JOHN BORTON • MARGIE BUCHANAN-SMITH • RALF OTTO

Support to Internally Displaced Persons

— Learning from Evaluations

Synthesis report of a joint
evaluation programme

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John Borton
Margie Buchanan-Smith
Ralf Otto

Preface

In May 2003, representatives of four donor organisations, the Danish and Dutch Ministries of Foreign Affairs, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and the European Commission Humanitarian Office (ECHO), agreed to undertake a collaborative evaluation process focussing on the theme of support to Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). The objective of the process was to 'to draw out key, system-wide lessons and thereby improve the provision of humanitarian assistance and protection to IDPs in the future'. An informal grouping 'the IDP Evaluation Group' was formed to steer the process, chaired by the Head of the Evaluation Department of the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. By the autumn of 2003 the initial grouping had expanded to also include representatives the US Agency for International Development (USAID), the UK Department for International Development (DFID), Development Cooperation Ireland (DCI), OCHA, UNHCR and WFP.

The approach adopted for planning and managing this collaborative exercise has been deliberately light and informal. This has meant it could be finalised within a relatively short time-scale, and has facilitated donor participation. Despite some weaknesses this collaborative approach has proved popular with all the participating agencies. It could serve as a useful model for future evaluations if applied with more rigour and discipline. The model has the following positive attributes: It encourages a broader perspective beyond the programming of a single donor. It is very much in alignment with the Good Humanitarian Donorship initiative that aims to increase the accountability and consistency of donors within the functioning of the wider humanitarian system. And it has the potential to push forward policy debates, which could be truly evidence-based.

This synthesis is based on 17 reports covering operations in ten countries, namely: Angola, Somalia, Indonesia, Kosovo, Afghanistan,

the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Colombia, Liberia, Eritrea, and Sudan. Three of these countries (Sudan, DRC and Colombia) contain the largest IDP populations in the world.

Seven critical issues are identified: the rights of IDPs; the protection deficit; donor policy on IDPs; the 'categorisation' of IDPs; needs assessments; coordination and the collaborative response; and when does the need for assistance end? These critical issues are discussed in detail in the full report and recommendations on how to deal with them are presented.

Niels Dabelstein
Head, Evaluation Department
Danida

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ALNAP	Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action
AREU	Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit
CAP	Consolidated Appeal Process
CHAP	Consolidated Humanitarian Action Plan
Danida	Development wing of the Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs
DCI	Development Cooperation Ireland
DFID	UK Department for International Development
DHA	UN Department for Humanitarian Affairs (now OCHA)
DPKO	UN Department for Peacekeeping Operations
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
ECHA	Executive Committee for Humanitarian Affairs
ECHO	European Commission Humanitarian Aid Office
ELN	National Liberation Army (Colombia)
EMOP	Emergency Operation (WFP)
ERC	UN Emergency Relief Coordinator
FARC	Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces
HAC	(EU) Humanitarian Aid Committee
HC	UN Humanitarian Coordinator
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
ICVA	International Council of Voluntary Agencies
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
ILO	UN International Labour Organisation
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force (Afghanistan)
JEM	Justice and Equality Movement

LPI	Life and Peace Institute
LRRD	Linking Relief-Rehabilitation and Development
LURD	Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy
MFA	Ministry for Foreign Affairs
MLC	Mouvement du libération du Congo
MODEL	Movement for Democracy in Liberia
MONUC	UN Military Observer Mission in the Congo
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NPFL	National Patriotic Front for Liberia
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NRVA	National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment
OAU	Organisation for African Unity (now African Union)
OCHA	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
OFDA	US Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
RACN	Rapid Assessment of Critical Needs
RC	UN Resident Coordinator
RCD	Rassemblement Congolais pour la démocratie
RSG	Representative of the Secretary General
SACB	Somalia Aid Coordination Body
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SLA	Sudan Liberation Army
SLM/A	Sudan Liberation Movement/Army
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNAMA	UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNHCHR	UN High Commissioner for Human Rights
UNHCR	UN High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	UN Children's Fund
UNITA	Union for the Total Independence of Angola
UNMIK	UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo
UNMIL	UN Mission in Liberia
UNOSOM	United Nations Operation in Somalia
UNSG	UN Secretary General
USAID	US Agency for International Development
VAM	Vulnerability Assessment Mapping
WFP	UN World Food Programme
WSP	War Torn Societies Project

Executive Summary

This synthesis report represents the final stage of a collaborative evaluation exercise on the theme of donor support to Internally Displaced Persons. The process began in mid 2003 and involved seven donor organisations (Danida, Sida, Netherlands MFA, ECHO, USAID, DFID and Development Cooperation Ireland) and three UN agencies/entities (UNHCR, OCHA and WFP). To help guide the evaluations undertaken as part of the exercise a Common Framework document was prepared. In all the collaborative exercise generated, or included, eleven evaluation reports. *(Refer to Section 1)*. To complement this 'core set' another six studies were included in the set used for this synthesis.

The principal method used in reviewing the reports in the set were the preparation of spreadsheet matrices recording the page references and principal points made against 45 'key terms' which had been derived from the Terms of Reference. The material contained in the reports was complemented by three other sources/processes:

- A series of interviews conducted in Geneva by the synthesis team over a 2.5 days during October;
- A workshop held in Brussels in November that brought together ten evaluators (principally the Team Leaders) representing 11 of the 17 studies in the set;
- Telephone and face to face interviews with representatives of the evaluation and operational sections of the organisations participating in the collaborative exercise.

In all 37 individuals were interviewed in addition to the participants in the November Workshop. *(Refer to Section 2)*.

Though the term IDP is widely used there is no single definition and many organisations have developed their own definitions tailored to their mandates and perspectives. The definition used in the UN

Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement is widely referred to and its key elements are the involvement of force as a cause of the displacement and the displaced remaining within the recognized state border. Under this definition there are estimated to be approximately 25 million IDPs around the world distributed between nearly 50 countries.

The full set of 17 reports covered operations that had provided or financed support to IDPs in ten countries, namely: Angola; Somalia; Indonesia; Kosovo; Afghanistan; the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC); Colombia; Liberia; Eritrea; and Sudan. A brief account of the conflict and IDP numbers is provided for each country. Three of these countries (Sudan, DRC and Colombia) contain the largest IDP populations in the world. The focus and coverage of the reports varied significantly, with some focussing on the programmes of a single donor or UN agency and others on the programmes funded by a group of donors. Some assessed the overall humanitarian response of which IDP programmes were just a part whilst others focussed more specifically on those programmes and issues relating specifically to IDPs. *(Refer to Section 3)*.

Recognition of the relative neglect of the issue of internally displaced persons from the early 1990's onwards has stimulated considerable activity in the international community. Much of the energy has been focussed on:

a) clarifying the legal position of IDPs in terms of existing international human rights and humanitarian law through the development of the 1998 UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, and encouraging states to incorporate such provisions into domestic law; and

b) improving the institutional arrangements within the international humanitarian sector for responding to the assistance and protection needs of IDPs.

Efforts to improve the institutional arrangements in relation to IDPs (principally within the UN) have been taking place within the context of wider efforts to improve coordination in humanitarian operations. Over the last decade the UN system has taken the view that a coordinated, collaborative approach is the preferred model for effectively meeting the protection and assistance needs of IDPs. The 'Collaborative Approach' has encountered resistance from various quarters, including some UN agencies and donor organisations. On more than one occasion (but particularly during 2000), the model of a dedicated or lead agency (most probably based in or around UNHCR) has been championed, but eventually been rejected in favour of the Collaborative Approach. In 2002 an Internal Displacement Unit was created within OCHA to encourage and support the Collaborative Approach.

The IASC has developed increasingly specific guidance to UN Resident Coordinators/Humanitarian Coordinators and UN Country Teams on the Collaborative Approach. The most comprehensive and specific guidance, the so called policy package, was issued in September 2004. Only three months earlier, following an evaluation of the Internal Displacement Unit that was critical of its lack of impact on the UN system that was "not ready for change", the Unit was upgraded to the status of Inter-Agency Internal Displacement Division. In many respects then, the current situation represents a new opportunity to 'make the Collaborative Approach work'. *(Refer to Section 4)*.

The results of the evaluations were initially reviewed in relation to the six key evaluative criteria.

Relevance was frequently assessed negatively as a result of lack of access, inadequate funding, difficulties in the identification of IDPs and their needs, and assistance not being sufficiently needs driven.

Effectiveness: where covered in the reports weaknesses were identified in a lack of clarity of objectives of the overall response, a general lack of monitoring and a low awareness of standards.

Impact was generally assessed positively despite the lack of baseline data and evidence of bias towards IDPs that were in accessible areas and more specifically in camps within those areas.

Efficiency was not well covered in the reports, though in Indonesia significant inefficiencies were identified as a result of lengthy management chains and organisations having to juggle the different programme rationales and contractual and reporting requirements of the different donors.

Coherence: Coherence was assessed variously depending on the level of assessment and the number of donors being considered.

Connectedness: Positive assessments were recorded by several evaluations in relation to the transition from relief to development, though the picture in relation to capacity building and efforts to address the causes of displacement were generally negative. There were problems in some cases resulting from the premature curtailment of assistance after IDP return

Findings in relation to the key criteria resonate with the annual synthesis exercises undertaken by ALNAP. *(Refer to Section 5)*.

Six critical issues emerged during the synthesis process and these were considered in greater depth in Section 6 of the report.

The rights of IDP
Conclusions

Since publication of the Guiding Principles in 1998 progress has been made on incorporating them into national legislation. In 2001 Angola became the first country to incorporate the Guiding Principles into domestic law and several countries have followed suit or incorporated

the Guiding Principles into their cooperation agreements with UN agencies. However, there are many countries that have yet to incorporate the Guiding Principles. Experience in Angola and Colombia shows that incorporating the Guiding Principles into domestic law does not necessarily lead to better government policies or to automatic improvements in the rights of IDPs, but at least there is legislation in place against which governments can be held to account. *(Refer to Section 6.2).*

Recommendations

1. Donors should ensure that sufficient support is being provided to the Representative of the Secretary General and human rights organisations in order to significantly increase the number of countries incorporating the Guiding Principles into domestic law.

2. Donors, UN agencies and NGOs should ensure that sufficient support is being provided to national civil society organisations in raising awareness of IDP rights under domestic law and strengthening civil society's ability (where possible including IDPs themselves) to hold government to account.

3. Donors, UN agencies and NGOs should do more to encourage and support governments in the implementation of national policies relating to IDPs, for example through advocacy. Donor governments have a particularly important and influential role to play, through coordinated advocacy, to ensure that national authorities are held to account where they fall short of the Guiding Principles or international human rights and humanitarian law.

The protection deficit
Conclusions

Where national government fail to protect IDPs, there is evidence of a continuing and substantial deficit in the protection work done by the international community. Practices and omissions contributing to this deficit include:

– Overlooking the protection needs of minorities
– The prioritisation of material assistance over protection needs
– The inability or unwillingness of implementing partners to engage in protection work
– European domestic asylum policy compromising in-country protection work
– Lack of access in areas of insecurity
– Lack of adequate monitoring of human rights abuses
– Conceptual confusion in donor organisations about their potential role in relation to protection

– Inadequate levels of funding being provided for protection activities in some cases *(Refer to Section 6.3)*.

4. Donor organisations should take steps to clarify their role in relation to protection and provide clear direction to their country desks and missions in how to encourage and support improved protection for IDPs in the humanitarian and development operations that they fund

5. Donor organisations should ensure that protection activities are not neglected relative to material assistance provision in their funding of humanitarian operations, and should encourage their implementing partners to strengthen their knowledge of, and capacity to undertake protection work.

6. Donor organisations, UN agencies and NGOs should increase the level of human rights monitoring and advocacy in IDP situations. In particular the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights should be encouraged, and funded accordingly, to deploy more field missions to areas experiencing significant displacement to play a lead role in the monitoring of human rights abuses.

Donor policy on IDPs
Conclusions

USAID recently became the first donor organisation to issue a policy statement in relation to IDPs. Currently several other donor organisations are in the process of reviewing and revising their overall humanitarian policies, though it would seem that few see the justification for a separate policy statement on IDPs. Whilst many donors lack formal policy statements in relation to IDPs all claim to be committed to the Guiding Principles. In practice however the policies (such as they were at the time the evaluations were undertaken) are not very evident at the operational level. One major donor (ECHO) has fundamental objections to the identification and treatment of IDPs as a separate group (see below). In Somalia the team found there to be 'policy evaporation' between the donor headquarters and the projects in the field. In Afghanistan a conflict was identified between domestic policies in donor countries and the policies of those donors in relation to IDPs in Afghanistan. Because of the difficulties surrounding the issue of 'categorisation' (see below) it would seem preferable for donors to develop policy statements in relation to vulnerability and vulnerable groups (including IDPs), in which a clear commitment to protection should figure, rather than to develop additional policy statements dedicated to IDPs. *(Refer to Section 6.4)*.

7. Donor organisations should develop clear policy statements on vulnerability and their approaches to meeting the assistance and protection needs of vulnerable groups in which IDPs are considered as one among several potentially vulnerable groups.

8. Through the Good Humanitarian Donorship Initiative, donor organisations should seek to achieve greater coherence between their humanitarian policies, particularly their policies relating to potential IDPs and other potentially vulnerable groups.

9. As a matter of course, evaluations commissioned by donor organisations should include an assessment of the extent to which stated policy is being followed through and implemented on the ground, and identification of the learning points in relation to policy.

The 'categorisation' of IDPs

Conclusions

The evaluations revealed a strong vein of objection, not only to the *treatment* of IDPs as a separate category but even to their separate *identification* amongst all actual and potential vulnerable groups. The strength of such objections was somewhat surprising considering the widely held view that IDPs had been a relatively neglected group and the participation of many humanitarian agencies in efforts to address such neglect over the last decade. Such objections reflect an apparent unease within the humanitarian sector with the notion of IDPs as a separate category and this needs to be thought through and resolved by the sector.

The factors contributing to this vein of objection are complex but include:

– the belief held by some of the evaluation teams and some agencies that identification of IDPs automatically meant that IDPs would be separately targeted in the provision of assistance and thus potentially privileged in relation to other vulnerable groups, and a consequent sense that separate identification was at odds with needs-driven humanitarianism;

– the observed reality that IDPs are not a homogenous group and that some IDPs are better off than some other vulnerable groups, including those who did not leave their homes in the face of insecurity and threats to their protection;

– the weakness of current needs assessment mechanisms in the humanitarian sector, particularly the lack of comprehensive assessments of need capable of identifying and prioritising differential needs across all potentially vulnerable groups (see below);

- the immense practical difficulties of accurately identifying IDPs from amongst other non-displaced populations, particularly in urban areas, and a consequent sense of mistrust of statistics on IDP numbers;

- the continuing pre-occupation of many humanitarian agencies with the provision of material assistance at the expense of their protection role and a consequent pre-occupation with the identification of households and individuals to be targeted with material assistance;

- an apparent lack of appreciation in some areas within the humanitarian sector of the benefits to be gained from monitoring IDP numbers (as distinct from other potentially vulnerable groups) in order to inform policies and potential interventions to improve the situation of IDPs *(Refer to Section 6.5)*.

Recommendations

10. The humanitarian sector (i.e. donors, UN agencies, NGOs and national authorities) should review approaches towards the identification and treatment of different vulnerable groups (including IDPs) and improve procedures and guidance on the identification and targeting of different vulnerable groups. Within such a process and with specific regard to IDPs it is recommended that *displacement be used as an indicator of potential vulnerability rather than as a means of defining target groups*.

11. Linkages between the humanitarian and human rights community should be strengthened particularly with regard to IDPs and the particular challenges that humanitarian agencies face in identifying them and responding to their assistance and protection needs when there is a range of other vulnerable groups to consider. Greater dialogue between the humanitarian and human rights community could also serve to strengthen knowledge of protection work amongst humanitarian agencies.

Needs assessments

Conclusions

The picture conveyed by the set was distinctly unimpressive:

- There was an overall lack of needs assessments

- The quality of assessments was often poor

- Where needs assessments were undertaken, they were often undertaken by single agencies and actors with a particular focus or perspective. Consequently the assessments were disparate and difficult to integrate

- Comprehensive, multi-sectoral, inter-agency assessments of need are rarely undertaken
- Follow up to the recommendations of those needs assessments actually undertaken tends to be inadequate

Such findings are troubling when many humanitarian agencies (and donors) claim to be "needs-driven". Substantial improvements are required in the quality, coverage (both geographically and sectorally) and the levels of agency participation in joint needs assessment processes. Donors are aware of such shortcomings and, through the work of the Montreux group and the Good Humanitarian Donorship Initiative are seeking to improve the situation. Significant improvements in relation to needs assessment processes would go a long way towards overcoming the objections of those who see the identification of IDPs as a category of vulnerable group as being somehow at odds with needs-driven humanitarianism. *(Refer to Section 6.6)*.

Recommendations

12. Donors, UN agencies, NGOs and national authorities should ensure that comprehensive, inter-agency, needs assessment processes are undertaken in all operations and on a regular basis. Such assessments should cover all areas and sectors and be capable of identifying the assistance and protection needs of all potentially vulnerable groups (including IDPs) *and of prioritising their needs*.

Coordination and the Collaborative Response

Conclusions

Efforts to improve the institutional arrangements in relation to IDPs (principally within the UN) have been taking place within the context of wider efforts to improve coordination in humanitarian operations. Over the last decade the UN system has taken the view that a coordinated, collaborative approach[1] is the preferred model for effectively meeting the protection and assistance needs of IDPs. The 'Collaborative Approach' has encountered resistance from various quarters, including some UN agencies and donor organisations. On more than one occasion (but particularly during 2000), the model of a dedicated or lead agency (most probably based in or around UNHCR) has been championed, but eventually been rejected in favour of the Collaborative Approach. In 2002 an Internal Displacement Unit was created within OCHA to encourage and support the Collaborative Approach. The IASC has developed increasingly specific guidance to UN Resident Coordinators/Humanitarian Coordinators and UN Country

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[1] On the use of the terms 'Collaborative Response' and 'Collaborative Approach' see footnote on page 111.

Teams on the Collaborative Approach. The most comprehensive and specific guidance, the so called policy package was issued in September 2004. Only three months earlier, following an evaluation of the Internal Displacement Unit that was critical of its lack of impact on the UN system that was "not ready for change", the Unit was upgraded to the status of Inter-Agency Internal Displacement Division. In many respects then the current situation represents a new opportunity to 'make the Collaborative Approach work'.

Most of the evaluations were undertaken before the most recent spate of institutional changes so they do not provide the basis for a verdict on the current status and likely prospects for the Collaborative Approach. What they do reveal are valuable insights and lessons into what has worked and what has not worked in the past.

Where OCHA is responsible for overall coordination in relation to IDPs based on OCHA's experience in Angola it would seem to work best when:

– it is able to control a significant resource 'pot' (such as an Emergency Response Fund) and encourage and support implementing agencies to undertake programmes in particular areas or sectors;

– it has the respect and support of donors;

– it has a field presence at a provincial level that enables it to be knowledgeable about the local context and to provide coordination and support services to the implementing agencies closer to the actual area or operations.

Within the framework of the Collaborative Approach, UNHCR, with its substantial operational capacity and expertise in the provision of assistance and protection, can perform very effectively in the role of IDP lead agency. However, this is dependent on the extent to which it is prepared to fully embrace the lead agency role. It appears only prepared to do so when it is assured of consent by the host government and adequate resources for it to undertake the role. Whilst UNHCR's insistence on determining for itself those situations in which it will take on the lead role is understandable, it introduces a significant area of unpredictability into the coordination arrangements.

For their part, it would seem that donor organisations are not doing nearly enough to support coordination mechanisms whether for overall humanitarian efforts or those specifically relating to IDPs. Indeed, in several respects donor funding behaviours actively undermine coordination efforts within the UN system. The Consolidated Appeals process is a principal mechanism for achieving a coordinated response but they are consistently under-funded, even though donors declare their commitment to the process. This forces UN agencies to undertake constant reprioritisation of their proposed activities – a process that introduces or increases

competitive behaviours between the agencies. Many donors fund 'outside the CAP', principally to NGOs. Whilst the factors influencing such decisions may be due to legitimate concerns about the relative merits of alternative channels this has the effect of weakening the CAP (and more significantly the Consolidated Humanitarian Action Plan) as an effective coordination mechanism. A bias towards the provision of food aid and away from covering the needs in other sectors and the practice of earmarking also detract from effective coordination. *(Refer to Section 6.7).*

Recommendations

13. Donor organisations should recognise that they have a critical role to play in making the Collaborative Approach work. Donors should use their funding allocations and relationships with IASC members to improve the incentives for 'positive collaborative behaviour' by agencies and strengthen the disincentives for 'negative collaborative behaviour'.

    – At the country level regular meetings should be held between representatives of the principal donors and the Humanitarian Coordinator at which a review of the operation of the Collaborative Approach is a fixed item on the agenda

    – At the sector level the review of the Collaborative Approach should be a fixed item on the agenda in regular meetings between the Emergency Relief Coordinator and the principal humanitarian donors

14. As part of the Good Humanitarian Donorship initiative and/or the Montreux process donor organisations should undertake a more vigorous programme to address perceived weaknesses in the CA process and to reduce those funding behaviours and practices that detract from, or undermine, the operations of the Consolidated Appeals process and the preparation of the Consolidated Humanitarian Action Plan.

15. Donor organisations and NGOs should support, and where appropriate participate in, the dissemination activities associated with the Collaborative Approach and the recent IASC 'policy package'. In addition they should monitor compliance with the letter and spirit of the Collaborative Approach and work to hold all UN agencies to account in 'making the Collaborative Approach work'.

When does the need for assistance end?

Conclusions

The set revealed wide variation in approaches towards, and experiences of, ending assistance to IDPs. It is apparent that this is an area requiring significant clarification in both policy and practice. Among the issues revealed were:

– Decisions to end assistance are frequently based on inadequate assessments.

– There appears to be a widely held belief that assistance is only required during the period of actual displacement despite widespread evidence that many returning households may require a lengthy period of assistance before they are able to re-establish their livelihoods, and that protection needs often persist after IDPs return home.

– Governments may take this stance because they may be anxious to declare an (internationally embarrassing) emergency over. Donors may take this view because they are anxious to end humanitarian assistance funding and return to their normal development activities in the hope that the problems faced by IDPs and recent returnees can be addressed through means other than humanitarian agencies.

– In some contexts the premature ending of assistance was wholly inappropriate and returnees experienced increased levels of hardship and vulnerability than compared to the levels experienced during their displacement when they were able to access international humanitarian assistance. *(Refer to Section 6.8)*.

Recommendations

16. Donors, UN agencies, NGOs and host governments should urgently develop improved policies and guidance on when it is appropriate to end assistance to IDPs. Donors in particular should engage more actively in the 'When Displacement Ends' series of workshops and could use these as a vehicle for developing improved policies and guidance.

17. Donors should only halt the use of humanitarian funds to IDPs once objective assessments have demonstrated that their vulnerability is no greater than that of the average population (as opposed to the adjacent population which may be experiencing high levels of vulnerability due to the area being affected by prolonged conflict).

Putting this to the test

Recommendation

18. To provide a focus for the implementation of the above recommendations it is recommended that donors should focus upon two ongoing cases of massive displacement. The objective of such a focus would be to:

– Achieve an active engagement in the types of policy and practice issues described above

– Use this engagement in developing improved policies and
   practices
 – Give particular and focussed support to the Collaborative
   Approach in these two important cases

Whilst the Good Humanitarian Donorship cases of DRC and Burundi
might serve in this role as test cases, we would suggest that considera-
tion be given to the massive and ongoing cases of Darfur and Uganda.
The former provides a case of rapid scale-up, poor government-donor
relations, and high levels of media interest. Uganda provides a case of
slow scale-up, good government-donor relations, and low levels of me-
dia interest.

Assessment of the Collaborative Evaluation Exercise
This collaborative evaluation exercise undertaken by the IDP Evaluation
Group represents an important and promising initiative to promote
shared learning and understanding across a group of influential donors.
Its effectiveness was assessed through interviews with those involved in
the evaluation and operational sections of the participating organisa-
tions/agencies, through discussions with the Team Leaders of the evalu-
ations at the November workshop and through our own analysis.

The approach adopted for planning and managing this collabora-
tive exercise has been deliberately light and informal. This has meant
it could be achieved within a relatively short time-scale, and has facili-
tated donor participation. A more structured management process
could have slowed it down. But there has been a cost to this lightness of
approach, in particular the donors not using the common framework
to the same extent, thus inhibiting comparable findings. Another con-
straint is the rather un-strategic set of evaluations, and insufficient at-
tention in the planning phase to the different contexts of internal dis-
placement.

'Ownership' of the collaborative exercise by donor officials in
humanitarian aid departments has sometimes been weak, which could
affect take-up of the recommendations which are mostly targeted at
such officials. And evaluation of donor policy, in addition to program-
ming, could have been stronger for a number of evaluations.

Overall however the collaborative exercise has proved popular
with all the participating donors and we are strongly of the opinion
that it should be repeated but with more rigour and discipline, and
conducted over a longer time period, both of which will contribute to a
higher quality final product. The model has the following positive at-
tributes:

– It encourages a broader perspective beyond the programming of
  a single donor.

– It has the potential to push forward policy debates, which could be truly evidence-based.
– Is very much in alignment with the Good Humanitarian Donorship Initiative that aims to increase the accountability and consistency of donors within the functioning of the wider humanitarian system. *(Refer to Annex B)*.

The six recommendations resulting from the analysis of the assessment of the collaborative evaluation exercise are set out in Annex B.

1.   Introduction

Following a proposal made by Sweden at a meeting of the EC Humanitarian Aid Committee (HAC) (in May 2003), a group of representatives of donor organisations agreed to undertake a collaborative evaluation process focussing on the theme of support to Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). Donor representatives interested in participating in the collaborative process formed an informal grouping referred to as the 'IDP Evaluation Group'.[2]

To help guide the evaluations to be undertaken during this collaborative process, consultants were commissioned (in August 2003) to prepare a 'Framework For A Common Approach to Evaluating Assistance to IDPs' (Danida 2003). The Framework was adopted by the IDP Evaluation Group in October 2003 with members agreeing to either:

a) encourage its use by teams undertaking ongoing evaluations of humanitarian assistance in a particular country, or

b) to incorporate the Framework in the TOR for evaluations that they were planning to undertake over the coming year.

In addition some members of the group 'offered' evaluation studies that covered assistance to IDPs but which had not been initiated or undertaken as part of the IDP Evaluation Group collaborative process. In all, eleven studies may be considered to have been undertaken as part of this collaborative evaluation exercise and these are listed in Table 1 below.

