access to direct funding was good or excellent: again, this was only a slight increase on 2015 (19%). In the case studies, some respondents (from international NGOs in Chad and Cameroon, and from national NGOs in Kenya and Côte d'Ivoire) thought that the situation was improving, but this was not a message that came across strongly.

It is perhaps not surprising that progress on direct funding has been slow. Many donors have legal constraints that prevent direct transfers to national NGOs, or eligibility and reporting requirements that make direct transfers extremely difficult. Some governments have addressed these constraints directly, while others have sought to increase funding through indirect routes, such as Country Based Pooled Funds or via international organisations. In 2017 Country Based Pooled Funds allocated $163.5 million (24% of the total of $647 million) to national NGOs. While this was a significant increase on the $74.06 million allocated in 2015 (14.6% of the total), it is still a relatively small sum compared to overall humanitarian expenditure in these countries. In the same year, 14 of the 29 C4C signatories transferred approximately 24% of their humanitarian funding directly to 'southern based NGOs' (Charter for Change, 2017). Despite these increases, the NEAR network has suggested that such indirect funding goes 'against the intent' of the Grand Bargain commitment, and will 'perpetuate the status quo' (NEAR, 2017).

Beyond the direction and amount of funding, challenges also remain as to the nature of the funding that national NGOs can receive – particularly its duration, and the support national NGOs receive for overheads and core costs (Charter for Change, 2017; Mowjee et al., 2017). The multiple constraints of international funding make alternatives attractive, and many national NGOs are attempting to build a funding base through private donations in their home countries, contributions from diasporas and online crowd funding (Sumaylo, 2017; Wall and Hedlund, 2016a).[9] Although these sources of funding have not always proved sustainable over longer periods (Svoboda and Pantuliano, 2015), this approach may open the way for alternatives to the existing international humanitarian system.

Another area of focus in the period 2015–17 was capacity development for local and national NGOs. In the practitioner survey, 35% of respondents thought that the support of international aid organisations and donors for capacity-building of local actors was good or excellent – a slight rise on 2015 and a fall from 2012 (31% and 51% respectively). The local and national NGOs that responded to the survey were even less positive, with only 30% saying that this support was good or excellent – a figure very similar to 2015's 32%. The case studies showed that a great deal of capacity-building was going on, and that it

The constraints of international funding make alternatives attractive, and many national NGOs are attempting to build a funding base through private donations in their home countries, contributions from diasporas and online crowd funding.
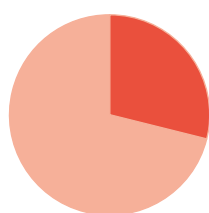
was wanted where it was not (Colombia, Afghanistan), but interviewees were divided on how useful and relevant these activities were. Participants in DRC and Côte d'Ivoire were positive, while interviewees in Greece felt that they were 'a repetition of ... PowerPoint-based courses, not adjusted for relevance, not adapted to the context, so unfortunately in most cases it is an activity that has to be done because it's written in the project plan somewhere' (see also Betts, Blight et al., 2016). Other reviews confirm that capacity-building activities vary in effectiveness from one place (and organisation) to another (Sumaylo, 2017), and are still often disjointed, rather than being part of a response-wide plan (STAIT (P2P), 2015; 2016c). The literature indicates that longer-running mentoring relationships and working together can be more valuable than one-off training (Betts, Blight et al., 2016; Howe et al., 2015; Svoboda and Pantuliano, 2015). Some interviewees suggested that the only way to build capacity would be to ensure long-term funding – and that training activities were really a distraction from the real problems. Others felt that, without support in grant management, it would be hard for them to manage larger budgets successfully.

A third area that received some attention in the period 2015–17 is the engagement of national and local NGOs in humanitarian coordination mechanisms. National and local organisations often find it difficult to participate in these mechanisms (and so gain visibility, access funds and link effectively into the larger response) for a number of reasons. Meetings are often held some distance from the site of humanitarian operations, where local organisations may be based. The working language of coordination is generally English or French, rather than the language of the country in which the response occurs, and – particularly where organised by sector – coordination can be extremely time-consuming (Knox Clarke and Campbell, 2016). In the period 2015–17, a larger number of HCTs have incorporated national NGOs as members (Metcalfe-Hough et al., 2018), and there has been a small but significant increase in satisfaction in this area, as measured by the practitioner survey: 32% of respondents, and 39% of respondents from national and local NGOs, rate the participation of local actors in interagency coordination mechanisms as good or excellent, an improvement on 2015 (when the figures were 24% and 32% respectively).

While the aspiration may be to establish working relationships as fully fledged partnerships, based on equality and mutual respect, in many cases the national organisation is a sub-contractor to the international agency (STAIT (P2P), 2015; 2016b; 2016d; Svoboda and Pantuliano, 2015; Wall and Hedlund, 2016a). These relationships do not, necessarily, involve a lack of respect (a recent Ground Truth survey found that most national respondents felt that they were treated with respect by international agencies (Ground Truth, 2018)), but they are generally unequal and can be exploitative. Overall, there does not appear to have been a significant move away from sub-contracting towards more equal partnership over the period covered by this report. In only a minority of cases (such as the DRC case study) did local and national NGO staff suggest that their relationships with international agencies were becoming more equal – although international staff tended to be

---

Of the 1,170 practitioners who completed the SOHS 2018 survey:

32%

of respondents rate participation of local actors as good or excellent. An improvement on

24%

in 2015.

---

more positive. Evaluations gave examples of both good (Econometría, 2016; Grünewald et al., 2016; House, 2016; Moughanie, 2015) and bad (Ferretti, 2017; Ovington et al., 2017) relationships. And the practitioner survey suggested that local and national 'partners' were more likely to be engaged in programme delivery than in programme design – suggesting that, in many cases, sub-contracting is alive and well: the international agency is taking the large design decisions, and the national partner is then implementing them.[10]

Factors affecting complementarity of local/national NGOs and international humanitarian agencies

International processes: the WHS and Grand Bargain
Many key informants felt that the World Humanitarian Summit process and the Grand Bargain had provided a major boost to discussions around 'localisation' – particularly with respect to national and local NGOs. In some organisations, the issue was already an important one, but the processes lent it force. In others, the WHS and Grand Bargain brought the issue onto the agenda for the first time. Either way, these processes 'provided a vehicle to galvanise institution-wide efforts to take, or speed up, action' (Metcalfe-Hough et al., 2018: 4).

Differences in meanings and objectives
At the same time, as these processes developed over 2016 and 2017, it became clear that there was not total alignment over objectives and key terms. In particular, there have been disagreements over what counts as a 'local' or 'national' organisation (specifically regarding national members of international federations or families), and what should be counted in the 25% of funding that should be going to national and local organisations under the commitments made in the Grand Bargain.

Donor policies and processes
As noted above, many (although not all) government donors have laws or regulations that prevent them from transferring funds directly to national or local organisations. (Derzsi-Horvath et al., 2017). In some cases, donors have found ways to work around these constraints in order to address needs that could not otherwise be met (Svoboda and Pantuliano, 2015), or to move towards their commitments under the Grand Bargain (Metcalfe-Hough et al., 2018).

A number of other donor processes also militate against localisation. Among the most important are challenges around scale and duration. Many national and local NGOs require only limited sums, but small grants often require too much time on the part of the donor to be economical. Donors are putting money through pooled funds and other mechanisms, such as the START Fund, thus sub-contracting the administrative element. Regarding duration, to develop capacity national NGOs need long-term, consistent funding in order to retain staff and

maintain structures ready for immediate response (Charter for Change, 2017; Sumaylo, 2017). Multi-year humanitarian financing may go some way to addressing this, but – at least in countries where crises are infrequent – alternative ways of funding humanitarian capacity will need to be found (Conoir et al., 2017; Wall and Hedlund, 2016a).

Capacity: the ability of local and national NGOs to operate effectively at scale

A number of evaluations (Grünewald et al., 2016; Kebe and Maiga, 2015; Poulsen et al., 2015) and respondents in the practitioner survey suggested that a major constraint to greater localisation is the limited capacity of many national and local NGOs. This theme also features in studies assessing the potential of national NGOs to play a greater role in humanitarian response (Ramalingam et al., 2013; Sumaylo, 2017; Tanner and Moro, 2016). This lack of capacity seems to be felt particularly keenly in two areas: the ability of these organisations to fulfil the onerous reporting requirements for funding, and their ability to cover large areas and large numbers of people. The problem of scale has been particularly acute in situations where organisations have been required to increase the size of their operations and the number of partners with which they work very quickly (Grünewald et al., 2016). Perhaps understandably, where international organisations have looked for partners in situations of rapid scale-up, they have tended to work with national organisations that already have the ability to cover larger areas (Al Nabhy et al., 2017). Emergent NGOs can easily be overlooked, and so do not gain the experience (and ability to attract resources) needed for larger-scale work.

Space: the ability of national NGOs and civil society organisations to operate

A small number of interviewees – from both national and international NGOs –suggested that issues around 'political space' were an important factor in the degree to which national and local organisations were able to operate effectively. In some cases, governments strongly supported national organisations – or some national organisations – to take a leading role in response, but more often interviewees spoke of governments blacklisting civil society organisations that took a different political position, or imposing restrictions on civil society organisations (Espada, n.d.; Wall and Hedlund, 2016b).

Access: the ability of international humanitarian agencies to operate effectively in hard to reach areas

As discussed earlier (see section on coverage), there are many areas where international humanitarian agencies are not present, and which they find difficult to access. In situations such as these international agencies have increasingly been turning to local agencies, which may be more acceptable to combatants (particularly to non-state armed groups) and so better able to go where risks to internationals might be deemed too high. This

Limited capacity of national and local NGOs was noted as a major constraint to greater localisation.

This was particularly felt:

in their ability to fulfil onerous reporting requirements for funding;

and their ability to cover large areas and large numbers of people.

The State of the System

Complementarity

form of humanitarian action is often referred to as 'remote programming' or 'remote management'. Peer reviews by the P2P programme suggest that local organisations have played a vital role in accessing affected communities in countries including Somalia and Ukraine, and SAVE research shows that local organisations consistently had a larger presence in the most dangerous areas (Stoddard et al., 2016). As the international humanitarian system struggles to access populations at risk, this form of 'localisation' may become more widespread.

National NGOs and humanitarian principles

As noted above (see section on coherence), some humanitarian actors – including key informants for this study – are concerned that national NGOs do not necessarily follow humanitarian principles, and that this makes them unsuitable partners for humanitarian responses. The reality, however, is more complex. Most international agencies also struggle to conform entirely to the principles, and should be careful not to hold national NGOs to higher standards than they hold themselves. The case studies for this report, as well as a number of other recent pieces of research, suggest that at least some national NGOs do recognise the principles, and attempt to work accordingly. This was the case with some local NGOs in Lebanon and Mali, and in Syria researchers found that 'most respondents from Syrian groups interviewed emphasised that they strived for impartiality ... some clearly distanced themselves from the opposition ... or refused funds from political or military groups' (Svoboda and Pantuliano, 2015: 15). Similarly, SAVE research suggests that 'in Somalia and Syria ... affected people and aid actors at the local level do not report that national NGOs are more susceptible to corruption or bias' (Haver and Carter, 2016: 11). In Ukraine, 'local actors explicitly referred to the principles as guiding their operations, though in practice adherence to and understanding of the principles was variable' (Svoboda et al., 2018: 14). Of course, many civil society groups involved in providing assistance in Mali, Lebanon, Syria and Ukraine would not want to see themselves as neutral or impartial (interviewees in Mali and Lebanon were clear that their views did not hold for all NGOs). The important point here, as in any partnership, seems to be that each organisation is different, and entering into partnership requires a clear understanding of the specific values and objectives of the other party.

> Most international agencies also struggle to conform entirely to the principles, and should be careful not to hold national NGOs to higher standards than they hold themselves.

Competition and attitudes of mistrust

A number of reviews have pointed out that national and international NGOs can be in competition for the same funds: 'On a[n] ... existential level, INGOs are expressing concern that locally-led responses will lead to them being redundant on the ground, challenging their authority in advocacy work and even their very existence' (Wall and Hedlund, 2016: 14; see also Bennett et al., 2016; Charter for Change, 2017). In the case studies for this edition of *The State of the Humanitarian System*, a small number of interviewees alluded

> The fact that discussions around complementarity combine elements of short- and long-term effectiveness in a highly charged atmosphere of values and attitudes may make progress in this area particularly challenging.

to this competition, particularly in countries responding to migration crises. But negative attitudes – towards international actors on the one hand and national actors on the other – seem to have sources deeper than immediate competition. The 'localisation' discussion also touches on historical and current inequalities and broader assumptions and injustices. Advocates of national action have suggested that lack of progress in this area is a result of 'racist and neo-colonial' attitudes (Wall and Hedlund, 2016a: 21), and local actors complain of being treated with 'snobbery and condescension' (Svoboda and Pantuliano, 2015: 16). The fact that discussions around complementarity combine elements of short- and long-term effectiveness in a highly charged atmosphere of values and attitudes may make progress in this area particularly challenging.

Complementarity in different contexts

Key informants were clear that there is generally less collaboration with governments in conflicts than there is in 'natural' disasters or refugee situations. Where the government is party to a conflict, it can be extremely difficult to retain independence and neutrality while working with state institutions. Governments may also have extremely limited access to vulnerable people, and those elements of the government that would normally address issues of health and welfare may be neglected. In disasters and refugee situations, in contrast, specific ministries or departments will often be designated to address the situation, and there should be fewer problems of legitimacy and principle.

The practitioner survey bore these assumptions out, at least to a degree. The participation of governments in the assessment, design and implementation of humanitarian programmes was 50–60% lower in situations of conflict than in refugee contexts or 'natural' disasters.[11] This does not mean that governments were entirely absent in humanitarian programming in conflicts: 17% of respondents said that collaboration with governments in these situations was good or excellent in assessment and implementation (for comparison, around 30% gave the same answer for disaster situations), and 15% of respondents to the recipient survey said that their main source of aid was the government. As noted above, some contact with government in these situations is inevitable, even if only to obtain access, and it may be possible to work with less politicised elements of the state to deliver services (Clarke et al., 2015; Darcy, 2016; Lawday et al., 2016).

It should not be a surprise that governments are political, or that political considerations will be important to governments in situations where humanitarian actors are allocating scarce resources to people in great need – people who are also political constituents. It would also be a mistake to compare 'apolitical' 'natural' disasters with 'political' conflicts – the difference may be more one of degree. In 'natural' disasters, too, there is a significant risk that government structures will be disrupted, making collaboration challenging, at least in the early stages.

When it comes to collaboration with national and local NGOs, the picture is slightly different. The practitioner survey suggested that engagement of these organisations was more-or-less similar across the three contexts:[12] international organisations appear to be as likely to work with national and local NGOs in conflicts as they are in refugee situations or disasters. What may differ (and this was alluded to directly in some interviews, and indirectly by the variability among evaluations of 'natural' disaster responses) is the nature of the society in which the crisis occurs: in some places, there may be a tradition of active and formalised civil society groups, which are 'recognisable' as potential partners by international humanitarian organisations. In others, systems of community support and redistribution may be less easy to identify or work with.

Groupe URD

Kenya: Drought in the north
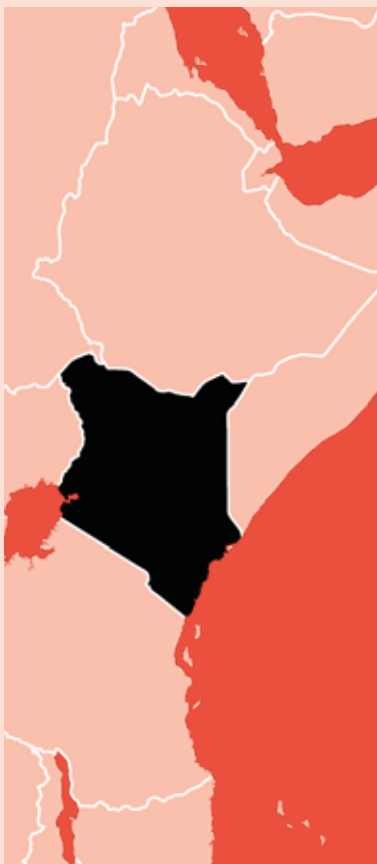
The drought in the Horn of Africa from 2016–17 has been described as one of the world's most devastating humanitarian crises. Food insecurity affected an estimated 2.6 million people in the Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASALs) of northern Kenya, including half a million in the 'emergency' category. Unlike previous drought crises, the response was led, not by international humanitarian actors, but by national and local institutions, notably the National Drought Management Authority (NDMA). In November 2016, the government allocated $19 million towards the drought response, rising to $72 million by March 2017, for sectors including food and safety nets, water, livestock, agriculture, health and nutrition, education, peace and security, the environment and coordination.[13] County governments also played a critical role, supporting activities such as water trucking, the rehabilitation of water points and infrastructure and the provision of relief. At the height of the drought, several counties reorganised their budgets to reallocate funds and prioritise emergency interventions. Meanwhile, international actors have designed increasingly fine-tuned programmes to complement and support government and civil society initiatives.

Cash transfers were widely implemented during the response through national social protection and safety net programmes. The Hunger Safety Net Programme (HSNP) provides regular, unconditional electronic cash transfers

of $50 to 100,000 poor and vulnerable residents in the arid northern counties of Mandera, Marsabit, Turkana and Wajir. The programme also contains an emergency scalability mechanism to extend coverage to additional households to cushion them against the effects of crises and shocks, such as drought and floods. As one respondent in Turkana put it:

The money has less logistical complications with it. You just go and you get the money, you don't have to worry how you're going to transport the food, like they had to do that with the maize before, and then the good thing is you can use it for different needs. You can use it for health, you can use it for education, depending on what exactly you need at that time.

While some implementing partners considered the amounts distributed under the HSNP insufficient and organised their own cash transfers, the programme's harmonised household register – in place since 2013 – was crucial to a quick response. Although partly out of date, agencies felt that the register was still useful in identifying the most affected households if the information was cross-checked with communities.

The response has also faced a range of obstacles, including shortages of skilled staff, a lack of transparency, poor infrastructure, the geographic distances involved and insecurity in Kenya's northern regions. Conflicts over livestock are escalating, and it is becoming much more difficult to access Marsabit, Wajir and Turkana because of increased fighting among pastoralists and attacks by Al-Shabaab. The response was also coloured by the political

"

Unlike the 2011 drought, which led to a public response in the shape of the 'Kenyans for Kenya' initiative, there appears to be little general public awareness of the crisis.

atmosphere in the country, with national and county elections in August 2017 and a postponed presidential election in October 2017. Attention focused on the polls, and there was little concerted debate and discussion on an issue affecting a substantial number of Kenyans in the arid north.

Unlike the 2011 drought, which led to a public response in the shape of the 'Kenyans for Kenya' initiative, there appears to be little general public awareness of the crisis.

As one UN worker put it:

'[T]he focus is on the elections. So that's now a challenge. If it wasn't an election year, maybe the media houses would be talking about the drought, but they are just talking elections only'.

More broadly, the positive role of the government in leading the response and providing support through existing national programmes cannot make up for years of under-investment in Kenya's pastoral areas. Climate change may be behind the increasing frequency of drought episodes, but poverty, under-development and a history of neglect and inequity are to blame for their impacts.• **CHARLOTTE HEWARD, GROUPE URD**

This write-up is based on a case study conducted for the SOHS 2018 theby Groupe URD. The full case study can be found at: **sohs.alnap.org**.

Groupe URD

Endotes for this criterion

1. At the end of 2017, Turkey was hosting almost 3.8 million refugees and asylum-seekers.

2. 'Other' sources were 7%.

3. People who received support from humanitarian organisations (local, national and international) were 1.3 times more likely to be positive about quality, 1.24 times more likely to be positive about quantity and 0.86 times less likely to be positive about the speed of aid.

4. The WHS preparatory stakeholder consultation for North and South-East Asia also conducted a survey on the effectiveness of various humanitarian responders: 35% thought government was most effective, 30% national and local civil society organisations and 15% international organisations. However, the survey had a very small number of respondents from affected communities, and the majority of these respondents were from China, where national disaster response is very advanced.