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[2]   The IDP Evaluation Group has been chaired by the Head of the Evaluation Department of the Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Initially the membership of the group comprised representatives of the Danish and Dutch Ministries of Foreign Affairs, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and the European Commission Humanitarian Office (ECHO). During the autumn of 2003 the initial grouping expanded to include representatives of the US Agency for International Development (USAID), the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and Development Cooperation Ireland (DCI). In addition the IDP Evaluation Group extended invitations to UNHCR, WFP and OCHA to participate in the work of the group and representatives of these organisations have participated in meetings of the Group.

From the outset the IDP Evaluation Group had agreed that the results of the various evaluations should be synthesised in a report to be prepared towards the end of 2004 – approximately one year after the adoption of the Common Framework. This report represents that synthesis.

In addition to drawing together and analysing the findings from the various evaluations included in the process the TOR for this study included a requirement to draw lessons from the experience of the IDP Evaluation Group in undertaking a collaborative evaluation process on a particular theme. These lessons are presented in Annex B of this report.

2. Approach and methods used in preparing this synthesis

2.1 Approach

The Synthesis Team started work in September 2004. The proposed approach for undertaking the synthesis was presented to a meeting of the IDP Evaluation Group in Stockholm on 16th September. The team requested, and the IDP Evaluation Group approved, the inclusion of additional evaluation reports that complemented the eleven 'core' studies. A further six evaluations undertaken by UNHCR, WFP and OCHA were therefore included within the overall 'set' of evaluations and these are indicated in Table 1. These six additional evaluations added two countries (Colombia and Liberia) to the list of countries covered by the set and added complementary perspectives to those evaluations on Angola and DRC already within the set. The inclusion of the evaluation of the OCHA IDP Unit in this additional batch added an important institutional perspective to the set.

The TOR listed over 100 potential questions relating to support provided to IDPs. The team reduced this list to 45 key terms that were to serve as the basis for the synthesis process. Each report was closely read and the location of sections relating to the 45 key terms were recorded on a 'matrix' (an Excel spreadsheet) prepared for each report together with the principal points made by the report in relation to the 45 key terms. For most of the reports a summary of the principal findings was also generated. This somewhat mechanistic method proved invaluable in managing the large volume of material contained in the 17 reports.

Many of the reports had focussed on the programmes in a particular country funded by the respective donor organisations, and their consideration of the international policy and institutional context relating to IDPs was somewhat limited. To ensure that the Synthesis was able to take account of the policy and institutional context and appropriately 'locate' the findings from the set of evaluations, the team un-

dertook 2.5 days of interviews in Geneva (18–20th October) with representatives of the OCHA Inter-Agency Internal Displacement Division, the OCHA CAP Section, ICRC, UNHCR, UNHCHR, IOM and the Global IDP Project of the Norwegian Refugee Council. A separate telephone interview was conducted with an ICVA representative.

In addition the team made use of additional published (and in some cases unpublished sources) on particular country contexts or particular issues to corroborate or help triangulate the material contained in the reports (see References).

At the beginning of November a workshop was held in Brussels which brought together ten evaluators (principally the Team Leaders) representing eleven of the 17 studies in the set. The morning session focussed upon the process of undertaking the evaluations, the particular challenges faced by the teams in evaluating assistance and protection support to IDPs and their experience of using the Common Framework. The afternoon session reviewed the principal findings and issues identified by the synthesis process and, whilst broadly confirming the issues identified, provided valuable feedback and additional insights.

The final component of the approach were telephone and face-to-face interviews (14 telephone and two face-to-face) undertaken by individual team members with representatives of the evaluation sections of organisations participating in the IDP Evaluation Group and the humanitarian or operational sections of the donor members of the Group. These interviews used separate checklists of questions with that for the evaluation managers focussing on aspects of the collaborative approach and that for the humanitarian or operational sections focussing on donor policy and practice in relation to assistance and protection support provided to IDPs.

2.2   Triangulation and the robustness of the findings

Differences in the remit and scope of the evaluations, the methods employed and the different contexts in which programmes had been implemented and the evaluations undertaken resulted in differences between the 17 evaluations included in the set.

Some of the differences in remit and scope are apparent from Table 1. Whilst some of the evaluations focussed upon programmes undertaken by a single agency, others covered programmes undertaken by a range of agencies funded by a single donor and three evaluations (the Netherlands Somalia, Sida Indonesia and Danida Afghanistan Preliminary) covered programmes funded by a group of donors. Whilst most of the studies were *ex post* evaluations, two were 'real-time' evaluations with agency specific remits (UNHCR Angola and UNHCR Liberia) and another was a 'programme continuation review' intended to inform decisions by the agency about the future of a particular intervention (UNHCR Angola).

Table 1. Evaluation reports included in the synthesis set

Country	Commissioning Organisation	Coverage (Period and Donors)	Title and Team Leader	Conducted as part of IDP Evaluation Group Initiative?
Angola	Danida	Humanitarian expenditures by Denmark 1999–2003	"Danish Assistance to Internally Displaced Persons in Angola 1999–2003" John Cosgrave	Yes
	ECHO	Humanitarian expenditures by ECHO 2002–2003	"Evaluation of ECHO's Global Humanitarian Plans in Angola, particularly with regard to the treatment of IDPs and Assessment of ECHO's future strategy in Angola" Aart van der Heide	Yes
	UNHCR	UNHCR's IDP Intervention during 2000	"Angola 2000: A Real-Time Assessment of UNHCR's IDP Intervention" Arafat Jamal	No
	UNHCR	UNHCR's IDP Intervention During 2001–2002	"UNHCR and Internally Displaced Persons in Angola: A programme continuation review" Guillermo Bettocchi	No
Somalia	Netherlands	Humanitarian expenditure by Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden and ECHO 1999–2003	"The Effects of Humanitarian Assistance on IDPs in Somalia: An evaluation of support for IDPs in Somalia, 1999–2003 provided by The Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden and ECHO" Phil O'Keefe	Yes
Indonesia	Sida	Humanitarian expenditures in support of IDPs by Sweden, Denmark, Netherlands, DFID and ECHO 2001–2003	"Evaluation of Assistance to IDPs in Indonesia" Emery Brusset	Yes
Kosovo	Danida	Humanitarian expenditures by Denmark 1999–2003	"Evaluation of Danish Humanitarian and Rehabilitation Assistance in Relation to the Kosovo Crisis 1999–2003" Mette Visti	Yes

Afghanistan	ECHO	Humanitarian Expenditures by ECHO 2002–2003	"Evaluation of ECHO's Humanitarian Intervention Plans in Afghanistan (including the actions financed in Iran and Pakistan under the plan) and Assessment of ECHO's Future Strategy in Afghanistan with reference to actions in Iran and Pakistan" John Wilding	Yes
	Danida	Preliminary review of IDP Interventions funded by UK, Netherlands, Ireland, Denmark and Sweden (larger evaluation to follow in 2005)	"Preliminary Study of Assistance to Internally Displaced Persons in Afghanistan" Peter Marsden	Yes
Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)	USAID	Humanitarian expenditures by USAID 2000-2004	"Evaluation of USAID's Humanitarian Response in the Democratic Republic of the Congo 2000-2004 Sheila Reed	Yes
	WFP	WFP food aid to vulnerable groups including IDPs	"Information Note on WFP Assistance to Internally Displaced Persons in the Democratic Republic of Congo"	No
Sudan, Angola, Afghanistan	ECHO	Synthesis of three ECHO Evaluation in terms of findings on IDPs, Refugees and Returnees and Local Population	"Synthesis of findings on ECHO's Policy of treating affected populations without regard to preconceived categories, specifically IDPs, Refugees and Returnees and Local Population, based on reviews in Sudan, Angola and Afghanistan" John Cosgrave	Yes
Colombia	UNHCR	UNHCR's IDP interventions between 1999–2003	"Evaluation of UNHCR's Programme for Internally Displaced People in Colombia" Josef Merkx	No
Liberia	UNHCR	UNHCR's support to Refugees and IDPs during 2003	"Real-time evaluation of UNHCR's response to the Liberia emergency, 2003" Sharon Cooper	No
Eritrea	WFP	WFP food aid to vulnerable groups including IDPs 2002–2003	"Summary Report of the Evaluation of the Eritrea Relief Portfolio" Allison Oman	Yes
Sudan	ECHO	Humanitarian expenditures by ECHO 1999–2002	"Evaluation of ECHO's 1999 to 2002 Funded Actions in Sudan" Claudio Schuftan	Yes (Though report completed before Common Framework was finalised)
Not country specific		Functioning and Performance of OCHA's Internal Displacement Unit	"External Evaluation of OCHA's Internal Displacement Unit" Victor Tanner	No

Strictly speaking two of the studies included in the set do not qualify as 'evaluations'. The WFP DRC study is titled an 'Information Note' rather than an evaluation as a result of problems encountered in undertaking the evaluation as originally planned. The Danida Afghanistan study is titled 'Preliminary Study' because it was undertaken ahead of a more comprehensive and rigorous evaluation scheduled for 2005, in part to ensure that the experience of IDP programmes in Afghanistan should be available for use by this Synthesis.

One of the studies (the ECHO Synthesis study) represented a synthesis of particular components of three earlier ECHO evaluations (ECHO Sudan, ECHO Angola and ECHO Afghanistan). Whilst all the other evaluations focussed upon programmes undertaken in support of IDPs, the OCHA IDP Unit evaluation focussed upon the extent to which the IDP Unit was achieving the objectives set for it on its formation in 2002.

Two of the evaluations/studies (Netherlands Somalia and Danida Afghanistan) were in draft form when reviewed by the Synthesis team. In the case of the former it is understood that the final version of the report (expected in early 2005) will contain revisions intended to strengthen the analysis and presentation of the evidence.

The preparation of the Common Framework gave a measure of commonality to many of the original 'core' set of evaluations. However, as will be discussed in Chapter 7, four of the original set did not adhere to the approach proposed in the Common Framework, in part because some were undertaken before the Common Framework had been prepared. The degree of adherence to the Common Framework by the other studies in the original set varied also. For instance, the primary focus of the Danida Kosovo evaluation was the overall response by the Danish government to the conflict and associated protection and humanitarian crises; whilst the report includes a chapter covering IDP and refugee issues in the overall Danish response, IDP programmes were not the principal focus of the evaluation. As would be expected the six evaluations added to the original core set at the request of the Synthesis team, were conducted without reference to the Common Framework.

With such wide variations in the scope and remit of the reports, it is hardly surprising that there were also variations in the methods used by the different teams and the ways in which their findings and supporting evidence were presented. For instance some teams undertook extensive consultations with IDPs and affected populations, whilst other do not appear to have done so. In some cases it is understood that the planned work of the evaluation teams was constrained by insecurity and logistical difficulties. Whilst in most cases the evidence and reasoning underlying particular findings were clearly presented, for some reports it was not always clear how a particular finding had been

reached. Whilst some clarification of such points was possible during the workshop with the Team Leaders, time constraints meant that it was not possible to enter a correspondence with the evaluation teams over particular points.

Given such differences between the reports, some explanation is required as to how the Synthesis team handled such differences and particular findings.

As noted in Section 2.1 the material contained in the reports was complemented by:

– Interviews by the team with UN and other agency personnel in Geneva. These interviews focussed on the policy and institutional context for the provision of support to IDPs, but also enabled questioning on the context for IDP in the countries covered by the evaluation set;

– The November workshop with Team Leaders which resulted in a greater understanding by the Synthesis team of the process by which the team had identified their findings and reached particular conclusions;

– Interviews with representatives of the evaluation section of organisations participating in the IDP Evaluation Group and the humanitarian or operational sections of the donor members of the Group. These provided the Synthesis team with additional perspectives on particular findings and useful background information on the process of commissioning and managing the evaluation;

– The use of relevant document sources on operations in particular countries or particular issues in the provision of assistance and protection to IDPs. Such sources were identified through review of the sources used by or referred to by the evaluation teams, through web searches or were provided by interviewees.

These complementary sources and perspectives helped the Synthesis team, not only in terms of supplementing and extending the material contained in the reports in relation to issues such as coordination arrangements, or the legal or legislative context on the rights of IDPs in particular countries, but also in 'locating' the findings in the reports and assessing their robustness.

Whilst the evaluations provide the *principal* source of information for the synthesis, it should be noted that some sections draw quite strongly from the other sources. This is particularly the case in relation to the discussion on Coordination and the Collaborative Repsonse (Section 6.6) which draws largely from interviews and documentation obtained during the Geneva visit.

The additional group of evaluations added to the original core set provided the team with additional evaluations in two countries (Angola

and DRC) which facilitated the cross-checking of findings in these cases.

The number of evaluations included in the set and the systematic way in which they were read and analysed facilitated the identification of patterns in the findings made by individual reports. Where similar findings were made by several reports and appeared to be well supported by evidence contained in the reports, this served to increase the Synthesis team's confidence in the robustness of the findings. Where findings were unique to a particular evaluation and/or the supporting evidence was unclear or appeared to be weak, they were given less weight and for the most part were not cited or referred to by the Synthesis.

Finally, the draft of this Synthesis went through a review process that involved the IDP Evaluation Group and the Team Leaders that had participated in the November workshop. The draft was reviewed at a meeting of the IDP Evaluation Group held in London on 4th December 2004 and additional written comments were received from most of the organisations and agencies represented on the Group. Broadly the feedback was positive with many of the points made resonating with the organisations and agencies represented on the IDP Evaluation Group. Following the London meeting the draft report was distributed to Team Leaders who had participated in the November workshop and written feedback was received from four of the teams. Modifications have been made to this final version of the report to take account of the feedback received.

3. The countries covered by the evaluations

3.1   What the set represents

Before analysing the findings and conclusions of the evaluations included in our set of evaluations, it is important to indicate the countries covered by the evaluations, the contexts in which support to IDP programmes was provided and the contexts in which the evaluations were carried out.

Currently there are estimated to be approximately 25 million IDPs around the world distributed between nearly 50 countries. The evaluations in our set examined programmes supported by one or more donor organisations in ten of these countries. Table 2 lists the countries containing IDPs ranked according to size of the estimated IDP population. As can be seen there is an extraordinary range in the distribution of IDPs between countries. The top three countries (Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Colombia) contain 10.5 million IDPs which represents 42% of the global number of IDPs. At the bottom of the list are six countries containing fewer than 10,000 IDPs.

The countries represented in our set are shown as shaded entries in Table 2. The set includes the three countries with the largest populations of IDPs (Sudan, DRC and Colombia)[3], a group of four countries with between 375,000 to 550,000 IDPs each (Indonesia, Liberia, Angola and Somalia), two countries with just under 250,000 (Afghanistan and Serbia/Montenegro and Kosovo) and one country with 58,000 IDPs (Eritrea). The following points can be made about the set:

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[3] Colombia was added to the set as part of the six evaluations added to the orginal 'core' set. Uganda which ranks fourth in Table 2 has been experiencing massive displacements many of them fresh displacements for some years. However the synthesis team were unable to identify an evaluation of IDP programmes in Uganda that could have been included in the set of evaluations and so Uganda was not included in the synthesis.

- It represents a range of countries in terms of the size of their IDP populations, though with a bias towards those with the larger IDP populations.

- Six of the countries are in Africa (Sudan, DRC, Liberia, Angola, Somalia, Eritrea); two in Asia (Indonesia, Afghanistan); one in Latin America (Colombia); and one in Europe (Kosovo). African countries are somewhat overrepresented and countries in Europe, Asia and the Middle East somewhat under-representation.

- Out of the ten countries, international peacekeeping forces are providing security in all (or parts of) four countries (DRC, Liberia, Afghanistan, Kosovo). In the DRC and Liberia the forces are comprised of UN peacekeepers whilst in Kosovo and Afghanistan the forces are made up of NATO forces complemented by contributions from other countries.

- Though difficult to substantiate from the data available, it would appear that countries in the 'return stage' of displacement are somewhat overrepresented compared to countries experiencing 'fresh displacement'. If correct, the set may contain more material assessing the management of the return process than on the response to newly displaced populations.[4]

- There are wide differences in the way that the evaluations 'covered' IDPs and IDP issues, some of which detract from the impression that the set has captured the perspective and issues in particular countries. For instance the evaluation undertaken by ECHO in the Sudan, the country with the largest number of IDPs in the world, was completed before the Common Framework was completed. When combined with ECHO's policy of not using 'pre-conceived categories' of groups in need this resulted in the evaluation drawing limited distinction between displaced and non-displaced. Many of the evaluations take a broader focus than just IDP assistance due to a combination of: donor policies not clearly distinguishing IDPs; difficulties of identifying IDPs from other vulnerable groups in the field and difficulties in identifying the IDP-related components of the assistance provided to a country. The way that the evaluations actually covered IDPs and IDP issues is discussed further in Section 7.

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[4] The Sudan evaluation included in the set focussed on programmes in the south of the country rather than on the massive recent displacements in Darfur which at the time the evaluation was carried out had yet to capture the attention of the international community.

Table 2. Countries ranked by 2004 estimated IDP numbers[*] showing country cases included in the set

No. IDPs	Country	Evaluation and commissioning organisation
4,000,000	Sudan	ECHO evaluation (completed before finalization of the Common Framework)
3,400,000	DRC	USAID evaluation and WFP Information Note
3,100,000	Colombia	UNHCR evaluation
1,600,000	Uganda	
1,000,000	Algeria	
1,000,000	Turkey	
900,000	Iraq	
800,000	Burma	
650,000	Côte d'Ivoire	
650,000	India	
613,000	Sri Lanka	
570,000	Azerbaijan	
535,000	Indonesia	Sida evaluation
500,000	Liberia	UNHCR evaluation
450,000	Angola	ECHO and Danida evaluations plus two UNHCR evaluations/reviews
381,000	Burundi	
375,000	Somalia	Netherlands evaluation
350,000	Syria	
335,000	Bangladesh	
330,000	Bosnia-Herzegovina	
330,000	Russian Federation	
300,000	Lebanon	
260,000	Georgia	
250,000	Guatemala	
250,000	Nigeria	
242,000	Afghanistan	ECHO evaluation and Danida Preliminary study
225,000	Israel	
225,000	Serbia/Montenegro (incl. Kosovo)	Danida Kosovo evaluation
210,000	Cyprus	
200,000	CAR	
150,000	Zimbabwe	
150,000	Nepal	
132,000	Ethiopia	
100,000	Guinea	
75,000	Congo	
60,000	Peru	
58,000	Eritrea	WFP evaluation
12,700	Palestinian Territories	
11,493	Croatia	
11,000	Mexico	
7,500	The Philippines	
5,000	Senegal	
3,000	Armenia	
3,000	Uzbekistan	
2,678	Macedonia	
1,000	Moldova	
24,813,371	**Total**	

[*]   Source: Global IDP Project Map. List does not include Turkmenistan, Rwanda or Pakistan where IDP numbers were 'undetermined' by the Global IDP Project.
[**] Angola's IDP population has dropped significantly since a peak of 4.1 million in 2002

3.2   Principal features and characteristics of the country cases

This section is intended to provide readers of this Synthesis report with an overview of the context in the different countries covered by the evaluations in the set and key data relating to IDPs. The overviews draw upon material in the evaluation studies complemented where necessary by other sources – principally the excellent country summaries available from the Global IDP Project D5tabase.[5]

Angola

The long-running civil war between the government of Angola and the UNITA rebel movement led by Jonas Savimbi restarted in 1998. UNITA, which had lost practically all international support, increasingly targeted the civilian population with killings, maiming and kidnappings prompting large-scale displacements. Civilians were also forcibly displaced by government troops, mainly to prevent the population supporting UNITA. Between 1998 and February 2002 more than three million war-affected people fled from rural areas to the major urban centres where they found some level of security and better access to humanitarian assistance. Combining data on all those displaced including 0.4 million Angolan refugees in neighbouring countries, the Danida Angola study estimated that in early 2002 approximately 5 million out of a total population of 12 million (40%) were displaced. The killing of Jonas Savimbi by government troops in February 2002 proved a turning point and in March 2002 a ceasefire agreement was signed. Since March 2002 the vast majority of IDPs and refugees have returned to their home areas or settled elsewhere. Currently the UN estimates the number of IDPs at under 60,000 though this contrasts with the government's estimate of over 0.3 million. Both the ECHO and Danida studies were carried out in the third quarter of 2003 when the spontaneous and organised returns of IDPs and refugees were still underway.

Somalia

Armed opposition to the regime of Siad Barre developed during the 1980s. Barre's overthrow in 1991 created a power vacuum which led this ethnically, linguistically and religiously homogeneous country to implode into clan-based civil war and the effective division, if not break-up, of the country. Since then Somalia has epitomised the notion of a 'failed state' with no nationwide central authorities or governance. The civil war that began in 1991 led to a famine affecting most areas of Somalia in which up to 100,000 people died, two million were internally displaced and 800,000 sought refuge in neighbouring countries. In December 1992 the US deployed a large force of troops to

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[5]   www.idpproject.org

protect humanitarian aid convoys under Operation Provide Comfort and this was later joined and linked to a UN peacekeeping force (UNOSOM II). The killing of US troops in October 1993 led to the complete withdrawal of US troops over the next five months. UNOSOM II was withdrawn by March 1995.

Currently Somalia is divided into three distinct zones. In the north-west, local leaders and political groups that had opposed Barre in 1991 proclaimed the Somaliland Republic with the city of Hargeisa as its capital. Despite achieving greater stability than other areas and developing a relatively effective government structure, the Somaliland Republic has never achieved full international recognition. In the north-east, local leaders declared the autonomous Somali State of Puntland in 1998, though this has proved to be less stable and effective than the Somaliland Republic. In the south and central areas of Somalia warlords and clan leaders hold sway with periodic outbreaks of violence over the control of key ports and fertile lands. After more than a dozen failed peace initiatives, the National Reconciliation Conference launched in late 2002 with the objective of establishing an all-inclusive, recognised national government, has made some progress. However, the October 2002 ceasefire has repeatedly been violated and agreement on power sharing is proving elusive.

Current estimates are that the number of IDPs is approximately 375,000 which represents about 5% of the total population of Somalia; two thirds of the IDPs are in south and central Somalia and the other third divided between Somaliland and Puntland. Though there have not been large scale new displacements for several years, thousands are temporarily displaced each year by localised conflicts. The current IDP picture is greatly complicated by the high mobility and nomadic livelihood of significant section of the population and the non-development of the country for well over a decade The search for economic opportunities as well as conflict is an important cause of displacement. The Netherlands Somalia study evaluated humanitarian assistance provided by the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden and ECHO over the period 1999–2003. The team visited Somaliland, Puntland and south and central Somalia in mid-2004.

Indonesia

The 1998 financial crisis and the fall of the Suharto regime led to religious and ethnic violence and fuelled separatist aspirations in different areas of this large, populous and geographically dispersed, country. An underlying factor contributing to such tensions was the Transmigration Programme under which populations from the densely populated inner islands (Java, Bali, Madura) were resettled in the outer, less densely populated islands to achieve a more balanced demographic development and alleviate poverty. Though such programmes had been

undertaken since Independence they peaked in the 1980s with considerable support from donors and multilateral development banks.[6] The resulting unrest saw more than 1.4 million people displaced between 1999 and 2002 (equivalent to 0.7% of the total population of 214 million) with the major areas of displacement being Maluku, East Java and Central Sulawesi. The precise causes of displacement varied between locations with insurgency and counter-insurgency operations, communal violence and fear of communal violence and issues of access to natural resources and communal ownership of land variously contributing. A further 3 million people were estimated to be affected by the conflicts – a figure which included the communities hosting IDPs.

The fall of the Suharto regime prompted a process of political transition and increased democracy that led to the election of new presidents in 1999 and 2001 and then the holding of the country's first direct presidential election in July 2004. With the exception of Aceh and Maluku provinces where unrest continues, the rest of the country has experienced relative stability since the end of 2002 and a significant number of IDPs (approximately 0.9 million) have returned home or opted to settle elsewhere. In part this process has been accelerated by the strong central government which was keen to bring the internal displacement crisis to an end. In late 2001 it formulated a national policy to address the problem of internal displacement and in January 2004 withdrew IDP status from the remaining displaced in all regions and shifted responsibility for the remaining "vulnerable people" (which includes an estimated 0.5 million internally displaced) to the provincial authorities. The Sida Indonesia study was undertaken between March and July 2004.

Kosovo

Serb oppression of the Albanian majority community in the province of Kosovo increased following the break-up of the Former Yugoslavia during the first half of the 1990s. In 1997 the Kosovo Liberation Army was formed and attacks on Serb police and army units resulted in reprisal attacks on civilians. Attempts by NATO and the UN to press Serbia into accepting a peace agreement were resisted and led in March 1999 to the start of a bombing campaign by NATO. Belgrade responded by a programme of killings and forced expulsion that resulted in massive displacements of Kosovar Albanians. Out of a population of 1.7 million over 800,000 sought refuge in neighbouring countries and approximately 500,000 were internally displaced. The NATO bombing campaign ended after 78 days in June 1999 with Ser-

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[6] "Indonesia's Transmigration Programme – An Update" A report prepared for Down to Earth by M. Adriana Sri Adhiati and Armin Bobsien (eds.) July 2001http://dte.gn.apc.org/ctrans.htm

bia agreeing to withdraw its army and police units, a NATO-led international force entering Kosovo and a UN administration being established for the province. This prompted a spontaneous return of the refugees and IDPs to homes that in many cases had been damaged or destroyed. Despite the presence of the large NATO-led force, reprisal attacks by Kosovar Albanians against Kosovar Serbs and other minority groups such as the Roma community resulted in the departure of half of the pre-conflict Kosovar Serb population. Five years after their departure from Kosovo approximately 225,000 IDPs from Kosovo remain in Serbia and Montenegro. The Danida Kosovo evaluation covered Danish assistance to Kosovo from 1999–2003 and the team visited the province in the fourth quarter of 2003.

Afghanistan

Afghanistan has been wrecked by conflict for nearly all of the last 25 years and this has caused massive and often repeated displacements either as IDPs or as refugees principally into neighbouring Pakistan and Iran[7] . Since the ousting of the Taliban regime in late 2001 as a result of its hosting of the Al Quaida terrorist movement, the international community has been providing substantial security, reconstruction and nation-building support to the Afghan government headed by President Mohammed Karzai. However Taliban and Al Quaida elements continue to operate and cause insecurity principally in the south and east of the country.