5. Adams et al., 2015; Ambroso et al., 2016; Betts and Coates, 2017; Blake and Pakula, 2016; Coste et al., 2016; Darcy et al., 2015; Ferretti, 2017; Mowjee et al., 2016; Murray et al., 2015; Poulsen et al., 2015; Save the Children, 2015; Stigter and Morris, 2016; Stone et al., 2015; Turner et al., 2016; UNICEF, 2016, 2017b; Yila, 2017; YMCA Liberia and YCARE International, 2015.

6. Only 25% of respondents said that governments were actively involved in assessment, 19% in response design and 22% in implementation. Direct government involvement in these areas was lower in conflict situations, and higher in refugee-hosting situations.

7. Anthony Banbury, in International Press Institute webcast 'Ebola and the UN's First Emergency Health Mission', 3 February 2015 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tv5Vx63N6To).

8. Under its 'Core responsibility: from delivering aid to ending need': 'The international community should respect, support and strengthen local leadership and capacity in crises and not put in parallel structures that may undermine it'. The summit also saw the launch of the NEAR network, a movement of civil society organisations from the global South.

9. A good example is the JEAF initiative in the Philippines, part of the national NGO-led 'convergence and emergence' project.

10. In the practitioner survey, 49% of respondents said that the involvement of national and local organisations in implementation was good or excellent, while only 28% said involvement in design was good or excellent. Involvement in assessment came between the two, at 37% good or excellent. Again, national and local NGOs took a more positive view of their role – while 46% said involvement in implementation was good or excellent, 38% said involvement in design was good or excellent – a much less stark distinction. The pattern of greater engagement in implementation than in design was repeated in all contexts. The question was not asked in 2015 and 2012, so it is not possible to see any changes over time.

11. Assessment: conflict – 17%; refugee contexts – 29%; disasters – 36%. Design: conflict – 13%; refugee contexts – 23%; disasters – 25%. Implementation: conflict – 17%; refugee contexts – 27%; disasters – 29%. All figures for 'good' and 'excellent' responses.

12. Assessment: conflict – 36%; refugee contexts – 36%; disasters – 41%. Design: conflict – 26%; refugee contexts – 28%; disasters – 31%. Implementation: conflict – 47%; refugee contexts – 51%; disasters – 48%. All figures for 'good' and 'excellent' responses.

13. The Drought Resilience March 2017 newsletter produced by the NDMA notes that the government had approved a further Kshs7.4 billion for drought response measures by March 2017. These were funds were for a number of sectors, including food and safety nets, water, livestock, agriculture, health and nutrition, education, peace and security, environment and coordination.

The State
of the System

Complementarity
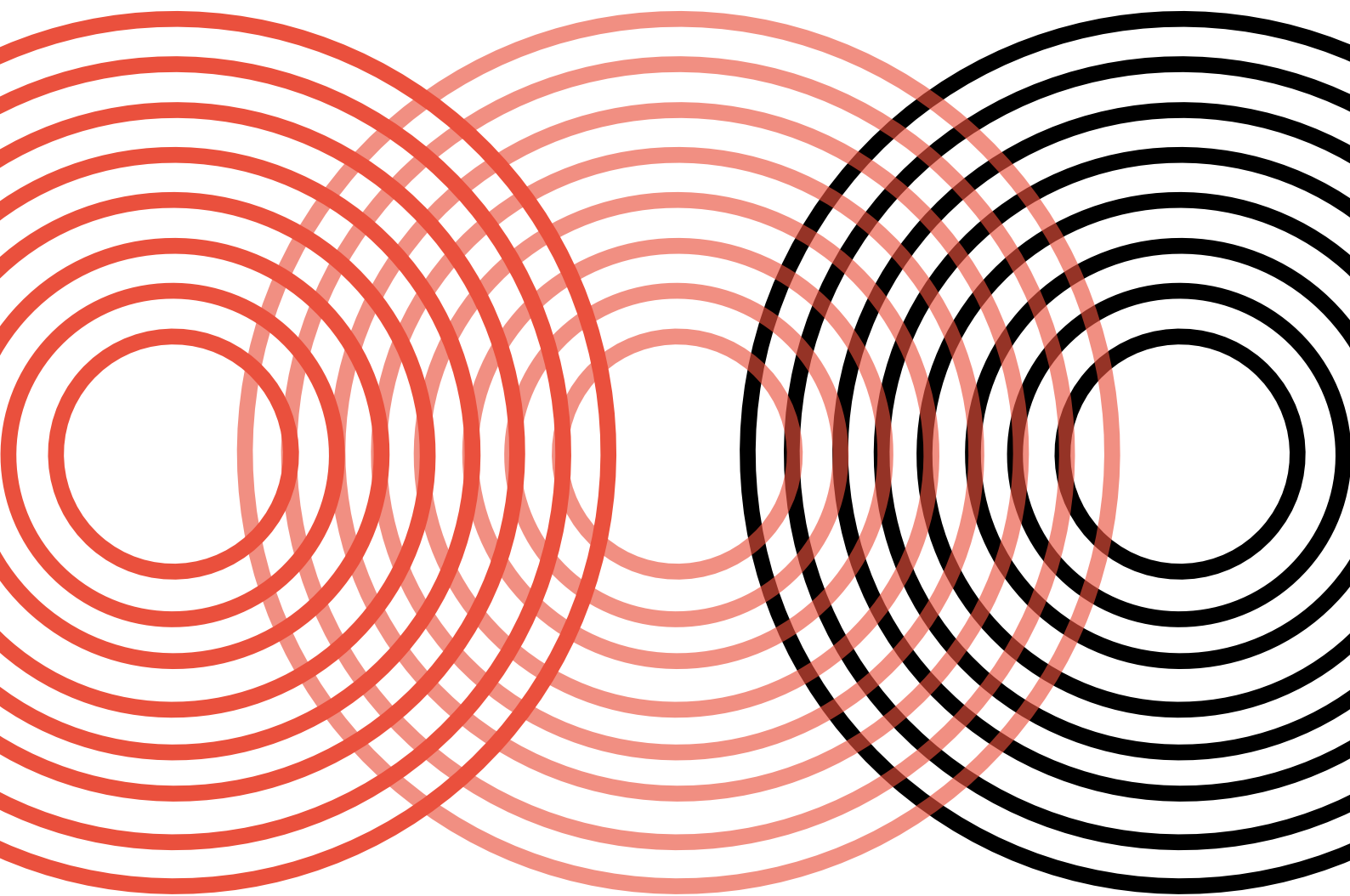
IMPACT

The question of what longer-term impacts – positive and negative –
humanitarian action has on the societies and economies in which it takes
place is often not asked, and remains unanswered.

"

The criterion of impact is one of the most important and least understood of any of the performance criteria considered here. There appears to be little hard data measuring the impact of humanitarian responses on wider populations or across time.

Impact

In brief

The criterion of impact is perhaps one of the most important and least understood of any of the performance criteria considered here. For many years, academics and commentators have suggested that humanitarian action might, unintentionally, do more harm than good – particularly in situations of conflict (see for example de Waal, 1997; Terry, 2002). But there appears to be little hard data measuring the impact of humanitarian responses on wider populations or across time. Very few evaluations attempt to assess impact, although some include anecdotal information. The evaluations note this failure and blame it on the short funding cycles of humanitarian action, which prevent consistent longitudinal research (Clarke et al., 2015; IFRC and PRCS, 2016), and a lack of baseline data against which to measure progress (Adams et al., 2015; Darcy, 2016b; Duncalf et al., 2016). Similar points were made by a number of key informants. The literature review identified a number of research publications that considered the impact of humanitarian aid, but there were fewer of them than might have been expected. As a result, information on impact is scattered and largely anecdotal, and does not allow any overall conclusion to be drawn, either on performance or on trends related to this criterion.

To what degree does humanitarian action produce (intentionally or unintentionally) positive longer-term outcomes for the people and societies receiving support?

Key informants and interviewees discussed a number of related issues when considering the criterion of impact. The first of these was the immediate unintended effects of humanitarian programming. Interviewees from both national and international organisations suggested that humanitarian programming had had significant effects on the local economy beyond those planned for in programme objectives. As one explained, in the absence of government or private sector investment 'the local economy is really based on humanitarian money'. Humanitarian agencies provided employment for local people, and purchased local goods. Where these goods were purchased in significant quantities (for example, for relief deliveries) this could have a positive effect on local agricultural production, and on local markets (Ibrahim et al., 2016; Watson et al., 2016). By increasing demand for local produce, cash transfers had a similar effect (Drummod et al., 2015). Conversely, where large quantities of goods were brought in from elsewhere, as was the case in Haiti and Cameroon, interviewees discussed the negative effects on local production and markets.

'[T]he local economy is really based on humanitarian money'

NGO INTERVIEWEE

While there were a few positive effects of humanitarian assistance on community cohesion, the introduction of aid seemed more likely to have negative effects, particularly by exacerbating tension between those who receive assistance and those who do not.

A second immediate effect, more noted in evaluations than in interviews, was the potential for humanitarian aid to prevent recipients from resorting to coping strategies such as taking children out of school. This effect was noted for cash (as an unintended benefit (Drummod et al., 2015; Hagen-Zanker et al., 2017)) and for school feeding programmes (although in this case school attendance was part of the programme design (IFRC and KRCS, 2015)). An important point made by the evaluations was that, in order for programmes to address negative coping strategies, they need to be reliable: individuals and families need to know that the support they are receiving will arrive regularly, and for the whole period when assistance is required.

A number of evaluations also discussed the social and community effects of humanitarian assistance. While there were a few positive effects of humanitarian assistance on community cohesion (Girard, 2015; Stites and Bushby, 2017), the introduction of aid seemed more likely to have negative effects, particularly by exacerbating tension between those who receive assistance and those who do not (Blake and Pakula, 2016; Hidalgo et al., 2015). This effect was notable in refugee and displacement situations, where host populations felt discriminated against, and in situations where marginalised groups were excluded from assistance, or received assistance they could not use (Stites and Bushby, 2017). As with the immediate economic effects, the nature of the effect – positive or negative – appeared to owe much to the degree to which the potential impact had been considered in programme design.

Turning to the longer-term results of aid, we can distinguish a number of different types of effect. The first is best thought of as sustainability: the degree to which humanitarian operations continue to deliver benefits over time, after the projects themselves have closed. Again, the results are mixed. One long-term study of communities affected by the 2004 Tsunami, published in 2014 (and so just outside the time period of this report) found that the quality of housing, and satisfaction with health and education services, was better ten years after the humanitarian intervention than it had been beforehand (Lee et al., 2014). The study found that the receipt of humanitarian shelter and legal support seemed to predict positive long-term outcomes: those who had received shelter soon after the Tsunami consistently scored better on a number of indicators than those who had not. A World Vision report (World Vision International, 2014) on the Tsunami underscored the importance of shelter support for long-term recovery.

A different sustainability effect is noted in Oxfam research on community protection structures that the agency helped to initiate in DRC. The study found that the community groups were, in many cases, still active some years after the end of the programme: 'In a large number of cases, individuals reported that they "couldn't stop", often because the project had "opened their eyes"' (Oxfam, 2016: 15). Some structures became involved in activities that 'were not planned or supported as part of the original project but which could be described as broader community development activities' (ibid.: 8).

Another type of long-term effect occurs when the humanitarian system has provided a series of short-term interventions over a long period, and these have had an unintended, cumulative effect. There is for example some – limited but interesting – evidence that the cumulative effect of years of humanitarian support to healthcare systems has improved overall health status in Afghanistan (Asia Foundation, 2017).

A third type of long-term effect can result from intentional efforts to build people's resilience to future crises or – more generally – to support the development of people's livelihoods. As discussed in the section on connectedness, there are many questions over whether humanitarian programmes have been successful in insulating people against future shocks. With respect to activities aimed at developing livelihoods, or helping livelihoods to recover, interviewees gave a number of examples aimed at developing livelihoods, including training in book-keeping, provision of seeds and tools and education. However, the effectiveness of this type of work seems to be highly variable. In the Tsunami research mentioned above, a decade after the event family income was generally below pre-Tsunami levels, and where livelihood assistance was received in the year after the Tsunami, it 'significantly lowered the odds of a household attaining or surpassing its pre-tsunami monthly income' (Lee et al., 2014: 7). In other situations, however, some types of livelihood support have produced positive long-term effects (Stites and Bushby, 2017).

A surprising number of interviewees also spoke of the unintended dependency effect of humanitarian aid. Previous work on this topic (Harvey and Lind, 2005) has strongly suggested that individuals do not become dependent on humanitarian assistance, but interviewees from national NGOs, international organisations and local authorities disagreed. In Mali, DRC and Côte d'Ivoire, in particular, aid recipients were perceived to have become used to receiving support, and unwilling to take initiatives to support themselves. Interviewees also felt that government structures had, in some cases, been disempowered by long-term humanitarian interventions: 'we've contributed, in part, to the state of the country. Because we're pretty much creating a parallel system … They don't have any accountability to improve their systems and their mechanisms' (see also Lawday et al., 2016). A related concern was that humanitarian action had had negative effects on social structures and mechanisms for redistribution and social support.

Impact in refugee contexts

The concern that humanitarian aid could lead to tension between social groups has been particularly acute in refugee contexts – particularly in the Middle East – over the past three years. The challenge here has been that humanitarians have provided assistance and protection to refugees, while not extending support to the (often impoverished) communities to which the refugees have fled. This concern has led to an increased focus on community cohesion as an objective in humanitarian work with refugees in the area (see for example Aiken and Dewast, 2015; Church World Service, 2016; Garcia et al., 2015; Turnbull, 2015).

A small number of key informants raised a different concern around the humanitarian response to refugees in Europe: the way in which, by emphasising the needs (rather than the capacities) of refugees and migrants, humanitarian agencies may have contributed to a negative framing of the Migration 'Crisis' in the media. This is a specific, and important, example of a more general question around the impact of the humanitarian system: what are the unintended consequences of communications which often focus on need and vulnerability?

Impact in situations of conflict

Some of the longer-term results of aid in situations of conflict have been considered by the Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium (SLRC). This longitudinal research aimed to understand the contribution of donor-supported activities to the long-term livelihood trajectories of people affected by conflict. While the focus was not exclusively on humanitarian activities, the research suggests that humanitarian actors' attempts to achieve a positive impact in terms of recovery have been extremely limited. Most humanitarian cash transfers are too small, and of too limited duration, to make any significant difference to people's livelihoods in the longer term. Similarly, one-off distributions of seeds and tools seem to have very limited impact, and are often undertaken without an understanding of local conditions of land ownership and labour relations or the availability of other inputs. While in some contexts (DRC, South Sudan and Pakistan) local groups that engage in longer-term activities have had some impact on livelihoods, this seems to be the exception, not the rule, in conflict and post-conflict environments (Maxwell et al., 2015; Stites and Bushby, 2017).

> "
>
> The evidence available on the impact of aid on conflicts in the period 2015–17, however, is far from conclusive. Given the importance of human life and dignity to the humanitarian enterprise, this is a surprising omission.

The SLRC's work is unusual in considering the potential for positive impact. As noted above, a more general concern of researchers and practitioners is the possibility that humanitarian action might make conflict worse, or prolong it. Several key informants discussed this theme, suggesting that humanitarian action could have the effect of extending conflict by substituting for political solutions or preventing a swift military conclusion. This was a theme echoed in the literature: one article used a statistical model to demonstrate that humanitarian aid has had the effect of prolonging conflict (Narang, 2015). In other circumstances, humanitarian aid may provide disproportionate advantage to one side in a conflict, and so potentially tilt the balance of hostilities. Martinez et al. (2016: 167) argue that this has happened in Syria, where 'the provision of emergency food aid in Syria by the international humanitarian community has unintentionally assisted the Assad regime … international food aid has allowed the government to continue welfare support for the civilian population while reducing government expenditure on food distribution, thus freeing up additional resources for the war effort and simultaneously assuaging popular discontent that could easily turn to unrest'. More immediately, the literature provides examples where the provision of aid has made civilians more vulnerable to attack (Stites and Bushby, 2017; Wood and Sullivan, 2015). The evidence available on the impact of aid on conflicts in the period 2015–17, however, is far from conclusive. Given the importance of human life and dignity to the humanitarian enterprise, this is a surprising omission, and one that will hopefully be addressed before the next edition of T*he State of the Humanitarian System* is written in 2021.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bibliography

A full bibliograhy of this report is available via the HELP Library.

AAN Associates. (2016) *Evaluation of humanitarian assistance, UNICEF Yemen country office , 2016*. Islamabad Capital Territory: AAN Associates. (www.alnap.org/help-library/evaluation-of-humanitarian-assistance-unicef-yemen-country-office-2016-0).

Abdula, N. J. (2017) *Emergency response to meet immediate MHCP and livelihood needs of internal displaced persons (IDPs) and host communities affected by the on-going conflict in Iraq , 2016*. New York: Action Against Hunger. (www.alnap.org/help-library/emergency-response-to-meet-immediate-mhcp-and-livelihood-needs-of-internal-displaced).

Aberra, A., Gessesse A. and Alemu, D. (2015) *Evaluation of emergency nutrition response for vulnerable families - Increased Resilience to Food Security Project*. Dun Laoghaire: GOAL. (www.alnap.org/help-library/evaluation-of-emergency-nutrition-response-for-vulnerable-families-increased-resilience).

ACAPS. (2016) *Crisis overview 2016 humanitarian trends and risks for 2017*. Geneva: ACAPS. (www.alnap.org/help-library/crisis-overview-2016-humanitarian-trends-and-risks-for-2017).

ACAPS. (2017) *Humanitarian overview: An analysis of key crises into 2018*. Geneva: ACAPS. (www.alnap.org/help-library/humanitarian-overview-an-analysis-of-key-crises-into-2018-0).

ACAPS. (2018a) 'Crisis analysis of Colombia: Politics and security'. [Website]. 2 June. Geneva: ACAPS. (www.alnap.org/help-library/crisis-analysis-of-colombia-politics-and-security).

ACAPS. (2018b) 'Crisis analysis of Iraq'. [Website]. 2 June. Geneva: ACAPS. (www.alnap.org/help-library/crisis-analysis-of-iraq).

ACAPS. (2018c) 'DRC overview'. [Website]. 2 June. Geneva: ACAPS. (www.alnap.org/help-library/drc-overview).

ACAPS. (2018d) 'Myanmar overview'. [Website]. 2 June. Geneva: ACAPS. (www.alnap.org/help-library/myanmar-overview).

Adams, J., Lloyd, A. and Miller, C. (2015) *The Oxfam Ebola response in Liberia and Sierra Leone: An evaluation report for the disasters*. Oxford: Oxfam. (www.alnap.org/help-library/the-oxfam-ebola-response-in-liberia-and-sierra-leone-an-evaluation-report-for-the).

ADE. (2016) *Evaluation of the use of different transfer modalities in ECHO humanitarian aid actions 2011-2014*. Louvain-La-Neuve: ADE. (www.alnap.org/help-library/evaluation-of-the-use-of-different-transfer-modalities-in-echo-humanitarian-aid-actions).

Advisem Services Inc. (2016) *Final evaluation of the British Red Cross' Haiti earthquake 2010 response and recovery programme: Achievements, challenges and recommendations.* Ottawa: Advisem. (www.alnap.org/help-library/final-evaluation-of-british-red-cross%E2%80%99-haiti-earthquake-2010-response-and-recovery).

Aiken, M. and Dewast, C. (2015) *Integrated urban shelter and information counselling and legal assistance (ICLA) programme.* Oslo: Norwegien Refugee Council. (www.alnap.org/help-library/integrated-urban-shelter-and-information-counselling-and-legal-assistance-icla).

Allex-Billaud, L. (2015) *Local authorities in crisis management: The local generalist approach* (2016) Paris: Cities Unies France. (www.alnap.org/help-library/local-authorities-in-crisis-management-the-local-generalist-approach).