In terms of displacements over the last 3–4 years a drought was having a profound impact on livelihoods and population movements during 2000 and 2001. The withdrawal of international staff in late September 2001 and the start of the US bombing campaign in support of the Northern Alliance advance in October interrupted the drought relief programmes and the number of IDPs rose dramatically to 1.16 million – partly caused by people leaving cities such as Kandahar that

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[7] The Danida Preliminary Study on Afghanistan identified the following nine main causes/types of displacement in the country in the period since the 1979 Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan:
– Those displaced by the efforts of the Taliban to take over north-eastern Afghanistan from 1999 onwards.
– Those displaced as a consequence of the US military intervention in support of the Northern Alliance of October 2001 (this includes attacks on Pushtuns perceived as being linked to the Taliban in the north of the country after the bombing had ended)
– Those among the 3.1 million refugees who have returned from Pakistan and Iran since early 2002 to their villages of origin and found that the conditions are not conducive to their economic survival and have since moved on, as whole or part families, to urban areas or district centres.
– Those who have been displaced within their own districts by a declining availability of water for both drinking and agriculture.
– Those displaced within cities as a consequence of rapidly rising property prices (primarily in Kabul due to the rapid growth in population since 2001 as a result of the better security there, the influx/competition for resources among the international agencies, property speculation fuelled by profits from the rapidly growing opium trade).

were the subject of frequent bombing but partly as a result of people leaving their homes in search of food. This number dropped to around 700,000 by the end of January 2002 most of which were in camps/ peri-urban settlements supported by agencies. Gradually this figure has been reduced through spontaneous and assisted returns (with some dispute about the sustainability of livelihoods and the justification for the ending of assistance for some returnees). The current IDP figure is around 180,000 the majority of whom are "Kuchi" nomadic pastoralists displaced by the drought, reduction in grazing lands and ethnic tensions. Since March 2002 when UNHCR embarked on an assisted repatriation programme for refugees 2.1 million refugees have returned from Pakistan and just under 1 million from Iran. The total population of Afghanistan is estimated to be 28 million. The ECHO evaluation team worked in the country in late 2003 and the Danida Preliminary team visited the country in the third quarter of 2004.

Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)

The 1994 genocide and conflict in Rwanda resulted in 1.5 million Hutu refugees seeking sanctuary in eastern Zaire. Amongst the refugees were *génocidaires* and elements of the former Rwandan army who threatened the security of Rwanda under its new Tutsi dominated government. In 1996 Rwandan troops (supporting a rebel movement under Laurent Kabila) attacked the refugee camps and forced the majority of refugees back into Rwanda. They then pressed on to capture Kinshasa, oust President Mobutu and replace him with Laurent Kabilia and re-name the country the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). In 1998 Kabila turned against his former Rwandan allies prompting an uprising by two rebel movements (RCD and MLC, openly supported by Rwandan and Ugandan troops). Troops from Angola, Zimbabwe and Namibia supported Kabila and the conflict became the first pan-Afri-

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Box 1. Profile of a 'Typical' IDP in the DRC

In an attempt to convey a sense of a 'typical' IDP in the DRC, the USAID evaluation compiled the following profile:

– Most frequently, a woman, often head of household, who has suffered physical and sexual violence
– Less frequently, a man who has suffered physical violence
– A child who may have suffered or seen both physical and sexual violence
– Displaced more than once, from their homes or from an area of displacement
– Flees a relatively short distance from home (less than 50 km), typically from a rural area toward an urban centre
– Living in host communities with host families or in the forest with similar or closely related ethnic groups (USAID DRC p.23)

can war. In the eastern half of the country controlled by the RCD and MLC, Mai Mai groups (autochthonous populations) opposed the foreign backed rebels and were supported by Kabila. Control and exploitation of the Congo's rich mineral reserves was an important motivation for all the parties to the conflict and at times caused serious military clashes between Ugandan and Rwandan troops in DRC. Between 1998 and 2002 an estimated 3.4 million people died as a result of the conflict from direct violence or from lack of access to food and health care. A peace process began in 1999 but proceeded slowly and with many setbacks.

A UN peacekeeping force was deployed but with inadequate numbers of troops and until 2003 a weak mandate. Rwandan troops were formally withdrawn in 2002 though both Rwanda and Uganda retain considerable influence over the RCD and MLC. In January 2002 a volcanic eruption in Goma caught international attention and then in May 2003 intense violence between Lendu and Hema in and around the town of Bunia in Ituri Province killed hundreds of civilians and displaced tens of thousands. This led to the temporary deployment of a French-led military force and to an increase in MONUC's troop levels and a strengthening of its mandate. A Transitional Government was formed in June 2003 and the transitional process is scheduled to lead to legislative and presidential elections in 2005. However the process is extremely fragile and efforts to integrate former rebel groups into the national army have produced mutinies – such as that in May 2004 when Bukavu was temporarily occupied and terrorised by a mutinous faction with links to Rwanda.

The numbers of IDPs is thought to have peaked at 3.4 million during 2003 (representing 7% of the total population of 50 million) but to have dropped to 2.3 million by August 2004. The USAID evaluation included in the set was undertaken during mid-2004.

Colombia

Colombia has experienced socio-political violence for four decades. Marginalisation of low-income farmers and resistance to agrarian reforms by a powerful clique of landowners, government officials and paramilitaries was a key factor in the origins of the conflict. However the cultivation and trading of narcotics have since become an important source of funding for the guerrilla movements – the most important of which are the Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces (FARC) and the National Liberation Army (ELN). Paramilitaries opposed to the guerrillas and anyone suspected of sympathising with them have been active since the 1980s and frequently act in connivance with army officials.

Forced displacement is a deliberate strategy rather than a by-product of the conflict with groups displaced in order to establish control

over strategic areas, expand the cultivation of narcotics or take possession of land and private property. All figures on IDPs and refugees are subject to wide variation due to many avoiding registration in order to escape reprisals or forcible returns. Since 1985 over three million Colombians have been displaced representing 7% of the total population of 44 million. In addition there are an estimated 200,000 Colombian refugees in neighbouring countries and 34,000 in more distant countries (US Committee for Refugees, 2004). Following the breakdown of the peace process in February 2002 there was a dramatic increase in newly displaced. Approximately 0.4 million were newly displaced during 2002 and 0.25 million during 2003 (US Committee for Refugees, 2004). Afro-Colombians and indigenous people are disproportionately represented among the IDPs (comprising one-quarter of the total) by virtue of often living in areas of strategic interest to the warring parties. Many IDPs have moved to the cities seeking better security and almost one-quarter of the total number of IDPs live in slums in Bogotá. However, the IDPs in urban areas are increasingly exposed to crime and violence and actions by paramilitary-backed 'cleansing squads' causing repeated displacement. While Colombia has probably the most advanced IDP legislation in the world it remains poorly implemented. The UNHCR study included in the set was conducted in the second quarter of 2003.

Liberia

Liberia has experienced two civil wars over the last 15 years. The first one ended in 1996 and elections in 1997 brought to power Charles Taylor, leader of one of the principal former rebel movements, the NPFL. Taylor ruled the country in a style little different from his former role as warlord – supporting RUF rebels in neighbouring Sierra Leone in return for a share of their illegal exploitation of Sierra Leonian diamonds. In 1999 LURD a rebel movement initially based in Guinea began attacks in the north of the country. In 2003 another rebel movement MODEL emerged from bases originally in Côte d'Ivoire. The fighting between government and rebel forces caused widespread displacements with many seeking refuge in camps around the capital Monrovia. By early 2003 LURD rebels had advanced close to Monrovia forcing the camp populations to move into the city and in July the rebels began attacking the city itself and hundreds of civilians were killed in the fighting. At the height of the fighting upto 50,000 displaced were living in the main sports stadium. Under intense international pressure to seek exile Taylor left the country in August and a new National Transitional Government was established. In October a UN peacekeeping force of 15,000 troops (UNMIL) began deploying initially in and around Monrovia taking over from an earlier West African peacekeeping force. Confrontations between LURD, MODEL

and former NPFL supporters continued through to the end of 2003 in central and northern areas causing further population displacements. In early 2004 UNMIL began deploying throughout the country improving security and access for humanitarian agencies. UNMIL is currently undertaking a disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme. As of September 2004 there were estimated to be 430,000 IDPs in the country representing 13% of the total population of 3.4 million and of these 260,000 were living in 20 formal camps near Monrovia. The pace of return has been slow and as of September 2004 only four out the 15 counties had been declared safe enough for returns to proceed. The UNHCR real time evaluation that is included in the set was undertaken during October 2003 at a time when UNMIL was only just beginning its deployment and humanitarian agencies were unable to travel far beyond Monrovia.

Eritrea

The 1998–2000 border conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea displaced approximately 1.1 million Eritreans representing 31% of the total population of 3.5 million. The June 2000 ceasefire and the Algiers Peace Agreement that followed 6 months later facilitated the return of many IDPs. By the end of 2000 the number of IDPs had fallen to about 210,000. The breakdown of the process for physically demarcating the disputed border area is preventing the return of the final groups of IDPs. As of May 2004, just under 60,000 remain displaced of which 51,000 live in camps in Gash Barka, Debub and Northern Red Sea provinces. Many of the returned IDPs require support to reconstruct their livelihoods. In addition to the returned IDPs approximately 125,000 refugees repatriated from Sudan also require assistance. The fieldwork for the WFP study included in the set was conducted in November 2003.

Sudan

Since the early 1980s the conflict between the Government of Sudan (GoS) and the Sudan People' Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) in the south of the country and with rebel movements in other parts of the country have generated what has consistently been the world's largest internally displaced population. Current estimates are that the numer of IDPs is approximately 4 million representing 10% of the total population of 39 million. There are two conflicts in southern Sudan, the main one being north-south, between the GoS and the southern opposition, primarily led by the SPLA. The second conflict is south-south, between factions of the southern rebel movement who have fought each other for leadership of the southern cause and for control over territory and access to resources. The GoS has fuelled the south-south conflict through its chillingly effective strategy of counter-

insurgency, supporting southern and Arab militias. Displacement was often seasonal, during the dry season when fighting was most intense. For some it has been a more or less continual state over many years. Deliberate displacement was a key strategy in the GoS scorched-earth policy in oil-producing areas of Western Upper Nile: their intention is that no one should return.

Peace talks between the GoS and SPLM/A begun in July 2002 have made significant progress. Since the October 2002 ceasefire hundreds of thousands of IDPs have begun returning home, often from the north to the south. But the peace process is fragile, and violent intra and inter-ethnic fighting continues in parts of southern Sudan

In early 2003 two rebel movements (SLM/A and JEM) emerged in Darfur in the west of the country. Government forces enlisted and supported Arab militias in the areas, known as *Janjaweed*, in a campaign of attacks on villages with the motive of displacing civilians from their home areas into IDP camps throughout the region or as refugees into neighbouring Chad. The political response by the international community has been slow and weak and the UN Security Council unable to agree on a more forceful response despite the US Government pronouncing the situation as 'genocide' in September 2004. Currently, a modest force of African Union troops is providing security to a ceasefire monitoring group in the region. The lack of protection for the displaced as well as those still in their home areas remains the overriding issue. After initial resistance from the GoS humanitarian access to the region improved from around May 2004 onwards and large-sale operations are currently underway. Current estimates are that over 50,000 people have died as a result of the conflict and the forced displacements in Darfur, 1.5 million are displaced and 200,000 have sought safety as refugees in neighbouring Chad.

The ECHO evaluation in Sudan was undertaken in the second quarter of 2003 and focussed upon programmes in relation to Southern Sudan. The evaluation was completed before the Common Framework had been prepared.

Box 2. What is an IDP?

The term Internally Displaced Person (IDP) is widely used. However there is no single definition (legally-based or otherwise) and organisations tend to have developed their own definitions tailored to suit their mandates and perspectives. The most commonly used definition is the one contained the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement: *"… internally displaced persons are persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border."* The two key elements of this definition are the force involved in prompting the flight and remaining within the recognized state border. The second element marks the differentiation with refugees as defined in the 1951 Refugee Convention. According to the Global IDP Survey the current number of IDPs globally is approximately 25 million. As would be expected this large population contains numerous sub-groups and 'types' of IDP. The following list is intended to show the range of potential 'types' and is by no means exhaustive:

– those in camps and those living amongst a host community (rural or urban);
– those displaced once and those displaced repeatedly over a long period;
– those recently displaced and currently unable to meet their basic needs and those displaced years ago and who have managed to establish a livelihood in their new location;
– those registered by the Government and/or international agencies and those who are unregistered
– those who are being assisted by the international community and those who are not;
– those who are vulnerable to continuing violence and those who are living in stable, secure locations.

As discussed in Section 6.5 such groups are not mutually exclusive and there is considerable overlap between groups and situations and consequent difficulties in identifying and accurately counting the numbers of IDPs in any one country or humanitarian operation. In addition of course are the elements of gender, age, ethnicity and religion that exist in any population but which may be important factors for IDPs – possibly being a causal factor in their displacement or in their ability to access assistance and protection in their new location. Clearly IDPs are not a homogenous group in terms of vulnerability and need. The common factor they share is their displacement, which is directly associated with the violation of certain rights, for example the protection of property.

From the overviews of the ten countries, it can be appreciated that the programmes being evaluated, and indeed the evaluations themselves, took place in widely differing contexts. These contexts included:

– countries commonly referred to as 'collapsed states' and 'strong states';

– countries where insecurity had severely hampered access to IDPs and the international response to them and countries where the insecurity continues and indeed hampered the effort to evaluate the support provided;

– countries where international peacekeeping forces had intervened and either left or were still present and countries where there had been no external peacekeeping intervention;

– countries where earlier IDP populations had largely returned to their home areas and countries where large scale displacement continues.

Such differences were borne in mind by the synthesis team throughout their work and should also be borne in mind by readers of this report.

4. Principal developments in the international community in relation to IDPs

4.1 The context

The period since 1990 has seen profound changes in the international community's recognition of, and engagement with, the issue of internal displacement caused by conflict. The context for this shift was set by the ending of the Cold War, bi-polar, era at the end of the 1980s and consequent changes in the policies of Northern states towards asylum seekers and refugees. The principal factors contributing to these developments were neatly summarised in the Danida Afghanistan Preliminary study.

The ending of the Cold War era at the end of the 1980's led to:

– The removal of strategic incentives for the western and eastern blocs to maintain high levels of political, economic and military support to former client states which led to a marked increase in internal conflicts and state breakdown in the developing world.

– Humanitarian intervention in such states became a more practical possibility since in no longer risked confrontation with a nuclear-armed superpower.

– The removal of the strategic motivation for Western states to receive refugees fleeing 'communist oppression'.

Improvements in global transportation enabled those fleeing (the increased levels of) violence to claim asylum in rich Northern states and also for economic migrants to increase their use of the 'asylum route' to circumvent the effective restrictions to legal migration that had been put in place during the 1970s. This led in turn to stricter asylum controls in the Northern states and a gradual refocusing of the international refugee regime on:

- the 'containment' of refugee flows in the conflict-affected states or in their immediate neighbours
- ensuring that refugees returned to their homes as quickly as possible.

The ending of the Cold War and the process of globalisation have together contributed to a gradual erosion of sovereignty. Though national sovereignty remains highly sensitive it is now accepted by many that a state's territorial sovereignty can legitimately be infringed if its government was violating the human rights of its citizens. As the Danida Afghanistan Preliminary study expressed it:

"The gradual chipping away at the principle of territorial sovereignty … opened the way for the international community to take a formal interest in the protection of those who were displaced within the borders of their own countries" (p. 13).

4.2   Developments since 1991

Table 3 below indicates the principal developments during the period since 1991 when the plight of Kurds trapped inside northern Iraq highlighted the anomalous position of IDPs in comparison with that of refugees from both a legal and an institutional perspective.

Two principal threads running through the period have therefore been:

a) efforts to collate and clarify the legal position of IDPs as a means of increasing their protection; and

b) efforts to clarify and improve the institutional arrangements within the international humanitarian sector for responding to the assistance and protection needs of IDPs.

Table 3. Timeline of principal developments in relation to IDPs[8]

1991	–	End of Gulf War and flight of Iraqi Kurds upto Turkish border prompts 'Operation Provide Comfort' which creates 'safe zone' for IDPs inside Iraq. Issue of IDPs lodged more firmly on international agenda
1992	–	Following request by the UN Commission on Human Rights UN Secretary General appoints Dr Francis Deng as Representative of the Secretary General (RSG) on Internally Displaced Persons
	–	Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) established. Sets up internal displacement task force and designates Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) as UN reference point for protection of and assistance to IDPs– UNHCR adopts a working definition of internal displacement enabling it to work directly with IDPs who fall within its original mandate
1993	–	RSG issues first annual report and recommends the creation of a new UN agency or modification of the mandate of an existing one (such as UNHCR) "to cater more specifically to the needs of IDPs"
	–	UNHCR issues its first policy guidelines for its role in situations of internal displacement

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8   The principal source for this timeline is Box 2.6 in No Refuge: *The Challenge of Internal Displacement* but other entries added from variety of other sources.

1994	–	Genocide in Rwanda
1995		
1996	–	Publication of the Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda
	–	Faced with resistance to the idea of a dedicated/lead UN agency for IDPs, the RSG alters his position and supports the IASC's 'collaborative approach' among UN agencies
	–	Following request from UN, Norwegian Refugee Council establishes 'The Global IDP Project' in Geneva to monitor and provide information on conflict-induced internal displacement worldwide. The IDP Database launched in 1999.
1997	–	In UNSG's programme of reform the ERC is reaffirmed as UN focal point on internal displacement and OCHA replaces the Department for Humanitarian Affairs (DHA)
1998	–	Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement presented to UN Commission on Human Rights
	–	Masses in Flight and The Forsaken People edited by Cohen and Deng published. The two companion volumes provide well-researched cases studies and analysis of internal displacement
1999	–	IASC issues paper "Policy on the Protection of Internally Displaced Persons" which reinforces the collaborative approach and is accompanied by a manual on field practice which outlines members position on response to internal displacement
	–	US Permanent Representative to the UN, Ambassador Richard Holbrooke, visits Angola and is shocked by condition of IDPs in Luanda
2000	–	Ambassador Holbrooke makes speech on IDPs to UN Security Council and other fora and urges lead agency (suggesting UNHCR) within UN system
	–	Senior Inter-Agency Network on Internal Displacement established
	–	IASC issues "Supplementary Guidance to Humanitarian Coordinators/Resident Coordinators on Their Responsibilities in Relation to IDPs" giving them primary responsibility at the field level
2001	–	UN High Commissioner for Refugees identifies the "Three Green Lights" for when UNHCR will become involved in situations of internal displacement
	–	Angola becomes first state to incorporate the Guiding Principles into domestic law
	–	Between Borders (a volume of ten IDP case studies) edited by Vincent and Sorenson is published
	–	International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) publishes its report The Responsibility to Protect
2002	–	Internal Displacement Unit created within OCHA
2003	–	IASC issues "Guidance Note on the Collaborative Approach in Responding to Crises of Internal Displacement"
	–	Internal Displacement Unit publishes No Refuge: The Challenge of Internal Displacement which represents the first UN publication on internal displacement
	–	"IDP Response Matrix" (the results of questionnaire survey of humanitarian actors conducted by the Internal Displacement Unit) is published. Indicates many sectors of assistance and protection of IDPs not sufficiently covered and that weaknesses and failings in implementation of the Collaborative Approach
	–	Jan Egeland succeeds Kenzo Oshima as Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator (September)
2004	–	External evaluation of Internal Displacement Unit recommends 'activation and empowerment' of the Unit
	–	Internal Displacement Unit upgraded to Inter-Agency Internal Displacement Division and new Director (Dennis McNamara) is appointed
	–	Following expiration of Francis Deng's term as RSG, Walter Kälin is appointed to the modified role of RSG on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons
	–	IASC approves 'Policy Package' Guidance for UN Humanitarian Coordinators/ Resident Coordinators and Country Teams on "Implementing the Collaborative Response to Situations of Internal Displacement

Following the creation of the post of Representative of the Secretary General on Internally Displaced Persons and the appointment of Dr Francis Deng there was a concerted effort to draw together existing provisions within international human rights law, international humanitarian law and relevant international treaties and conventions, to provide a set of Guiding Principles. Published in 1998, the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement "should be understood not as a layer of completely new international obligations but as a tool to facilitate the application of existing international legal standards" (Neussl, 2004). Since 1998 states generating, or with the potential to generate, internal displacement have been encouraged to incorporate the Guiding Principles into their domestic law. Currently several states (Angola, Sudan, Colombia, Uganda, Kosovo and Bosnia-Herzegovina) have incorporated the Guiding Principles, or elements of them, into domestic law or into draft or approved national policies on internal displacement (Neussl, 2004).

Improving the institutional arrangements

The provision of assistance to IDPs cuts across the mandates of the principal UN agencies with their focus on food (WFP), children (UNICEF), refugees (UNHCR), and development (UNDP). Moreover it was the ICRC, outside the UN system, that until the end of the Cold War, had been regarded by many governments as being principally responsible for the provision of protection to civilians in situations of armed conflict. Efforts to improve the institutional arrangements in relation to IDPs since 1991 have had to wrestle with the awkward reality of the existing architecture and the sometimes competing interests and agendas of the agencies involved.

During the period there were principally two schools of thought as to how the UN system should organise itself to respond to the needs of IDPs – the 'lead agency' model and the 'collaborative approach' model.

Until roughly the mid-1990s the lead agency model had many supporters. UNHCR with its considerable capacity and experience in providing assistance and protection for refugees was viewed as the ideal 'lead agency' in relation to IDPs. In 1991 the agency was asked by the Secretary General to take on the lead role for humanitarian operations generally in the in the Former Yugoslavia where massive displacements were taking place within the boundaries of the Former Yugoslavia, though often across the 'borders' of the newly emerging states of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. In 2000 the lead agency model was again given high profile support by the US Permanent Representative to the UN Richard Holbrooke following his witnessing of the plight of IDPs in Luanda, Angola and his presentation on the IDP issue to the

Security Council. He made the point that the bureaucratic distinction between refugees and IDPs was negatively affecting the lives of millions of IDPs. The US Government subsequently provided for UNHCR to establish an experimental IDP programme in Angola. However, for many within and outside UNHCR, adding IDP responsibilities to its refugee role was viewed as likely to jeopardise its mandate and its responsibilities to refugees. The suspicion that the resources available for it to undertake an expanded mandate would not be adequate and funding would be diverted from refugees to IDPs was widely held in the agency. There was also resistance from other agencies and organisations that feared UNHCR becoming the pre-eminent UN humanitarian agency.

Gradually the 'collaborative approach' gained support as efforts to improve humanitarian coordination within, and beyond, the UN system took root through the work of the Emergency Relief Coordinator, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), and the Executive Committee for Humanitarian Affairs (ECHA). To the outsider some of the earlier arrangements and initiatives were confusing. The Danida Afghanistan preliminary study refers to:

> "… a confusing array of 'focal points', 'reference points', 'senior advisors', 'special coordinators', 'inter-agency committees' and 'inter-agency networks'." (p. 63)

While Ambassador Holbrooke's intervention had the effect of temporarily raising the profile of the lead agency model, it ultimately had a galvanising effect on the UN system, leading directly to the formation of the Senior Inter-Agency Network on Internal Displacement to propose ways of improving the international response to IDP needs. In 2001 the Senior Network recommended the creation of a non-operational IDP office within OCHA with the primary aim of promoting an improved inter-agency response to the needs of the displaced and supporting the Emergency Relief Coordinator in his role as the coordinator of the international humanitarian response to the IDP's needs.

Also in 2001, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees identified the three criteria (referred to as 'the three green lights') that would need to be satisfied in order for UNHCR to take on a lead role in the provision of assistance and protection to IDPs.

1. The consent of the UN Secretary General

2. The consent of the Government

3. The assurance of adequate resources

The Internal Displacement Unit was established in January 2002 for an initial one year period. In order to encourage and support the sys-

tem-wide approach, staff of the Unit (frequently referred to as the OCHA IDP Unit) were seconded from other UN agencies and the NGO community. An external evaluation was undertaken during the final quarter of 2003 and its final report presented in January 2004. The evaluators were critical of the Unit and of the UN system.

"The United Nations continues to fall short in its response to the internally displaced. In the 22 months since its inception, OCHA's Internal Displacement Unit has not changed the way the UN addresses internal displacement, and is not likely to do so unless radical changes in outlook occur. The reasons for this are twofold. First, the Unit has lacked focus and strategic purpose. Its activities have been numerous but scattered. It has not managed to leverage its direct link to the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC). It has not played its central role of premier advocate within the UN system on behalf of the internally displaced aggressively enough. Second, and more pointedly, the UN system is not ready for change. The out-going ERC did not effectively use the Unit to fully perform his mandate as the Secretary General's focal point for the internally displaced. UN operational agencies remain more concerned with their organizational interests than with the interests of the internally displaced. They do not display the collegiality necessary for a truly collaborative response to crises of internal displacement. … The evaluation's main recommendation is that the Unit concentrates on internal UN advocacy." *(OCHA External Evaluation of the Internal Displacement Unit,* p. 12).

As a direct result of the evaluation, in July 2004 the Unit was restructured, given a more senior Director and its status upgraded from that of a Unit to a Division – the Inter-Agency Internal Displacement Division – 'hosted' by OCHA. The Division currently has 11 personnel with secondments from UNHCR, WFP, IOM, NGOs (ICVA and SCHR), OCHA and UNDP. A secondment from Habitat is currently being negotiated. UNICEF is not currently supporting a secondment to the Division. To help focus its work the Division is focussing on 8 countries (Colombia, Burundi, Uganda, Sudan, Somalia, Liberia, DRC and Nepal or possibly Myanmar/Burma).

As well as the new Division, additional impetus and support for the 'collaborative approach' was given in September 2004 by the IASC issuing the document 'Implementing the Collaborative Response to Situations of Internal Displacement' which provides guidance for UN Humanitarian and/or Resident Coordinators and Country Teams. Though elements of this document (notably the 'Procedural Roadmap on developing an IDP Response Strategy') had been issued over a year earlier, it drew all the existing guidance together and provides donors and NGOs as well as UN agencies and the new Division with a framework that enables monitoring and verification of the adherence to the 'the policy package'.

It is the intention of the Director of the Inter-Agency Internal Displacement Division that its efforts be evaluated towards the end of 2005 and a view taken on the success of the collaborative approach. If substantial improvements against the findings of the January 2004 External Evaluation of the Unit are not clearly discernible it remains possible that alternative means of achieving coordination in relation to the needs of IDPs will be considered. The next 16 or so months will therefore be critical to the future of the collaborative approach and the considerable efforts expended thus far on articulating it. If the collaborative approach cannot be seen to work effectively over the next 16 months or so the coordination arrangements in relation to IDPs may be forced to go through another round of disruptive uncertainty and institutional manoeuvring. This is the policy context into which this synthesis report is feeding.

4.3   The situation during the period in which the evaluations were undertaken

Most of the evaluations in the set were undertaken in the period from mid-2003 to mid-2004. At the time most of the studies were undertaken therefore the IDP Unit had been in existence for 12–18 months or longer. However, most of the evaluations had been completed before the Procedural Roadmap was disseminated to Humanitarian Coordinators and/or Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams in April 2004. Virtually all the evaluations had been completed before the IDP Unit was upgraded to the Inter-Agency Internal Displacement Division.

Whilst the External Evaluation of the IDP Unit assessed the functioning of the collaborative approach (as of late 2003), few of the studies in the set provide much insight into the functioning of the collaborative approach per se. For instance none of the evaluations mentions the Procedural Roadmap and only the Danida Afghanistan report discusses the collaborative approach. Whilst the Angola and DRC evaluations provide insight into OCHA's performance and the UNHCR Liberia real time evaluation provides a telling insight into the frictions between UN agencies at a particular juncture in Liberia, most of the studies are weak in their coverage of UN coordination arrangements in relation to IDPs.

5. Results of the evaluations in relation to the key criteria

5.1 Introduction

The Common Framework offered a checklist of potential questions for the evaluations to consider and these were organised in relation to the widely used DAC criteria of Relevance, Effectiveness, Impact, Efficiency, Coherence and Connectedness[9]. Whilst the way that the evaluations used and organised their reports in relation to the criteria varied, this section reviews the principal findings of the evaluations in relation to the criteria. The section intentionally makes extensive use of direct quotes from the reports to allow them to, 'speak for themselves' and convey the range of findings and the way the reports expressed them. Having provided an overview of the findings in this section, the synthesis will then focus in subsequent sections on what we have identified as the critical policy issues.

5.2 Relevance

The criteria of relevance relates primarily to whether the support was provided in line with the needs and priorities of IDPs, impartially and in proportion to need. The Common Framework encouraged a distinction to be made between the relevance of agency policies and the operations supported or undertaken. The different evaluations approached 'relevance' in different ways. Some did not explicitly consider relevance and of those that did some did not consider the relevance of donor policies, focussing instead upon the implementing partners and the relevance of their approach and performance in relation to the needs of IDPs.

Of those evaluations that did assess the relevance of donor policies, the findings were closely related to the existence or not of explicit policy on IDPs. For instance, in August 2004 USAID became the first

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[9] A combination has been made of the established five DAC criteria and the additional criteria often used in humanitarian evaluations.

bilateral donor to issue a policy statement on Assistance to IDPs and the draft statement was in existence at the time the USAID DRC evaluation was undertaken. The evaluation considered the evolution of the draft policy and was approving of its content and the increased attention to IDPs within USAID that it exemplified.

In some contrast, ECHO's policy is that, as a humanitarian agency, it responds to needs as assessed in the field rather than on preconceived categories such as 'IDPs', 'refugees' or 'returnees'. Whilst noting that ECHO assistance had often been provided in support of IDPs, the ECHO evaluations tended to agree with the policy. However, the important distinction between categorisation as an indicator of vulnerability rather than for targeting *per se* does not appear to have been fully appreciated.

Noting the ECHO 'prioritization by need' policy and that Denmark, the Netherlands, and Sweden were all in the process of re-working their humanitarian policies, the Netherlands Somalia study focussed on the policies of these donors in relation to Somalia and to IDPs in Somalia. Its findings were complex due to the particularly difficult operational context in the country, the difficulty of identifying IDPs in a context of massive historical displacements, nomadism and generalised chronic poverty and non-development. But the principal finding was that donor policies had 'evaporated' by the field level where the few agencies that were able to operate implemented projects where and as best as they could. Whilst it does not state that an objective of the policies of the donors was to retain a presence in the country and an engagement in the (fraught) peace process, the evaluation concludes that this was probably the most valuable impact of the assistance provided.

In Afghanistan where UNHCR had been given the lead role in relation to IDPs in early 2002, the Danida Preliminary Study found that the donors (UK, Danida, Sida and the Netherlands) had delegated responsibility to the agency for identifying the needs of IDPs in relation to returnees and other vulnerable groups and that this trust had been well placed. The issues of donor policy on IDPs and the 'categorisation' of IDPs are considered in more detail in Sections 6.4 and 6.5.

Consideration of relevance in relation to actual operations by the evaluations yields a very mixed picture. Assessing the overall relevance of the activities funded in Angola by Danida and ECHO the findings of the respective evaluations were positive "Overall the projects seen [funded by Danida] were relevant to the needs of the beneficiaries and reflected good humanitarian practice" (Danida p. 49) and "the evolution of the [ECHO] Global Plans and other decisions has therefore been relevant to the changing humanitarian situation" (ECHO p. 19). Considering the wide range of ECHO assistance provided to Afghanistan (only a small proportion of which was addressed to the needs of IDPs) the ECHO Afghanistan study concluded "the selection of interventions by ECHO since mid-2002 has been masterful in terms of a balanced approach to the requirements of

geographical spread, sectoral exigencies and vulnerable target populations" (p. 38). With some qualifications the Sida Indonesia evaluation concluded that humanitarian assistance met the basic needs during displacement in those areas where they had access.

However, evaluations for other countries were less positive, particularly where relevance was explicitly considered in relation to the needs of IDPs rather than to overall humanitarian assistance as was the case with the Angola evaluations. For instance

WFP DRC Study (p. 11): "The strategies pursued under the PRRO were only partially adapted and only partially relevant to the needs of IDPs, given the complexity of the situation and the enormous range of IDP needs."

Netherlands Somalia evaluation (p. 78): "the assistance was not 'in line with ... the needs, priorities, and rights of IDPs'".

UNHCR Colombia (p. 6): "There was broad agreement that the response to internal displacement in the post-emergency phase was completely inadequate. IDP families have few alternatives once the three months of relief have ended."

The USAID DRC evaluation questioned the significant role played in US assistance by Title II food aid which consistently accounted for one quarter of all USAID assistance to DRC during the period. It cited an earlier study " .. Title II (food aid) programs address only a narrow portion of the spectrum of physical needs confronting the internally displaced and address only indirectly the protection needs of internally displaced communities" (Kunder 1999) and concluded "If food aid is to be the largest focus, measures should be taken to use it in a calculating fashion to address the priority human rights protection needs and for peace-building rather than pacification" (p. 28)

Among the various factors contributing to negative assessments of relevance, four seem to stand out, namely:

– lack of access;
– inadequate funding;
– difficulties in the identification of IDPs and their needs;
– assistance not being sufficiently needs-driven.

Whilst some of these factors relate more to the criteria of 'effectiveness', which will be considered later in this section, they will be covered here with the exception of difficulties in the identification of IDPs and their needs which forms part of one of the critical policy issues identified and will be dealt with in Section 6.5.

Lack of access
If agencies are not able to operate in an area where there are known IDP populations then those populations are automatically deprived of

any assistance and protection that the agencies may have been able to provide. Access is therefore a critical issue not just for the criteria of 'relevance' but also for those of 'effectiveness' and 'impact'.

Lack of access by humanitarian agencies to IDPs has been a critical issue in the DRC since the start of the conflict in 1998. Of the estimated 1.4 million IDPs in the four eastern Provinces of North Kivu, South Kivu, Maniema, and North Katanga in March 2004 for instance, 400,000 (29%) were judged by OCHA to be "inaccessible". For the most part inaccessibility was due to insecurity. However, the appalling condition of many roads and inadequate use of Congolese NGOs and church networks with their greater outreach appear to have been additional contributory factors. To a certain extent use was made of air transport to overcome poor road infrastructure or where surface transport was blocked by areas of insecurity. The USAID DRC evaluation praised the funding of, and work undertaken by, the NGO AirServ. However, the evaluation was critical of the international actors in DRC for not developing "a comprehensive and inclusive strategy for gaining access, such as the access strategy developed for southern Sudan" (p. 32). According to those interviewed, such a strategy might have simultaneously utilised:

– local people and NGO networks;
– encouragement and pressure on local authorities and armed groups to improve access;
– the greater use of airlifts (as operated by OCHA under its Emergency Humanitarian Interventions initiative)
– the greater use of the UN peacekeeping force (MONUC).

The team were not able to explore the factors that may have contributed to the failure to develop a comprehensive access strategy. Whilst some of the steps proposed by the report would not have required substantial additional funding, it is possible that the overall inadequacy of funding for the operation served to constrain the use of airlifts. For instance, it is possible that more generous funding levels would have led to improvements being made to airstrips, enabling the use of larger cargo aircraft or to clear forested areas enabling the air-dropping of food – a technique used by WFP in other parts of Africa.

In relation to MONUC the report notes the inadequate troop levels to enable it to have a significant impact on the levels of violence and is critical of the lack of support by MONUC to local ceasefire negotiations with the Mai Mai initiated by NGOs and MONUC's failure to follow up all reports of ceasefire violations. However, "(w)hen its mandate was bolstered in July 2003 after the Ituri crisis, MONUC played a significant role in opening access to some areas, such as around Bunia." (p. 32). Due to time and logistical constraints the team

were not able to collect sufficient data with which to judge the decisions by the Security Council in regard to the DRC and MONUC operations or to question why the Security Council and MONUC had not been more pro-active in the four to five years prior to 2003. During that period the conflict is estimated to have directly or indirectly caused 3.4 million deaths. Though the number of IDPs who died will never be known, it is probably safe to assume that they constituted a significant proportion of this appalling total. In the Executive Summary the report concludes "On a broader level … that of humanitarian policy, the international community has obviously failed the DRC. The situation remains chaotic. In what has been a client-state of the US almost since its independence, overall US policy has failed the Congolese and the American people" (p. xi).

In Somalia the insecurity in the Central and South Somalia is a significant constraint on operations by agencies, deterring many from operating there and for those that do, periodically forcing staff evacuations. In this context, agencies rely heavily on trying to maintain good relations with local clan leaders and warlords negotiation to improve the security and access for their project staff and beneficiaries. Given the history of the failed US and UN peacekeeping interventions in the early 1990's, the route of external intervention to improve security and improve access is completely off the agenda.

In Afghanistan the Danida Preliminary Study concluded that: "the donor and assistance communities have had to grapple with an adverse security environment which has seriously impacted on the capacity of implementing agencies to deliver" (p. 56). Programmes in the south of the country have been particularly constrained.

In Indonesia access by humanitarian agencies had been restricted or even prevented by the authorities as a result of the lack of security in some Provinces such as Aceh, Papua, North Sumatra and West Timor. In West Timor for example former refugees have languished in a state of legal non-status to which UNHCR and other UN agencies were unable to respond because the area has been declared unsafe by the UN security coordinator since the murder of three UN staff members in December 2000. In northern Sumatra aid personnel (with the exception of ICRC) had been effectively excluded from the province. The report does not indicate the proportion of the IDP population that were inaccessible or where access was restricted because these figures were apparently not known to the agencies themslves. The Indonesia case shows how access can be limited, not just as a result of insecurity and threats to the humanitarian personnel in the area concerned, but by strong central and provincial authorities who are able to prevent agencies working in certain areas. The report notes that restrictions on agencies is greatest where "vertical" conflicts exist with the authorities fighting organised groups within the population, or where groups have

fled as a result of political change in their home areas. In such areas the authorities simply do not want agencies to be present.

The Somalia evaluation suggests three principal ways in which access is negotiated:

– Political actors participate in support of humanitarian negotiators.

– Military and political agents negotiate on behalf of the humanitarians.

– Political actors leave humanitarians to negotiate on their own.

In Somalia, and probably most other cases as well, the first of these approaches was followed. Though the reports contain little material on this issue it seems that humanitarian agencies will seek to address local or smaller-scale issues of access on their own and seek to draw on the support of 'political actors' including donor and diplomatic encouragement and pressure where the scale of the issue is felt to warrant it. The use of advocacy and the mobilisation of donor and diplomatic pressures to improve protection for IDPs is discussed further in Section 6.3.

Inadequate funding

As with lack of access, inadequate funding can have a pronounced effect on the criteria of 'relevance' as well as 'effectiveness', 'impact' and the other criteria. Inadequate funding was identified as a critical constraint by the evaluations in DRC, Somalia and Eritrea.

Many of those interviewed by the USAID DRC evaluation cited inadequate funding for humanitarian agencies as a key constraint on their work. Despite significant increases in funding by USAID and ECHO (the two principal donors) the overall funding levels did not match the rapid rise in the numbers of IDPs and the cost of responding to their needs. The 2004 CAP received only 44% of the amount requested. As of March 2004 of the 1.1 million IDPs in the four eastern provinces of DRC that were deemed "accessible" only 45% were actually receiving assistance, though the report does not indicate to what extent this could be attributed to funding shortfalls, inadequate capacity or problems in actually identifying the IDPs.

For the Netherlands Somalia evaluation, the 'non-development' of most of the country for well over a decade has resulted in such low levels of public service provision that attainment of the Sphere Standards is denied to many Somalis regardless of whether they are IDPs or not. In relation to humanitarian programmes it concludes "very few of the programmes reach the standard associated with the Sphere project, since there is neither the stability nor the cash to reach Sphere quality thresholds" (p. 67). Apparently however the problem was due

"not so much to a lack of funds as the failure to ensure that they were provided in a way that made their object sustainable". Apparently, the annual (or in ECHO's case 6-monthly) budgeting/spending cycle had led to breaks in the funding of a number of projects. Such breaks were dispiriting for staff of the implementing agencies and damaged the relationship between the agencies and the project beneficiaries[10].

For reasons which are not explored in the report, the WFP Eritrea evaluation refers to "slow donor response" and "shortfalls in resourcing of earlier EMOPs" as being mainly responsible for food aid supply shortfalls which saw WFP food aid fall from 167,000 tonnes to 39,000 tonnes during "the worst drought since independence" which "significantly affected the number of general feeding beneficiaries supported by WFP".

Assistance not being sufficiently needs-driven

In contrast to the inadequate funding for DRC and Somalia the Danida Kosovo study tells a very different story, criticising "the disproportionate Danish contribution to Kosovo both in comparison to other donors and in comparison to more severe crises developing internationally" (p. 11). It notes that by 2000 Denmark became the third largest bilateral humanitarian donor, contributing 9% of total assistance and goes on to make a direct comparison with the DRC: "In 2000, while the average donor contributed about 100 times the level of assistance per capita to Kosovo compared to the infinitely more deadly conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark gave almost double the average. … There appears to be no impartial needs-based criteria used in the allotment of Denmark's humanitarian aid" (p. 12).

The lack of objective assessment of needs was a major concern for the Netherlands Somalia evaluation and an important factor in its negative findings on relevance.

> "No comprehensive assessment of needs was made in Somalia, so there is no basis on which to judge whether or not the provision and distribution of humanitarian necessities was proportionate to them. In the absence of overall assessments, there is no general targeting, but individual projects frequently select particular places or operations based on a project assessment of need." (p. 80).

The Sida Indonesia evaluation found that programmes were heavily influenced by the ease of access to an area, the leverage the population had on national and international political actors, media coverage,

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[10] This qualification on the inadequacy of the disbursement processes rather than the overall levels of fundng per se was provided by the evaluation team in their written comments on the draft synthesis report. (ETC 7/12/04).

and donor preferences resulting in a focus on some areas and the relative neglect of others – leading to inconsistencies in standards of humanitarian assistance provided. For instance, the evaluation found that this combination of factors had contributed to an "exceptional focus" on two islands and noted that most of the Dutch humanitarian aid provided over the five year period being evaluated had been earmarked to two provinces because of historical and Parliamentary ties to the population of those islands.

At the time the UNHCR Liberia evaluation was undertaken (October 2003) the West African peacekeepers and the newly arriving UNOMIL force was only able to provide security in and around Monrovia and it was not until early 2004 that UNOMIL was able to extend its presence and improve security to other areas of the country. The evaluation found that:

> "Because the IDPs living in and around Monrovia are easily accessible to humanitarian agencies, journalists and donor state representatives, they have attracted a large and perhaps disproportionate degree of international attention. Recent evidence suggests that the situation of IDPs in other parts of the country is equally if not more dire." UNHCR Liberia evaluation (para 36)

Even within the significantly under-resourced response in DRC, the USAID evaluation notes disproportionate responses to particular events that received international media attention and thus additional resources from official, as well as private, sources.

> "The Goma crisis illustrates the impact the media can have in making a difference. Donations of over $33 million were pledged within three weeks, more than one-third of the sums pledged for the total inter-agency CAP (2002) for the entire country. Many interviewees felt that the response was disproportionate to the needs, particularly since the relative need on almost every indicator was greater in rural areas in North and South Kivu. … Similarly, the 2003 Ituri crisis grabbed international attention and blindsided assistance actors to the persistent unfolding crises in other parts of the country, such as in Maniema and the Kivus." (p. 38)

The issue of needs assessment is discussed in more detail in Section 6.7.

Consultation with IDPs represents a critical means by which agencies can ensure relevance of the support provided to them. Several of the evaluations did not explicitly consider consultation, neither when evaluating past programmes, nor to solicit IDP views as part of the

evaluation. Among those that did, their findings were varied. For programmes in Afghanistan and Indonesia and an ILO project in Somalia the findings were positive:

> Danida Afghanistan Preliminary study (p. 31): "A particularly positive aspect of the interventions of the aid community over the past fifteen years has been the use of various models to maximise community participation in the decision-making process relating to the allocation of resources."
>
> Sida Indonesia evaluation (p. 14): "There has been a clear global shift to more consultation from end 2003 for all aid programmes".

However general assessments in relation to Somali and Angola were critical.

> Netherlands Somalia evaluation (p. 62): "What Somali people think about their needs for protection seems not to have been analysed …The exclusion of significant Somali input at overall programme level was a deterrent to local ownership and to diffusing models of good practice"
>
> Danida Angola evaluation (p. 56): "Beneficiaries were rarely consulted about projects, or if consulted, consultation was limited to traditional leaders."

5.3 Effectiveness

The criteria of effectiveness is principally concerned with the extent to which the objectives stated for the programmes were attained and if so whether this was in a timely fashion. With the introduction and greater use of standards, notably the Sphere Minimum Standards, in the humanitarian sector over the last 5–10 years, effectiveness is also concerned with standards and their attainment. Assessment in relation to standards requires the monitoring of programmes and of indicators and so the Common Framework also highlighted monitoring and the consistent use of indicators as a concern of 'effectiveness'.

The Common Framework sees access as a key concern of effectiveness but as this has already been discussed in relation to 'relevance' it will not be covered here.

As pointed out by the Danida Angola evaluation: "It is only possible to assess effectiveness when there is a clear statement of objectives and when it is clear what has been done". Few of the reports considered clarity of objectives. Where this was done, as in the cases of the Danida Angola and Kosovo evaluations, they were critical of the lack of clarity of objectives. For instance:

Danida Kosovo (p. 40): "The *Kosovo Action Plan* as a policy and strategy document for the Danish assistance to Kosovo was comprehensive, relevant and farsighted. However, an apparently weak link between strategy and operations meant that the strategy was often not followed in implementation and the operation lacked a strategic design."

Whilst not all of the reports explicitly considered the monitoring of programmes and indicators relating to IDPs, it appears to have been generally poor. The ECHO Angola, Danida Angola, Sida Indonesia, Netherlands Somalia and UNHCR Colombia evaluations all indicate inadequate monitoring. For instance:

Sida Indonesia p. 6: "The general lack of needs-assessment, monitoring reports and evaluations made it impossible to carry out a documentary evidence-based synthesis of the country-wide assistance towards IDPs"

In Afghanistan UNHCR operated a 'returnee monitoring mechanism' but the Preliminary Study commented that it "it can do no more than indicate, in very general terms, the extent to which there are resource gaps in areas of return" (p. 52)

Given the general lack of monitoring, findings in relation to 'effectiveness' by the evaluations appear to have drawn more on overall assessments by the evaluators rather than from specific monitoring by the agencies.

Few of the reports considered awareness of, and monitoring against the Sphere Standards. Of those that did, awareness of the standards appears to have been low and evidence of monitoring in relation to the standards was not apparent. The Netherlands Somalia evaluation states:

"The Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief and the 'Sphere Standards' were both acknowledged in the regional headquarters of the relevant agencies, but workers in the field knew little about either." However it goes on to question the relevance of the Standards "to a humanitarian response to a chronic developmental crisis." (p. 81)

The same evaluation also questions the relevance of 'timeliness' in an assessment of effectiveness since "in the period at issue, there was no IDP emergency and since no assistance was provided specifically for Somali IDPs, it is not relevant". However timeliness was seen as being highly relevant in other contexts of sudden and massive displacement.

The USAID DRC evaluation found that the first groups to respond to the arrival of IDPs were local NGOs and community members and that international NGOs tended to respond only to the larger displacements. "In places without large numbers of IDPs, entire groups of people received no international assistance and suffered when local communities could not support them." (p. 30) However, if large displacements were into areas where international NGOs were present the system could respond quickly. For instance, the massive displacement from Ituri in May 2003 produced daily flows of 2000 or so IDPs into and through Eringeti where World Vision had a presence. The agency was able to alert other agencies so that within the next 2–3 weeks other NGOs set up programmes in the town, WFP brought in food aid from Kampala and OFDA airlifted non-food items from Italy and Kuwait.

Particularly in contexts where there is a general lack of funding and media interest, NGOs are often dependent on donor funding to respond to sudden influxes. The speed with which proposals are approved and financial authorisation given by donors therefore becomes a critical determinant of their ability to respond in a timely fashion. Though OFDA was generally praised for its responsive programme and its support for airlifts, the evaluation found that its procedures may be slower than those for ECHO where local representatives "can decide on the spot to fund programmes with 80% certainty, allowing organisations to proceed with initial steps" (p. 31). The limited representation of OFDA in Eastern DRC was identified as a factor contributing to its slower procedures.

In Angola the Emergency Response Fund operated by OCHA proved highly effective, disbursing nearly US$ 26 million from 1997 to 2003. The Danida Angola evaluation found that "many NGOs used this as the immediate sources of funding while waiting for applications to ECHO or other donors to come through." (p. 42)

Given such findings on the different components of effectiveness, what were their overall conclusions on the criteria of effectiveness?

Sida Indonesia evaluation (p. iv): "Agencies have responded effectively to the more accessible emergencies. This effectiveness must be partly attributable to the high quality of Indonesian institutional and physical infrastructure"

WFP DRC study (p. 11): "WFP has succeeded in bringing about strengthened household food security and better nutrition for hundreds of thousands of IDPs fortunate enough to have received assistance. However, it has not been possible to ensure continued and regular assistance to many beneficiaries, mainly because of insecurity but also owing to pipeline breaks and logistical constraints."

Danida Angola evaluation (p. 56): "Despite the flaws detailed above, Danida's partners did manage to deliver real and needed assistance to large numbers of IDPs, and are continuing to deliver assistance. The evaluator considered that, overall, the programmes of Danida's partners were relatively effective."

Whilst critical of the Danish strategy that it characterised as "spend quick then get out quick", the Danida Kosovo evaluation (p. 13) was broadly positive about operational effectiveness: "Denmark's assistance was successful in delivering rapid and relevant assistance to address the initial refugee emergency. Danish aid provided essential relief and shelter for refuges in Albania, and Denmark made a modest contribution to the humanitarian evacuation of refugees from Macedonia. After the rapid return of ethnic Albanians to Kosovo in 1999, Danish assistance helped minimise the human suffering during the winter of 1999–2000. With the notable exception of a major timber procurement contract, Danish emergency assistance appears to have been effective in achieving its objectives."

5.4 Impact

As stated by the Common Framework, impact "assesses the real difference that programmes and projects have made in addressing the needs of IDPs – positive and negative, short and long-term, direct and indirect" (p. 12).

The ECHO Angola evaluation stressed the need for indicators and comparable data to be used from the start of a programme. For ECHO programmes in Angola it found that, with the exception of the nutrition sector (where the impact of ECHO assistance was rated as "significant") a lack of baseline data made this analysis difficult. No doubt other evaluations faced similar constraints but, drawing on a range of sources, most were prepared to offer conclusions on impact. Danida Angola evaluation (p. 65) for instance,

"based on the interviews, documents studied, and field visits it is possible to state unequivocally that:
– The work of Danida funded partners has reduced suffering and has prevented premature death among the displaced in Angola;
– The work of Danida funded partners is currently reducing suffering among those returning to their areas of origin."

USAID DRC evaluation (p. xi): "The US humanitarian relief efforts have saved many Congolese lives and prevented, to some extent, still more chaos and suffering."

Sida Indonesia (p. 37): "The impact of assistance on the overall conditions of the IDPs in Indonesia have been significant and verifiable, in great part thanks to the response from the Indonesian authorities and population, well supported by the aid agencies".

In arriving at overall assessments of impact, it is necessary to consider the extent to which impacts may have differed between different groups within the overall IDP population (by age, gender, ethnicity, length of displacement, camp and non-camp etc.) or between the IDPs and adjacent or 'host' communities. To a significant degree the ability to differentiate needs relates to the quality of the needs assessments undertaken (see Section 6.6) and the degree to which there was consultation of and participation by the IDPs in the design of the programmes (see above under Relevance).

Where the evaluations considered the camp/non-camp distinction there appears to have been a clear bias in assistance towards favouring those in camps. For instance, the USAID DRC study found:

"indications of an imbalance in assistance between IDPs who were in camps and those who had sought refuge with host families. This reached alarming proportions in some areas, with some hosted IDPs seldom if ever receiving assistance while camps down the road had monthly food distributions." (p. 24)

Whilst the report goes on to note that hosted-IDPs tend to be economically more active and therefore less dependent on aid than those in camps, it questions the assumption apparently being made by agencies "that host families or communities provide adequate protection for IDPs without this being fully justified" (p. 26).

Sida Indonesia (p. 19): In contexts where the Government is seeking to encourage IDPs into camps so that they can be more easily monitored or controlled, or where the Government itself is closely involved in the provision of assistance to IDPs, there may be an explicit policy of only providing support to those in camps. In Aceh where the state has assumed full responsibility for IDPs "assistance was only provided to those residing in government camps and not to those outside the camps."

In terms of the support provided taking account of gender differences, the conclusions were generally negative.

> Sida Indonesia (p. iv): "Women's needs tend to be consistently overlooked, such as privacy."
> Danida Angola (p. 53): "Gender analysis was almost non-existent, and apart from a few individual agency staff there was no awareness of its importance."