Al Nabhy, ART., di Porcia e Brugnera, G., Bamtarf, H., El Kadri, H., Saleh, M., Yehya, N., Blakeley, S. and van Eekelen, W. (2017) *Disasters emergency committee Yemen crisis appeal: Independent phase one review.* London: Agulhas Applied Knowledge. (www.alnap.org/help-library/disasters-emergency-committee-yemen-crisis-appeal-independent-phase-one-review).

Ambroso, G., Swamy Meier-Ewert, G., Parker, J. and Richardson, L. (2016) *Evaluation of UNHCR's response to the L3 South Sudan refugee crisis in Uganda and Ethiopia.* Geneva: UNHCR. (www.alnap.org/help-library/evaluation-of-unhcr%E2%80%99s-response-to-the-l3-south-sudan-refugee-crisis-in-uganda-and).

Amnesty International. (2017) 'Kenya: Historic ruling blocks closure of Dadaab refugee camp'. [Website]. 3 June. London: Amnesty International. (www.alnap.org/help-library/kenya-historic-ruling-blocks-closure-of-dadaab-refugee-camp).

Anderson, M. (1999) *Do no harm: How aid can support peace - or war.* Colorado: Lynne Reinner Publishers. (www.alnap.org/help-library/do-no-harm-how-aid-can-support-peace-or-war-0).

Asia Foundation. (2017a) *A survey of the Afghan people.* San Francisco: The Asia Foundation. (www.alnap.org/help-library/a-survey-of-the-afghan-people).

Asia Foundation. (2017b) *Independent impacts and recovery monitoring phase 4: April 2017.* Washington, D.C.: The Asia Foundation. (www.alnap.org/help-library/independent-impacts-and-recovery-monitoring-phase-4-april-2017).

Associated Press. (2014) Central African Republic: Factions approve a cease-fire agreement. *The New York Times.* 23 July. (www.alnap.org/help-library/central-african-republic-factions-approve-a-cease-fire-agreement).

Austin, C. (2016) *Evaluation of community feedback in shaping humanitarian response.* London: UKAID. (www.alnap.org/help-library/evaluation-of-community-feedback-in-shaping-humanitarian-response).

Bailey, S. (2014) 'Annex D: Literature review - value for money of cash transfers in emergencies'. *Value for Money of Cash Transfers in Emergencies.* London: UKAID. (www.alnap.org/help-library/annex-d-literature-review-value-for-money-of-cash-transfers-in-emergencies).

Bailey, S. and Harvey, P. (2017) *Time for change: harnessing the potential of humanitarian cash transfers*. London: ODI. (www.alnap.org/help-library/time-for-change-harnessing-the-potential-of-humanitarian-cash-transfers).

Baker, J. (2015) *Independent review of the value added of the central emergency response fund (CERF) in the countries affected by the South Sudan crisis regional synthesis report*. New York: CERF. (www.alnap.org/help-library/independent-review-of-the-value-added-of-the-central-emergency-response-fund-cerf-in-5).

Baker, J., Dross, E., Shah, V. and Polastro, R. (2013) *Study: How to define and measure value for money in the humanitarian sector*. Stockholm: SIDA. (www.alnap.org/help-library/study-how-to-define-and-measure-value-for-money-in-the-humanitarian-sector-0).

Baker J, Dunn S, Vazquez L, Kamah, Z. and Horst, N. (2016) *Liberia PRRO 200550: Food assistance for refugees and vulnerable host populations*. Rome: WFP. (www.alnap.org/help-library/liberia-prro-200550-food-assistance-for-refugees-and-vulnerable-host-populations-an).

Baker, J., Thiele, A. and Saint-Mieux, C. (2017) *Disasters emergency committee - East Africa response review: South Sudan*. London: Results Matter Consulting. (www.alnap.org/help-library/disasters-emergency-committee-east-africa-response-review-south-sudan).

Barbelet, V. and Wake, C. (2017) *Livelihoods in displacement from refugee perspectives to aid agency response*. London: ODI. (www.alnap.org/help-library/livelihoods-in-displacement-from-refugee-perspectives-to-aid-agency-response).

Barbelet, V., Hagen-zanker, J. and Mansour-ille, D. (2018) *The Jordan compact: Lessons learnt and implications for future refugee compacts*. London: ODI. www.alnap.org/help-library/the-jordan-compact-lessons-learnt-and-implications-for-future-refugee-compacts).

Bayntun, C. and Zimble, S. A. (2016) *Evaluation of the OCG response to the Ebola outbreak: Lessons learned from the Freetown Ebola treatment unit, Sierra Leone*. Geneva: MFS. (www.alnap.org/help-library/evaluation-of-the-ocg-response-to-the-ebola-outbreak-april-2016-lessons-learned-from).

Beck, T. (2006) *Evaluating humanitarian action using the OECD-DAC criteria: An ALNAP guide for humanitarian agencies*. London: ALNAP/ODI. (www.alnap.org/help-library/evaluating-humanitarian-action-using-the-oecd-dac-criteria).

Béné, C., Jahan, F., Chowdhury, F. S., Rashid, M. and Dhali, S. A. (2016) *Impact evaluation of the WFP enhancing resilience to natural disasters and the effects of climate change programme with a specific focus on the resilience dimension*. Rome: WFP. (www.alnap.org/help-library/impact-evaluation-of-the-wfp-enhancing-resilience-to-natural-disasters-and-the-effects).

Bennett, C., Foley, M. and Pantuliano, S. (2016) *Time to let go: A three-point proposal to change the humanitarian system*. London: ODI. (www.alnap.org/help-library/time-to-let-go-a-three-point-proposal-to-change-the-humanitarian-system).

Berg, M. and Seferis, L. (2015) *Protection outcomes in cash-based interventions: a literature review*. Geneva: UNHCR. (www.alnap.org/help-library/protection-outcomes-in-cash-based-interventions-a-literature-review).

Betts, J. and Coates, S. (2017) *Operation evaluations synthesis 2016–2017: Optimizing performance*. Rome: WFP. (www.alnap.org/help-library/operation-evaluations-synthesis-2016%E2%80%932017-optimizing-performance).

Betts, J., Blight, N. and Storr, R. (2015) *Annual synthesis of operation evaluations (2014 - 2015): changing course: From implementing to enabling*. Rome: WFP. (www.alnap.org/help-library/annual-synthesis-of-operation-evaluations-2014-2015-changing-course-from-implementing).

Betts, J., Blight, N. and Coates, S. (2016) *Operation evaluations synthesis 2015-2016: partnerships for the future*. Rome: WFP. (www.alnap.org/help-library/operations-evaluations-synthesis-2015-2016-partnerships-for-the-future).

Betts, J., O'Grady, N., Olsen, K. and Watkins, F. (2016) *'Striking the balance': Evaluation of the planning, organisation and management of Norwegian assistance related to the Syria regional crisis*. Colorado: NORAD. (www.alnap.org/help-library/%E2%80%98striking-the-balance%E2%80%99-evaluation-of-the-planning-organisation-and-management-of).

Blake, E. and Pakula, B. (2016) *Evaluation report : DEC project phase 2 typhoon Haiyan response prepared for Plan UK*. Surrey: Plan International. (www.alnap.org/help-library/evaluation-report-dec-project-phase-2-typhoon-haiyan-response).

Blanchet, K., Ramesh, A., Frison, S., Warren, M, Hossain, M, Smith, J, Knight, A., Post, N., Lewis, C., Woodward, A., Dahab, M., Ruby, A., Sistenich, V., Pantuliano, S. and Roberts, B. (2017) 'Evidence on public health interventions in humanitarian crises'. *The Lancet*, 390(10109): 2287–2296. (www.alnap.org/help-library/evidence-on-public-health-interventions-in-humanitarian-crises).

Boano, C. and Martén, R. (2017) *Think urban and learn from the city : Exploring urban dimensions of humanitarianism*. London: Urban Crisis Learning Partnership. (www.alnap.org/help-library/think-urban-and-learn-from-the-city-exploring-urban-dimensions-of-humanitarianism).

Bonino, F., Jean, I. and Knox Clarke, P. (2014) *Humanitarian feedback mechanisms: research, evidence and guidance*. ALNAP Study. London: ALNAP/ODI.

Bourns, L. and Alexander, J. (2016) *Leaving no one behind: Humanitarian effectiveness in the age of sustainable development goals*. New York: OCHA. (www.alnap.org/help-library/leaving-no-one-behind-humanitarian-effectiveness-in-the-age-of-sustainable-development).

Bousquet, C. (2015) *Evaluation finale independante: Pool d'urgences nutrition Congo (PUNC II)*. New York: Action Against Hunger. (www.alnap.org/help-library/%C3%A9valuation-ind%C3%A9pendante-finale-du-programme-%C2%AB-pool-d%C2%B4urgences-nutrition-congo-punc-ii-%C2%BB).

Bradol, H. (2017) 'Ebola, le jour d'apres'. *La revue du practicien*, 67: 841–844. (www.alnap.org/help-library/la-revue-du-practicien-octobre-2017-tome-67-num%C3%A9ro-8-ebola-le-jour-dapres).

Briggs, C. (2017) 'Protection of civilians (POC) sites and their impact on the broader protection environment in South Sudan', in Fenton, W., Foley, M. and Chan, N. (eds), 'The crisis in South Sudan' [special feature]. *Humanitarian Exchange* 68. London: HPN/ODI. 17-20. (www.alnap.org/help-library/protection-of-civilians-poc-sites-and-their-impact-on-the-broader-protection).

Burniske, J. and Modirzadeh, N. (2017) *Pilot empirical survey study on the impact of counterterrorism measures on humanitarian action*. Massachusetts: Harvard Law School Program on International Law and Armed Conflict (ILAC). (www.alnap.org/help-library/pilot-empirical-survey-study-on-the-impact-of-counterterrorism-measures-on-humanitarian).

Cabot Venton, C. (2018) *The economics of resilience to drought in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia*. Washington, DC: USAID. (www.alnap.org/help-library/the-economics-of-resilience-to-drought-in-ethiopia-kenya-and-somalia).

Cabot Venton, C., Fitzgibbon, C., Shitarek, T., Coulter, L. and Dooley, O. (2012) *The economics of early response and disaster resilience: Lessons from Kenya and Ethiopia*. London: UKAID. (www.alnap.org/help-library/the-economics-of-early-response-and-disaster-resiliencelessons-from-kenya-and-ethiopia).

Cabot Venton, C., Bailey, S. and Pongracz, S. (2015) *Value for money of cash transfers in emergencies*. London: DIFD. (www.alnap.org/help-library/value-for-money-of-cash-transfers-in-emergencies).

CaLP and Accenture Development Partnerships. (2018) *The state of the world's cash report 2018*. Oxord: CaLP. (www.alnap.org/help-library/the-state-of-the-world%E2%80%99s-cash-report-cash-transfer-programming-in-humanitarian-aid).

Campbell, L. (2017) *What 's missing? Adding context to the urban response toolbox*. London: ALNAP/ODI. (www.alnap.org/help-library/whats-missing-adding-context-to-the-urban-response-toolbox).

Campbell, L. and Knox Clarke, P. (2017) *Making operational decisions in humanitarian response: A literature review*. London: ALNAP/ODI. (www.alnap.org/help-library/making-operational-decisions-in-humanitarian-response-a-literature-review).

Campbell, L., Adan, C. and Morgado, M. (2017) *Learning from the Ebola response in cities: Responding in the context of quarantine*. London: ALNAP/ODI. (www.alnap.org/help-library/learning-from-the-ebola-response-in-cities-responding-in-the-context-of-urban).

CARE international. (2017) *Suffering in silence The 10 most under-reported humanitarian crises of 2017*. Geneva: CARE International. (www.alnap.org/help-library/suffering-in-silence-the-10-most-under-reported-humanitarian-crises-of-2017).

Carraud, S. (2018) Magistrates dismiss sex abuse case against French soldiers in Africa. *Reuters*. 15 January. (www.alnap.org/help-library/magistrates-dismiss-sex-abuse-case-against-french-soldiers-in-africa).

Catley, A. and Cullis, A. (2012) 'Money to burn? Comparing the costs and benefits of drought responses in pastoralist areas of Ethiopia'. *Journal of Humanitarian Assistance*. Massachusetts: JHA. (www.alnap.org/help-library/money-to-burn-comparing-the-costs-and-benefits-of-drought-responses-in-pastoralist).

CERF. (n.d.) 'United Nations CERF: Central emergency response fund. [Website]. New York: United Nations. (www.alnap.org/help-library/united-nations-cerf-central-emergency-response-fund).

Chaffin, J. (2016) *Norwegian refugee council Jordan youth programme evaluation*. Oslo: NRC. (www.alnap.org/help-library/norwegian-refugee-council-jordan-youth-programme-evaluation).

Charter for Change. (2017) *Charter for Change: From commitments to action. Progress Report 2016-2017*. London: Charter for Change. (www.alnap.org/help-library/charter-for-change-from-commitments-to-action).

Checchi, F., Testa, A., Warsame, A., Quach, L. and Burns, R. (2018) E*stimates of crisis-attributable mortality in South Sudan , December 2013-April 2018: A statistical analysis*. London: London School of Hygeine and Tropical Medicine. (www.alnap.org/help-library/estimates-of-crisis-attributable-mortality-in-south-sudan-december-2013-april-2018-a).

CHS Alliance, Groupe URD and The Sphere Project. (2014) *Core humanitarian standard on quality and accountability*. Geneva: CHS Alliance. (www.alnap.org/help-library/core-humanitarianstandard-on-qualityand-accountability).

Church World Service. (2016) *Urban refugee self-reliance pilot program in Rwanda, South Africa and Tanzania*. New York: CWS. (www.alnap.org/help-library/urban-refugee-self-reliance-pilot-program-in-rwanda-south-africa-and-tanzania).

Clarke, N., Loveless, J., Ojok, B., Routley, S. and Vaux, T. (2015) *Inter-agency humanitarian evaluation (IAHE) of response to the crisis in South Sudan*. New York: OCHA. (www.alnap.org/help-library/inter-agency-humanitarian-evaluation-iahe-of-response-to-the-crisis-in-south-sudan).

Cohen, M. J. and Gingerich, T. (2015) *Turning the humanitarian system on its head: Saving lives and livelihoods by strengthening local capacity and shifting leadership to local actors*. Massachusetts: Oxfam America. (www.alnap.org/help-library/turning-the-humanitarian-system-on-its-head-saving-lives-and-livelihoods-by).

Conoir, Y., Murray, J., Negreyeva, I. and Stolyarenko, K. (2017) *Evaluation of UNHCR's Ukraine country programme*. Geneva: UNHCR. (www.alnap.org/help-library/evaluation-of-unhcr%E2%80%99s-ukraine-country-programme).

Coombs, D., Soekarjo, D., Moossavi, N., Bokhari, S., Hakimi, A., Horst, N. (2015) *Afghanistan PRRO 200447 assistance to address food insecurity and under-nutrition: An operation evaluation*. Rome: WFP. (www.alnap.org/help-library/afghanistan-prro-200447-assistance-to-address-food-insecurity-and-under-nutrition-an).

Cosgrave, J., Crawford, N. and Mosel, I. (2016) *10 things to know about refugees and displacement*. London: HPG/ODI. (www.alnap.org/help-library/10-things-to-know-about-refugees-and-displacement).

Coste, J., Michiels, D., Bichard, A., Mahamat-Ahmat, A. (2016) *Tchad IPSR 200713: Renforcer la résilience protéger les moyens d'existence et réduire la malnutrition parmi les réfugiés, les rapatriés et les autres personnes vulnérables.* Rome: WFP. ([www.alnap. org/help-library/chad-prro-200713-building-resilience-protecting-livelihoods-and-reducing-malnutrition](http://www.alnap.org/help-library/chad-prro-200713-building-resilience-protecting-livelihoods-and-reducing-malnutrition)).

Crook, P., Haji Ibrahim, M. and Ferrari, G. (2018) *Real-time evaluation of UNICEF SCO humanitarian response to the pre-famine Crisis.* Ede: MDF training and consultancy. (www.alnap.org/help-library/real-time-evaluation-of-unicef-sco-humanitarian-response-to-the-pre-famine-crisis).

Dalrymple, S. and Smith, K. (2015) *Coordinating decision-making: meeting needs.* Bristol: Development Initiatives. (www.alnap.org/help-library/coordinating-decision-making-meeting-needs).

Darcy, J. (2016a) *Synthesis of key findings from inter-agency humanitarian evaluations (IAHEs) of the international responses to crises in the Philippines (Typhoon Haiyan), South Sudan and the Central African Republic.* New York: OCHA. ([www.alnap. org/help-library/synthesis-of-key-findings-from-inter-agency-humanitarian-evaluations-iahes-of-the](http://www.alnap.org/help-library/synthesis-of-key-findings-from-inter-agency-humanitarian-evaluations-iahes-of-the)).

Darcy, J. (2016b) *Syria coordinated accountability and lessons learning (CALL) initiative: evaluation synthesis and gap analysis.* New York: OCHA. ([www.alnap. org/help-library/syria-coordinated-accountability-and-lesson-learning-call-evaluation-synthesis-and-gap](http://www.alnap.org/help-library/syria-coordinated-accountability-and-lesson-learning-call-evaluation-synthesis-and-gap)).

Darcy, J., Durston, S., Ballarin, F., Duncalf, J., Basbug, B. and Buker, H. (2015) *An independent evaluation of UNICEF's response to the Syrian refugee crisis in Turkey, 2012 – 2015.* New York: UNICEF. (www.alnap.org/help-library/an-independent-evaluation-of-unicef%E2%80%99s-response-to-the-syrian-refugee-crisis-in-turkey).

David, K., Ridsdel, B., Yarlett, K., Puhalovic, J. and Gerlach, C. (2017) *No time to retreat: First annual synthesis report on progress since the World Humanitarian Summit.* New York: OCHA. (www.alnap.org/help-library/no-time-to-retreat-first-annual-synthesis-report-on-progress-since-the-world-0).

De Castellarnau, M. and Stoianova, V. (2018) *Bridging the emergency gap.* Paris: MSF. (www.alnap.org/help-library/bridging-the-emergency-gap-reflections-and-a-call-for-action-after-a-two-year-0).

De Geoffroy, V., Léon, V. and Beuret, A. (2015) *Evidence-based decision-making for funding allocations.* Plaisians: Groupe URD. (www.alnap.org/help-library/evidence-based-decision-making-for-funding-allocations).

De Waal, A. (1997) *Famine crimes: Politics and the disaster relief industry in Africa.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press. (www.alnap.org/help-library/famine-crimes-politics-and-the-disaster-relief-industry-in-africa).

Derzsi-horvath, A., Steets, J. and Ruppert, L. (2017) *Independent grand bargain report.* Berlin: GPPi/Inspire Consortium. (www.alnap.org/help-library/independent-grand-bargain-report).

Development Initiatives. (2018) *Global humanitarian assistance report.* Bristol: Development Initiatives. (www.alnap.org/help-library/global-humanitarian-assistance-report-2018).

Dewast, C. and Glette, V. (2016) *Evaluation of the emergency shelter and non-food items cluster in the Ukraine.* Geenva: UNHCR. (www.alnap.org/help-library/evaluation-of-the-emergency-shelter-and-non-food-items-cluster-in-the-ukraine).

Díaz, B. and Betts, J. (2017) *Regional synthesis 2013-2017: Latin America and the Caribbean region.* Rome: WFP. (www.alnap.org/help-library/regional-synthesis-2013-2017-latin-america-and-the-caribbean-region).

Donino, A. and Brown, D. (2014) *Rhetoric or reality? Putting affected people at the centre of humanitarian action.* London: ALNAP/ODI. (www.alnap.org/help-library/rhetoric-or-reality-putting-affected-people-at-the-centre-of-humanitarian-action).

Doocy, S. and Tappis, H. (2017) *A Campbell systematic review international development coordinating group cash-based approaches in humanitarian emergencies: a systematic review.* Oslo: Campbell Collaboration. (www.alnap.org/help-library/a-campbell-systematic-review-international-development-coordinating-group-cash-based).