Of all the reports, the Danida Kosovo study devoted the greatest effort to assessing issues of gender. Noting that "the discrepancy in rights and access to resources between women and men in Kosovo is one of the largest in Europe" (p. 79) it concludes that:

> "Despite the clear policy of targeting and prioritising gender in Danish humanitarian assistance this was not applied in Kosovo. The assistance seems to have given very limited attention and allocated few resources to women." (p. 82)

The issue of assistance being provided to IDPs living adjacent to or within a host community, the potential tensions this may have introduced and how agencies dealt with this issue will be covered primarily in Section …. However, it is worth mentioning the finding of the USAID DRC evaluation here as it is so pertinent to the overall assessment of impact:

> "the tendency to focus on assisting camps and IDPs may occur at the expense of vulnerable host families and host communities. Many NGO and UN staff remarked on the obvious lowering of the standard of living of host families over months and years of sharing resources with IDPs. In the words of a host community interviewee: "When you take in an IDP you become one." (p. 26)

5.5   Efficiency

Not all of the reports directly considered efficiency in the use of resources and few dealt with it in any depth. Lack of readily available data on costs, particularly unit costs, appeared to be the main reason for this.

Both the ECHO and Danida Angola studies commented on the high cost of airlifts prior to the ceasefire but concluded that this was unavoidable. However, the Danida study noted the existence of what it termed 'legacy projects' by which it meant high cost, relief-orientated activities, inappropriately continued after the ceasefire when overland access improved. Overall it concluded:

"examples of inefficiency seen were relatively limited. The evaluator therefore formed that view that the operations of Danida's partners were reasonably efficient but in relation to ICRC noted that:

"ICRC has a special role in conflict situations, but the structures that enable it to work in such dangerous environments make it an expensive partner in time of peace, despite the high quality of its work." Danida Angola (p. 63)

The Sida Indonesia evaluation highlighted the existence of long management chains made up of successive sub-contracting arrangements and the effect this had on the average overhead costs of the assistance provided. It estimated that if each level of management in the chain charged an overhead cost of 15% then the average total overhead for the delivery of assistance (assuming three levels of management) would be about 40%. It prepared a map of the funding flows for Sida, one of the donor agencies covered by the evaluation, which channelled its assistance through the UN and Red Cross systems, which in turn worked through either the Provincial/local government levels and international/national NGOs or through the Indonesian Red Cross and Red Crescent Society (PMI) and its local branches.

Such long management chains were the product of "the arduous process of relating to local resources". Contributory and relevant factors included:

– the very limited administrative capacity within the donor missions and UN agencies to deal with complex projects or large numbers of local implementing partners[11].

– the need to "gain in legitimacy by using increasingly local actors as one moves towards the beneficiary population, to avoid the awkward political connotations of international organisations, often still seen in the light of the secession of East Timor from Indonesia." (p. 23).

The Sida Indonesia evaluation was alone among the studies in highlighting the inherent *inefficiencies* of organisations in the sector having to juggle the different programme rationales and contractual and reporting requirements of the different donors funding their programmes. It stated:

"In the absence of agreed reporting frames (for example based around operationally viable and verifiable indicators) this reduces the transparency in the management of resources, and we find an overlap of different strategies of intervention." (p. 24)

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[11] The report notes that AusAID (though not included in the evaluation) had individual contracts with between 30-60 INGOs in addition to programmes funded through the UN.

5.6   Coherence

The criteria of coherence is concerned with the common logic and consistency of the policies and programmes of different donors and agencies. It therefore involves an examination of the policies guiding the activities of the donors and their partners and consideration of the coordination arrangements. As donor policies are considered in Section 6.4 and Coordination in Section 6.7, this section considers selected findings only.

Only three of the evaluations considered more than one donor – the Sida Indonesia evaluation, the Netherlands Somalia evaluation and the Danida Afghanistan Preliminary study – so consideration of coherence *between* donors is largely to be found in these reports.

Citing the case of the UNDP-managed North Maluku Recovery Programme, the Sida Indonesia evaluation found evidence of inefficiency created by donors with different programme rationales and contractual and reporting requirements:

> "When each donor gives its own timeframe and reporting guidelines for the funds disbursed, it is natural for the actual delivery to be highly constrained, obliging the programme officers to take more into account the donor funding procedures than the actual constraints on the ground." (p. 26).

In the case of the North Maluku programme, the team found that such constraints and pressures had resulted in 80% of the funds being given to two provinces which had already received significant levels of assistance. Within one province a large amount of the funds had been spent in one district due to the presence of a UNDP office in the main town. With its predominantly Christian population a focus on this particular district was perceived as representing a pro-Christian bias by UN agencies and the NGOs implementing the programmes. The team concluded:

> "While the original focus of the donor agencies is to concentrate resources to increase efficiency, the end result is reduced relevance, coherence and efficiency". (p. 26)

The Danida Afghanistan Preliminary Study implied that IDP programmes funded by the five donors were coherent because of the leadership and coordination provided by UNHCR and the trust placed in it by the different donors. However the same study found a lack of coherence between the different military strategies being pursued in the country.

> Danida Preliminary Study (p. 56): "The parallel operations of a US-led coalition engaged in the war on terror and of

ISAF and others seeking to build up the security apparatus of the new state has seriously undermined progress and increased insecurity. The very different policies, perspectives and agendas of the US government from those of many European governments have further complicated efforts to achieve cohesion within the donor community."

The Danida Kosovo study found that Denmark's programme of Kroner 1.4 billion (approximately US$ 240 million) were disbursed through 217 allocations for over 70 distinct "purposes" and through 44 different implementing partners. "The *Kosovo Action Plan* and the subsequent Danish Appraisal Mission Report identified strategic priorities, but provided little guidance for the practical choice of strategic goals, sectors or partner agencies" (p. 13) and it concludes "The operation was highly diverse or, arguably, was very incoherent with regard to the considerable range of purposes pursued. The overall choice of purposes and sectors was apparently not guided by any strategy prioritisation." (p. 40).

5.7 Connectedness

The criteria of connectedness considers the extent to which short-term emergency interventions have been carried out in a context which takes longer-term and interconnected problems into account. It therefore covers issues such as attempts to address the 'root causes' of displacement and vulnerability, the development of local capacities and the transition from relief to rehabilitation and development activities.

Addressing the causes of displacement

Some evaluations considered this in the narrow sense of aid programmes and projects, whilst others considered it more broadly in terms of donor *governments* (our emphasis) having the ability to influence peace processes and the causes of displacement.

The USAID DRC evaluation did not consider the considerable potential influence of the US government over the governments of Uganda and Rwanda. However it did consider, and was critical of, the apparently limited use of US influence in relation to the government of DRC. For instance, the report was critical of the fact that the US did not push for local mediation and ceasefire negotiations in the east and did not denounce the support given to the Mai Mai by the Kinshasa authorities as breaches of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement. However the report concluded favourably in relation to the conflict resolution activities supported by USAID. Such activities included grants to community level conflict resolution mechanisms, support for the Inter-Congolese Dialogue though the NGO Search for Common Ground (SFCG) and support for the radio station ('Radio Okapi') operated by MONUC.

However it found that opportunities had been missed by USAID in "leveraging assistance toward resolving root causes" due to:

– restrictions placed on local mediation efforts with, and between, armed groups which "eliminated a critical step in peace-building – connection with key actors" (p. 39)

– paying limited attention to the arms proliferation issue which has been an important driver of insecurity and the lack of protection and led to communities arming themselves in their own defence

– no attention being given to the issue of natural resource exploitation by different factions and their sponsors in DRC and neighbouring countries

– insufficient use being made of local networks, such as the churches and other NGOs, and their capacity developed much more effectively in support of indigenous efforts at peace-building which "have the greatest impact, since outsiders simply do not stay long enough to build needed trust" (p. 39).

In the context of strong central authorities, the ability of donor governments (let alone humanitarian agencies) to influence policies in terms of the root causes of displacement can be very limited. The Sida Indonesia evaluation concluded that:

> "There are many constraints in making meaningful contact with personnel at the higher levels of public administration, especially in Jakarta. Aid agencies have had little impact on its overall policies. This reduces their ability to provide timely assistance and durable solutions." (p. iv)

The Netherlands Somalia study highlighted the importance of the Peace Process to efforts to achieve stability and restart development activities which have in effect been frozen for the last 15 years. Indeed it saw maintaining western presence and engagement in the Peace Process as a critical motivation of the humanitarian assistance provided to Somalia. "Interventions were chosen and designed, not in the light of an analysis of the conflict, but of the Peace Process" (p. 83).

However, some efforts to reduce the levels of violence had been successful. For instance, the Danish De-Mining Group had done much to persuade people to hand over stocks of unexploded ordinance which they were hoarding against possible organised and violent attacks. "Further violence is certainly possible, but it will be on a far smaller scale and far more opportunistic than in the past" and concluded "the overall reduction of violence, and the improbability of its eruption on the same scale as in the past, owes much to the nexus of the health and

educational interventions, mine action and the Peace Process [supported by the four donors]. " (p. 83).

As clearly stated by the Danida Kosovo evaluation:

> "The establishment of the UN trusteeship authorised by UN Security Council Resolution 1244 did not change the status of Kosovo as a partially autonomous territory of the Yugoslavia Republic of Serbia and Montenegro. However, the constitutional status of Kosovo is at the heart of this conflict and connects into nascent conflicts between Slavic and Albanian peoples elsewhere within the Balkans. It is unlikely that the Kosovans will settle for anything less than full independence and it is equally unlikely that this will be granted by the Yugoslavian Republic, or indeed that the international community will impose it. For many observers, sustainable peace and security within Kosovo and more widely within the region hinges most critically upon this issue being either resolved or finessed. (p. 28)

Transition from relief to rehabilitation and development

In terms of the transition from relief to rehabilitation activities, several evaluations concluded quite positively:

> Sida Indonesia (p. v): "the gradual shift … has been actively reinforced by the implementing agencies, in spite of administrative guidelines within some donor administrations (separating emergency aid from development aid)."
> Danida Angola (p. 69): "Danida's partners are linking relief to development relatively effectively … [but] Even though the acute relief phase is largely over in Angola, there is a continuing need for humanitarian assistance to bring people to the level where they have sufficient social capital to be no longer "potentially vulnerable …Humanitarian assistance will probably be needed for another three years."
> ECHO Angola evaluation (p. 10): "[The] evaluators found that LRRD [ECHO's policy statement on Linking Relief-Rehabilitation and Development] is viewed as a priority in ECHO's Angola strategy – though some of the efforts to hand over activities to other EC instruments were reported as proceeding more slowly than intended. The reason for this can be seen in the heavy workload of responsible EC officials in Luanda and the demand of managing large development projects."

However, the Danida Kosovo report was more critical. In the context of a Danish Government strategy that it characterised as "spend big, then get out quick", the Danida Kosovo study found that 75% of the funding was disbursed in the first 19 months, the remaining 25% then being spread over the following three years, of which just 2% was allocated in 2003. The report was critical of the 'frontloading' of Danish assistance and its concentration on reconstruction at the expense of development assistance. When implementing agencies had "tried to take a relevant long-term perspective they report that they were constrained in doing so." (p. 12)

Capacity building

The USAID DRC report is quite critical of the variable and generally weak capacity building efforts of UN agencies and international NGOs.

> "In the DRC, donors including USAID choose to channel the bulk of their financial and material aid through international NGOs and leave it to them to develop and define relations with Congolese organizations. The team found that many of OFDA's partners work with local NGOs, but that not all had effective capacity development programs for them. Other international NGOs partnered with very few local groups. For example, of UNICEF's 50 partners, only six are national NGOs." (p. 44)
>
> "A significant number of Congolese NGOs, from the over 20 interviewed, reported that they frequently provided information and advice to international NGOs setting up their programs, yet they got sidelined when those programs were established. … While some of this behaviour might be considered normal in a situation where groups compete for resources, the frequency with which international NGOs were accused of ultimately ignoring potential local partners has to be a cause for concern." (p. 43)

The Netherlands Somalia evaluation concluded that "Capacity building in local structures, as part of humanitarian assistance, has certainly been very successful" (p. 83) and cites examples such as the Danish Demining Group, the UNDP Rule of Law programme and the work of the Life and Peace Institute (LPI), Diakonia and the War Torn Societies Project (WSP) with local authorities, traditional leaders and village council in democracy and human rights training.

5.8   Concluding remarks

Many of the findings described above are typical of many evaluations undertaken in the humanitarian sector. Syntheses of evaluation find-

ings undertaken annually by ALNAP since 2001 are replete with similar findings of lack of access, lack of funding, assistance not being sufficiently needs driven, inadequate monitoring systems, inadequate efforts to develop the capacity of national and local partners and lack of consultation with and participation by the intended beneficiaries of the assistance (ALNAP 2001; 2002; 2003; 2004). However, some of the issues that emerged were 'new' and of particular interest to this synthesis. It is to these critical policy issues that we now turn.

6. The principal policy issues

6.1 Introduction

This section focuses on seven issues that emerged during the analysis of the set which we regard as critical issues deserving fuller consideration. The seven issues are:

– The rights of IDPs

– The 'protection deficit'

– Donor policy

– The 'categorisation' of IDPs

– Needs Assessments

– Coordination and the Collaborative Response

– The ending of assistance

In selecting these particular issues, we have given priority to those that are most pertinent to IDPs. As presented in Section 5, the reports in our set also identified a number of other issues, such as the general under-funding of operations in particular contexts such as the DRC and Somalia and the issue of access. However we have regarded these as general issues for the humanitarian sector as a whole rather than as issues specific to IDPs. Other studies have investigated such issues in much greater depth than is possible in this synthesis.[12]

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[12] See for instance: Darcy, James and Hofmann, Charles-Antoine (2003) According to need? Needs assessment and decision-making in the humanitarian sector. HPG Report London:Overseas Development Institute. Smillie, Ian and Minear, Larry (2003) The Quality of Money: Donor Behaviour in Humanitarian Financing. Boston:Humanitarianism and War Project, Tufts University. International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (2001) The Responsibility to Protect. Ottawa: International Development Research Centre.

6.2   The rights of IDPs

Unlike the rights of refugees, which are embodied in the 1951 Refugee Convention, the 1967 Protocol and in the OAU Convention of 1969, there is no specific legal statute defining IDPs and their rights. Instead the rights of IDPs may be covered by one or more of the following types of legal system:

1. The national laws of the country of which the IDPs are citizens

2. International human rights law[13]and international humanitarian law[14]

3. Legal and institutional provisions relating to IDP's which have been embodied in peace agreements (such as in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, and East Timor) and combine elements of national and international law.

First and foremost, responsibility for assisting and protecting IDPs lies with the national authorities. But in situations of armed conflict, national authorities are frequently either unable or unwilling to meet their responsibilities and in some contexts may actually be responsible for causing the displacement. In addition, national laws may be overruled by the introduction of martial law or the declaration of a state of emergency, as was the case in Indonesia, and this may have important implications for the status and rights of IDPs and on assistance provided by international agencies. For instance as a result of the martial law introduced in Aceh, Indonesia, NGOs had to obtain a recommendation letter from the government in order to operate and such letters were generally withheld from NGOs working in the human rights sector.

Using international human rights law in relation to IDPs is far from a straightforward process. For instance the right of IDPs to return home is not formulated in one statute but may relate to different treaties dealing with the following types of rights: property rights[15]; the prohibition on forced displacement[16]; the right to freedom of movement and protection of home and family life[17]; and the right to adequate housing[18].

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[13] Many states experiencing problems of internal displacement have ratified one or more of the major UN human rights treaties and so can be held accountable to their provisions: the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR); the 1984 Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Torture Convention); the 1965 International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (Racial Discrimination Convention; the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (Women's Convention)

[14] Principally the 1949 Geneva Convention and its 1977 Protocols.

[15] 1950 European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, 1969 American Convention on Human Rights

[16] 1949 Geneva Conventions

[17] 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

[18] 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

It was partly to simplify such complexities that motivated the development of the Guiding Principles. The Guiding Principles attempt to bring together in one document the relevant principles of international human rights and humanitarian law, clarify grey areas and fill in gaps that may exist in relation to the protection of IDPs. They address three aspects of internal displacement: a preventive phase, or the right not to be displaced; access to protection and assistance while internally displaced; and durable solutions through safe return and reintegration, or alternative settlement. But the Guiding Principles have (as yet) no enforcement mechanisms and are not in themselves legally binding. However the fact that many countries have ratified many of the treaties and conventions underlying the Guiding Principles gives them a moral force as well as highlighting ways in which a state's actions in relation to IDPs might be challenged through the national courts. While governments are free to ignore them, Francis Deng, the Representative of the Secretary General on Internally Displaced Persons from 1992 to 2004, has noted that the Guiding Principles are increasingly being treated as binding customary law, partly because they are based on 'hard' law (cited in Giffard and Hrle, 2002)

The RSG and other actors involved in advocacy on IDP issues have worked to integrate Guiding Principles into national legislation. In 2001 Angola became the first state to incorporate the UN Guiding Principles into domestic law[19]. Burundi, Sudan and Uganda followed with approaches to integrate the Principles either into their national policies or into their agreements regarding the cooperation with UN agencies[20]. Colombia went further by integrating the Guiding Principles into national jurisdiction (Law 387 of 1997) and by placing the Guiding Principles on the same level as the national constitution through a presidential initiative.

Both the Danida Angola and the UNHCR Colombia evaluations were conscious of the incorporation of the Guiding Principles into national legislation in the two countries. The Danida Angola evaluation noted that the national legislation of 2001 and 2002 was preceded by a lengthy process of advocacy and consultancy by OCHA with support from UNHCR. Indeed the UNHCR Angola Review of May 2002 refers to it as "The most significant joint UN protection achievement"(p. 4). The Danida Angola evaluation also notes and that the Angolan Regulations actually go beyond the Guiding Principles to establish the minimum conditions for IDPs to return to their homes. It also compared the standards specified in the Angolan Regulations with indicators for other standards such as Sphere and found that in some aspects the Angolan

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[19] Normas sobre o reassentamento das populações deslocadas (Norms for Resettlement of Displaced Populations)

[20] For the case of Burundi: Tullio Santini in Forced Migration Review 15 page 43 "Addressing the protection gap: the Framework for Consultation on IDPs in Burundi"

standards were more detailed than in Sphere, but in other aspects they were less demanding. Danida Angola evaluation, Appendix 9.

However, the incorporation of the Guiding Principles into Angolan domestic law does not appear to have had as much impact on the conduct of the relief and return programmes as many would have hoped. While OCHA estimated that 30% of returning IDPs were going back to places where the minimum conditions indicated by the legislation were being met, the evaluator felt that the figure was even lower "probably of the order of ten to fifteen percent at most" (p. 38) as a result of unrealistic expectations in the regulations regarding the ability of provincial governments to construct health and education infrastructure in the return areas to meet the standards indicated in the regulations. He went on to note that interviewees were divided as to whether the result was the product of a government that "cared nothing for the people in rural areas" and those who believed that "while the government was far from perfect, it had made an effort and the situation was complex" (p. 39)

In Colombia Law 387 of 1997 provides a comprehensive coverage of the protection and assistance needs of IDPs and outlines government policy on emergency aid, the structure of the national system for providing assistance to IDPs. The definition of an IDP is similar to the one used in the Guiding Principles. But, as in Angola, there is a considerable gap between the Law 387 and the reality on the ground. According to the UNHCR Evaluation:

"Law 387 … is accepted as a progressive piece of legislation, but what is missing is enforcement. Many authorities responsible for the response to internal displacement in the field are often not fully aware of the legislation." (p. 7).

Other evaluations in the set also considered national legislation in relation to IDPs, though these were not countries that had formally incorporated the Guiding Principles into domestic law. Despite the UN system 'translating and publicising very broadly" (p. 41) the Guiding principles, the Sida Indonesia evaluation found that "practically none of the general laws in Indonesia relate specifically to the needs of IDPs, or even mention them" (p. 20). While "some laws provided a favourable environment for the delivery of assistance," OCHA personnel:

"noted the considerable constraint posed to the programme by the arduous process to obtain travel authorisations to areas of conflict, such as Maluku and North Maluku." (p. 20).

The Danida Afghanistan Preliminary review noted that the government had produced an IDP National Operation Plan which stated that '[t]he UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement are to be adhered to by the Afghan State to promote and seek permanent solutions for IDPs'. However the consultants report that the Minister responsible for IDPs was not familiar with the Guiding Principles[21].

The poor implementation of the Guiding Principles in those countries that have incorporated them into domestic legislation and the apparent low awareness of the Guiding Principles in those countries which have yet to incorporate them raises the question of whether more could be done by donors and other actors to encourage the adoption of, and adherence to, the Guiding Principles.

The USAID DRC report noted that USAID provides substantial funding for OCHA for OCHA in the DRC. OCHA has translated the Guiding Principles into local languages and the production of a cassette for use by MONUC's Radio Okapi (Annex E). While the report noted that USAID now possesses a clear policy on IDPs, including a statement on the promotion of the Guiding Principles, it noted:

> "discomfort among USAID staff regarding the role they can and should play to protect human rights within development and humanitarian assistance programs."

It also noted that:
> "An obstacle to harmonious policy development is that the US Government has not ratified most of the supporting international treaties. Another is that the US law provides only a minimum statutory basis for government action on behalf of IDPs." (USAID DRC evaluation p. 18)

The Sida Indonesia report concluded that despite improvements in the level of dialogue between agencies and local and national government;

> "there is little evidence of lasting policy impact: the IDP policies are decided separately from the priorities of the agencies. One such policy was the decision to declare all IDP emergencies over in December 2003 (p. 41)

It attributes the "failure to utilise the existing legal system to protect IDPs with a coherent and accessible framework of justice, if not with the rule of law" to inadequate support and advice by international agencies on how to implement the Guiding Principles at the local level (p. 41).

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[21] Marsden, personal communication 3 November 2004

The UNHCR Colombia evaluation noted that UNHCR is involved in training and dissemination activities to promote the rights of IDPs including the distribution of copies of IDP legislation, but notes that "enforcement of the government policy is weak" (p. 8). Elsewhere in the report such weaknesses are attributed to:

– high staff turn-over in the Joint Technical Unit in its government counterpart *Red de Solidaridad Social* (RSS);

– a lack of commitment by government; and

– limited access by the government to some IDP areas.

The reports therefore provide a sense of the type of actions that might be undertaken by agencies and with support and encourage from donors. While the reports do not comment directly on ways of supporting and holding national governments to account in protecting the rights of IDPs, there is a sense that much more could be done in this regard. In those countries where aid plays a significant role in government expenditures, or where the authorities may be amenable to diplomatic encouragements and pressures, more and better coordinated advocacy may achieve positive results. For instance, during our interviews with staff of the Inter-Agency Internal Displacement Division we were informed of some positive developments in Uganda where, with encouragement from the UN Country Team, a group of influential donors was able to achieve positive outcomes on IDP issues in the north of the country.[22] Encouragement for more coordinated advocacy on IDP rights among donor field missions and a commitment to learn from positive instances of coordinated advocacy on such issues, would almost certainly benefit IDP rights and reinforce the work of OCHA and the Representative of the Secretary General.

6.3   The protection deficit

Protection: An explanation

The Common Framework placed humanitarian protection right up front as a unifying concept in the approach to IDPs:

> 'The challenge confronting policy makers, therefore, is how to orientate their humanitarian assistance to address the protection gap caused by the grave violations of humanitarian law and to ensure that millions of internally displaced persons may realise their full rights as civilians in a conflict'.
> (Framework for a Common Approach to Evaluating Assistance to IDPs: p. 3)

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[22] Denis McNamara and Marc Vincent, personal communication 18 October 2004

As explained in section 6.2, national government has primary responsibility for the security of all their citizens, including IDPs. Where national government has incorporated the Guiding Principles into national legislation, the prospects for protecting IDPs are greatest, at least in theory. The particular challenge is that, in many cases, the state authorities are the authors of the displacement, and may not have the political will and/or capacity and resources to assist and protect this particular group of citizens. As Slim and Eguren put it:

> "people are not protected just because the law says that they are and because it identifies authorities with a duty to protect. In many wars, laws are frequently broken consciously and purposively by all sides."[23]

In turn, one of the consequences of displacement is usually the breakdown of community structures and hence traditional forms of protection. This leaves IDPs even more vulnerable to abuse and to violence.

How to provide protection, and even more fundamentally, what protection means in practice, are challenges that have exercised humanitarian agencies in recent years, not least as so many now espouse a rights-based approach to their work, yet face a formidable task in making this transition from being solely service-providers. In relation to IDPs, protection issues are often starkest, but it is also an issue for other population groups which have not been displaced but are still threatened by violence and abuse. Slim and Eguren (ibid) describe protection from the standpoint of a humanitarian agency, as:

> "the challenge of making states and individuals meet their humanitarian responsibilities to protect people in war and filling-in for them as much as possible when they do not".

In contrast to the provision of material assistance, protection work is multi-faceted. Often it involves advocacy with warring parties to respect international humanitarian and human rights norms. But it also has implications for how humanitarian assistance is provided, in ways that minimise vulnerable people's risks to new or further violation. As far as possible, protection work should involve the people in need of protection themselves (Slim and Eguren, 2004). Taking on board the legal dimension of protection work, the sensitive advocacy that may be required, as well as the logistical challenges of delivering life-saving aid in insecure environments have stretched the skills and resources of many humanitarian agencies.

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[23] Slim, H., and Eguren, L.E., 2004, 'Humanitarian protection. A guidance booklet', ALNAP

All the evaluations touched on protection, although to widely varying degrees. (See table 4 below). Indeed, as this is such a fundamental issue for IDPs, it was surprising that some evaluations did not cover it in greater depth. For example, the ECHO Sudan synthesis gave it extraordinarily brief coverage with the comment: "Protection of the population and of detainees is a function ECHO [is] funding through a grant to the ICRC. As documented in interviews, the Red Cross is doing a commendable job in this field" (p. 14).

Table 4. Key findings on protection of IDPs in the core set

Evaluation/ study	Attention paid to protection in evaluation	Evidence of protection deficit
Danida Kosovo	High	Policy awareness and commitment, not followed through into action in the case of minorities
USAID DRC	Medium to high	Policy commitment, but inadequate funding and use of US diplomatic advocacy/pressure
Sida Indonesia	High	Donor interest, but implementation gap: aid agencies unable/ unwilling to implement protection activities, especially related to legal issues
Danida Afghanistan (preliminary study)	High	Action on protection compromised by domestic asylum policy of some donors, affecting UNHCR's objectivity and ability to lobby for protection
Netherlands Somalia evaluation	Medium	Challenge of protection in a failed state; limited protection by the international aid community, problems of access and lack of experience of protection work
Danida Angola	Medium to low	Protection activities tended to focus on IDPs and communities in government controlled areas, with little coverage of communities in UNITA controlled areas
ECHO Angola	Medium	(Comments are mostly project-related)
ECHO Afghanistan	Low	Difficulties, and failure in addressing sexual and gender-based violence
ECHO Sudan	Low	(Limited comments on performance of ICRC)
ECHO Synthesis	Low	(Limited comment)

Elsewhere, the common theme that emerges is of a continuing and substantial deficit in the level of protection provided. However, the way this was manifested varied quite considerably, as described below. In some countries, the consequences of the international community failing to address protection needs of IDPs have been horrifying:

1) *Overlooking the protection needs of minorities:* The Danida Kosovo evaluation describes an absolutely appropriate awareness of protection needs, clearly articulated in Denmark's Kosovo Action Plan. Initially, protection concerns were focussed on the Kosovo Albanians, and particularly on the massive refugee exodus in 1999. Although the Kosovo Action Plan recognised the subsequent threat faced by

minority groups in Kosovo, including the Serbs, there was an over-whelming failure by the international community (including Denmark) to prevent displacement of these minorities. Policy commitment was not followed through with action. As a result, more than 140,000 IDPs remain in very difficult conditions in Serbia.

2) *Material assistance prioritised over protection needs:* The USAID DRC evaluation shows that IDP protection needs are well covered in USAID's policy documents – both in overall USAID policy and in its DRC country strategy – but this is not followed through. For example, there is inadequate donor funding (including USAID) of the protection/human rights/rule of law components within the CAP, and USAID's emphasis has been food aid provision through WFP, limiting its ability to address protection needs. In DRC the impact of the conflict has been devastating, contributing directly and indirectly to the death of more than 3 million people, many of whom were probably IDPs. Sexual and gender-based violence emerges as a huge unaddressed problem in DRC. A 2004 MONUC study in 3 IDP camps near Kalemi found that over 70% of women had been raped at some point during the conflict. USAID's partners were found not to have put in the required efforts to address the scope of the problem until only recently.

3) *Implementing partners' inability / unwillingness to engage in protection work:* The Sida Indonesia evaluation revealed a strong interest amongst donors to fund protection work, but a reluctance or inability of agencies on the ground to take the necessary action. The reasons vary although they are not always explained. In Aceh, the involvement of the authorities in causing displacement has made it difficult for agencies that are operational to engage in advocacy and lobbying. This highlights the difficult choice that many agencies face – either to be operational or to engage in politically sensitive advocacy which may jeopardise their operational presence. Many of the protection issues in Indonesia are to do with legal rights (for example, identity papers, land rights), which NGOs have shied away from, especially at field level.

4) *European domestic policy compromises protection work in-country:* According to the Danida Afghanistan Preliminary study, pressure from some donors to play down the economic and security problems faced by IDPs and returnees in Afghanistan in order to support refugee return from Europe, negatively affected UNHCR's ability to analyse the situation objectively, and to fulfil its protection mandate – see section 6.4 below.

5) *Lack of access in areas of insecurity:* Lack of access was a major issue in the several cases. In Somalia the Netherlands evaluation highlights the challenge of protecting IDPs (whose protection needs

overlap with many other groups in the population) in a failed state. International agencies have limited access, particularly in south and central Somalia where violence has been greatest. For many agencies, protection is a new field of activity; shifting from service delivery to a rights-based approach has proved difficult.

Where the international community fails in protection work, the onus falls on IDPs themselves and frequently on their host communities. As the USAID DRC evaluation points out: 'aid agencies may be assuming that host families or communities provide adequate protection for IDPs without this being fully justified… In the words of a host community interviewee: "when you take in an IDP you become one"' (p. 26).

Some of the most positive comments on protection activities in the various evaluation reports are reserved for the work of the more experienced agencies, most notably ICRC and UNHCR (for example by the ECHO Sudan; Danida Angola; UNHCR Angola evaluations). Both agencies have decades of experience of protection work with a strong legal foundation. However, their coverage is inevitably restricted, both in terms of population coverage and in terms of activities (see UNHCR Colombia and UNHCR Angola evaluations which both raise problems of access and coverage). It is not apparent that this is always appreciated by donors who may feel that they are somehow 'covering' protection needs by contributing to the funding of the work of these two agencies.

Lack of adequate monitoring of human rights abuses emerged in interviews conducted for this synthesis study. Whilst it is acknowledged that an operational agency's presence may sometimes be a deterrent to the abuse and violation of local people's rights, one donor representative questioned whether operational humanitarian agencies are best-placed to carry out the documentation of human rights abuses. It requires a particular set of skills and knowledge not traditionally associated with humanitarian NGOs, and could compromise their emergency relief work. The case for leaving this kind of human rights monitoring to the 'expert' agencies is compelling. However, a recent study of response to IDP needs comments that: "The absence of protection monitoring in many countries by a UN agency must be addressed"[24]. Interviews with staff of OHCHR revealed the role that they play in some IDP situations, for example in Colombia where they have their largest field mission, and where their mandate has broadened from protection through monitoring and advocacy to promotion through public awareness and training. Generally, OHCHR has no, or a very limited presence in IDP situations. A major constraint has been lack of funding and hence lack of capacity. As part of the UN Secre-

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[24] IDP Unit, 2002,'IDP Response Matrix', preliminary report, October

tariat, the financial and personnel procedures that have to be adhered to are not conducive to the rapid and flexible deployment of field missions. The route for donor funding to reach OHCHR is apparently tortuous and slow.

Nevertheless, the time seems ripe for considering a more pro-active and enhanced role for OHCHR in relation to IDPs and protection. As mainstreaming human rights is part of the UN reform process, and with the Guiding Principles as a framework designed to uphold IDP rights, OHCHR is well-placed to expand its field presence and its protection activities. This would require a clear and consistent funding commitment from donors.

Box 3. The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and its current and potential role in the provision of protection in areas covered by humanitarian operations

The post of the High Commissioner for Human Rights was established in 1993 to be the principal UN official with responsibility for human rights and is accountable to the Secretary General. Under the 1997 UN Reform measures OHCHR was also given responsibility for integrating human rights thinking and standards throughout the work of the UN. OHCHR provides support to the Representative of the Secretary General on IDPs, the Commission on Human Rights and other human rights mechanisms (including the treaty bodies established by the international conventions on torture, racial discrimination, etc.) and consequently has a role in monitoring the human rights situation in signatory/member states. Such monitoring is undertaken by independent international human rights specialists mandated by the Commission on Human Rights as well as by OHCHR field presences where this has been agreed with respective Governments.

Currently OHCHR has a field presence in around 30 countries. Whilst some field presences have focused on promotional and technical cooperation activities, others have responded to human rights violations in armed conflicts with strong protection roles involving the monitoring and reporting of abuses and associated advocacy. The effectiveness of OHCHR in such a protection role is determined by a range of factors including:
–   the relationship with the host-government
–   OHCHR's ability to deploy experienced monitors and provide them with the necessary financial and logistical support.

A particular challenge faced by OHCHR has been obtaining the required levels of funding and the cumbersome nature of mechanisms for accessing and disbursing funding to the field missions (funding provided by donor governments for OHCHR field missions is currently routed via the UN Office in Geneva and UNDP)

With increased funding levels and a stronger field presence OHCHR could, in principle, play a much enhanced role in strengthening the protection of IDPs and other vulnerable groups. At the heart of this role would be ongoing monitoring of

human rights violations, feeding into and informing UN advocacy work, not least through the UN Humanitarian Coordinator. This information could also be used by donor governments for advocacy purposes. If OHCHR was adequately fulfilling this human rights monitoring role, this would release operational humanitarian agencies from attempting to play this role which could well compromise their ability to deliver humanitarian assistance. As OHCHR strengthens its monitoring presence in a situation of violent conflict, it would then be in a position to engage in promotion activities, including awareness-raising and capacity-building, for which sustained levels of funding are essential. It would also be well-placed to help bridge the gap between human rights and humanitarian agencies, for example by linking knowledge about patterns of human rights violations with the design of humanitarian assistance programmes, to ensure the latter reduce the exposure of IDPs and other vulnerable groups to abuse and violence.

The current field mission in Darfur represents a test of OHCHR's ability to play this role and illustrates some of the challenges. Under the UN Action Plan for Darfur agreed with the Government of Sudan, OHCHR has deployed human rights observers to Darfur (though the first group did not arrive until August 2004) and is currently working closely with the UN Assistance Mission in Sudan as well as other UN agencies/programmes (in particular UNHCR, OCHA and UNDP) to develop the activities and procedures for enhancing the level of protection for the affected population.

Sources:
OHCHR website http://www.ohchr.org/
OHCHR (2003) 'Human Rights in Action: Promoting and Protecting Rights Around the World' Geneva
Mathias Behnke, interviewed 19 October 2004

Donor governments have a direct role to play in 'responsibilising' those with a duty to protect IDPs, in other words national authorities. This is a fundamental role for them to play, particularly where the state is directly or indirectly causing forced displacement. In such cases, NGOs rarely have the political clout to successfully engage in advocacy, and are ultimately dispensable if they make too much noise. Unfortunately the evaluations say remarkably little about donor advocacy, possibly because this was not specifically required by the TOR for many of the evaluations or encouraged by the commissioning organisations. Some reports refer positively to advocacy work by UN agencies, for example in Indonesia and in Angola, but the extent to which this is backed up by, and/or coherent with donor government advocacy receives almost no attention. One of the few comments on donor advocacy appears in the ECHO Angola evaluation, in relation to:

> "donor's expectations for the government to use more of its own extensive resources for humanitarian work… Such advocacy is mainly transmitted through an *ad hoc* arrangement of 'the five ambassadors' (US, UK, Norway, Netherlands and Sweden), rather than at formal government-donor meetings, which donors report to be *pro forma* and insubstantial" (p. 31).

Regrettably, there are few lessons to be gleaned from the evaluations on this important topic of donor advocacy.

There are rather few examples in the evaluations of good protection work carried out by humanitarian agencies as part of their ongoing assistance programmes. The ECHO Angola evaluation commends ICRC's tracing work:

> "Protection activities in general, and family reunifications in particular, are according to the involved agencies not cost-efficient per case. However, it sends an important and relevant signal for peace-building and restoring Angolan society" (p. 36)

The evaluators recommend that protection concerns be expressed in all projects as a cross-cutting issue. The Sida Indonesia evaluation highlights the importance of aid agencies as advisors in interpreting the norms set out in international instruments and guidelines (p. 15), although it is not clear from the evaluation that this role has been fulfilled successfully, especially at provincial and field levels. The Netherlands Somalia evaluation provides one of the clearest examples of good practice, showing how the Danish Refugee Council has successfully made the transition from being service-provider to a more rights-oriented approach. Its '*Peace, Human Rights and Advocacy Campaign*' in Somaliland has had a remarkable impact in reducing revenge killings and settling land disputes over a six month period, by working with the community leadership on the customary legal system (p. 64).

Protection and peacekeeping operations

Finally, what difference has the presence of an international peacekeeping force made to the protection of IDPs? This issue is somewhat beyond the TOR of the evaluations, but is nevertheless relevant to the work of humanitarian agencies, and is touched upon in some evaluation reports. Somalia represents one extreme. As noted in chapter 5, the history of failed US and UN peacekeeping interventions means that humanitarian agencies have been working on their own for over a decade, and have poorly addressed protection needs during this period. Since 1999 there has been a peacekeeping force in

DRC, but its size has been insufficient to control the violence (p. ix) although it has become more effective since it focussed its activities on eastern DRC. During the Ituri conflict in 2003, MONUC-controlled areas (and camps) around Bunia afforded some protection to IDPs, but the coverage was very limited. Indeed, the USAID DRC evaluation is critical 'that the international community was only willing to support peace initiatives in Eastern DRC when they conformed to the political interests of the Kinshasa authorities' (p. 10). In short, MONUC has sometimes improved access to humanitarian assistance for displaced and vulnerable people, but protection by MONUC troops also posed a dilemma in compromising humanitarian neutrality (p. 32). In Liberia, access to IDPs is highly dependent on the presence of UNMIL and its ability to provide security so that humanitarian agencies can operate. At the time of UNHCR's evaluation in 2003, this was restricted to a 25 km radius around Monrovia, yet there are IDPs in many other parts of the country. The importance of strengthening UNMIL and expanding its presence, both to address protection and to advance the peace process is clearly stated in the evaluation report. The experience of peace-keeping forces in Kosovo contrasts sharply with experience in Africa. As a high political priority, the former has been well-funded, in the form of NATO's Kosovo Force, KFOR. The Danida evaluation credits KFOR for establishing and maintaining security in Kosovo, but comments that: 'regional peace still depends upon the continuing presence of international peacekeepers in Kosovo and Bosnia-Herzegovina', and therefore upon the international community's willingness to deploy adequate numbers of peacekeepers (executive summary). Yet despite the massive KFOR presence, the evaluation questions why ethnic cleansing of Serbian and Roma communities was not prevented after the return of Kosovo Albanians.

Concluding remarks

As this section demonstrates, protection is a wide-ranging issue for donors and for their implementing partners, and is one of the most fundamental needs of IDPs. Yet there still appears to be a lot of conceptual confusion about what protection means for donor agencies, most explicitly acknowledged in the USAID DRC evaluation (p. 18). Although most donors have made a greater commitment to protection in their policy statements, translating this into practice remains an elusive goal. Meanwhile, many of their implementing partners are struggling with how to respond to protection needs, often reverting to the more familiar service delivery. Clarifying the respective roles of donor governments – for example in advocacy; of 'traditional' NGO implementing partners – for example in mainstreaming protection thinking into their planning and delivery of humanitarian assistance; and of

human rights organisations – for example strengthening the role of OHCHR – would be an important first step.

6.4   Donor policy

General donor policy on IDPs

Coverage of donor policy by the individual evaluations is varied, as discussed in section 7.4 below. Of all the donor agencies participating in this collaborative evaluation exercise, only USAID has a separate and explicit policy statement on IDPs: "USAID Assistance to Internally Displaced Persons Policy" PD-ACA-558. This policy has just been approved, having been formulated over a two-year period. The USAID DRC evaluation commends this as an effort to 'institutionalize USAID's commitment to protecting IDPs, as well as actions that demonstrate a stronger commitment to strategic planning to improve IDP responses' (p. 17). Recognising some of the particular characteristics of the internally displaced, such as their lack of special legal status under international law and some of the challenges of prolonged displacement, this policy document addresses all phases of displacement, from humanitarian assistance, to reintegration and transition, to long-term development. It raises the issue of protection, and states USAID's support for the Guiding Principles[25]. Significantly, it clearly states USAID as the US government's lead coordinator on IDPs. As this policy has been finalised, a new post of 'Humanitarian Protection and IDP Advisor' has been created, within OFDA. This signifies a shift in commitment to protection within OFDA's mandate of humanitarian assistance, and a commitment to operationalise this new IDP policy. However, it is interesting to note that the title of this new post has been adjusted in recent months, to emphasise protection first, and IDPs second.

None of the other donors involved in this exercise (Sida, Danida, DFID, DCI, DGIS-Netherlands and ECHO) has a separate or dedicated policy statement on IDPs. Within their overall policy statements on humanitarian action IDPs may be mentioned but this is often in the context of aid allocations being needs-based and impartial, with IDPs being mentioned as one of a number of potentially vulnerable groups. Interviews with officials from each of these six donor agencies and feedback received on the draft report indicate that most donors do not see the need for a special policy on IDPs.

ECHO appears to be the most categorical in its policy of 'non-categorisation' of IDPs, which it sought to review through the evalua-

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[25] Deciding on the precise wording of the policy, particularly in relation to the Guiding Principles, has been a long process, informed by the potential legal repercussions, not least because the US government has not ratified most of the supporting international treaties.

tions it commissioned. This issue is dealt with in section 6.5 below. Some concern was expressed by both donor officials and evaluators about privileging IDPs over other vulnerable groups if they are separated out. The Danida Afghanistan Preliminary Study also warns of the heterogeneity of IDPs, which challenges policy statement about this 'group' as though it were homogenous. Indeed, the USAID DRC evaluation states that:

> 'The litmus test of the [USAID] policy development exercise is whether it will create assistance and protection disparities between IDPs and other vulnerable people. If it does, then it is perceived to be off track'
> (p. 18)

All of the donor organisations participating in the evaluation are committed to the Guiding Principles. What difference this makes on the ground, however, is hard to ascertain. This question was poorly covered in the individual evaluation reports. Interviews with donor officials throws doubt about whether the written policy commitment makes much difference in the way that aid is programmed. Real support for the Guiding Principles would imply a more significant advocacy role for donor governments with respect to national authorities than often appears to be the case. Once again, this issue is thinly covered in the evaluations. The US IDP policy does clearly 'put(s) the onus on governments to take responsibility for their own IDP problem' (ibid: 18). This is critical, and must be the starting point for all international assistance to IDPs.

Country-specific donor policy

This also has mixed coverage in the individual evaluation reports; not all comment on country-specific donor policy, explicit or implicit. The Netherlands Somalia evaluation does. In line with general donor policy, it notes that IDPs are mentioned as one of a number of potentially vulnerable groups (including women, children and the elderly), for example in Danida's policy on Somalia.

The Danida Kosovo evaluation says most about this topic. It commends the 'excellent policy analysis' in the Kosovo Action Plan, formulated to guide Danish assistance to Kosovo, and committing Denmark to the promotion of a pluralist and multi-ethnic Kosovo, whilst recognising the risk of reprisals against Kosovo Serbs. But the evaluation is highly critical of the collective failure of governmental and intergovernmental actors – including Denmark – in 'prevent(ing) the exodus of minorities in the "second ethnic cleansing of Kosovo" (section 5.5). It talks of 'the main political imperatives of intervention [in this case, material humanitarian assistance to the very visible

Kosovar Albanian refugees] obscur(ing) other equally critical humanitarian needs': the protection of Serbs and other minorities. An important lesson emerging from this experience is to conduct a needs assessment of the totality of a complex crisis, and to be vigilant against humanitarian assistance being skewed to the most immediate and visible humanitarian needs.

Coherence of donor policy – domestic and international

Two of the reports draw some important conclusions about the links between domestic policy within donor countries, which in certain cases is seen to be increasingly antagonistic towards asylum-seekers, and international aid policy and practice towards IDPs. This is most evident in Afghanistan:

> 'Three of the governments [evaluated] have significant Afghan refugee populations which they are keen to return, whether through voluntary mechanisms or through enforced deportations. These are the UK, Denmark and the Netherlands. These asylum-related policies sit somewhat uneasily with the traditional humanitarian and development approaches adopted by those responsible for assistance, which are based on an objective assessment of both needs and human rights conditions…. This focus has also meant that UNHCR has not been able to draw on the diplomatic support of these three governments in any representations that it has made to the governments of Pakistan and Iran with regard to the protection of Afghans in both countries and with regard to the heavy pressures that these two governments have been placing on Afghans to return.'
> (Danida Afghanistan preliminary study, section 6.3)

The study comments on how these three governments have a clear interest in maintaining displacement within the regions of origin inside Afghanistan, to avoid new influxes into Europe and to show how successfully IDPs are being reintegrated and are re-establishing their lives and livelihoods. The economic situation in Afghanistan is thus portrayed in as positive a light as possible, to justify refugee return from Europe. Yet, other sources of information present a very different reality, for example that refugees have returned from Pakistan and Iran as a consequence of 'a high level of duress', and many returnees (both refugees and IDPs) have not been able to re-establish a sustainable livelihood. Objectivity of analysis and impartiality of response are casualties of this political pressure, apparently affecting UN agencies as well as donors.

The Danida Kosovo evaluation talks of 'constant references [during the evaluation process] to the disconnection between the proclaimed virtues of Denmark as a beacon of human rights and a xenophobic trend in Danish political discourse that seems hostile to "the other" and deeply critical of the history of Denmark in receiving refugees' (section 5.7). In pointing out this incoherence between domestic and international aid policy, it comments that 'the forces of intolerance that exist in Kosovo will not readily take lessons on multi-ethnicity from a country that has adopted policies hostile to pluralism and diversity for itself'.

This incoherence between donor governments' commitment to humanitarian principles and international humanitarian law applied abroad, and their domestic policy on asylum is most evident for countries of greatest political significance: Afghanistan and Kosovo. The immediate challenge is to maintain the integrity of humanitarian assistance in the face of such domestic political pressure. The longer-term challenge is coherence of policy, international and domestic.

Conclusions

USAID's commitment to IDPs in the form of its new policy document is to be welcomed. Our conclusion, however, is not that all donors should follow USAID's lead and develop explicit policy statements on IDPs. Rather, they should address IDPs under broader policy statements on vulnerability and needs, thus locating IDPs and other potentially vulnerable groups in a larger context that will hopefully avoid confusion over categorisation and targeting of particular vulnerable groups that is not needs-driven. However, donor agencies should be much more strident in their promotion of the Guiding Principles in relation to IDPs. The formulation of the Guiding Principles was a valuable step forward in highlighting the rights of IDPs, that should be capitalised upon more than currently appears to be the case, in dialogue with, and lobbying of national authorities.

Where there is incoherence between restrictive domestic asylum policies, and humanitarian aid policy based on the principles of impartiality and allocation of aid according to need, there is a real danger that the latter will be sacrificed in certain countries, as is already happening in Afghanistan. IDPs and returning refugees will be the casualties. In such situations, strong leadership to protect humanitarian principles is essential.

6.5   The 'categorisation' of IDPs

The evaluations reveal significant differences in approach to the identification and treatment of IDPs as a specific group of actual or potential beneficiaries of humanitarian assistance and protection. Indeed there appears to be quite a strong vein of objection not only to the *treat-*

ment of IDPs as a separate category[26] but even to their separate *identification* from amongst all the actual and potential vulnerable groups. Such differences manifested themselves in different ways: at the level of donor and agency policy; at the programme level; and between the evaluators themselves. At the field level the very real practical difficulties of identifying IDPs when intermingled with other vulnerable groups or amongst the urban poor were an important source of objection to the separate identification of IDPs. However, a more fundamental source of objection was the belief that the separate identification of IDPs is somehow at odds with the humanitarian principle that assistance should be determined by needs and needs alone.

This section explores the issue of categorisation from the following perspectives

– Agency policy – specifically USAID, ECHO and ICRC

– Difficulties in the identification and counting of IDPs

– The Vulnerability of IDPs Relative to Other Groups

– Some concluding remarks on categorisation

Categorisation and agency policy

USAID

As noted in Section 6.4, USAID is so far the only donor to have developed a specific public policy statement on IDPs. Whilst the statement does not deal with the practical issues as to how IDPs will be identified or treated, an implication of their being the focus of a separate policy statement is that they are regarded as a specific vulnerable category and that on occasion this will translate into specific programmes intended to address the needs of IDPs. The DRC evaluation found that OFDA's criteria for programme support issued annually: "[did] not solicit projects targeted specifically for IDPs; rather IDPs are mentioned as one potentially needy group." (p. 21).

ECHO

ECHO's policies on humanitarian aid are governed by Council Regulation (EC) No. (1257/96) of 20 June 1996. The Regulation states that the primary objective of humanitarian aid is "to save and preserve life during emergencies and their immediate aftermath." It includes a commendable commitment to be impartial and 'needs-driven: "humanitarian aid decisions must be taken impartially and solely according to the victims' needs and interests". The only specific mention of IDPs in the Regulation is that one of the objectives of humanitarian aid operations is:

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[26] The separate treatment of IDPs had been recognised as an area of contention in the Common Framework Paper which had proposed a 'point of compromise', namely that: "the central concern is not to grant the internally displaced a privileged status, but to identify as accurately as possible who and where they are, and then to ensure that their needs are not ignored".

"to cope with the consequences of population movements (refugees, displaced people and returnees) caused by natural and man-made disasters and carry out schemes to assist repatriation to the country of origin and resettlement there when the conditions laid down in current international agreements are in place".

In 2001 a paper titled "ECHO's policy vis-à-vis forcibly displaced people"[27] was prepared and in its opening paragraph states:

"ECHO in principle aims at addressing humanitarian needs of affected populations regardless of whether they have been forcibly displaced, let alone whether that displacement has taken place across international boundaries. ECHO's financing is thus based on the actual accurate assessment of needs in the field rather than on pre-conceived categories."

Subsequently the paper went on to argue that "there would appear to be no substitute for a case-by-case analysis of the situation in the field." The notion that IDPs represented a "pre-conceived category"[28] and that this might somehow be at odds with ECHO's 'needs-driven' approach appears to stem from this paper.

The TOR for the ECHO evaluations utilised the opening paragraph from the 2001 paper and requested them to:

– review ECHO's policy of treating affected populations without regard to pre-conceived categories
– consider "whether the humanitarian response to IDPs should be specifically 'targeted' to this group or be integrated into policies which address overall vulnerability and needs".[29]

Consequently in their consideration of IDPs, the evaluators tended to frame their discussion of 'categorisation' and 'pre-conceived categories' in terms of IDPs being automatically targeted or somehow being privileged by virtue of their displaced status. That there might be value in simply considering vulnerability in relation to different categories of people, or that displacement might serve as a potential indicator of vulnerability and therefore be worthy of regular monitoring were not explored.

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[27] ECHO-4/GMV D(2001) 21st September 2001.
[28] The logic of this phrase implies that any type of group defined as such prior to the emergency (whether they be female, disabled, or belonging to a particular ethnic or religious group) could be deemed to be 'pre-conceived'.
[29] ECHO Angola evaluation (p. 22).

The Sudan and Angola evaluations were quite categorical in their affirmation of current ECHO policy over the posited alternative of automatically targeting on the basis of 'pre-conceived categories':

> ECHO Sudan (p. 15) "[The] evaluators can vouch that ECHO's policy to address humanitarian needs of affected populations – regardless of whether they have been forcibly displaced or not – has been respected in Southern Sudan. …the evaluators wish to endorse the criteria …NOT to categorise vulnerable groups; they strongly feel no changes are needed in this respect".
> ECHO Angola (p. 22) "Overall, the evaluators find that favouring IDPs at the expense of others – i.e. relying on categorisation to target aid – would not do justice to the recent and current needs in Angola."

However, on the face of it, the Afghanistan evaluation appeared to reach different conclusions:

> ECHO Afghanistan (p. 7) "ECHO interventions have, in fact targeted Pre-conceived Categories of beneficiary (such as Refugees, Drought IDPs, Conflict IDPs and Returnees) but such specific targeting has been found to be quite justified as a means of reaching the greatest number."

The subsequent Synthesis Study steered its way through such apparent paradoxes by helpfully explaining that:

> "The present ECHO policy of targeting on [the] basis of need will generally lead to assistance being targeted to pre-conceived categories where these are the groups in greatest need and targeting by category allows for efficient distribution. And pointing out that "categories are widely used because they are useful" and sometimes necessary in situations where time or access constraints do not allow detailed needs assessments but make distribution to groups based on experience necessary."