Doocy, S., Tappis, H. and Lyles, E. (2015) *Emergency transfers in Northern Syria: An economic evaluation of GOAL food assistance programs in Idlib Governorate.* Dublin: GOAL. (www.alnap.org/help-library/emergency-transfers-in-northern-syria-an-economic-evaluation-of-goal-food-assistance).

Downen, J., Sutter, P., Walters, T., Egeh, A., Kahsay, A., Alhaddad, R. and Vallet, M. (2016) *Ethiopia PRRO 200700 (2015-2018). South Sudanese, Sudanese and Somali Refugees: An evaluation of WFP's current operation and transition period.* Rome: WFP. (www.alnap.org/help-library/ethiopia-prro-200700-2015-2018-food-assistance-for-eritrean-south-sudanese-sudanese-and).

Drummod, J., Khoury, R., Bailey, S., Crawford, N., Fan, L., Milhem, R. and Zyck, S. (2015) *An evaluation of WFP's regional response to the Syrian crisis, 2011-2014.* London: HPG. (www.alnap.org/help-library/an-evaluation-of-wfp%E2%80%99s-regional-response-to-the-syrian-crisis-2011-2014).

DuBois, M., Harvey, P. and Taylor, G. (2018) *Rapid real-time review: DFID Somalia drought response.* London: Humanitarian Outcomes. (www.alnap.org/help-library/rapid-real-time-review-dfid-somalia-drought-response).

DuBois, M. and Wake, C. (2015) *The Ebola response in West Africa: Exposing the politics and culture of international aid. HPG Working Paper.* London: HPG. (www.alnap.org/help-library/the-ebola-response-in-west-africa-exposing-the-politics-and-culture-of-international).

Duncalf, J. (2015) *External evaluation: ACF Zimbabwe mission closure.* New York: Action Against Hunger. (www.alnap.org/help-library/external-evaluation-acf-zimbabwe-mission-closure).

Duncalf, J., Khogali, H., Molyneux, M., De Meulder, F., Silvéréano-Vélis, J. P., Wahhab, H. and Makki, I. (2016) *Iraq: An evaluation of WFP's portfolio (2010-2015)*. Rome: WFP. (www.alnap.org/help-library/iraq-an-evaluation-of-wfps-portfolio-2010-2015).

Econometría. (2016) *External assessment of the UNHCR – UNDP joint program 'transitional solutions initiative - TSI': Final report.* New Jersey: Econometría. (www.alnap.org/help-library/external-assessment-of-the-unhcr-%E2%80%93-undp-joint-program-%E2%80%9Ctransitional-solutions).

Espada, F. (n.d.) *On authority and trust: A reflection on the effectiveness of disaster management in Bangladesh, India and Nepal.* London: Save the Children (UK). (www.alnap.org/help-library/on-authority-and-trust-a-reflection-on-the-effectiveness-of-disaster-management-in).

European Commission. (2016) *EU - Lebanon partnership: The compact.* Brussels: EU. (www.alnap.org/help-library/eu-lebanon-partnership-the-compact).

European Commission (DG ECHO). (2017) *The urban amplifier.* Brussels: ECHO. (www.alnap.org/help-library/the-urban-amplifier-adapting-to-urban-specificities-report-on-humanitarian-action-in).

European Parliament. (2016) 'EU-Turkey statement and action plan'. [Website]. 3 June. Brussels: European Parliament. (www.alnap.org/help-library/eu-turkey-statement-and-action-plan).

Eurostat. (2018) 'European Union asylum statistics'. [Website]. 18 April. Luxembourg: Eurostat. (www.alnap.org/help-library/european-union-asylum-statistics).

FAO, OCHA and NRC. (2017) *Living up to the promise of multi-year humanitarian financing.* Rome/New York/Oslo: FAO/OCHA/NRC. (www.alnap.org/help-library/living-up-to-the-promise-of-multi-year-humanitarian-financing).

Featherstone, A. (2014) *Missed again: making space for partnership in the typhoon Haiyan response.* London: Actionaid, CAFOD, Christian Aid, Oxfam, Tearfund. (www.alnap.org/help-library/missed-again-making-space-for-partnership-in-the-typhoon-haiyan-response-0).

Featherstone, A. and Bogati, S. (2016) *Opportunity knocks: Realising the potential of partnerships in the Nepal earthquake response.* London: Actionaid, CAFOD, Christian Aid, Oxfam, Tearfund. (www.alnap.org/help-library/opportunity-knocks-realising-the-potential-of-partnerships-in-the-nepal-earthquake).

Ferretti, S. (2017) *Final independent evaluation: Nutrition emergency pool in DRC (PUNC).* New York: Action Against Hunger. (www.alnap.org/help-library/final-independent-evaluation-nutrition-emergency-pool-in-drc-punc).

FSNAU/Fewsnet. (2017) *Somalia food security alert.* Nairobi: FSNAU. (www.alnap.org/help-library/somalia-food-security-alert-may-9-2017).

Garcia Ravel, J. and Bernard. V. (2017). 'Changing the narrative on international humanitarian law'. *Humanitarian Law & Policy*. Geneva: ICRC. (www.alnap.org/help-library/changing-the-narrative-on-international-humanitarian-law).

Garcia, O. and Bassil, S. (2016) *Joint evaluation: Collective site management and coordination (CSMC) in informal tented settlements (ITSs) – Lebanon*. Dublin: Concern Worldwide. (www.alnap.org/help-library/joint-evaluation-collective-site-management-and-coordination-csmc-in-informal-tented).

Garcia, O., Bartrolí, X. and Gammoh, I. (2015) *Evaluation of the Norwegian Refugee Council's Lebanon host community shelter programmes: 'Increasing the availability of host community housing stock and improving living conditions for the provision of refugee shelter'*. Oslo: NRC. (www.alnap.org/help-library/evaluation-of-the-norwegian-refugee-council%E2%80%99s-lebanon-host-community-shelter-programmes).

Gardner, A., Prout, J., Danylin, V. and Horst, N. (2016) *EMOP 200765 Emergency assistance to civilians affected by the conflict in Eastern Ukraine*. Rome: WFP. (www.alnap.org/help-library/emop-200765-emergency-assistance-to-civilians-affected-by-the-conflict-in-eastern).

Girard, A. (2015) *Réponse d'urgence en eau, assainissement et hygiène à la crise humanitaire à Bossangoa, RCA*. New York: Action Against Hunger. (www.alnap.org/help-library/r%C3%A9ponse-d%E2%80%99urgence-en-eau-assainissement-et-hygi%C3%A8ne-%C3%A0-la-crise-humanitaire-%C3%A0-bossangoa).

Global Affairs Canada. (2017) *Evaluation of Canada's development and stabilization and reconstruction taskforce (START) programming in South Sudan*. Toronto: Global Affairs Canada. (www.alnap.org/help-library/evaluation-of-canada%E2%80%99s-development-and-stabilization-and-reconstruction-taskforce-start).

Ground Truth Solutions. (2017) *Perspectives from the field*. Vienna: Ground Truth Solutions. (www.alnap.org/help-library/perspectives-from-the-field).

Ground Truth Solutions. (2018) *The grand bargain: perspectives from the field*. Vienna: Ground Truth Solutions. (www.alnap.org/help-library/the-grand-bargain-perspectives-from-the-field).

Grünewald, F. (2018) *Somalia report drought response in 2005-6, 2011 and 2016-17 (draft, unpublished)*. Inspire Consortium.

Grünewald, F. and Thakur, LN. (2015) *Key Messages: Handicap International's component of the health preparedness programme EPP in Nepal*. Plaisians: Groupe URD. (www.alnap.org/help-library/key-messages-handicap-international%E2%80%99s-component-of-the-health-preparedness-programme).

Grünewald, F., Brangeon, S. and Karroum, N. (2017) *Collective resolution to enhance accountability and transparency in emergencies: Lebanon Report*. Berlin: Transparency International. (www.alnap.org/help-library/collective-commitment-to-enhance-accountability-and-transparency-in-emergencies-lebanon).

Grünewald, F. and Burlat, A. (2016) *Nepal earthquake: A rapid review of the response and a few lessons learnt.* Plaisians: Groupe URD. (www.alnap.org/help-library/ nepal-earthquake-a-rapid-review-of-the-response-and-a-few-lessons-learnt).

Grünewald, F. and Schenkenberg, E. (2016) *Real-time evaluation: Response to hurricane Matthew in Haiti.* Plaisians: Groupe URD. (www.alnap.org/help-library/ real-time-evaluation-response-to-hurricane-matthew-in-haiti).

Grünewald, F., Léon, V., Baché, J. and de Geoffroy, V. (2016) *Start Network independent evaluation: European refugee response.* London: Start Network. (www. alnap.org/help-library/start-network-independent-evaluation-european-refugee-response).

GUAC. (2016) *Global Alliance for Urban Crises: Adapting global crisis response to an urban world.* New York: Global Alliance for Urban Crises. (www.alnap.org/help-library/global-alliance-for-urban-crises-overview).

Guay, J. (2015) *Social Cohesion between Syrian Refugees and Urban Host Communities in Lebanon and Jordan.* California: World Vision International. (www.alnap. org/help-library/social-cohesion-between-syrian-refugees-and-urban-host-communities-in-lebanon-and-0).

Guha-sapir, D., Hoyois, P. and Below, R. (2016) *Annual disaster statistical review 2015: The numbers and trends.* Brussels: CRED. (www.alnap.org/help-library/ annual-disaster-statistical-review-2015-the-numbers-and-trends).

Hagen-zanker, J., Ulrichs, M., Holmes, R. and Nimeh, Z. (2017) *Cash transfers for refugees in Jordan: The economic and social effects of a programme in Jordan.* London: ODI. (www.alnap.org/help-library/cash-transfers-for-refugees-the-economic-and-social-effects-of-a-programme-in-jordan).

Hanley, T., Binas, R., Murray, J. and Tribunalo, B. (2014) *IASC Inter-agency humanitarian evaluation of the typhoon Haiyan response.* Geneva: IACS. (www.alnap. org/help-library/iasc-inter-agency-humanitarian-evaluation-of-the-typhoon-haiyan-response).

Hargrave, K., Pantuliano, S. and Idris, A. (2016) *Closing borders - The ripple effects of Australian and European refugee policy: case studies from Indonesia, Kenya and Jordan.* HPG Working Paper. London: HPG. (www.alnap.org/help-library/closing-borders-the-ripple-effects-of-australian-and-european-refugee-policy-case).

Harmer, A. and Grünewald, F. (2016) C*ollective resolution to enhance accountability and transparency in emergencies: Synthesis report.* Berlin: Transparency International. (www.alnap.org/help-library/collective-commitment-to-enhance-accountability-and-transparency-in-emergencies-1).

Hartberg, M., Bowen, D. and Gorevan, D. (2015) *Failing Syria: Assessing the impact of UN Security Council resolutions in protecting and assisting civilians in Syria.* Paris: ACTED. (www.alnap.org/help-library/failing-syria-assessing-the-impact-of-un-security-council-resolutions-in-protecting-and).

Harvey, P. and Lind, J. (2005) *Dependency and humanitarian relief.* London: HPG / ODI. (www.alnap.org/help-library/dependency-and-humanitarian-relief-a-critical-analysis).

Hattem, J. (2017) Uganda at breaking point as Bidi Bidi becomes world's largest refugee camp. *The Guardian.* 3 April. (www.alnap.org/help-library/uganda-at-breaking-point-as-bidi-bidi-becomes-worlds-largest-refugee-camp).

Haver, K. and Carter, W. (2016) *What it takes: principled pragmatism to enable access and quality humanitarian aid in insecure environments.* Berlin: GPPi. (www.alnap.org/help-library/final-report-what-it-takes-principled-pragmatism-to-enable-access-and-quality).

Healy, S. and Tiller, S. (2014) *Where is everyone? Responding to emergencies in the most difficult places.* Paris: MSF. (www.alnap.org/help-library/where-is-everyone-responding-to-emergencies-in-the-most-difficult-places).

Hidalgo, S., Collin, C., Fisher, M., LaGuardia, D., Spaak, M. and Stoianova, V. (2015) *Evaluation of the Common Humanitarian Fund global synthesis report.* New York: OCHA. (www.alnap.org/help-library/evaluation-of-the-common-humanitarian-fund-0).

Hidalgo, S., LaGuardia, D., Trudi, G., Sole, R., Moussa, Z., van Dijk, J., Merckx, P. and Zimmer, L. (2015) *Beyond humanitarian assistance? UNHCR and the response to Syrian refugees in Jordan and Lebanon, January 2013 – April 2014.* Brussels: Transtec. (www.alnap.org/help-library/beyond-humanitarian-assistance-unhcr-and-the-response-to-syrian-refugees-in-jordan-and).

High Level Panel on Humanitarian Cash Transfers. (2015) *Doing cash differently: How cash transfers can transform humanitarian aid.* London: ODI. (www.alnap.org/help-library/doing-cash-differently-how-cash-transfers-can-transform-humanitarian-aid).

Hirschfeld Davis, J. and Jordan, M. (2017) Trump plans 45,000 limit on refugees admitted to U.S. *The New York Times.* 26 September. (www.alnap.org/help-library/trump-plans-45000-limit-on-refugees-admitted-to-us).

Hoddinott, JF., Gilligan, D. O., Hidrobo, M., Margolies, A., Roy, S., Sandström, S., Schwab, B. and Upton, J. (2013) *Enhancing WFP's capacity and experience to design, implement, monitor, and evaluate vouchers and cash transfer programmes: Study summary.* Rome: WFP. (www.alnap.org/help-library/enhancing-wfp%E2%80%99s-capacity-and-experience-to-design-implement-monitor-and-evaluate).

Holloway, K. and Fan, L. (2018) *Dignity and the displaced Rohingya in Bangladesh: 'Ijjot is a huge thing in this world'.* London: HPG. (www.alnap.org/help-library/dignity-and-the-displaced-rohingya-in-bangladesh).

House, S. (2016) *Humanitarian quality assurance: Philippines. Evaluation of Oxfam's humanitarian response to Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda).* Oxford: Oxfam. (www.alnap.org/help-library/humanitarian-quality-assurance-philippines).

House of Commons International Development Committee. (2016) *Ebola: Responses to a public health emergency*. London: House of Commons. (www.alnap. org/help-library/ebola-responses-to-a-public-health-emergency).

Howe, K., Stites, E. and Chudacoff, D. (2015) *Breaking the hourglass: Partnerships in remote management settings — The cases of Syria and Iraqi Kurdistan*. Massachusetts: Tufts University. (www.alnap.org/help-library/breaking-the-hourglass-partnerships-in-remote-management-settings-the-cases-of-syria).

Huang, C. and Ash, N. (2017) *Addressing the crisis of protracted displacement*. New York: IRC. (www.alnap.org/help-library/refugee-compacts-addressing-the-crisis-of-protracted-displacement).

Human Rights Watch. (2015) 'Indiscriminate attacks by opposition groups in Syria'. [Website]. 1 June. New York: Human Rights Watch. (www.alnap.org/help-library/he-didnt-have-to-die).

Human Rights Watch. (2016) 'Syria: New deadly chemical attacks'. [Website]. 1 June. New York: Human Rights Watch. (www.alnap.org/help-library/syria-new-deadly-chemical-attacks).

IASC. (2016) *Humanitarian needs overview guidance*. Geneva: IASC. (www.alnap. org/help-library/humanitarian-needs-overview-guidance-draft).

IASC. (2018) 'L3 IASC System-wide response activations and deactivations'. [Website]. 1 June. Geneva: IASC. (www.alnap.org/help-library/l3-iasc-system-wide-response-activations-and-deactivations).

Ibrahim, Y., Knobel, T., Muhia, J. and Yonamu, F. (2016) *Evaluation of the food insecurity cash transfer programme (Malawi)*. Geneva: IFRC. (www.alnap.org/help-library/evaluation-of-the-food-insecurity-cash-transfer-programme-malawi).

ICF. (2016) *Evaluation of ECHO's intervention in the Sahel (2010 - 2014)*. Virginia: IFC. (www.alnap.org/help-library/evaluation-of-echo%E2%80%99s-intervention-in-the-sahel-2010-2014).

ICRC. (2015) *Urban services during protracted armed conflict: a call for a better approach to assisting affected people*. Geneva: ICRC. (www.alnap.org/help-library/urban-services-during-protracted-armed-conflict-a-call-for-a-better-approach-to).

ICRC. (2016a) *ICRC's statement to the World Humanitarian Summit*. Geneva: ICRC. (www.alnap.org/help-library/icrc%E2%80%99s-statement-to-the-world-humanitarian-summit).

ICRC. (2016b) *ICRC's comment on one humanity: Shared responsibility*. Geneva: ICRC. (www.alnap.org/help-library/icrcs-comment-on-one-humanity-shared-responsibility).

ICRC. (2016c) *People on war*. Geneva: ICRC. (www.alnap.org/help-library/people-on-war).

ICRC. (2017) 'IHL in action: respect for the law on the battlefield'. [Website]. 4 October. Geneva: ICRC. (www.alnap.org/help-library/ihl-in-action-respect-for-the-law-on-the-battlefield).

ICVA. (2017) *The global compact on refugees explained*. Geneva: ICVA. (www.alnap.org/help-library/the-global-compact-on-refugees-explained).

IFRC. (n.d.) 'Data download: Federation-wide databank and reporting system'. [Website]. Geneva: IFRC. (www.alnap.org/help-library/data-download-federation-wide-databank-and-reporting-system).

IFRC. (2015) *Haiti earthquake: Five-year progress report*. Geneva: IFRC. (www.alnap.org/help-library/haiti-earthquake-five-year-progress-report).

IFRC and KRCS. (2015) *Kenya drought response evaluation report: Focus on Marsabit and Baringo counties*. Geneva/Shuwaikh: IFRC/KRCS. (www.alnap.org/help-library/kenya-drought-response-evaluation-report-focus-on-marsabit-and-baringo-counties).

IFRC and PRCS. (2016) *Reproductive health and violence prevention project in Palestine: Final evaluation report*. Geveva/Al-Bireh: IFRC/PRCS. (www.alnap.org/help-library/reproductive-health-and-violence-prevention-project-in-palestine-evaluation-and).

International Crisis Group. (2015a) 'CrisisWatch: July 2015'. [Website]. 1 June. Brussels: ICG. (www.alnap.org/help-library/crisiswatch-july-2015).

International Crisis Group. (2015b) 'CrisisWatch: September 2015'. [Website]. 1 June. Brussels: ICG. (www.alnap.org/help-library/crisiswatch-september-2015).

International Crisis Group. (2015c) 'Yemen at War. Crisis group Middle East briefing N°45'. [Website]. Brussels: ICG. (www.alnap.org/help-library/yemen-at-war-crisis-group-middle-east-briefing-n%C2%B045).

International Crisis Group. (2017a) *Instruments of pain (I): Conflict and famine in Yemen. Crisis Group Middle East briefing N°52*. Brussels: ICG. (www.alnap.org/help-library/instruments-of-pain-i-conflict-and-famine-in-yemen-crisis-group-middle-east-briefing-n).

International Crisis Group. (2017b) *Instruments of pain (II): Conflict and famine in South Sudan. Crisis Group Africa briefing N°124*. Brussels: ICG. (www.alnap.org/help-library/instruments-of-pain-ii-conflict-and-famine-in-south-sudan-crisis-group-africa-briefing).

International Crisis Group. (2017c) *Instruments of pain (III): Conflict and famine in Somalia. Crisis Group Africa briefing N°125*. Brussels: ICG. (www.alnap.org/help-library/instruments-of-pain-iii-conflict-and-famine-in-somalia-crisis-group-africa-briefing-n).

International Crisis Group. (2017d) 'Undocumented migration from the Northern Triangle of Central America'. [Website]. 3 June. (www.alnap.org/help-library/undocumented-migration-from-the-northern-triangle-of-central-america).

IPC. (2017a) *Integrated food security phase classification: Key IPC findings September 2017-March 2018*. Juba: IPC. (www.alnap.org/help-library/integrated-food-security-phase-classification-key-ipc-findings-september-2017-march).