It concluded that

> "It is appropriate to target assistance to a specific category, on the basis of assessments or prima facia evidence, that the category of person is more in need than persons outside that category, or that they are as needy as categories that are already being assisted, where such broad targeting leads

to greater efficiency than would come from household level targeting." (p. 6)

"The special needs of some preconceived categories for protection may make it appropriate for ECHO to continue to fund organisations providing protection to one preconceived category or another." (p. 6)

ECHO is in the process of acting upon the recommendations made by the Synthesis Study and is currently in the process of commissioning a review of "core cross-cutting issues and key objectives affecting persons in humanitarian crisis." The review will consider definitions of different categories of beneficiaries, identify benchmarks and indicators to be used and develop model guidelines for use in the implementation of humanitarian operations.[30]

ICRC
The ICRC is the guardian of the Geneva Conventions and the principal humanitarian actor in most zones of conflict. It is supported by many bilateral donors and by ECHO. As well as being funded to provide *assistance* to civilians many donors also regard the ICRC as their principal means for providing protection to civilians in zones of conflict through it's role in monitoring observance of the Geneva Conventions by parties to the conflict. The ICRC's policies and position in relation to IDPs were set out in a series of official statements during 2000. The following extracts from an "Official Statement on ICRC activities relating to internal displacement" made to the ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment in July 2000, summarise its position:

"The ICRC considers persons who have been displaced by armed conflict to be first and foremost civilians, who, as such, are protected by international humanitarian law."

"When implementing a programme on behalf of the civilian population, the ICRC always seeks to identify particularly vulnerable groups. Its approach can thus be said to be oriented more towards vulnerability than predefined categories. It is evident, however, that displaced persons are often particularly vulnerable and thus included among the ICRC's beneficiaries. At the same time, the conditions in which these people live vary considerably, depending on their proximity to the conflict, in time and space, and the particular phase of the displacement."

"In its work, the ICRC gives priority to … recently displaced persons [who] may still be exposed to the dangers

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30 Terms of Reference Annex 1 ECHO/ADM/BUD/2004/012xx on *http//europe.eu.int/comm/echo/*

of military operations, and they may be empty-handed; they may thus depend on immediate support for their very survival."

"Statistics on the numbers of internally displaced persons are always the subject of considerable interest, and sometimes of controversy, among humanitarian organizations and governments. … [I]t should be noted that the very notion of "displaced person" varies greatly from one organization to another, depending on the desired scope of intervention, and that the figures are consequently often compiled with a specific purpose in mind. For its part, the ICRC reserves the term "displaced person" for those in greatest need of immediate life-saving assistance. This typically covers persons who have recently been displaced and are thus totally dependent on immediate support in order to survive."

"In the ICRC's opinion, it would be wrong to focus too much on figures and in particular to earmark funds for only a particular category of victim. To do so would not only be ethically questionable in cases where other categories are in equally difficult or even more difficult circumstances, but also ineffective in the context of a comprehensive approach. For instance, when providing support for health-care facilities, the ICRC is also aiding internally displaced persons who are wounded or sick. Activities aimed at providing the population with access to safe drinking water, seed and tools or food aid also benefit internally displaced persons, not only when they are the direct recipients but also when the host population is better equipped to take them in."

To some extent therefore the ICRC forges a middle path, rejecting uninformed categorisation of IDPs, for example on the basis of numbers alone, but nevertheless recognising that displaced people are likely to be amongst the most vulnerable.[31]

Difficulties in the identification and counting of IDPs
As noted in Chapter 5 the difficulty of actually identifying IDPs and thus being confident that the needs of all IDPs were actually being met was an important factor contributing to the generally negative assessment of relevance.

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[31] In their feedback on the draft report some of the reviewers within bilateral donor organisations broadly agreed with ICRC's approach. For example: "separate 'categorisation' of IDPs is not common in the Netherlands' humanitarian assistance, except in those contexts were this is functional or has added value." Comments from the Humanitarian Aid Division of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs (9/12/04)

For several evaluations the issue was approached from the perspective of differences in the estimates of the numbers of IDPs. The Danida Angola evaluation found that the number of "reported IDPs" was on average 260% of the number of "confirmed IDPs" due to:

– the inclusion of over one million "old IDPs" in the Government total;

– the reclassification of IDPs who had returned to their home areas and were no longer seen as needing humanitarian assistance by OCHA; and

– the non-inclusion of IDPs staying with friends or family in the confirmed IDP figures.

The report was critical of OCHA for not consistently using the terms relating to sub-categories over a period of years.[32]

For the DRC, the USAID evaluation found "disagreement among international staff as to who should be counted as an IDP and, in general, numbers are viewed with scepticism". Some of those interviewed disagreed with OCHA's inclusion of 'long term displaced' (ie. those who have been displaced for more than ten years) in the figures. Some organisations included those with nomadic lifestyles (e.g. in Masisi) and others moving on a seasonal basis in their figures on IDPs. The report also found disparities in the way that accessible IDPs were counted. Those in camps and in small towns tended to be included more than those in large towns, where they are usually not counted. Several organizations claimed that it was nearly impossible to count IDPs in towns larger than 100,000 because no reliable administrative mechanisms exists to structure and monitor the counting procedure. The report concludes:

> "In short, few organizations trust each other's numbers, or any numbers. Since funding and targeting are based on numbers, this is unsettling." (p. 23)

The ECHO Sudan evaluation reported that it was "often impossible to differentiate" the status of IDPs and local populations suffering from the protracted conflict (p. 15).

The Netherlands Somalia evaluation found that there was a significant mixing of refugee returnees, urban landless and poor with IDPs in camps and compounds located in or near urban areas and that most agencies did not target IDPs when providing assistance to a particular area or community. As already noted the team used the phrase 'policy evaporation' to describe the decline in profile of IDPs

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[32] The categories used by OCHA were: Reported IDPs; New IDPs; Old IDPs; Confirmed IDPs; and Assisted IDPs.

as they moved from policy level at head offices towards the operational level.

The difficulty of identifying and therefore assessing the needs of IDPs in urban areas was a common theme in the studies. The Danida Afghanistan Preliminary Study notes that a proportion of the current, swollen population of Kabul may well be legitimate IDPs. The UNHCR Colombia evaluation estimated that as many as 40 per cent of all IDPs end up in larger cities, where they "integrate" or "disappear" amongst the urban poor. It concludes:

> "The government and international community are hardly addressing the issue of urban displacement arguing that it is a huge, overwhelming problem, which requires substantial additional resources. Another argument for not getting involved is the difficulty of distinguishing between the urban poor … and the IDPs." (p. 11)

In summary, the practical difficulties of physically identifying IDPs in any country or area of operation are often profound. Whilst the estimates of aggregate numbers of IDP by the Global IDP Project and others are extremely helpful in conveying a sense of the relative scale of the IDP population in any country, for most countries the figures are informed estimates; in very few countries are the numbers based upon rigorous registration procedures. It is therefore the operational agencies and agencies of the host government that face the challenge of actually identifying households and individuals who are, or have been, displaced. For organisations potentially concerned with the provision of material assistance to identified individuals and households the difficulties of identification and accurate counting represent a significant problem.

However, it should be stressed that work on improving the civil, political, social and cultural rights of IDPs may be undertaken without detailed prior knowledge of those individuals and households who may be defined as IDPs. The preoccupation of some organisations with the difficulties of physically identifying IDPs should be seen in this light. Indeed it could be interpreted with an overemphasis on their assistance role at the expense of their role in relation to the provision of protection. The protection aspect of humanitarian action may, at least in part, be fulfilled in the absence of physical identification and accurate numbers, though even here categories remain necessary.

Apart from situations where the IDPs are resident in camps during the period of their displacement (where they are more easily registered and more likely to be dependent upon external assistance) many operational agencies do not seem to be overly concerned with establishing the precise numbers of IDPs. This outcome could be interpreted as

operational agencies 'on the ground', dealing with the difficult conceptual and practical challenges in a pragmatic, if untidy, way.

The vulnerability of IDPs relative to other groups

Typically humanitarian operations are concerned with a range of different groups experiencing different levels of vulnerability to increased morbidity and mortality due to a lack of one or more basic necessities (health, food, water, sanitation, shelter) and/or a violation of rights)

The Sida Indonesia evaluation identified four principal vulnerable groups in the country:

– IDPs

– former IDPs

– the 'extremely poor', and

– besieged or 'hostaged' populations (those who have lost their freedom of movement but live in their area of origin among their own social groups)

The ECHO Angola evaluation indicated the major vulnerable groups following the 2002 ceasefire as being:

– 3.5 million IDPs

– 130,000 repatriated refugees (with another 300,000 Angolan refugees in neighbouring countries potentially returning)

– 85,500 demobilised UNITA soldiers and 288,000 family members

– An unspecified number of impoverished resident populations in the newly accessible areas

– Especially vulnerable groups such as unaccompanied minors, the elderly separated from or without families, widows, handicapped, street children, female or child-headed households

It made the point that the impoverished resident populations in the newly accessible areas:

> "are worse off than the displaced population due to long lasting lack of humanitarian assistance, and to experiences during occupation by UNITA and FAA [government troops] such as looting, destruction of crops and theft of livestock, killing, rape and abduction" (p. 40)

That IDPs are not always the most vulnerable group was made by several evaluations, and was reinforced in the evaluators' workshop. For instance the Danida Afghanistan Preliminary Study reported an interview that:

> "many Kuchi [pastoral nomads who were severely affected by the 1999–2001 drought], including those living on the outskirts of Kabul, were enduring far worse conditions of poverty and destitution than those lucky enough to be 'guests' in 'the best hotel in Afghanistan', Zhare Dasht IDP camp" (p. 67).

In addition they report on a study (de Weijer, 2002) on the vulnerability of 'nomadic' Kuchi in the south-western part of the country that suggested that transport costs to the IDP camps were cited as a reason why households had not moved to a camp, suggesting that it "might not be the most vulnerable people residing in camps." This point was reinforced by several team leaders during the evaluators' workshop: those unable to move and therefore left behind, for example the elderly, may be more vulnerable and at risk than the more able-bodied who have become displaced.

Agency practice in targeting IDPs

From the evidence in the evaluations it would seem that in their operations many agencies only specifically target IDPs when they are living in camps. Where the IDPs are living within host communities or are returning to their former homes and home areas, the tendency seems to be to provide assistance to the whole community rather than just targeted on the IDPs, and this seems wholly appropriate. For instance the USAID DRC evaluation reported that:

> "All partner NGOs have targeting policies, but very few single out IDPs to be specifically targeted. However, all OFDA partner organizations refer to IDPs as a category of needy people and, in most cases, account for them in project proposals and in quarterly reports" (p. 21)

The Netherlands Somalia evaluation reported that at the Nairobi level:

> "UN agencies and most INGOs said that they did not target IDPs *per se*, but treated them as part of the general population of vulnerable and needy people. Two reasons were commonly given: identifying IDPs unfairly removed attention from the broader group and identification was potentially dangerous, both for IDPs and for those who prioritised them." (p. 69)

In the DRC the USAID evaluation found that agencies tended to concentrate their assistance on the IDPs in camps to the neglect of IDPs in host communities, even those that might be close to the camps:

"This reached alarming proportions in some areas, with some hosted IDPs seldom if ever receiving assistance while camps down the road had monthly food distributions" (p. 24). The tendency to focus on IDPs in camps and the relative neglect of IDPs in host communities was found to have had a negative impact on the host communities: "Many UN staff remarked on the obvious lowering of the standard of living of host families over months and years of sharing resources with IDPs." Where stresses occurred between IDPs and host communities or communities adjacent to camps, this was found to be mainly due to inequities in assistance targeting.

Some concluding remarks on categorisation

Many of the arguments made in the evaluations against identifying and treating IDPs as a separate category have already been presented. Two of the the evaluations (the Danida Afghanistan Preliminary Study and the Sida Indonesia evaluation) discussed the issue at some length and their differing perspectives are considered here.

The Danida Afghanistan Preliminary set out what the authors felt to be "some of the unintended and undesirable consequences that result from the use of this ill-defined concept to separate out a special category of 'people in need' or 'people of concern'." (p. 64). These were identified as being:

– *The homogenizing effect of the label* – the sense that it reduces the diversity of individuals to a single characteristic that they themselves would not normally use to identify themselves

– *The stigmatizing effect of the label* – the possibility that IDPs may, by virtue of their being defined in terms of their displacement, be regarded as people who do not belong where they are and do not have a right to stay there

– *The localizing effect of the label* – that it promotes and lends credence to the idea that people are naturally rooted to a single place of origin and that the lasting solution to their displacement is to return to the place of origin which is based on a simplistic understanding of the meaning of 'home' and 'locality' in human social life

– *The privileging effect of the label* – the potential effect of diverting attention from others in comparable or even greater need.

Under this last heading the authors take issue with the 'point of compromise' proposed in the Common Framework paper, namely that: "the central concern is not to grant the internally displaced a privileged status, but to identify as accurately as possible who and where they are, and then to ensure that their needs are not ignored". The Danida Preliminary Study argues:

> "The trouble with this formulation is that it is difficult to tell the difference between, on the one hand, granting the internally displaced a 'privileged status' and, on the other, singling them out from others who may be at least as vulnerable, to ensure that *their* needs are not ignored. It is not clear, therefore, how this suggested resolution or 'point of compromise' can help in overcoming the disadvantages of treating IDPs as a subcategory of people in special need."

Whilst some of the strongest objections against categorisation were made by the ECHO evaluation teams that had not seen the Common Framework and its 'point of compromise', and had assumed that categorisation automatically led to the privileging of IDPs, the objections from the Danida Afghanistan team are more serious, for on the face of it they would seem to question the whole basis of efforts to address the neglect of IDPs since the early 1990s.

The Sida Indonesia evaluation took a different approach. Having considered the issue of displacement and the challenges of separately identifying the displaced the draft report recommended that:

> "Displacement is an important indicator of vulnerability, and is more easily identified in a complex situation than other forms of vulnerability. It should be preserved as an important humanitarian aid analytical tool." (Recommendation 1 draft dated 7 June 2004)

By the final report this recommendation had been modified though the central point had been retained:

> "Displacement should be used as an indicator of vulnerability, rather than to define target groups (Recommendation 1 page vi, Final Report dated 1 August 2004).

The notion that *displacement should be used as an indicator of vulnerability rather than as a means of defining target groups* would seem to offer a constructive alternative to the critical stance taken by the Danida Afghanistan Preliminary Study. What it implies is that IDPs (and their principal sub-categories) *and all other potentially vulnerable groups* should be identified through *comprehensive* needs assessments and then programmes be designed to address those groups in greatest need, regardless of whether they include or exclude IDPs or IDP sub-categories. If the status of potential vulnerable groups are not specifically

examined and monitored there is a risk that the needs of particular groups may be overlooked[33]

This position chimes with the points made in the ECHO evaluations that assessments of vulnerability should be the driver of decisions about the assistance provided. For instance the ECHO Angola evaluation stated "vulnerability criteria are a better instrument of targeting [than simplistic categorisation]" (p. 24). In short improved needs assessments would seem to offer a way through the different and apparently contradictory perspectives on the 'categorisation' of IDPs. This 'vulnerability-led' approach which has already been articulated in terms of donor policy on IDPs, places a particular requirement on the process of needs assessment which forms the subject of the next section.

6.6   Needs assessments

Comprehensive assessments of the assistance and protection needs of all potentially vulnerable groups should form the starting point for the prioritization of needs and coordination of the response to achieve an effective division of labour. At least that is the theory. The following quotes convey a picture that is often markedly different.

In Somalia the Netherlands evaluation found that

> "In operational terms, neither donors, nor their implementing partners in Somalia, have defined the needs or the rights of IDPs." (p. 79).

In Angola the Danida evaluator concluded that:

> "Assessment and strategic planning based on beneficiary needs were lacking". (p. 10) and in relation to current and future programming in the areas of return "found no evidence of detailed analysis of the likely future needs for the population or of strategic thinking in general. Instead, programmes seemed to be founded on past needs such as the distribution of seeds and tools, rather than considering supporting the setting up of commercial mechanisms through which peasants could have access to seeds and tools" (p. 52).

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[33] We are reminded of similar arguments that surround ethnic monitoring in many European countries. Unless reliable statistics are gathered in relation to particular groups, public debate on their status and/or representation can be uninformed (to the detriment of the quality of the debate) and steps that might be taken to remove barriers to the improved representation of particular ethnic groups could be overlooked.

The Sida Indonesia evaluation refers to a "general lack of needs assessments" (p. 6) and "needs assessments are not well carried out" (p. v) In Afghanistan the ECHO evaluation concluded:

> "Cursory analysis of the 2001 intervention plan and a deeper analysis of the 2002 plan point towards a somewhat 'donor driven' response to the international sensationalism wrought by the media rather than the result of a needs-based assessment. However, such a response was necessary given the immediate needs of the population and the lack of time necessary for proper needs assessment. (p. 17)

The ECHO Sudan evaluation found that

> "In GOS areas, the four health partners evaluated carried out good needs assessments; in the non-GOS areas only one of five partners did so." ECHO Sudan Synthesis report (p. 6)

The actual process of undertaking needs assessments and compiling overall pictures of needs seems to have varied. In Angola the 2002 ceasefire was followed by a wave of mostly spontaneous returns by IDPs and the opening up of newly accessible areas. Over the next few months rapid assessments were undertaken by OCHA and by NGOs. The OCHA surveys were apparently joint agency assessment exercises termed 'Rapid Assessments of Critical Needs' (RACN). Unfortunately none of the Angola evaluations describes these exercises or assesses their coverage and effectiveness.

In Afghanistan, according to the Danida Preliminary study, assessments have variously been undertaken by:

– WFP's Vulnerability Assessment Mapping (VAM) team;
– the National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (NRVA) which is a joint initiative by the Afghan Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development, the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry, the Ministry of Public Health and the Ministry of Women's Affairs, with support from the UN, the World Bank, AREU, DFID and NGO partners of the National Surveillance System
– NGOs undertaking surveys in the areas in which their programmes are operating
– UNHCR in areas of return to ascertain the situation and identify the priority needs of returning IDPs and refugees.

In the DRC the USAID evaluation summarised needs assessment procedures of USAID's partners as follows:

"For their assessments in terms of numbers, assistance organizations rely on local administrative community and NGO structures, with some spot checks for validity. Many organizations, such as WFP, depend on numbers provided by OCHA. Registration is often undertaken by local administrative structures that may tamper with procedures, according to our interviews with NGOs and comments from community focus groups. In some areas, it is estimated that up to 30% of those registered as IDPs are actually local people who have managed to be registered." (p. 24)

Whilst the RACN surveys in Angola and the NRVA in Afghanistan appear to represent inclusive, multi-agency, multi-sector assessments, they were paralleled by other assessments often undertaken by single agencies using their own methodologies and focussed upon those sectors and areas of actual or potential interest to them. In most contexts single agency assessments appear to have been the principal type of assessment. For instance, in Kosovo the Danida study found that UNMIK was slow to establish its presence at the municipality level and that "Implementing agencies, therefore, tended to rely on their own coordination structures and needs assessment procedures." (p. 65). The Danish Battalion undertook their own assessments of needs in their areas of operation, though this helped complement assessments by NGOs whose ability to cover remoter areas was limited.

Such results are borne out by a comprehensive ODI study of needs assessment and decision making in the humanitarian sector (Darcy and Hofmann, 2003) which found that:

"In many of the most serious humanitarian situations there was a lack of crucial information available to decision-makers, and the kinds of needs assessment required to generate this are conducted only sporadically. The result is that few situations are assessed as a whole, making prioritisation within and across contexts difficult. The same lack of data makes impact almost impossible to gauge" (p. 6).

Another significant finding of the ODI study was that:
"Overwhelmingly, needs assessments are conducted by operational agencies, often in order to substantiate a request for funding. This allows for a close correlation of needs analysis with the design and execution of responses, but raises major questions about objectivity of analysis. It also encourages supply-drive responses, and risks distorting the scale of the threat and the importance of the proposed

intervention. The lack of independent 'reality checks' makes it difficult for the system to ensure that responses are appropriate, proportionate and impartial." Ibid. (p. 8)

The consequence of inadequate needs assessment is inadequate consultation with beneficiaries at the outset, and the risk of providing unwanted assistance. This is highlighted in the Danida Angola evaluation:

> "it would have been better if agencies had put more effort into establishing what beneficiary needs were before intervening. In Uige DRC staff reported that beneficiaries were so uninterested in the sleeping mats that formed part of the non-food-items kits that they did not even take them in some cases. This shows that the non-food-items kits were drawn up without consulting beneficiaries".
> (p. 54)

At least four of the evaluations were critical of the lack of gender analysis, in consultation and hence in design of programmes. The Sida Indonesia evaluation draws attention to the inconsistency between agencies' stated gender-sensitive objectives, yet lack of gender sensitivity "in the mode of delivery and consultation of the population" (p. iv). As a result, women's needs such as privacy are consistently overlooked. The Danida Angola evaluation is critical of Danida's partners for failing to undertake analyses of the differential needs of women and men, citing examples of how education for girls has been overlooked. However, lack of gender analysis is not uniform in Angola; UNHCR, amongst other agencies, is credited for investing heavily in understanding the differential needs of women and men. As highlighted in section 5.4, lack of gender analysis was also raised as an issue in the Danida Kosovo evaluation.

Where needs assessments were undertaken, the evaluations point to weakness in follow up to them.

> Danida Kosovo (p. 10) "While the *Kosovo Action Plan* outlined a scope of issues and proposed priorities which were relevant, the plan appears not to have been followed in practise. Likewise recommendations of the July 1999 Appraisal Mission do not appear to have been followed."

> Netherlands Somalia (p. 79) "'Humanitarian needs assessments', either for IDPs or for other vulnerable groups, were rarely followed by results."

In conclusion then the findings were principally that.
- There was an overall lack of needs assessments
- The quality of assessments was often poor
- Where needs assessments were undertaken, they were often undertaken by single agencies and actors with a particular focus or perspective. Consequently the assessments were disparate and difficult to integrate

- Comprehensive, multi-sectoral, inter-agency assessments of need are rarely undertaken
- Follow up to the recommendations of those needs assessments actually undertaken tends to be inadequate

In the light of the discussion in the previous section about the importance of comprehensive, multi-sectoral assessments of assistance and protection needs for agencies seeking to identify the full range of vulnerable groups and be 'needs-driven' in their response, this finding is troubling. It is an area that donor organisations and others are seeking to improve though the work of the 'Montreux Group' (of donors providing support to OCHA) and the Good Humanitarian Donorship Initiative[34]. The success of such efforts is critical. As noted in the previous section our sense is that a significant improvements in the quality, coverage and levels of participation in joint needs assessments will go a long way towards overcoming the objections of those who see the identification of IDPs as a category of vulnerable group as being somehow at odds with needs-driven humanitarianism.

6.7 Coordination and the Collaborative Response[35]

Coordination of the response to the assistance and protection needs of IDPs takes place within the overall humanitarian coordination mechanisms and processes. Assessment of coordination should therefore involve an examination both of overall coordination and that specifically relating to IDPs. In this examination of coordination we seek to focus on the two areas/issues of particular interest to this study:

- the role of donor organisations
- the operation of, and implied prospects, for the Collaborative Response approach within the UN system.

Before reviewing the findings from the set it is necessary to comment on the coverage of coordination issues by the evaluations. Whilst all the evaluations considered coordination to some degree, their approach and depth of analysis varied. For instance very few evaluations considered the role and behaviour of donor organisations in any depth; only one evaluation examined the Consolidated Appeal mechanisms in any detail; and only one considered the Collaborative Response or indeed used that term; none of the studies mentioned the Procedural Roadmap. When considering coordination, there was a general tendency in the reports to consider coordination performance

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34 http://www.reliefweb.int/ghd/index.html
35 Since mid-2004 the term 'Collaborative Response' has been used by the IASC in place of the earlier 'Collaborative Approach' in order to reflect a more pro-active approach by IASC member agencies.

in aggregation i.e. at the level of the overall humanitarian response. Coordination specifically in relation to the assistance and protection needs of IDPs was rarely considered. For this reason the discussion in this section draws heavily on material from interviews conducted by the synthesis team in Geneva and from documentation provided by the Geneva-based interviewees or from literature searches.

Overall findings on coordination

To avoid a lengthy description of the coordination arrangements in each country Table 5 summarises the principle characteristics of the arrangements and also provides a sense of the overall verdicts from the evaluations.

Table 5. Summary of coordination arrangements and evaluation findings[36]

Country	Coordination arrangements	Overall verdict from evaluations
Indonesia	CA/CHAP important vehicle for funding and coordination with OCHA managing the CA	Generally positive, though aid process and leading on IDPs somewhat concentrated on particular areas. Effective national and provincial administrative structures were an important factor contributing to positive finding.
DRC	CA/CHAP important vehicle for funding and coordination with OCHA managing the CA process, coordinating the IDP response and (apparently) filling the gap in relation to advocacy activities for IDPs.	Lack of overall coordination structure prior to 2002 characterised as "a mild form of anarchy". But positive remarks about OCHA since 2002 and its establishment of field offices. Work of Humanitarian Action Group also praised.
Somalia	Combination of CA process and Somalia Aid Coordinating Body (SACB) based in Nairobi. Role of OCHA not clear from evaluation report.	No particular praise or criticism of coordination mechanisms, though SACB characterised as the 'national planning agency in waiting' but lacking in Somali representation
Kosovo	Theoretically UNHCR lead role during NATO bombing/refugee phase and UNMIK during post-conflict rehabilitation phase	During the refugee and immediate return phase coordination arrangements were swamped in a 'frenzy of bilateralism'. Once properly established UNMIK was broadly effective
Angola	CA/CHAP important vehicle for funding and coordination with OCHA managing the CA process and leading on IDPs. UNHCR took on temporary and geographically limited role in relation to IDPs and refugee returnees from 2001 to 2003.	General praise for OCHA's role and its Emergency Response Fund

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[36] The column on Coordination Arrangements was compiled from a variety of sources in addition to what was available in the evaluations. The synthesis team would like to thank Denis Vidal and Susanne Frueh of OCHA for their comments on an earlier draft of this table.

Country	Coordination arrangements	Overall verdict from evaluations
Afghanistan	UNAMA in collaboration with Afghan Government (AIA/ATA). UNHCR took on lead role in relation to IDPs return and reintegration from end 2001 (in addition to its refugee returnee role) and serves as 'focal point' of the Consultative Group on the Returnee and IDP Programme chaired by the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation	Certain hiatus in coordination in late 2001/ early 2002 before UNAMA established and UNHCR took on IDP lead role. Broad agreement that UNHCR has been effective in its lead role and in its support to the Consultative Group.
Colombia	UNHCR in lead role for IDPs since 1999 supported by OCHA	Development of Humanitarian Action Plan lengthy and difficult process but UNCT now working well together (though hampered by year long gap in Resident Coordinator position)
Liberia	OCHA in 'gap-filling' role on IDP issues in immediate post-conflict phase. In 2004 OCHA controversially absorbed within UNMIL	Competition between UNHCR and OCHA in immediate post-conflict phase
Eritrea	Overall arrangements not clear from evaluation report. WFP played "lead role in coordinating in-country food and relief efforts"	Good working relationship noted between WFP and Government
Sudan	Arrangements not clear from evaluation report. Arrangements differed between northern and southern sectors. North: OCHA coordinating the IDP response; South: OLS headed by Deputy HC, with support of OCHA Office for Southern Sudan	Coordination between donors generally good (though donors split in their response on the GoS MoU issue). Poor coordination between ECHO implementing partners.