IPC. (2017b) *Integrated food security phase classification the Republic of South Sudan May 2017 Projection Period for Most Likely Scenarios: June-July 2017*. Juba: IPC. (www.alnap.org/help-library/integrated-food-security-phase-classification-the-republic-of-south-sudan-may-2017).

IPI. (2015) 'Ebola and the UN's first emergency health mission'. [YouTube] 4 February. (www.alnap.org/help-library/ebola-and-the-un's-first-emergency-health-mission).

IRC. (2016a) *Cost efficiency analysis: Child protection case management*. New York: IRC. (www.alnap.org/help-library/cost-efficiency-analysis-child-protection-case-management).

IRC. (2016b) *Cost efficiency analysis: Latrine-building programs in Ethiopia*. New York: IRC. (www.alnap.org/help-library/cost-efficiency-analysis-latrine-building-programs-in-ethiopia).

IRC. (2016c) *Cost efficiency analysis: Legal aid Case management*. New York: IRC. (www.alnap.org/help-library/cost-efficiency-analysis-legal-aid-case-management).

IRC. (2016d) *Cost efficiency analysis: Non-food items vs. cash transfers*. New York: IRC. (www.alnap.org/help-library/cost-efficiency-analysis-non-food-items-vs-cash-transfers).

IRC. (2016e) *Cost efficiency analysis: Unconditional cash transfer programs*. New York: IRC. (www.alnap.org/help-library/cost-efficiency-analysis-unconditional-cash-transfer-programs).

IRC. (2016f) *The Ebola lessons reader*. New York: IRC. (www.alnap.org/help-library/the-ebola-lessons-reader).

Jackson, A. and Zyck, S. A. (2017) *Presence & proximity: To stay and deliver, five years on*. Olso: NRC. (www.alnap.org/help-library/presence-and-proximity-to-stay-and-deliver-five-years-on).

Jones, M. (2016) *Community consultations on humanitarian aid: overall findings*. Istanbul: World Humanitarian Summit. (www.alnap.org/help-library/community-consultations-on-humanitarian-aid-overall-findings).

Kebe, G. and Maiga, M. H. (2015) *Programme du Cadre Commun pour l'Eau, l'Hygiène et l'Assainissement Reliant Urgence, Reconstruction et Développement au Nord Mali*. New York: Action Against Hunger. (www.alnap.org/help-library/programme-du-cadre-commun-pour-l%E2%80%99eau-l%E2%80%99hygi%C3%A8ne-et-l%E2%80%99assainissement-reliant-urgence).

Kenya Red Cross. (2017) *Drought emergency cash transfer response 2016-2017 real time evaluation report*. Nairobi: Kenya Red Cross. (www.alnap.org/help-library/drought-emergency-cash-transfer-response-2016-2017).

Khan, SU. (2015) *Humanitarian support to vulnerable populations in Pakistan*. New York: Action Against Hunger. (www.alnap.org/help-library/humanitarian-support-to-vulnerable-populations-in-pakistan).

Knox Clarke, P. (2014) *Between chaos and control: Rethinking operational leadership*. London: ALNAP/ODI. (www.alnap.org/help-library/between-chaos-and-control-rethinking-operational-leadership).

Knox Clarke, P. (2013) *Who's in charge here? A literature review of approaches to leadership in humanitarian operations*. London: ALNAP/ODI. (www.alnap.org/help-library/whos-in-charge-here-a-literature-review-of-approaches-to-leadership-in-humanitarian).

Knox Clarke, P. (2017) *Transforming change*. London: ALNAP/ODI. (www.alnap.org/help-library/transforming-change).

Knox Clarke, P. and Campbell, L. (2015) *Exploring coordination in humanitarian clusters*. *ALNAP Study*, London: ALNAP/ODI. (www.alnap.org/help-library/exploring-coordination-in-humanitarian-clusters).

Knox Clarke, P. and Campbell, L. (2016) *Improving humanitarian coordination*. ALNAP Working Paper. London: ALNAP/ODI. (www.alnap.org/help-library/improving-humanitarian-coordination-themes-and-recommendations)

Knox Clarke, P. and Obrecht, A. (2015) *Global forum for improving humanitarian action - results and analysis*. London: ALNAP/ODI. (www.alnap.org/help-library/global-forum-for-improving-humanitarian-action-results-and-analysis).

Latimer, C. and Swithern, S. (2017) *Global humanitarian assistance report. GHA Annual Report*, Bristol: Developmental Initiatives. (www.alnap.org/help-library/global-humanitarian-assistance-report-2017).

Laville, S. (2015) UN aid worker suspended for leaking report on child abuse by French troops. *The Guardian*. 29 April. (www.alnap.org/help-library/un-aid-worker-suspended-for-leaking-report-on-child-abuse-by-french-troops).

Lawday, A., Adjibade, K., Dahrendorf, N., Kubwayezu, F. and Caro Morinière, L. (2016) *Inter-agency humanitarian evaluation (IAHE) of the response to the Central African Republic's crisis 2013-2015*. New York: OCHA. (www.alnap.org/help-library/inter-agency-humanitarian-evaluation-iahe-of-the-response-to-the-central-african-0).

Leber, B. (2015) *Humanitarian multi-sectorial rapid response mechanism, Yobe State, Nigeria*. New York: Action Against Hunger. (www.alnap.org/help-library/final-independent-evaluation-of-the-humanitarian-multi-sectorial-rapid-response).

Lee, C., Doocy, S., Deli, A., Krisch, T., Weiss, W. and Robinson, C. (2014) 'Measuring impact: A cross-sectional multi-stage cluster survey to assess the attainment of durable solutions in post-tsunami Aceh, Indonesia'. *BMC Public Health*, 14(1). (www.alnap.org/help-library/measuring-impact-a-cross-sectional-multi-stage-cluster-survey-to-assess-the-attainment).

Lentz, EC., Barrett, CB. and Gómez, MI. (2012) *Chapter I: The Impacts of Local and Regional Procurement of US Food Aid: Learning Alliance Synthesis Report.* New York: Cornell University. (www.alnap.org/help-library/chapter-i-the-impacts-of-local-and-regional-procurement-of-us-food-aid-learning).

Levers, J. (2016) *External evaluation of the DEC-funded Philippine Red Cross and British Red Cross livelihoods and shelter recovery programme, Iloilo Province, Philippines.* London: British Red Cross. (www.alnap.org/help-library/external-evaluation-of-the-dec-funded-philippine-red-cross-and-british-red-cross).

Lewins, R., Msiska, F., Bahr Caballero, K., Prout, J. and Murphy, B. (2016) *Malawi PRRO 200692 Responding to humanitarian needs And strengthening resilience.* Rome: WFP. (www.alnap.org/help-library/malawi-prro-200692-responding-to-humanitarian-needs-and-strengthening-resilience-a-mid).

Link, M. W., Murphy, J., Schober, M. F., Buskirk, T. D., Hunter Childs, J., Langer, Tesfay, C. (2014) *Mobile technologies for conducting, augmenting and potentially replacing surveys: report of the AAPOR task force on emerging technologies in public opinion research.* Oakbrook Terrace, IL: AAPOR. (www.alnap.org/help-library/mobile-technologies-for-conducting-augmenting-and-potentially-replacing-surveys-report).

Logan, I., Slezak, M. and Paivalainen, A. (2015) *An evaluation of the capacities and methodology to prepare for and respond to slow onset disasters in Africa.* Geneva: IFRC. (www.alnap.org/help-library/an-evaluation-of-the-capacities-and-methodology-to-prepare-for-and-respond-to-slow).

Logistics Cluster. (2017) *Yemen: Lessons learned report.* Rome: Logistics Cluster. (www.alnap.org/help-library/yemen-lessons-learned-report-april-2017).

Logistics Cluster. (2018) *Haiti, hurricane Matthew: Lessons learned report.* Rome: Logistics Cluster. (www.alnap.org/help-library/haiti-hurricane-matthew-lessons-learned-report).

Magone, C., Neuman, M. and Weissman, F. (2011) *Humanitarian negotiations revealed: The MSF experience.* London: Hurst Publishers. (www.alnap.org/help-library/humanitarian-negotiations-revealed-the-msf-experience).

Martínez, JC. and Eng, B. (2016) 'The unintended consequences of emergency food aid: Neutrality, sovereignty and politics in the Syrian civil war, 2012-15'. *International Affairs*, 92(1): 153–173. (www.alnap.org/help-library/the-unintended-consequences-of-emergency-food-aid-neutrality-sovereignty-and-politics).

Matopoulos, A., Kovács, G. and Hayes, O. (2014) 'Local resources and procurement practices in humanitarian supply chains: An empirical examination of large-scale house reconstruction projects'. *Decision Sciences*, 45(4): 621–646. (www.alnap.org/help-library/local-resources-and-procurement-practices-in-humanitarian-supply-chains-an-empirical).

Maxwell, D., Stobaugh, H., Parker, J. and McGlinchy, M. (2013) *Network Paper: Response analysis and response choice in food security crises : a roadmap.* London: HPN/ODI. (www.alnap.org/help-library/network-paper-response-analysis-and-response-choice-in-food-security-crises%E2%80%AF-a-roadmap).

Maxwell, D., Santschi, M., Moro, L., Gordon, R. and Dau, P. (2015) *Questions and challenges raised by a large-scale humanitarian operation in South Sudan. Researching livelihoods and services affected by conflict.* London: ODI. (www.alnap.org/help-library/questions-and-challenges-raised-by-a-large-scale-humanitarian-operation-in-south-sudan).

Maxwell, D., Hailey, P., Kim, J., McCloskey, E. and Wrabel, M. (2018) *Complexities of information and analysis in humanitarian emergencies: Evidence from South Sudan.* Massachusetts: Tufts University. (www.alnap.org/help-library/constraints-and-complexities-of-information-analysis-in-humanitarian-emergencies-0).

Médecins Sans Frontières. (2016) 'MSF to pull out of World Humanitarian Summit'. [Website]. 5 May. Paris: MSF. (www.alnap.org/help-library/msf-to-pull-out-of-world-humanitarian-summit).

Medecins sans Frontieres. (2017) *Forced to flee Central America's Northern Triangle: a neglected humanitarian crisis.* Geneva: MSF. (www.alnap.org/help-library/forced-to-flee-central-america%E2%80%99s-northern-triangle-a-neglected-humanitarian-crisis).

Méedecins sans Frontières. (2017) *Rohingya crisis - a summary of findings from six pooled surveys.* Paris: MSF. (www.alnap.org/help-library/rohingya-crisis-a-summary-of-findings-from-six-pooled-surveys).

Médecins Sans Frontières. (2018) *No one was left: Death and violence against the Rohingya in Rakhine State, Myanmar.* Paris: MSF. (www.alnap.org/help-library/no-one-was-left-death-and-violence-against-the-rohingya-in-rakhine-state-myanmar).

Meerkatt, H., Kolo, P. and Renson, Q. (2015) *UNICEF/WFP return on investment for emergency preparedness study.* New York/Rome: UNICEF/WFP. (www.alnap.org/help-library/unicefwfp-return-on-investment-for-emergency-preparedness-study).

Metcalfe-hough, V. and Poole, L. (2018) *Grand Bargain annual independent report 2018.* London: HPG. (www.alnap.org/help-library/grand-bargain-annual-report-2018).

Moeller, S. (2010) 'Media coverage of natural disasters and humanitarian crises', in *Public Sentinel: News Media & Governance Reform.* Washington: World Bank. (www.alnap.org/help-library/media-coverage-of-natural-disasters-and-humanitarian-crises).

Mohiddin, L. and Smith, G. (2016) *A review of needs assessment tools, response analysis frameworks, and targeting guidance for urban humanitarian response.* London: IIED. (www.alnap.org/help-library/a-review-of-needs-assessment-tools-response-analysis-frameworks-and-targeting-guidance).

Moon, S., Sridhar, D., Pate, M. A., Jha, A., Clinton, C., Delaunay, S., Edwin, V. and Fallah, M. (2015) 'Will Ebola change the game? Ten essential reforms before the next pandemic. the report of the Harvard-LSHTM Independent Panel on the Global Response to Ebola'. *The Lancet*, 386(10009): 2204–2221. (www.alnap.org/help-library/will-ebola-change-the-game-ten-essential-reforms-before-the-next-pandemic-the-report-of).

More, E. (2016) *Evaluation of Christian Aid's DEC typhoon Haiyan rehabilitation and resilience building programme.* London: Christian Aid. (www.alnap.org/help-library/evaluation-of-christian-aid%E2%80%99s-dec-typhoon-haiyan-rehabilitation-and-resilience-building).

Morenne, B. (2017) 'No charges in sexual abuse case involving French peacekeepers'. *The New York Times.* 6 January. (www.alnap.org/help-library/no-charges-in-sexual-abuse-case-involving-french-peacekeepers).

Morland, A. (2016) Liberté, égalité, impunité. *IRIN News.* 4 July. (www.alnap.org/help-library/libert%C3%A9-%C3%A9galit%C3%A9-impunit%C3%A9).

Moughanie, H. (2015) *Towards sustainable solutions for improved living conditions of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon.* Nairobi: UN Habitat. (www.alnap.org/help-library/towards-sustainable-solutions-for-improved-living-conditions-of-palestinian-refugees-in).

Mowjee, T., Fleming, D. and Toft, E. (2015) *Evaluation of the strategy for Danish Humanitarian Action 2010-2015: Syria response case study report.* Copenhagen: Danida. (www.alnap.org/help-library/evaluation-of-the-strategy-for-danish-humanitarian-action-2010-2015-syria-response-case).

Mowjee, T., Poole, L., Greenhalgh, L. and Gharbi, S. (2016) *Evaluation of Sida's humanitarian assistance.* Stockholm: Sida. (www.alnap.org/help-library/evaluation-of-sida%E2%80%99s-humanitarian-assistance).

Mowjee, T., Poole, L. and Willitts-King, B. (2017) *From Grand Bargain to beneficiary: An analysis of funding flows through the humanitarian system.* London: HPG. (www.alnap.org/help-library/from-grand-bargain-to-beneficiary-an-analysis-of-funding-flows-through-the-humanitarian).

Mowjee, T., Baker, J. and Poole, L. (2018) *Independent review of the value added of the central emergency response fund (CERF) in the countries affected by el Nino.* New York: CERF. (www.alnap.org/help-library/independent-review-of-the-value-added-of-the-central-emergency-response-fund-cerf-in-6).

Murray, A., Majwa, P., Roberton, T., Burnham, G. (2015) *Report of the real time evaluation of Ebola control programs in Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia.* Geneva: IFRC. (www.alnap.org/help-library/report-of-the-real-time-evaluation-of-ebola-control-programs-in-guinea-sierra-leone-and).

Mutunga, T., Assefa, M., Nzimbi, A. and Kilunda, T. (2015) *Ethiopia shelter evaluation.* Oslo: NRC. (www.alnap.org/help-library/ethiopia-shelter-evaluation).

Narang, N. (2015) 'Assisting uncertainty: How humanitarian aid can inadvertently prolong civil war'. *International Studies Quarterly,* 59(1): 184–195. (www.alnap.org/help-library/assisting-uncertainty-how-humanitarian-aid-can-inadvertently-prolong-civil-war).

NEAR. (2017) *Open letter: Localisation marker working group definitions outcome.* Nairobi: NEAR. (www.alnap.org/help-library/open-letter-localisation-marker-working-group-definitions-outcome).

Niland, N., Polastro, R., Donini, A. and Lee, A. (2015) *Independent whole of system review of protection in the context of humanitarian action.* Oslo: NRC. (www.alnap.org/help-library/independent-whole-of-system-review-of-protection-in-the-context-of-humanitarian-action).

Obrecht, A. (2015) *WHS effectiveness theme focal issue: Accountability.* London: ODI/ALNAP. (www.alnap.org/help-library/whs-effectiveness-theme-focal-issue-accountability).

Obrecht, A. (2017) *Using evidence to allocate humanitarian resources : Challenges and opportunities.* London: ALNAP/ODI. (www.alnap.org/help-library/working-paper-using-evidence-to-allocate-humanitarian-resources-challenges-and).

Obrecht, A. (2018) *Dynamic gridlock: Adaptive humanitarian action in the Democratic Republic of Congo.* London: ALNAP/ODI. (www.alnap.org/help-library/dynamic-gridlock-adaptive-humanitarian-action-in-the-drc).

O'Callaghan, S. and Harmer, A. (2017) *Increasing support and funding tools for local and national responders: Rapid Mapping of Relevant Initiatives.*

OCHA. (n.d.) 'Who does what, where (3W) humanitarian operational presence and operational capacity. Afghanistan: humanitarian operational presence'. [Website]. Geneva: OCHA. (www.alnap.org/help-library/who-does-what-where-3w-humanitarian-operational-presence-and-operational-capacity).

OCHA. (2015a) *Humanitarian needs overview 2015: Yemen (revised).* New York: OCHA. (www.alnap.org/help-library/humanitarian-needs-overview-2015-yemen-revised).

OCHA. (2015b) *Humanitarian needs overview 2016: Syrian Arab Republic.* New York: OCHA. (www.alnap.org/help-library/syrian-arab-republic-humanitarian-needs-overview-2016).

OCHA. (2015c) *République centrafricaine : Aperçu des besoins humanitaires 2016.* New York: OCHA. (www.alnap.org/help-library/r%C3%A9publique-centrafricaine%E2%80%AF-aper%C3%A7u-des-besoins-humanitaires-2016).

OCHA. (2015d) *South Sudan: Humanitarian needs overview 2016.* New York: OCHA. (www.alnap.org/help-library/south-sudan-humanitarian-needs-overview-2016).

OCHA. (2015e) *Ukraine: Humanitarian needs overview 2016.* New York: OCHA. (www.alnap.org/help-library/ukraine-humanitarian-needs-overview-2016).

OCHA. (2016a) 'Agenda for Humanity initiatives'. [Website]. 3 June. New York: OCHA. (www.alnap.org/help-library/agenda-for-humanity-initiatives).

OCHA. (2016b) *El niño: Overview of impact, projected humanitarian needs and response - March 2016.* New York: OCHA. (www.alnap.org/help-library/el-ni%C3%B1o-overview-of-impact-projected-humanitarian-needs-and-response-march-2016).

OCHA. (2016c) *El niño: Overview of impact, projected humanitarian needs and response - September 2016.* New York: OCHA. (www.alnap.org/help-library/el-ni%C3%B1o-overview-of-impact-projected-humanitarian-needs-and-response-september-2016-0).

OCHA. (2016d) *Humanitarian needs overview 2017: Syrian Arab Republic.* New York: OCHA. (www.alnap.org/help-library/2017-humanitarian-needs-overview-syrian-arab-republic).

OCHA. (2016e) *Humanitarian needs overview 2017: Yemen.* New York: OCHA. (www.alnap.org/help-library/humanitarian-needs-overview-2017-yemen).

OCHA. (2016f). *République centrafricaine : Aperçu des besoins humanitaires 2017.* New York: OCHA. (www.alnap.org/help-library/r%C3%A9publique-centrafricaine%E2%80%AF-aper%C3%A7u-des-besoins-humanitaires-2017).

OCHA. (2016g) *Sahel: Aperçu des besoins humanitaires et des fonds requis pour la réponse 2017.* New York: OCHA. (www.alnap.org/help-library/sahel-aper%C3%A7u-des-besoins-humanitaires-et-des-fonds-requis-pour-la-r%C3%A9ponse-2017).

OCHA. (2016h) *South Sudan: Humanitarian needs overview 2017.* New York: OCHA. (www.alnap.org/help-library/south-sudan-humanitarian-needs-overview-2017).

OCHA. (2016i) *Ukraine: Humanitarian needs overview 2017.* New York: OCHA. (www.alnap.org/help-library/ukraine-humanitarian-needs-overview-2017).

OCHA. (2016j) *World humanitarian data and trends 2016.* New York: OCHA. (www.alnap.org/help-library/world-humanitarian-data-and-trends-2016).

OCHA. (2016k) *World Humanitarian Summit: Commitments to action.* New York: OCHA. (www.alnap.org/help-library/world-humanitarian-summit-commitments-to-action).

OCHA. (2016l) *World Humanitarian Summit at a glance.* New York: OCHA. (www.alnap.org/help-library/world-humanitarian-summit-at-a-glance).

OCHA. (2017a) *Humanitarian needs overview 2018: Syrian Arab Republic.* New York: OCHA. (www.alnap.org/help-library/syrian-arab-republic-humanitarian-needs-overview-2018).

OCHA. (2017b) *Humanitarian needs overview 2018: Yemen.* New York: OCHA. (www.alnap.org/help-library/humanitarian-needs-overview-2018-yemen).

OCHA. (2017c) *Lake Chad Basin: Crisis overview.* New York: OCHA. (www.alnap.org/help-library/lake-chad-basin-crisis-overview-as-of-07-march-2017).

OCHA. (2017d) *Mali: Plan de réponse humanitaire.* New York: OCHA. (www.alnap.org/help-library/mali-plan-de-r%C3%A9ponse-humanitaire).

OCHA. (2017e) *Nepal country profile.* New York: OCHA. (www.alnap.org/help-library/nepal-country-profile).

OCHA. (2017f) *République centrafricaine: Aperçu des besoins humanitaires 2018*. New York: OCHA. (www.alnap.org/help-library/r%C3%A9publique-centrafricaine%E2%80%AF-aper%C3%A7u-des-besoins-humanitaires-2018).

OCHA. (2017g) *Sahel 2014-16: Regional humanitarian response strategy reviewed*. New York: OCHA. (www.alnap.org/help-library/sahel-2014-16-regional-humanitarian-response-strategy-reviewed).

OCHA. (2017h) *South Sudan: Humanitarian needs overview 2018*. New York: OCHA. (www.alnap.org/help-library/south-sudan-humanitarian-needs-overview-2018).

OCHA. (2017i) *Ukraine: Humanitarian needs overview 2018*. New York: OCHA. (www.alnap.org/help-library/ukraine-humanitarian-needs-overview-2018).

OCHA (2017j) World Humanitarian Data and Trends 2017. New York: OCHA. (www.alnap.org/help-library/world-humanitarian-data-and-trends-2017).

OCHA. (2017k) 'World Humanitarian Summit 2016'. [Website]. 3 June. New York: OCHA. (www.alnap.org/help-library/world-humanitarian-summit-2016).

OCHA. (2018a) 'About OCHA Iraq'. [Website]. 2 June. New York: OCHA. (www.alnap.org/help-library/about-ocha-iraq).

OCHA. (2018b) *Iraq: Timeline of displacement and returns*. New York: OCHA. (www.alnap.org/help-library/iraq-timeline-of-displacement-and-returns).

OCHA. (2018c) *Lake Chad Basin emergency: Humanitarian needs and requirement overview emergency*. New York: OCHA. (www.alnap.org/help-library/lake-chad-basin-emergency-humanitarian-needs-and-requirement-overview-emergency).

OCHA and UNHCR (2014) *Joint UNHCR - OCHA note on mixed situations coordination in practice*. New York/Geneva: OCHA/UNHCR. (www.alnap.org/help-library/joint-unhcr-ocha-note-on-mixed-situations-coordination-in-practice).

OECD. (n.d.) *DAC criteria for evaluating development assistance*. Paris: OECD. (www.alnap.org/help-library/dac-criteria-for-evaluating-development-assistance).

OHCHR. (2016) *Attacks on medical units in international humanitarian and human rights law*. Geneva: OHCHR. (www.alnap.org/help-library/attacks-on-medical-units-in-international-humanitarian-and-human-rights-law).

Okeyo, B., Eggleston, N., Lutaaya, L. and Abebe, A. (2017) *Ethiopia drought - midterm evaluation report*. Geneva: IFRC. (www.alnap.org/help-library/ethiopia-drought-midterm-evaluation-report).

Omar, M., Abouaoun, E. and Pouligny, B. (2016) *Rebuilding societies: strategies for resilience and recovery in times of conflict*. Washington, DC: USIP. (www.alnap.org/help-library/rebuilding-societies-strategies-for-resilience-and-recovery-in-times-of-conflict).

Ovington, K., Lim, S., Sutton, K., Flint, J., Luzzi, M., Kenni, L. and Aueb-Charles, N. (2017) *Humanitarian assistance in the Pacific: An evaluation of the effectiveness of Australia's response to cyclone Pam*. Canberra: Australia Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. (www.alnap.org/help-library/humanitarian-assistance-in-the-pacific-an-evaluation-of-the-effectiveness-of-0).

Oxfam. (2016) *If we don't do it, who will? A study into the sustainability of community protection structures supported by Oxfam in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Oxford: Oxfam.* (www.alnap.org/help-library/if-we-don%E2%80%99t-do-it-who-will-a-study-into-the-sustainability-of-community-protection).

Oxford Policy Management. (2015) *Evaluation of the Kenya hunger safety net programme phase 2: Drought emergency scale-up payments process review.* Nairobi: NDMA. (www.alnap.org/help-library/evaluation-of-the-kenya-hunger-safety-net-programme-phase-2-drought-emergency-scale-up).

P2P. (2017) *Peer 2 peer support project mission report: Nigeria.* Geneva: IASC / P2P. (Report available on request from p2psupport@un.org).

Pantuliano, S., Metcalfe-hough, V., Mckechnie, A., Carl, A., Jackson, A., Domingo, P. and Al-Azar, R. (2018) *The capacities of UN agencies, funds and programmes to sustain peace An independent review.* London: ODI. (www.alnap.org/help-library/the-capacity-of-un-agencies-funds-and-programmes-to-sustain-peace-an-independent-review).

Particip GMBH, Dara International Foundation, Prolog Consult SPRL and GERMAX. (2016) *Evaluation of DG ECHO's actions on building resilience in the LAC Region.* Freiburg/Madird/ Belgium/Aachen: Particip GMBH/Dara International Foundation/Prolog Consult SPRL/GERMAX. (www.alnap.org/help-library/evaluation-of-dg-echo%E2%80%99s-actions-on-building-resilience-in-the-lac-region).

Patel, R., King, J., Phelps, L. and Sanderson, D. (2017) *What practices are used to identify and prioritize vulnerable populations affected by urban humanitarian emergencies?* Massachusetts: Tufts University. (www.alnap.org/help-library/what-are-the-practices-to-identify-and-prioritize-vulnerable-populations-affected-by-0).

Patko, D. (2016) *Beneficiary satisfaction survey and evaluation report: Istanbul community centre project for Syrian people under temporary protection in Turkey.* Geneva: IFRC. (www.alnap.org/help-library/beneficiary-satisfaction-survey-and-evaluation-report-istanbul-community-centre-project).

Peacocke, B., Tadesse, S. and Tequame, M. (2015) *Operation evaluation: Cameroon, protracted relief and recovery operation 200552 food and nutrition assistance to Nigerian and Central African refugees and host populations in Cameroon (2013-2016).* Rome: WFP. (www.alnap.org/help-library/cameroon-prro-200552-food-and-nutrition-assistance-to-nigerian-and-central-african).

Penoy, J-Y., Roselli, C., Skolem, L., Torpp, Ø. and Wengen, E. (2016) *Unleashing more time and money for humanitarian aid.* Massachusetts/Oslo: BCG/NRC. (www.alnap.org/help-library/unleashing-more-time-and-money-for-humanitarian-aid).

Peters, K. and Pichon, F. (2017) *Crisis modifiers: A solution for a more flexible development-humanitarian system?* London: ODI. (www.alnap.org/help-library/crisis-modifiers-a-solution-for-a-more-flexible-development-humanitarian-system).

Polygeia. (2016) *Lessons from Ebola-affected communities: Being prepared for future health crises.* London: Polygeia. (www.alnap.org/help-library/lessons-from-ebola-affected-communities).

Poole, L. (2014) *Funding at the sharp end.* London: CAFOD. (www.alnap.org/help-library/funding-at-the-sharp-end-investing-in-national-ngo-response-capacity).

Poulsen, L., Tanner, C., Thuo, N., Hashi, S., Adnan Ismail, M., Dunn, S and McMillon, C. (2015) *Somalia PRRO 200443: Strengthening food and nutrition security and enhancing resilience June 2012 – December 2015.* (www.alnap.org/help-library/somalia-protracted-relief-and-recovery-operation-200443-strengthening-food-and).

Qadri, F., Azad, AK., Flora, MS., Islam Khan, A., Islam, T., Balakrish Nair, G., Khetrapal Singh, P. and Clemens, J. (2018) 'Emergency deployment of oral cholera vaccine for the Rohingya in Bangladesh'. *The Lancet*, 391(10133): 1877–1879. (www.alnap.org/help-library/emergency-deployment-of-oral-cholera-vaccine-for-the-rohingya-in-bangladesh).

Ramalingam, B., Gray, B. and Cerruti, G. (2013) *Missed opportunities: the case for strengthening national and local partnership-based humanitarian responses.* Johannesburg: ActionAid. (www.alnap.org/help-library/missed-opportunities-the-case-for-strengthening-national-and-local-partnership-based).

Reilly, H. (2017) 'Racing to prevent cholera in Rohingya refugee camps'. [Website]. 9 October. New York: UNICEF. (www.alnap.org/help-library/racing-to-prevent-cholera-in-rohingya-refugee-camps).

ReliefWeb. (2017a) 'Hurricane Matthew - Sep 2016'. [Website]. 3 June. New York: ReliefWeb. (www.alnap.org/help-library/hurricane-matthew-sep-2016).

ReliefWeb. (2017b) 'South America: Drought - 2015-2017'. [Website]. 3 June. New York: ReliefWeb. (www.alnap.org/help-library/south-america-drought-2015-2017).

ReliefWeb. (2017c) 'Southern Africa: Food insecurity - 2015-2017'. [Website]. 3 June. New York: ReliefWeb. (www.alnap.org/help-library/southern-africa-food-insecurity-2015-2017).

ReliefWeb. (2018) 'Humanitarian crisis in Kasai region, DR Congo'. [Website]. 2 June. New York: ReliefWeb. (www.alnap.org/help-library/humanitarian-crisis-in-kasai-region-dr-congo).

Saavedra, L. (2016) *We know our wounds: National and local organisations involved in humanitarian response in Lebanon.* London: ALNAP/ODI. (www.alnap.org/help-library/we-know-our-wounds-national-and-local-organisations-involved-in-humanitarian-response).

Salama, P., Spiegel, P., Talley, L. and Waldman, R. (2004) 'Lessons learned from complex emergencies over past decade'. *The Lancet*, 364(9447): 1801–1813. (www.alnap.org/help-library/lessons-learned-from-complex-emergencies-over-past-decade).

Samuel Hall. (2015) *The impact of cash transfer programmes on protection outcomes in Afghanistan.* Kabul/Geneva/Oslo: Samuel Hall/UNHCR/NRC. (www.alnap.org/help-library/the-impact-of-cash-transfer-programmes-on-protection-outcomes-in-afghanistan).

Sanderson, D. and Sitko, P. (2017) *Urban area-based approaches in post-disaster contexts*. London: IIED. (www.alnap.org/help-library/urban-area-based-approaches-abas-in-post-disaster-contexts).

Sanderson, D., Rodericks, A., Shresta, N. and Ramalingam, B. (2015) *Nepal earthquake appeal response review*. London: DEC. (www.alnap.org/help-library/nepal-earthquake-appeal-response-review-0).

Sassoli, M. and Issar, Y. (2015) 'Challenges to international humanitarian law', in von Arnaud, A., Matz-Lück N., and Odendahl K. (eds), *100 Years of peace through law: Past and future*. Berlin: Dunker & Humblot. 181–235. (www.alnap.org/help-library/challenges-to-international-humanitarian-law-100-years-of-peace-through-law-past-and).

SAVE. (n.d.) 'Secure Access in Volatile Environments (SAVE)'. [Website]. (www.alnap.org/help-library/secure-access-in-volatile-environments-save).

Save the Chindren. (2015) *Evaluation of humanitarian action: Typhoon Yolanda (Haiyan) response*. London: Save the Children. (www.alnap.org/help-library/evaluation-of-humanitarian-action-typhoon-yolanda-haiyan-response).

Schofield, R. (2016) *DEC funded Ebola response programme in Sierra Leone*. Dublin: Concern Worldwide. (www.alnap.org/help-library/dec-funded-ebola-response-programme-in-sierra-leone).

Shepherd, M., Frize, J., de Meulder, F., Bizzari, M., Lemaire, I., Ressler Horst, L. and Chase, S. (2017) *An evaluation of WFP's L3 response to the Ebola virus disease (EVD) crisis in West Africa (2014–2015)*. Rome: WFP. (www.alnap.org/help-library/an-evaluation-of-wfp%E2%80%99s-l3-response-to-the-ebola-virus-disease-evd-crisis-in-west-0).

Sida, L., Trombetta, L. and Panero, V. (2016) *Evaluation of OCHA response to the Syria crisis*. New York: OCHA. (www.alnap.org/help-library/evaluation-of-ocha-response-to-the-syria-crisis).

Smith, G. and Mohiddin, L. (2015) *A review of evidence of humanitarian cash transfer programming in urban areas*. London: IIED. (www.alnap.org/help-library/a-review-of-evidence-of-humanitarian-cash-transfer-programming-in-urban-areas).

Smith, G., McCormack, R. and Jacobs, A. (2018) *The state of the world's cash report*. Oxford: CaLP. (www.alnap.org/help-library/the-state-of-the-world%E2%80%99s-cash-report-cash-transfer-programming-in-humanitarian-aid).

Spencer, A., Parrish, C. and Lattimer, C. (2016) Counting cash: Tracking humanitarian expenditure on cash-based programming. London: ODI. (www.alnap.org/help-library/counting-cash-tracking-humanitarian-expenditure-on-cash-based-programming).

Spiegel, P. B., Checchi, F., Colombo, S. and Paik, E. (2010) 'Health-care needs of people affected by conflict: future trends and changing frameworks'. *The Lancet*, 375(9711): 341–345. (www.alnap.org/help-library/health-care-needs-of-people-affected-by-conflict-future-trends-and-changing-frameworks).

STAIT (P2P). (2015) *IASC operational peer review: Response to the crisis in Syria.* Geneva: IASC/STAIT. (Report available on request from p2psupport@un.org).

STAIT (P2P). (2016a) Operational peer review: Response to the Yemen crisis. Geneva: IASC/STAIT. (Report available on request from p2psupport@un.org).

STAIT (P2P). (2016b) *STAIT mission report: Somalia.* Geneva: IASC/STAIT. (Report available on request from p2psupport@un.org).

STAIT (P2P). (2016c) *STAIT mission report: South Sudan.* Geneva: IASC/STAIT. (Report available on request from p2psupport@un.org).

STAIT (P2P). (2016d) *STAIT mission report: Ukraine.* Geneva: IASC/STAIT. (Report available on request from p2psupport@un.org).

Steets, J. and Derzsi-Horvath, A. (2015) *Synthesis report of the evaluations series of WFP's emergency preparedness and response (2012-2015).* Rome: WFP. (www.alnap.org/help-library/synthesis-of-the-evaluation-series-of-wfps-emergency-preparedness-and-response-2012-%E2%80%93).

Steets, J. and Ruppert, L. (2017a) *Cash coordination in humanitarian contexts.* Berlin: GPPi. (www.alnap.org/help-library/cash-coordination-in-humanitarian-contexts).

Steets, J. and Ruppert, L. (2017b) *White paper on cash coordination.* Berlin: GPPi. (www.alnap.org/help-library/white-paper-on-cash-coordination).

Steets, J., Binder, A., Derzsi-Horvath, A., Krüger, S. and Ruppert, L. (2016) *Drivers and inhibitors of change in the humanitarian system.* Berlin: GPPi. (www.alnap.org/help-library/drivers-and-inhibitors-of-change-in-the-humanitarian-system-a-political-economy).

Stigter, E. and Morris, H. (2016) *Evaluation of emergency transit centres in Romania and the Slovak Republic.* Geneva: UNHCR. (www.alnap.org/help-library/evaluation-of-emergency-transit-centres-in-romania-and-the-slovak-republic).

Stites, E. and Bushby, K. (2017) *Livelihood strategies and interventions in fragile and conflict-affected areas: Assessing trends and changes from 2012 to 2016.* London: SLRC. (www.alnap.org/help-library/livelihood-strategies-and-interventions-in-fragile-and-conflict-affected-areas).

Stoddard, A. and Jillani, S. (2016) *The effects of insecurity on humanitarian coverage.* Berlin: GPPi. (www.alnap.org/help-library/final-report-the-effects-of-insecurity-on-humanitarian-coverage).

Stoddard, A., Poole, L., Taylor, G., Willitts-King, B., Jillani, S. and Potter, A. (2017) *Efficiency and inefficiency in humanitarian financing.* Washington, DC: USAID. (www.alnap.org/help-library/efficiency-and-inefficiency-in-humanitarian-financing).

Stone, D., Saroinsong, J. F. M., Sano, J., et al. (2015) *DEC external evaluation of Tearfund's typhoon Haiyan response in the Philippines.* Teddington: Tearfund. (www.alnap.org/help-library/dec-external-evaluation-of-tearfunds-typhoon-haiyan-response-in-the-philippines).

Sule Caglar, A., Conoir, Y., Murray, J., Thomas, V. and Ulkuer, N. (2016) *Evaluation of UNHCR's emergency response to the influx of Syrian refugees into Turkey*. Geneva: UNHCR. (www.alnap.org/help-library/evaluation-of-unhcr%E2%80%99s-emergency-response-to-the-influx-of-syrian-refugees-into-turkey).

Sumaylo, K. K. (2017) *Local humanitarian action in practice: Case studies and reflections of local humanitarian actors*. London: British Red Cross Society. (www.alnap.org/help-library/local-humanitarian-action-in-practice-case-studies-and-reflections-of-local).

Sunwoo, I. and Cascioli Sharp, R. (2015) *Real-time evaluation of World Vision's response to the Western Balkan refugee response*. California: World Vision. (www.alnap.org/help-library/real-time-evaluation-of-world-vision%E2%80%99s-response-to-the-western-balkan-refugee-response).

Supporting Syria and the Region. (2017) *Supporting Syria and the region: Post-London conference financial tracking, report two*. London: Supporting Syria and the Region. (www.alnap.org/help-library/supporting-syria-and-the-region-post-london-conference-financial-tracking-report-two).

Svoboda, E. and Gillard, E-C. (2015) *Protection of civilians in armed conflict*. London: HPG. (www.alnap.org/help-library/protection-of-civilians-in-armed-conflict-bridging-the-gap-between-law-and-reality).

Svoboda, E. and Pantuliano, S. (2015) *International and local/diaspora actors in the Syria response*. London: HPG. (www.alnap.org/help-library/international-and-localdiaspora-actors-in-the-syria-response-a-diverging-set-of-systems).

Svoboda, E., Barbelet, V. and Mosel, I. (2018) *Holding the keys: Humanitarian access and local organisations*. London: HPG. (www.alnap.org/help-library/holding-the-keys-humanitarian-access-and-local-organisations).

Swithern, S. (2015) *Global humanitarian assistance report 2015*. Bristol: Development Initiatives. (www.alnap.org/help-library/global-humanitarian-assistance-report-2015).

Tanner, L. and Moro, L. (2016) *Missed out: The role of local actors in the humanitarian response in the South Sudan conflict*. Bristol: Development Initiatives. (www.alnap.org/help-library/missed-out-the-role-of-local-actors-in-the-humanitarian-response-in-the-south-sudan).

Taylor, G. and Assefa, E. (2017) *External evaluation of the Start Fund progress, performance & future plans*.

Taylor, G., Kreidler, C. and Créac'h, Y-K. (2017) *Evaluation of multi-year planning*. New York: OCHA. (www.alnap.org/help-library/evaluation-of-multi-year-planning-february-2017).

Terry, F. (2002) *Condemned to repeat? The paradox of humanitarian action*. New York: Cornell University Press. (www.alnap.org/help-library/condemned-to-repeat-the-paradox-of-humanitarian-action).

Torbati, Y. (2017) Trump lifts refugee ban, but admissions still plummet, data shows. Reuters. 8 December. (www.alnap.org/help-library/trump-lifts-refugee-ban-but-admissions-still-plummet-data-shows).

Tsvetkova, M. and Zverev, A. (2016) Ghost soldiers: the Russians secretly dying for the Kremlin in Syria. Reuters. 3 November. (https://www.alnap.org/help-library/ghost-soldiers-the-russians-secretly-dying-for-the-kremlin-in-syria).

Turnbull, M. (2015) Humanitarian quality assurance: Jordan. Evaluation of Syria crisis response. Oxford: Oxfam. (www.alnap.org/help-library/humanitarian-quality-assurance-jordan-evaluation-of-syria-crisis-response).

Turnbull, M. (2016a) *Humanitarian quality assurance: Central Afrian Republic. Evaluation of the response in Bangui.* Oxford: Oxfam. (www.alnap.org/help-library/humanitarian-quality-assurance-central-african-republic-evaluation-of-the-response-in).

Turnbull, M. (2016b) *Humanitarian quality assurance: South Sudan. Evaluation of the 2013 Juba conflict response.* Oxford: Oxfam. (www.alnap.org/help-library/humanitarian-quality-assurance-south-sudan).

Turner, S., Bhatia, R., Madi, A., Silkin, T., Tavakoli, H. and Driscoll, Z. (2016) *State of Palestine: An evaluation of WFP's Portfolio (2011 - mid-2015).* Rome: WFP. (www.alnap.org/help-library/state-of-palestine-an-evaluation-of-wfps-portfolio-2011-2015).

Twigg, J. and Mosel, I. (2018) *Key messages: Informality in urban crisis response.* London: ODI. (www.alnap.org/help-library/informality-in-urban-crisis-response).

Ullah, Z. (2015) *Final independent evaluation of the safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene support for flood affected community in Pakistan.* New York: Action Against Hunger. (www.alnap.org/help-library/final-independent-evaluation-of-the-safe-drinking-water-sanitation-and-hygiene-support).

UN Panel of Experts. (2018) *Letter dated 26 January 2018 from the panel of experts on Yemen mandated by Security Council resolution 2342 (2017) addressed to the President of the Security Council.* New York: United Nations Security Council. (www.alnap.org/help-library/letter-dated-26-january-2018-from-the-panel-of-experts-on-yemen-mandated-by-security).

UN Secretary-General. (2016) 'Condemning attacks on hospitals as war crimes, Secretary-General says security council must press all parties to respect humanitarian obligations'. New York: United Nations. (www.alnap.org/help-library/condemning-attacks-on-hospitals-as-war-crimes-secretary-general-says-security-council).

UN Secretary-General. (2017a) R*eport of the Secretary-General on the protection of civilians in armed conflict*s. New York: United Nations. (www.alnap.org/help-library/report-of-the-secretary-general-on-the-protection-of-civilians-in-armed-conflicts).

UN Secretary-General. (2017b) *Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse: a new approach.* New York: United Nations. (www.alnap.org/help-library/special-measures-for-protection-from-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse-a-new-approach).

UN Secretary-General. (2018) *Report of the Secretary-General on protection of civilians in armed conflict*. New York: United Nations. (www.alnap.org/help-library/report-of-the-secretary-general-on-protection-of-civilians-in-armed-conflict).

UNHCR. (n.d.) *Cash for education: A global review of UNHCR programs*. Geneva: UNHCR. (www.alnap.org/help-library/cash-for-education-a-global-review-of-unhcr-programs).

UNHCR. (2013) *UNHCR Refugee coordination model*. Geneva: UNHCR. (www.alnap.org/help-library/unhcr-refugee-coordination-model).

UNHCR. (2015a) 'Jordan: Year-end report 2015'. [Website]. 3 June. Geneva: UNHCR. (www.alnap.org/help-library/jordan-year-end-report-2015).

UNHCR. (2015b) 'Lebanon: Year-end report 2015'. [Website]. 3 June. Geneva: UNHCR. (www.alnap.org/help-library/lebanon-year-end-report-2015).

UNHCR. (2015c) 'Over one million sea arrivals reach Europe in 2015'. [Website]. 30 December. Geneva: UNHCR. (www.alnap.org/help-library/over-one-million-sea-arrivals-reach-europe-in-2015).

UNHCR. (2015d) 'Turkey: Year-end report 2015'. [Website]. 3 June. Geneva: UNHCR. (www.alnap.org/help-library/turkey-year-end-report-2015).

UNHCR. (2016a) *Global trends: Forced displacement in 2015*. Geneva: UNHCR. (www.alnap.org/help-library/global-trends-forced-displacement-in-2015).

UNHCR. (2016b) 'Jordan: Year-end report 2016'. [Website]. 3 June. Geneva: UNHCR. (www.alnap.org/help-library/jordan-year-end-report-2016).

UNHCR. (2016c) 'Lebanon: Year-end report 2016'. [Website]. 3 June. Geneva: UNHCR. (www.alnap.org/help-library/lebanon-year-end-report-2016).

UNHCR. (2016d) 'Mexico: Year-end report 2016'. [Website]. 3 June. Geneva: UNHCR. (www.alnap.org/help-library/mexico-year-end-report-2016).

UNHCR. (2016e) Regional refugee and resilience plan 2015-2016: 2015 annual report. Geneva: UNHCR. (https://www.alnap.org/help-library/3rp-regional-refugee-resilience-plan-2015-2016-in-response-to-the-syria-crisis-2015).

UNHCR. (2016f) 'Turkey: Year-end report - 2016'. [Website]. 3 June. Geneva: UNHCR. (www.alnap.org/help-library/turkey-year-end-report-2016).

UNHCR. (2017a) *Dadaab, Kenya: Operational update 16-30 September 2017*. Geneva: UNHCR. (www.alnap.org/help-library/dadaab-kenya-operational-update-16-30-september-2017).

UNHCR. (2017b) *Global trends: Forced displacement in 2016*. Geneva: UNHCR. (www.alnap.org/help-library/global-trends-forced-displacement-in-2016).

UNHCR. (2017c) *Practical application of the comprehensive refugee response framework*. Geneva: UNHCR. (www.alnap.org/help-library/practical-application-of-the-comprehensive-refugee-response-framework).

UNHCR. (2017d) *Regional refugee and resilience plan 2017-2018: 2017 Progress Report*. Geneva: UNHCR. (www.alnap.org/help-library/regional-refugee-and-resilience-plan-2017-2018-2017-progress-report).

UNHCR. (2017e) *Regional refugee and resilience plan 2016-2017: 2016 Annual report*. Geneva: UNHCR. (www.alnap.org/help-library/regional-refugee-and-resilience-plan-2016-2017-2016-annual-report).

UNHCR. (2018a) *Burundi regional refugee response plan 2018*. Geneva: UNHCR. (www.alnap.org/help-library/burundi-regional-refugee-response-plan-2018).

UNHCR. (2018b) *Central African Republic Situation: Regional Situation Update December 2017 - January 2018*. Geneva: UNHCR. (www.alnap.org/help-library/central-african-republic-situation-regional-situation-update-december-2017-january-2018).

UNHCR. (2018c) *Global trends: Forced displacement in 2017*. Geneva: UNHCR. (www.alnap.org/help-library/global-trends-forced-displacement-in-2017).

UNHCR. (2018d) 'Jordan: Plan overview 2018'. [Website]. 3 June. Geneva: UNHCR. (www.alnap.org/help-library/jordan-plan-overview-2018).

UNHCR. (2018e) 'Lebanon: Plan overview 2018'. [Website]. 3 June. Geneva: UNHCR. (www.alnap.org/help-library/lebanon-plan-overview-2018).

UNHCR. (2018f) 'Mediterranean situation overview'. [Website]. 3 June. Geneva: UNHCR. (www.alnap.org/help-library/mediterranean-situation-overview).

UNHCR. (2018g) *The Democratic Republic of the Congo regional refugee response plan*. Geneva: UNHCR. (www.alnap.org/help-library/the-democratic-republic-of-the-congo-regional-refugee-response-plan).

UNHCR. (2018h) 'Turkey: Plan overview 2018'. [Website]. 3 June. Geneva: UNHCR. (www.alnap.org/help-library/turkey-plan-overview-2018).

UNHCR, IOM and United Nations. (2018). *Joint response plan For Rohingya humanitarian crisis 2018*. Geneva: UNHCR. (www.alnap.org/help-library/joint-response-plan-for-rohingya-humanitarian-crisis-2018).

UNICEF. (2015) *Evaluation of UNICEF's humanitarian response to the Syria crisis*. New York: UNICEF. (www.alnap.org/help-library/evaluation-of-unicef%E2%80%99s-humanitarian-response-to-the-syria-crisis).

UNICEF. (2016) *The UNICEF Response to the crisis in the Central African Republic*. New York: UNICEF. (www.alnap.org/help-library/the-unicef-response-to-the-crisis-in-the-central-african-republic).

UNICEF. (2017a) *Evaluation of UNICEF's response to the Ebola outbreak in West Africa 2014–2015*. New York: UNICEF. (www.alnap.org/help-library/evaluation-of-unicef%E2%80%99s-response-to-the-ebola-outbreak-in-west-africa-2014%E2%80%932015).

UNICEF. (2017b) *Towards improved emergency responses: Synthesis of UNICEF evaluations of humanitarian action 2010-2016*. New York: UNICEF. (www.alnap. org/help-library/towards-improved-emergency-responses-synthesis-of-unicef-evaluations-of-humanitarian).

United Nations. (2016a) *New York declaration*. New York: United Nations. (www. alnap.org/help-library/new-york-declaration).

United Nations. (2016b) *The world's cities in 2016: Data booklet*. New York: United Nations. (www.alnap.org/help-library/the-world%E2%80%99s-cities-in-2016-data-booklet).

United Nations. (2017) *Statement by the Humanitarian Coordinator for Yemen, Jamie McGoldrick, calling on parties to facilitate unimpeded aid delivery*. New York: UN. (www.alnap.org/help-library/statement-by-the-humanitarian-coordinator-for-yemen-jamie-mcgoldrick-calling-on-parties).

United Nations. (2018a) 'Remarks by the Secretary-General to the Pledging Conference on Yemen'. [Website]. 1 June. New York: UN. (www.alnap.org/help-library/remarks-by-the-secretary-general-to-the-pledging-conference-on-yemen).

United Nations. (2018b) Statement on United Nations and humanitarian community making progress in scaling up aid to people in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. [Website]. New York: UN. (www.alnap.org/help-library/statement-on-united-nations-and-humanitarian-community-making-progress-in-scaling-up).

United Nations General Assembly. (2016) *One humanity : Shared responsibility. Report of the Secretary General for the World Humanitarian Summit*. New York: UNGA. (www.alnap.org/help-library/one-humanity-shared-responsibility-report-of-the-un-secretary-general-for-the-world).

United Nations Peacekeeping. (n.d.) 'Minusma fact sheet: United Nations multidimensional integrated stabilization mission in Mali'. [Website]. New York: United Nations. (www.alnap.org/help-library/minusma-fact-sheet-united-nations-multidimensional-integrated-stabilization-mission-in).

US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2017) 2014-2016 *Ebola outbreak in West Africa*. Gerogia: US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (www. alnap.org/help-library/2014-2016-ebola-outbreak-in-west-africa).

Van Belle D. (2010) 'Media agenda setting and donor aid', in *Public Sentinel: News Media & Governance Reform*, 85–108. Washington, DC: World Bank. (www.alnap. org/help-library/media-agenda-setting-and-donor-aid).

Wall, I. and Hedlund, K. (2016) *Localisation and locally-led crisis response: A literature review*. Copenhagen: LPG2. (www.alnap.org/help-library/localisation-and-locally-led-crisis-response-a-literature-review).

Watson, C., Abdoulaye, Y. and Mingueyambaye, N. (2016) Étude sur les *effets/impacts des programmes de transferts monétaires sur les m*énages en *situation d'insécurité alimentaire et nutritionnelle dans la région de Wadi-Fira, d*épartement de *biltine.* Geneva: CARE International. (www.alnap.org/help-library/%C3%A9tude-sur-les-effetsimpacts-des-programmes-de-transferts-mon%C3%A9taires-sur-les-m%C3%A9nages-en).

WFP. (2017) Seguridad Alimentaria Urbana. Rome: WFP. [Website]. (www.alnap.org/help-library/seguridad-alimentaria-urbana).

White House. (2017) 'Presidential executive order on resuming the United States refugee admissions program with enhanced vetting capabilities'. [Website]. 3 June. (www.alnap.org/help-library/presidential-executive-order-on-resuming-the-united-states-refugee-admissions-program).

WHO. (2014) *A fast-moving Ebola epidemic full of tragic surprises.* Washington: World Bank. (www.alnap.org/help-library/a-fast-moving-ebola-epidemic-full-of-tragic-surprises).

WHO. (2015) *Report of the Ebola interim assessment panel.* Geneva: WHO. (www.alnap.org/help-library/report-of-the-ebola-interim-assessment-panel).

WHO. (2016a) 'Cholera outbreak – WHO and partners urgently require US$ 22.35 million to save lives and reduce suffering'. [Website]. 1 June. Geneva: WHO. (www.alnap.org/help-library/cholera-outbreak-%E2%80%93-who-and-partners-urgently-require-us-2235-million-to-save-lives-and).

WHO. (2016b) 'Final trial results confirm Ebola vaccine provides high protection against disease'. [Website]. 31 May. Geneva: WHO. (www.alnap.org/help-library/final-trial-results-confirm-ebola-vaccine-provides-high-protection-against-disease).

WHO. (2016c) *Situation report: Ebola Virus Disease.* Geneva: WHO. (www.alnap.org/help-library/situation-report-ebola-virus-disease-10-june-2016).

WHO. (2018a) 'Ebola outbreak 2014-2015'. [Website]. 31 May. Geneva: WHO. (www.alnap.org/help-library/ebola-outbreak-2014-2015).

WHO. (2018b) 'Ebola virus disease – Democratic Republic of the Congo'. [Website]. 31 May. Geneva: WHO. (www.alnap.org/help-library/ebola-virus-disease-%E2%80%93-democratic-republic-of-the-congo).

WHO. (2018c) *Yemen cholera response: Weekly epidemiological bulletin, W19 2018.* Geneva: WHO. (www.alnap.org/help-library/yemen-cholera-response-weekly-epidemiological-bulletin-w19-2018).

Wihaidi, R. and Wehaidy, R. (2016) *DEC Gaza program: Gaza relief response and early recovery 2014 (Phase 1 and 2). End of project evaluation report - final.* London: DEC. (www.alnap.org/help-library/dec-gaza-program-gaza-relief-response-and-early-recovery-2014phase-1-and-2-end-of).

WMO. (2016) *El Niño 2015 conference report*. Geneva: WMO. (www.alnap.org/help-library/el-ni%C3%B1o-2015-conference-report).

Wood, RM. and Sullivan, C. (2015) 'Doing harm by doing good? The negative externalities of humanitarian aid provision during civil conflict'. *The Journal of Politics*, 77(3): 736–748. (www.alnap.org/help-library/doing-harm-by-doing-good-the-negative-externalities-of-humanitarian-aid-provision).

World Bank. (2016) *World Bank global crisis response platform*. Washington, DC: World Bank. (www.alnap.org/help-library/world-bank-global-crisis-response-platform).

World Bank. (2017) *Cities of refuge. Bringing an urban lens to the forced displacement challenge*. Washington, DC: World Bank. (www.alnap.org/help-library/cities-of-refuge-bringing-an-urban-lens-to-the-forced-displacement-challenge).

World Bank. (2017) 'Fact sheet: the World Bank Group's response to the famine crisis'. [Website]. 28 November. Washington, DC: World Bank. (www.alnap.org/help-library/fact-sheet-the-world-bank-group's-response-to-the-famine-crisis).

World Humanitarian Summit. (2016) *The grand bargain: A shared commitment to better serve people in need*. New York: Agenda for Humanity. (www.alnap.org/help-library/world-humanitarian-summit-the-grand-bargain-a-shared-commitment-to-better-serve-people).

World in Consulting Ltd. (2015) *Final evaluation report: Emergency response operation Pakistan monsoon floods 2014*. Geneva: IFRC. (www.alnap.org/help-library/final-evaluation-report-emergency-response-operation-pakistan-monsoon-floods-2014).

World Vision International. (2014) *Stories of strength and survival: Young adults discuss their experiences after the 2004 Asian tsunami*. California: World Vision. (www.alnap.org/help-library/stories-of-strength-and-survival-young-adults-discuss-their-experiences-after-the-2004).

World Vision International. (2015) *Real-time evaluation of World Vision's response to the Nepal earthquake emergency, July 2015*. California: World Vision. (www.alnap.org/help-library/real-time-evaluation-of-world-visions-response-to-the-nepal-earthquake-emergency).

Yila, O. (2017) *Protecting and promoting the food and nutrition security in the Yobe State, Phase II, North Eastern Nigeria*. New York: Action Against Hunger. (www.alnap.org/help-library/protecting-and-promoting-the-food-and-nutrition-security-in-the-yobe-state-phase-ii).

YMCA Liberia and YCARE International. (2015) *Liberia YMCA Ebola Outbreak Emergency Response*. London: YCARE International. (www.alnap.org/help-library/liberia-ymca-ebola-outbreak-emergency-response).

ANNEXES

Annex 1

Acknowledgements in full

Consultants/ main component leads

- **Financial Analysis: Development Initiatives** - Sophia Swithern, Luminita Tuchel and Chris Degnan.
- **Field level key informant interviews, field case studies:** Groupe URD.

  Groupe URD team members involved involved in the Case Studies and Global Analysis of Field KII: Véronique de Geoffroy, François Grünewald, Charlotte Heward, Nawal Karroum, Valérie Léon, Bonaventure Sokpoh. **Research assistants:** Audrey Chabrat, Florian Fillin, Gabriel Rojas.

- **Global level key informant interviews:** Lewis Sida, Neil Barry, Lesley Bourns, Fred Robarts.
- **Evaluation synthesis, literature review:** James Darcy, Sofya Bourne.
- **Aid recipient survey:** GeoPoll/Mobile Accord

  Geopoll/ Mobile Accord team members involved: Brian Kiprop, Anna Langer Max Richman, Tavian MacKinnon, Michelle Williams, Natawnee Fritz.

- **Additional literature review and research support:** Sofya Bourne
- **Organisational mapping:** Abby Stoddard, Humanitarian Outcomes
- **Support study on Outcome harvesting:** Ian Christoplos
- **Making it Count: a feasibility study on shared indicators to monitor progress in the agenda for humanity:** Alice Obrect with Tim Harcourt-Powell and Amelie Sundberg.

Management

- **Oversight:** John Mitchell
- **Component management:** Alice Obrecht (Field KII, field case studies, Aid Recipient survey); Neil Dillon (Evaluation Synthesis, literature review); Leah Campbell (KIIs global); John Mitchell (Financial analysis, Organisational Mapping); Maria Gili, Alex Glynn and Tim Harcourt-Powell (practitioners and governments survey).
- **Project and consortium management:** Charlotte Skinner
- **Communications management (including editing, filming and data visualisation):** Maria Gili, Tim Harcourt-Powell, Cara Casey-Boyce and Alex Glynn.
- **Donor liaison and reporting:** Charlotte Skinner; Catriona Foley and Franziska Schwarz.
- **Launch management and coordination:** Catriona Foley

Methodology Reference Group
- Abby Stoddard, Humanitarian Outcomes
- Anne Street, Cafod
- Bertrand Taithe, HCRI, Manchester University
- Caroline Andresen, USAID/OFDA
- Catherine Bragg, previously Deputy ERC, OCHA, Adjunct Professor in Humanitarian Action, University College Dublin
- Christina Bennett, HPG, ODI
- Daniel Sissling, Irish Aid
- David Locquercio, formerly PHAP/CHS Alliance
- Ewen Macleod, UNHCR
- Flora Cornish, LSE
- Ian Christoplos, Glemminge Development
- Jeroen Jansen, Evidence Aid
- Jim Della-Giacoma, Center on International Cooperation, NYU
- Langdon Greenhalgh, OFDA/USAID
- Lars Peter Nielsen, ACAPS
- Lesley Bourns, independent
- Mo Hamza, Lund University
- Richard Garfield, CDC
- Sophia Swithern, Development Initiatives

Refining methodology
Alice Obrecht, Neil Dillon, Paul Knox-Clarke, John Mitchell and Alexandra Warner.

Box authors
- Irregular migration – Josiah Kaplan, Research Advisor, Migration and Displacement Initiative, Save the Children International.
- Humanitarian action in urban environments – Leah Campbell, Senior Research Officer, ALNAP.
- Innovation in the humanitarian system – Alice Obrecht, Senior Research Fellow, ALNAP.
- Internal displacement: a humanitarian and development challenge – Avigail Shai, Political Advisor, and Luisa Meneghetti, Internal Displacement Monitoring Expert, IDMC (The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre).
- Promoting compliance with IHL – Tim Harcourt-Powell, Communications Officer, ALNAP.
- Cash in humanitarian response – Neil Dillon, Research Fellow, ALNAP.

The Perspectives of Aid Recipients authors
Alice Obrecht, with contribution from Maria Gili and Paul Knox Clarke.
    ALNAP is grateful to the Core Humanitarian Standards Alliance for providing results from their self-assessments and to Ground Truth Solutions for sharing data and analysis from their Human Voice Index for this spread. Particular thanks to David Loquercio, Adrien Muratet, Diana Szasz, Michael Sarnitz, Tomas Folke, Elias Sagmeister and Nick van Praag, for their discussions with ALNAP on methodology and the interpretation of results.

ANNEX 2

Annex 2

Key informant interviews at HQ level

Alex Jacobs, former Director, CALP

Alexander Matheau, Executive Director of International, British Red Cross

Amin Awad, Director, Middle East & North Africa Bureau and Regional Refugee Coordinator, UNHCR

Andre Heller Perache, former Head of Programmes, MSF UK

Andrew Schroeder, Co-Founder, WeRobotics,

Andrew Wyllie, Chief, Programme Support Branch, OCHA

Andy Hill, Civil-Military Adviser, Humanitarian, DFID

Anita Shah, Managing Director, Kimetrica

Anke Reiffenstuel, Head of Division of Humanitarian Assistance and Operations, Federal Foreign Office Germany

Anne Kajuju Ikiara, former Executive Director, NEAR Network

Anne Street, Head of Humanitarian Policy, CAFOD

Anthony Nolan, Localisation Thematic Lead for the CP AoR and Child Protection Specialist, UNICEF

Arafat Jamal, Head of Partnership and Coordination Service, UNHCR

Beatrice Megevand Roggo, Middle East Director, Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue

Ben Ramalingam, Co-Founder and Chair, The HIF and Research Fellow, Institue of Development Studies

Bob Kitchen, Director, Emergency Response and Preparedness Unit, IRC

Brett Moore, Global Shelter Cluster Coordinator, UNHCR

Bruno LeMarquis, Deputy Director, Crisis Bureau, UNDP

Chris Porter, Humanitarian Head of Profession and Senior Advisor, Social Protection, DFID

Christina Bennet, Head of Programme, Humanitarian Policy Group, ODI

Christine Pirenne, Head of Humanitarian Aid, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Netherlands

Claire Messina, Deputy Director, UN Staff College

Courtenay Cabot Venton, international development economist

Dan Maxwell, Director, Food Security and Livelihoods in Complex Emergencies Research Program, Feinstein

International Centre, Tufts University

Dana Van Alphen, Caribbean Regional Advisor, Department of Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Relief

Danny Sriskadarajah, former Head of Civicus

David Crawford, Head of Humanitarian, Islamic Relief Worldwide

David Sanderson, Professor, University of New South Wales

Dr Dawit Zawde, President, Africa Humanitarian Action

Dayna Brown, independent consultant, formerly USAID

Degan Ali, Executive Director, ADESO

Dennis McNamara, Senior Humanitarian Advisor, Centre for Humanitarian Diagloue

Dominic Crawley, Concern

Dominik Stillhart, Director of Operations, ICRC

Dominique Burgeon, Director of Emergencies, FAO

Dominique Porteaud, Global WASH Cluster Coordinator, UNICEF

Dylan Winder, former Head of Humanitarian Policy and Response, DFID

Ela Serdaroglu, Global

Shelter Cluster Coordinator, IFRC

Elisabeth Rasmussen, Assistant Executive Director, WFP

Eric James, Director, Field Ready

Eugenio Cusumano, Assistant Professor, Leiden University.

Fadi Aldeiri, Hand in Hand

Federico Borello, Executive Director, Center for Civilians in Conflict

Fergus McBean, Humanitarian Advisor Yemen, DFID

Filiep Decorte, Officer-In-Charge, UN-Habitat New York

Gareth Owen OBE, Humanitarian Director, Save the Children

Gareth Price-Jones, Senior Humanitarian Policy and Advocacy Coordinator, CARE International

George Gabriel, Project Lead, Savage Passage

Guillaume Simonian, Interagency Lead, Humanitarian Policy and Guidance, Health Emergencies, WHO

Guillermo Garcia, Executive Director, International Response and Programs, American Red Cross

Hany El Banna, Chairman, The Humanitarian Forum

Heba Aly, Director, IRIN

Helen McElhinney, Senior Humanitarian Advisor, DFID

Henrike.Trautmann, Emergency Response

Inside EU, ECHO

Hishem Khadhouri, Geneva Call

Dr Hossam Elsharkawi, Vice President for International Operations, Canadian Red Cross

Hugo Slim, Senior Research Fellow, Institute of Ethics, Law and Armed Conflict, University of Oxford

Inger-Jo Tjoflaat, Norwegian Refugee Council

Jamie Isbister, Humanitarian Coordinator, DFAT

Jamie McGoldrick, Development and Humanitarian Coordinator Palestine, UN

Jan Egeland, Secretary General, Norwegian Refugee Council

Jemilah Mahmood, Under Secretary, Partnership, IFRC

Jen Scott, British Red Cross

Jesper Lund, Chief of Response Partnership Section and Secretary of INSARAG, OCHA

Jessica Alexander, independent consultant and lecturer

Joanna Macrae, Director, European Partnerships, Give Directly

Joe Belliveau, former Program Director, Humanitarian Access, and Negotiations, Conflict Dynamics

Joel Kaiser, Director, WeRobotics

John Mitchell, Director,

ALNAP

Joost Herman, President, NOHA

Judith Greenwood, Executive Director, CHS Alliance

Karl Blanchet, Director of the Health in Humanitarian Crises Centre, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine

Kate Halff, Executive Secretary, Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response

Kate Latimir, Senior Humanitarian Policy Adviser, ActionAid

Kathryn Schick, Director, VOICE

Kathryn Yarlett, former Special Assistant to the Chief of Branch, OCHA

Kirsten Gelsdorf, Professor of Practice of Public Policy, and Director of Global Humanitarian Policy, Frank Batten School of Leadership and Public Policy, University of Virginia

Lara Quarterman, Humanitarian Adviser, DFID

Larissa Fast, Research Associate, ODI

Lars Peter Nissan, Director, ACAPS

Leni Stenseth, Director Humanitarian Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway

Liz Hughes, Chief Executive, MapAction

Liza Mantilla, Director of Disaster Management, Pan American Development

Foundation

Louise Searle, Development Manager, Humanitarian Policy and International Partnerships, Foreign Affairs and Trade, New Zealand

Luisa Villegas, Deputy Senior Programs Director, Pan American Development Foundation

Manu Gupta, Chairperson, Asian Disaster Reduction and Response Network

Marc Dubois, independent humanitarian analyst and consultant, and Senior Fellow, SOAS

Marek Štys, Head of Emergency Operations and External Relations, People in Need

Maria Agnese Giordano, Global Education Cluster Coordinator, UNICEF

Marianne Vestergaard, Evaluation Specialist, DANIDA

Mark Bulpitt, Head of Fragile States and Emergency Response, World Vision International

Mark Lowcock, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, OCHA

Mathias Schmale, Director, United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

Matthew Carter, Humanitarian Director, CAFOD

Michael Mosselmans, Head of Humanitarian Practice, Policy and Advocacy, Christian Aid

Michaël Neuman, Director of Studies, MSF-CRASH

Michel Maietta, Founder and Director, Inter-Agency Research and Analysis Network

Mohammed Abdiker, Director of Operations and Emergencies, IOM

Monica Blagescu, Director of Programmes and Accountability, DEC

Monica de Castellarnau, Humanitarian Affairs Senior Adviser, MSF

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

Nathanial Raymond, former Founder and Director, Harvard Humanitarian Initiative.

Nick Van Praag, Founder and Executive Director of Ground Truth Solutions

Nigel Timmins, Humanitarian Director, Oxfam

Nils Carstensen, Senior Humanitarian Advisor, DanChurchAid

Nina Nepesova, Global Humanitarian Policy and Advocacy, World Vision

Nina Papadopoulos, Team

Lead Access in Crisis and Conflict, USAID

Nuno Nunes, Global Camp Coordination and Camp Management Cluster Coordinator, IOM

Oliver Lacy-Hall, Head of UN-OCHA Indonesia and ASEAN Liason Office

Olivier Bangerter, Deputy Head of Multilateral Affairs, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation

Olivier DeLarue, Co-Founder and CEO, Global Humanitarian Lab

Panos Moumtzis, UN Assistant Secretary General, Regional Humanitarian Coordinator for the Syria Crisis, OCHA

Patricia McIreavy, Vice President, Humanitarian Policy and Practice, InterAction

Patrick Foley, Lecturer in Humanitarian Affairs and IIHA Fellow, Fordham University

Peter Van Acker, Director, Humanitarian Aid, Transitional Development and Governance, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Belgium

Pierre Krahenbuhl, Commisioner General, United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

Rachel Scott, Head of Crisis and Fragility, OECD

Rahul Chandran,

Executive Director, Global Alliance for Humanitarian Innovation

Rajendra Aryal, former Senior Response and Resilience Coordinator, FAO

Rekha Das, Early Recovery Cluster Adviser, UNDP

Rezaul Chowdhury, Executive Director, COAST

Roberto Ricci, Chief, Emergency Response Section, OHCHR

Romano Lasker, Programme Specialist, Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery, UNDP

Ronald Jackson, Executive Director, Council of the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency

Sam RoseDeputy Director, Department, of Planning, United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

Sandra Aviles, independent consultant

Sean Lowrie, Director, START Network

Seán O'hAodha, Deputy Director, Humanitarian Unit, Irish Aid

Segolene Adam, Chief, Humanitarian Policy, UNICEF

Sema Genel, Executive Director, Support to Life

Silvia Colona, Senior Humanitarian Policy Adviser and Policy

Team Leader, British Red Cross

Simon Lawry White, independent consultant

Simon Russell, Global Protection Cluster Coordinator, UNCHR

Smruti Patel, Co-Founder and Director, Global Mentoring Initiative

Sonia Zambakides, Director, Humanitarian and Stabilisation, Crown Agents

Sophie Pongracz, independent consultant and economic

Sorcha O'Callaghan, former Head of Humanitarian Policy, British Red Cross

Stephen O'Brien, former Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, OCHA

Susanne Mikhail, Director of Humanitarian Assistance, Sida

Tanya Dræbel, Course Leader, Disaster Response Management & Coordination, University of Copenhagen

Tasha Gill, Senior Adviser, Child Protection in Emergencies, UNICEF

Tess Berry-Hart, Head of Advocacy, Calais Action

Than le, Director, Ebola Taskforce, DFAT

Ugochi Daniels, Chief, Humanitarian Response, UNFPA

Vickie Hawkins, Executive Director, MSF UK

Vincenzo Bollettino, Director, Resilient Communities Program, Harvard Humanitarian Initiative

Walter Kaelin, Lecturer, Bern University

Yasmine Sherif, Director, Education Cannot Wait

Key informant interviews at field level

Due to requests for confidentiality, and the sensitivity of information shared by field-level key informants, we are not publishing the names of those who participated in the field level key informant interviews. Groupe URD, the component lead for the field level research, and ALNAP are grateful for the time taken by field level humanitarian workers, host government staff and members of crisis affected communities for their time and invaluable inputs to this report.

ANNEX 3

Annex 3: The study matrix

The research for this edition of *The State of the Humanitarian System* was built around a study matrix, elaborated at the inception stage of the report.

Criteria	Indicators		Eval. Synt.	Lit. Rev.	KIIs (HQ)	KIIs (field)	Field studies	Survey (pract.)	Survey (aid recipient)	Financial analysis	Caseload analysis
Sufficiency/ Coverage											
Are the volume and distribution of resources sufficient to meet needs?	I-1.1	Total financial flows compared with stated requirements (appeals)								▓	
	I-1.2	Total pledged compared with total committed								▓	
	I-1.3	Proportion to technical sector compared with stated requirements								▓	
	I-1.4	Volume of public and private financial flows following the onset of a disaster								▓	
	I-1.5	Funding flows dedicated to protection, preparedness/resilience against needs		▓	▓	▓	▓			▓	▓
To what degree are needs covered?	I-1.6	Adequacy of programming to meet needs	▓		▓	▓	▓	▓	▓		
	I-1.7	Global and sectoral programming presence against needs	▓		▓	▓	▓	▓	▓		
Does coverage differ according to key population groups?	I-1.8	Examples of coverage gaps for specific population groups according to sex, age, ethnicity, or hard-to-reach communities	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓				
What (if any) are the constraints to sufficiency/ coverage?	I-1.9	Challenges to sufficiency/coverage identified through evaluations, surveys and key informant interviews	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓			

Criteria	Indicators		Eval. Synt.	Lit. Rev.	KIIs (HQ)	KIIs (field)	Field studies	Survey (pract.)	Survey (aid recipient)	Financial analysis	Caseload analysis
Appropriateness / Relevance											
Do interventions address the priority needs of recipients?	I-2.1	Extent to which recipients consider the assistance to be relevant and appropriate							■		
	I-2.2	Extent to which operational and strategic emphasis focused on priority needs	■		■	■	■	■	■		
Does appropriateness/ relevance differ according to key population groups?	I-2.3	Examples of appropriateness/ relevance being higher/lower for specific population groups according to sex, age, ethnicity, or hard-to-reach communities	■	■	■	■	■		■		
What (if any) are the constraints to appropriateness/relevance?	I-2.4	Challenges to appropriateness/ relevance identified through evaluations, surveys and key informant interviews	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		

Criteria	Indicators		Eval. Synt.	Lit. Rev.	KIIs (HQ)	KIIs (field)	Field studies	Survey (pract.)	Survey (aid recipient)	Financial analysis	Caseload analysis
Accountability/ Engagement											
To what extent are affected people able to hold humanitarian actors to account for the decisions that are made on their behalf?	I-3.1	The degree to which affected people are aware of their entitlements.	▮				▮		▮		
	I-3.2	Presence and strength of sanction mechanisms through which aid recipients can influence or assign consequences to agencies	▮	▮		▮	▮	▮	▮		
What (if any) are the constraints to greater accountability?	I-3.3	Challenges to accountability to affected people identified through evaluations, surveys and key informant interviews	▮	▮	▮	▮	▮	▮			
To what extent are affected people able to participate in/influence decisions that affect them?	I-3.4	The degree to which affected people are included in decision-making and management mechanisms, or control the decision-making over programmes	▮	▮	▮	▮	▮	▮	▮		
	I-3.5	Presence and quality of aid recipient consultation, as seen in: needs assessments, 'closed' feedback loops and changes to programming in response to feedback or complaints	▮	▮	▮	▮	▮	▮	▮		
What (if any) are the constraints to greater participation/influence?	I-3.6	Challenges to participation of affected people identified through evaluations, surveys and key informant interviews	▮	▮	▮	▮	▮	▮			

Criteria	Indicators		Eval. Synt.	Lit. Rev.	KIIs (HQ)	KIIs (field)	Field studies	Survey (pract.)	Survey (aid recipient)	Financial analysis	Caseload analysis
Effectiveness											
How well were humanitarian objectives met?	I-4.1	Degree to which protection and resilience objectives were met		X							
	I-4.2	Level of preparedness (advanced funding and rapid deployment systems and capacities)		X							
	I-4.3	Perceived relative effectiveness of different sectors and actors						X	X		
	I-4.4	Accomplishments against objectives set out in SRPs or similar (e.g. programme proposals)	X		X	X	X				
	I-4.5	Demonstrated improved response and/or quicker recovery in subsequent emergencies	X	X	X	X	X				
Was the response timely?	I-4.6	Timeliness of response	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Was the response of acceptable quality?	I-4.7	Degree to which response meets technical standards (e.g. Sphere) or is perceived to be of adequate quality by aid recipients	X		X	X	X	X	X		
What (if any) were the major constraints to meeting objectives in a timely way, and at acceptable levels of quality?	I-4.8	Challenges to Effectiveness identified through evaluations, surveys and key informant interviews	X	X	X	X	X	X			

Criteria	Indicators		Eval. Synt.	Lit. Rev.	KIIs (HQ)	KIIs (field)	Field studies	Survey (pract.)	Survey (aid recipient)	Financial analysis	Caseload analysis
Efficiency											
Do outputs reflect most rational and economic use of inputs?	I-5.1	Rational allocation of time and resources as perceived by participants					X	X	X		
	I-5.2	Appropriate use of pre-positioning, surge capacity and similar logistical platforms	X		X	X					
	I-5.3	Appropriateness of inventory and inputs to preparedness/resilience and protection		X							
	I-5.4	Efficiency of the use of funding channels and 'division of labour' between donors and funding channels. Gains in economies of scale vs. loss in cascading overheads of sub-partnership arrangements	X	X						X	
	I-5.5	Measurable results against activities and time spent	X								
What (if any) are the constraints?	I-5.6	Challenges to participation of affected people identified through evaluations, surveys and key informant interviews	X	X	X	X	X	X			

Criteria	Indicators		Eval. Synt.	Lit. Rev.	KIIs (HQ)	KIIs (field)	Field studies	Survey (pract.)	Survey (aid recipient)	Financial analysis	Caseload analysis
Complementarity											
Do humanitarian activities take appropriate account of national and local actors, their capacities and efforts?	I-6.1	Extent to which local/national authorities, where appropriate, were involved throughout the programme cycle (needs assessment and prioritisation, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation)	▓		▓	▓	▓	▓	▓		
	I-6.2	Existence of exit/transitional plans with local and national actors	▓		▓				▓		
	I-6.3	Levels of direct and, where possible, indirect funding to local organisations								▓	
	I-6.4	Extent to which humanitarian objectives held distinct from national and local agendas when necessary	▓		▓	▓	▓				
	I-6.5	Quality of partnerships between international humanitarian and national and local actors	▓		▓	▓	▓	▓			
	I-6.6	Level of capacity-building activities and opportunities for local/national organisations	▓		▓	▓	▓				
What (if any) are the constraints?	I-6.7	Challenges to Complementarity identified through evaluations, surveys and key informant interviews	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓			

Criteria	Indicators		Eval. Synt.	Lit. Rev.	KIIs (HQ)	KIIs (field)	Field studies	Survey (pract.)	Survey (aid recipient)	Financial analysis	Caseload analysis
Coherence											
Are humanitarian efforts coherent with core principles and IHL?	I-7.1	Evidence of promotion of/respect for IHL by humanitarian actors	▓	▓	▓						
	I-7.2	Adherence to core humanitarian principles by humanitarian actors (mapping outcomes of relevant meetings at the global and regional levels and perceptions indicated by surveys)						▓	▓		
	I-7.3	Number of attacks on aid workers and humanitarian relief efforts (hospitals, convoys)									▓
What (if any) are the constraints?	I-7.4	Challenges to coherence identified through evaluations, surveys and key informant interviews	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓			

ALNAP