In terms of the overall verdicts on coordination, the picture is mixed with some instances where coordination was judged positively and some where it was judged critically. The following quotes provide a flavour:

> Danida Kosovo (p. 75): "Despite the notable successes, UNMIK was weakened by the tendency to bilateralism, inadequate funding and lack of respect for the UN leadership and co-ordination of the international intervention. At the same time, lack of a clear economic, financial and political plan and framework for the development of Kosovo meant that the intervention became less effective."
>
> Sida Indonesia (p. iv): "If coordination is defined as a balanced and efficient interaction, then Indonesia on the surface can be presented as a positive example within the

global aid scene. There are few examples of significant duplication of effort and the divisions of labour between the State, donors and other agencies is coherent, even if on many occasions, more the fruit of circumstances (isolation, decentralisation) than design. Occurring coordination is concentrated in the areas of greatest focus, and has in some instances aggravated the bias towards certain regions (for example Maluku)"

Netherlands Somalia (p. 84): "The principal co-ordinating bodies were the SACB and the CAP, but both are in Nairobi and have no presence in the three adminis-trative regions. Consequently, there is no co-ordination with which the donors could engage. Further problems and ten-sions are emerging because neither body includes Somali partners."

UNHCR Colombia (para. 45): "Coordination amongst UN agencies in Colombia has proved a daunting task. All agencies have their own way of working and it has taken time to produce a joint document [the Humanitarian Plan of Action] acceptable to all. Donor countries have wel-comed the coordination process that led to the HPA. How-ever, they have also been very critical of the UN system; the fact that there has been no Resident Coordinator for more than a year has negatively affected the UN role in Colom-bia. It is now becoming urgent to sort out the coordination roles within the UN system in Colombia. UNHCR seems to be well placed to continue with the coordination of the GTD [Thematic Group for Displacement], having shown expertise in bringing partners together around the theme of internal displacement."

Four cases Angola, Afghanistan, DRC and Liberia appear to be espe-cially illuminating and will be considered in more detail.

Angola
Both the ECHO and Danida evaluations praised OCHA's coordinat-ing role in Angola:

"[OCHA drew] strong praise from all parties." ECHO Angola (p. 30). "All agency interviewees agreed that OCHA had worked well in Angola. … [The donors] spoke highly of the work done by OCHA" Danida Angola (p. 41)

The ECHO evaluation described OCHAs's role in the following terms:

> "OCHA's co-ordination role is more at the implementation level than the donor level (though their informational function is also crucial to donors). OCHA has field advisers in most provinces with humanitarian activities; their field offices co-ordinate and plan humanitarian activities with both government and NGOs, combines with UNSECOORD [the UN Security Coordinator] to do security assessments in NAAs [Newly Accessible Areas], conduct needs assessments jointly with NGOs and government, and collects, organises and forwards information to Luanda. Also at the implementation level, OCHA functions as a donor through its ERF [Emergency Response Fund] (which can authorise funding within one week, at Luanda level). ERF steps in on occasions where other donors cannot support immediate NGO deployment allowing partners to pursue other donors funding more gradually." (p. 30–31)

The Danida evaluation also highlighted the positive role of OCHA's provincial coordinators and the Emergency Response Fund which was described as a "really excellent initiative". Established in 1997 the objectives of the ERF are to:

– ensure a rapid response mechanism to address emergency needs
– support emergency initiatives by NGOs and international agencies
– support pipelines of non-food survival items[37]

Initially the ceiling for individual projects was $50,000 though this was later increased to $130,000 and $200,000 in exceptional cases. Between 1997 and 2003 it disbursed nearly US$ 26 million of which US$ 9 million was disbursed during 2002[38] – principally to agencies supporting returnees and establishing programmes in Newly Accessible Areas.

Afghanistan
According to the Danida Preliminary study coordination arrangements in the months immediately following the victory of the Northern Alliance forces (with the critical support of US and other western contributors to the 'Coalition Force') were characterised by "confusion" and "an image of multiple actors, many of which were operating relatively independently of each other."

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37 OCHA (2003) 'Emergency Response Fund' A briefing note on the ERF and an overview of donor contributions. Luanda:OCHA.
38 The principal donors supporting the big expansion of the ERF in 2002 were the US, UK, Netherlands and Norway.

The study (p. 40) identified the following factors as contributing to this situation:

– the arrival of many new NGOs responding to media coverage of the crisis

– confusion over the respective roles of the Afghan government, OCHA,[39] the World Bank and UNDP

– that some donors were implementing programmes themselves

– that the donor community was becoming involved in many new areas (including security sector reform, capacity building within government ministries, technical assistance to government, re-forms of government financial systems and the electoral process)

– that the international community has, "to a degree, been operat-ing parallel governments – in the form of the US embassy, the UN, the World Bank and, to a much lesser extent, NGOs (operat-ing more in place of local authorities than central government)"

– A paucity of skilled Afghans because of the exodus during pre-ceding years which resulted in a heavy reliance by the ministries on expatriates

– "The fact that a majority of the ministries were founded on pa-tronage from their particular ministers, with, in many cases, little commitment or capacity to deliver services."

Arrangements in relation to IDPs in Afghanistan had evolved over the years. In 1997 OCHA designated ICRC as the 'reference agency' for IDPs but according to the Danida Preliminary study "it seems that the roles and responsibilities of the different agencies involved were far from being clearly defined". UNHCR had apparently been ambivalent about an involvement in relation to IDPs before the autumn of 2001 but this changed with the fall of the Taliban once it became clear that the agency:

– would be managing a massive returnee programme for Afghan refugees in Pakistan and Iran

– had access to significantly increased funds

– had significantly increased its management capacity having as-sembled a highly capable team in Afghanistan

In November 2001 a UNHCR press release announced that it would be "assisting and promoting protection and return for internally dis-placed people and other vulnerable Afghans inside Afghanistan, within a UN inter-agency framework". According to the Preliminary study:

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[39] OCHA handed over humanitarian coordination responsibilities to UNAMA in the spring of 2002. As with UNMIK in Kosovo, the delay in establishing the UN Mission contributed to the initial coordina-tion problems.

"the agency then quickly became the de facto lead agency for IDPs in Afghanistan, a role that was formalized in June 2002 when it was designated, by agreement with the Interim Administration and UNAMA, the Secretariat of the Returnee and IDP Programme Group. In the following year it became the 'focal point' of the Consultative Group on the Returnee and IDP Programme, chaired by the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation."

"Its assumption of this role … fits the criteria set out by the organisation for its involvement with IDPs, notably the need for clear links between the IDP population in question and the activities regularly undertaken by UNHCR on behalf of refugees[40]. In a technical and logistical sense, the collaborative approach in Afghanistan has been a success, thanks to the strong and effective leadership and coordination provided by UNHCR."

DRC

The USAID DRC evaluation tells a story of improved coordination from an earlier, near anarchic, situation[41]:

"A centrally coordinated structure, with an institution at the top able to design an efficient plan that various participants would accept and follow, did not exist. The coordinating agency, OCHA, was understaffed and had to delegate its coordination responsibilities to other UN organizations, which each managed provinces. OCHA and, in some cases, the assigned humanitarian coordinators, had no authority to impose decisions on the participants. The result was a vast decentralized system that could probably be characterized as a mild form of anarchy, which was mitigated by the good will of local and international organization representatives and their commitment to work together. Even at the very local level until recently, no coordinated plans seemed to have been developed. Neither in the quality or quantity nor in the rhythm of implementation was there evidence of a visible master plan". (p. 40)

"In the past, the weakness of the UN coordination structure resulted in inefficiencies in humanitarian response in the DRC. However, the reorganization of OCHA, beginning in 2002 [part of which involved placing OCHA staff in each province], has resulted in the establishment of the right ingredients for a coherent picture of coordination and collaboration. At the national level, the government lacks

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[40] This also refers to the notion of 'three green lights' set out by UNHCR in 2001 described in Section 4.2.

[41] The USAID DRC team's critical assessment of earlier coordination efforts is supported by a study (as yet unpublished) undertaken the previous year by the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue. The earlier study was deeply critical of the operation of the UN system in DRC, including OCHA. Stockton, Nicholas (2003) 'Humanitarianism Bound: Coherence and Catastrophe in the Congo'.

capacity to take responsibility for coordination, and OCHA is attempting to fill this role. At the regional level, coordination is more successful, although interviewees felt that more connection has to be made between regions, especially for the purpose of preparedness, such as obtaining supplies for emergencies". (p. 41)

Liberia
As noted in Section 3.2 the UNHCR evaluation was undertaken during October 2003 at a time when UNMIL was only just beginning its deployment and humanitarian agencies were unable to travel far beyond Monrovia. This produced an almost 'hothouse' atmosphere among humanitarian agencies who were concentrated in Monrovia and aware of significant needs upcountry. The UNHCR evaluation was impressively frank in its comments on coordination arrangements:

> "The interaction between humanitarian agencies engaged in Liberia is generally collegial, but – as in recent emergencies in other parts of the world – is also characterized by a degree of competition. Unfortunately, this issue seems to be most visible and disruptive within the UN family. Several NGOs informed the evaluation team that the bickering between UN agencies in open coordination meetings was a source of embarrassment to them. UNHCR was not exempt from this critique." (para 43)
> "The issue of inter-agency cooperation and coordination has been raised most starkly in relation to the IDP problem. Despite formal correspondence at the highest level between OCHA and UNHCR, there is a lack of clarity as to the division of responsibility between the two agencies. In principle, OCHA has overall responsibility for coordination and can therefore designate other agencies to undertake certain tasks in relation to IDP camps. But OCHA is not in a position to provide those agencies with the resources they need to engage in operational activities." (para 44)
> "UNHCR, on the other hand, does not have a coordinating role in relation to IDPs, but is nevertheless regarded by many as the lead UN agency in this domain. UNHCR entered the transitional period the best equipped of any of the agencies operating in country. It chairs the IDP Task Force, supplies non-food items and transport services to IDPs and is also involved in protection activities with IDPs. In these circumstances, UNHCR finds it awkward to answer to another and essentially non-operational UN agency [OCHA]. The fact that this situation has given rise to

irritation rather than conflict is a testament to the strong interpersonal relationships established between the two organizations." (para 45)

To be fair this is the perspective of a UNHCR evaluation team.[42] An alternative perspective was offered eight months later by the Coordinator of ICVA reporting on a mission to Liberia in June 2004:

"If there is one actor to blame for the continuing saga on the question of who assumes the responsibility for the IDPs in Liberia, it is UNHCR. Within the internationally agreed policy of the collaborative approach, it is generally accepted practice that the refugee agency will assume responsibility for IDPs when they mix with refugee returnees. In Liberia, however, the collaborative approach turned into competitive approach between OCHA and UNHCR. .. Why … UNHCR did not proactively look for the IDP mandate in Liberia remains a mystery. … As a consequence of this inaction, OCHA rightly took the space that was left in terms of coordinating the operational response to IDPs." (Schenkenberg, 2004)

Concluding remarks on the overall findings

Whatever the rights and wrongs in the Liberia case it illustrates the very real challenge faced by the collaborative approach in terms of a non-operational coordinating organisation which is not in command of resources (OCHA) trying to encourage an operational agency to take on a role where there is uncertainty over the level of resources available for it to perform adequately in such a role without detracting from its obligations to refugees as part of its core mandate (UNHCR).

These four cases provide valuable insight into the requirements for effective operational coordination and point to those elements required for the current arrangements to work well. It would seem that the following conclusions can be drawn from the cases.

Where OCHA is responsible for overall coordination in relation to IDPs the evidence from the Angola case suggests that it works best when:

– it is able to control a significant resource 'pot' (such as an Emergency Response Fund) and encourage and support implementing agencies to undertake programmes in particular areas or sectors[43];

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[42] The team comprised two UNHCR staff – one from the Evaluation and Policy Analysis Unit and the other from the Department of International Protection.

[43] It is understood that the possibility of establishing an inter-agency fund at the disposal of the HC/RC for jumpstarting organisations that agree to become involved in IDP camp management has been actively considered in the context of the Darfur operations. Susanne Frueh, personal communication.

- it has the respect and support of donors;
- it has a field presence at a provincial level that enables it to be knowledgeable about the local context and to provide coordination and support services to the implementing agencies closer to the actual area or operations.

With its substantial capacity and expertise UNHCR can perform effectively in the role of IDP lead agency when it is prepared to fully embrace the role. The circumstances in which it is prepared to do so derive from its requirement for the consent of the host government and assurance of adequate resources. In the Afghanistan case these requirements were met and it embraced the role and performed well. In the Liberia case it appears that the level of resources required were not assured and the agency held back from embracing the role with a consequent negative effect on coordination and effective working relations with OCHA.

Whilst UNHCR's insistence on determining for itself those situations in which it will take on the lead role is understandable, it introduces a significant area of unpredictability into the coordination arrangements.

The Consolidated Appeal Process

As indicated by Table 5, the Consolidated Appeal Process performs an important role as a tool for achieving coordination in many situations in addition to its role as a fund-raising vehicle (principally though not solely) for UN agencies. The development of the Consolidated Humanitarian Action Plan (CHAP) in recent years has significantly enhanced the effectiveness and value of the whole CA process (see Box 5). Nevertheless, the CAP continues to face a number of challenges. Many of these challenges stem from the funding behaviours of donor organisations.

Box 5. The Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP) and the Consolidated Humanitarian Action Plan (CHAP)

The CAP mechanism was introduced into the UN system in 1991 as part of the General Assembly Resolution 46/182. Its introduction was a response to donor frustration with being presented with separate, un-prioritised 'shopping lists' by UN agencies. Since 2000 the mechanism has been strengthened with the addition of an in-country strategic planning process to develop a Common Humanitarian Action Plan (CHAP) which then forms the basis of the subsequent Consolidated Appeal document.

The Humanitarian Coordinator is responsible for the annual preparation of the CAP. The Consolidated Appeal document for each country is launched globally in the November of each year and an update, known as the Mid-Year Review (MYR), is

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presented to donors in June of each year. Donors provide resources to appealing agencies directly in response to the project proposals summarised in the Consolidated Appeal document.

The CHAP is developed at field level by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Country Team under the leadership of the Humanitarian Coordinator. This team mirrors the IASC structure at headquarters and includes UN agencies, and standing invitees, i.e. the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Red Cross Movement, and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) that belong to International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA), Interaction, or Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response (SCHR). Non-IASC members, such as national NGOs, can be included. Other key stakeholders in humanitarian action, particularly the host governments and donors are supposed to be consulted.

The CHAP represents a strategic plan for humanitarian response in a given country or region and includes the following elements:

a) A common analysis of the context in which humanitarian action takes place;
b) An assessment of needs;
c) Best, worst, and most likely scenarios;d) Stakeholder analysis, i.e. Who does what and where;
e) A clear statement of longer-term objectives and goals;
f) Prioritised response plans; and
g) A framework for monitoring the strategy and revising it if necessary.

Sources: IASC Appeal and Strategy Documents (as endorsed by the IASC WG March 2003 available at
http://www.humanitarianinfo.org/iasc/
http://www.reliefweb.int/appeals/

The Sida Indonesia evaluation examined the Consolidated Appeal mechanism in some depth. It estimated that the total international humanitarian assistance provided to the country over the period 2001–2003 was $81 million of which 60% had been channelled through successive Consolidated Appeals. Coverage of the total amounts requested in the Consolidated Appeals had varied from a low of 31.5% in 2002 to a 'high' of 54% in 2003 which compares well with the global average for Consolidated Appeals and led the evaluators to conclude, almost perversely, that: "The CAP has been well supported by donors" (p. 28). The USAID DRC evaluation noted that only 44% of the amount requested in the 2004 Consolidated Appeal for DRC had been received.

Whilst it would be inaccurate to view the coverage of the CAPs as the sole indicator of the overall levels of funding being provided to a particular operation (see below), the fact that in most operations CAPs are consistently under-funded increases the challenge of achieving coordination among the UN agencies. We were informed in many of our interviews in Geneva that the preparation of projects to be included in

a CAP that are subsequently un-funded or under-funded forces UN agencies to undertake constant re-prioritisation of their proposed activities and the dropping of many of their activities planned as part of the CHAP. Inevitably this process introduces or increases competitive behaviours between the agencies and may result in gaps in coverage and pressures to 'push at the boundaries' of agreements reached during the CHAP or even to 'stretch' the operational interpretation of agency mandates. Under-funding of the CAPs is widely seen as a principal source of the competitive behaviours that threaten the successful operation of the Collaborative Approach.

A significant, often substantial, volume of the funding into many operations is not channelled through the CAP. There may be many reasons for this. The following paragraphs attempt to explain the principal factors.

Funding for the ICRC and IFRC are raised through separate appeals and generally do not appear in the CAP. Participation by NGOs in the CAP is generally very low. Whilst donor funding for NGOs may be channelled through the CAP[44], in the majority of operations many donors provide direct funding to NGOs that is not recorded by the CAP. Unfortunately, estimates of the total funding being provided in any operation were only provided in the Sida Indonesia evaluation where it appears that of the US$ 81 million provided over the three year period 2001–03 56% was channelled 'inside' the CAP and 44% outside the CAP. In other contexts the majority of funds may be provided 'outside'.[45] Where significant levels of funding are flowing into an operation 'outside the CAP' this inevitably weakens the effectiveness of the CAP as a coordinating mechanism.

ECHO provides a substantial proportion of its funding directly to NGO implementing partners and consequently much of its funding is 'outside the CAP'. However, it must be said that in some countries ECHO personnel participate actively in the CHAP process and may develop an effective working relationship with OCHA that supports the coordination objectives of the CAP. For instance, the Danida Angola evaluation notes that NGOs requesting non-food items from the three NGOs which had ECHO contracts to bulk purchase non-food items had their requests referred to the OCHA provincial coordinators to see if they considered them reasonable. If they were considered reasonable the requests were granted. (p. 41)

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[44] In Indonesia the US, Australia and the Netherlands provided funding to NGO implementing partners outside the CAP during 2001 and 2002. In 2003 such funding was brought 'inside the CAP' largely to reduce the administrative demands (appraisal, approval, monitoring and reporting) upon their missions and transfer the burden to UN agencies. Sida Indonesia (p. 28–29)

[45] A recent study in Burundi conducted as part of the Good Humanitarian Donorship baseline exercise estimated that the CAP represented only one-tenth of the total aid funds (Bijojote and Bugnion, 2004). However, it is understood that this proportion is exceptionally low due to the counting of contributions to WFP as part of a Regional Appeal rather than as part of the Burundi CAP (Toby Lanzer, personal communication 20/10/04).

Decisions by donors to route their funding in parallel to, rather than through the CAP may be due to a number of reasons other than their preference for direct funding to NGOs and the very limited NGO participation in the CAP. For instance donors may feel that the funding priorities contained in a particular CAP are more a reflection of the priorities of UN agencies rather than the host-government or the overall needs of the situation. Alternatively, donors may feel that the CAP is too closely linked to the policies and priorities of the host government of which they might not approve. In some cases a donor may not agree with the needs assessment processes upon which part, or all, of the CAP is based. In some cases donors may feel that particular needs are better addressed by organisations whose appeal process is separate from the CAP. For instance the Sida Indonesia evaluation noted that some donors felt that protection needs would be better addressed by the ICRC than UN agencies. Sometimes a CAP may include activities which span the relief-development divide and raise questions about sustainability. Finally, it should be noted that the Sida Indonesia evaluation was also critical of the lack of systematic monitoring, reporting and evaluation mechanisms within or linked to the CAP in Indonesia, though it is not known if this was also a factor contributing to donor funding being directed outside the CAP. In short donors may have valid reasons for their decisions not to channel through the CAP.

Another factor affecting the CAP process and overall coordination efforts, are the persistent differences between the levels of funding provided by donors for food aid compared to virtually every other sector. It is quite common in CAPs for food aid to make up 50–60% of the total funding requirements and for the this sector to receive funding at levels twice or even three times above the average coverage for all sectors (see for example Smillie and Minear, 2003).

Another way in which donor behaviours may limit the effectiveness of coordination efforts is the practice of earmarking contributions to specific projects or geographical areas. In Indonesia this practice was apparently commonplace partly due to donor preferences but it has to be said also due to the UN's practice in Indonesia of allocating un-earmarked funding to particular projects to aid the tracking of funds and improve the specificity of reporting to donors. As noted in Section 5.2 the Sida Indonesia evaluation found that most of the Dutch humanitarian aid had been earmarked to two provinces because of historical and Parliamentary ties to the population of those islands.

Sida's provision of funding on an un-earmarked basis was commented upon very favourably by UN and international NGO personnel and described as "very unique" (p. 29). The team commented that:

> "Even though the relative amounts in some cases were
> small, the un-earmarked funds provided flexibility, and

resources for activities with less donor attention, and enabled the agencies to overcome the constraints of divergent procedures, timeframes, and late payments. It contributed positively to efficiency." (p. 29).

Inevitably the practice of earmarking reduces flexibility in the whole funding process and makes the system less able to respond to changes in priorities – such as new displacements.

Assessment of the status and prospects for the collaborative response

As noted in Section 4.2, since the early 1990s (in other words for the last decade) the 'Collaborative Approach' or more recently the 'Collaborative Response' has been the approach to the issue of internal displacement preferred by most, if not all, UN agencies. Following the intervention by Ambassador Holbrooke, a spate of improvements have been made to the mechanisms for achieving an effective Collaborative Approach, culminating most recently in the creation of the Inter-Agency Internal Displacement Division and the IASC guidance document 'Implementing the Collaborative Response to Situations of Internal Displacement'/or Resident Coordinators and Country Teams (the so-called policy package). As one of our interviewees in Geneva commented: "All the parts are now in place. We just have to get out there and make it work".

The challenges facing the UN system, especially OCHA and the Inter-Agency Internal Displacement Division in 'making it work' are significant and we would argue that donor organisations have a critical role to play in 'making it work'.

Whilst recent experiences have included some successes for the Collaborative Approach, including the Angola and Afghanistan cases cited above, there have also been some negative experiences of which the Liberia case (at the end of 2003 and early 2004) is only one. In August 2004 the Special Representative of the Secretary General Jan Pronk and the Sudanese Foreign Minister agreed on a document, the 'Darfur Plan of Action' that by-passed the process for developing an IDP response strategy that had been agreed by the IASC in the Spring of 2004. So hurried was the process for preparing the document that there was little if any consultation with UN agencies before it was signed. As part of this plan the GoS elected that the International Organisation for Migration (IOM)[46] be responsible for overseeing and assisting the voluntary return of IDPs to their homes. Shortly after the Darfur Plan of Action had been agreed the IOM agreed a Memorandum of Understanding with the GoS. The episode caused a furore, as the IOM does not have significant expertise or experience in the area

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[46] The IOM has 'Standing Invitee' status on the IASC.

of protection. It was variously perceived as undermining the agreed IASC process and risking the possibility of participating in a GoS agenda to promote the premature return of IDPs currently in camps to their homes.[47] Whilst the episode is open to different interpretations and the Emergency Relief Coordinator tried to assuage the concerns of other IASC members,[48] it reveals the types of pressures and situations that test the commitment of the IASC and all its members (as well as SRSGs) to adhere to the spirit as well as the letter of the 'policy package'.

It should not be forgotten that it was only in January 2004 that the External Evaluation of the former IDP Unit having examined five IDP operations[49] stated:

> "more pointedly, the UN system is not ready for change. … UN operational agencies remain more concerned with their organizational interests than with the interests of the internally displaced. They do not display the collegiality necessary for a truly collaborative response to crises of internal displacement (p. 14)

Whilst the subsequent upgrading of the former IDP Unit to the status of an Inter-Agency Division and the IASC's 'policy package' represent positive steps, they do not automatically address all the challenges.

Among the academic community there is also scepticism about the chances of the Collaborative Approach working effectively in all situations. Commenting on the IASC's 'policy package' Susan Martin, leader of a collaborative research project based at the Institute for the Study of International Migration at Georgetown University, Washington writes:

> "While a clear improvement in setting out the steps to be taken, the new plan still does not address a fundamental problem with the collaborative approach. No actor within the UN system has an obligation to respond to the assistance and protection needs of IDPs. The ERC has powers of persuasion that may, in many cases, encourage one or more agencies to offer its help to IDPs, but the ERC has no authority to order compliance. Nor does the ERC have funding to offer to make the decision to respond more appealing. As long as no UN body has the mandate and,

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[47] See for example "IOM, Darfur and the Meaning of Undermining (MoU)", ICVA Talkback 6-1, 4th October 2004. ICVA, Geneva.
[48] Letter from Jan Egeland to Elizabeth Ferris 20th September 2004.
[49] Besides conducting interviews in Geneva, Rome, London, New York and Washington DC., the team also conducted interviews in Belgrade, Pristina, Nairobi, Kinshasa, Goma and Kabul.

hence, the obligation to assist and, more importantly pro-
tect IDPs, gaps are likely to remain." (Martin, 2004 p. 312
– cited in the Danida Afghanistan Preliminary Study)

In the same article the author goes on to propose "the consolidation of
assistance and protection responsibilities for all forced migrants into a
new organization – the UN High Commissioner for Forced Migrants
(HCFM)" (Martin, 2004 p. 314)

It is our view that, after so much time and effort has been ex-
pended on the Collaborative Approach, the current opportunity to
'make it work' should be embraced. If the Collaborative Approach is
not seen to work over the next year or two and it is decided instead to
pursue the lead agency or dedicated agency approach, it would repre-
sent a major upheaval within the humanitarian sector and could dis-
rupt the operation of the sector over a period of years. More generally
it would reflect extremely negatively on collaboration within the UN
system.

Donor organisations have a critical role to play in making the Col-
laborative Approach work. Reducing the types of funding behaviours
described above that detract from, or undermine, the principal coordi-
nation mechanism in most operations (the CHAP/CA) is an obvious
area. Strengthening the CA process to address those areas perceived by
donors to be weak is another. The efforts of the Montreux Group of
donors in this regard should be continued and strengthened.

Another way of supporting the Collaborative Approach is for do-
nors to use their funding allocations and relationships with IASC mem-
bers to improve the incentives for 'positive collaborative behaviour' by
agencies and strengthen the disincentives for 'negative collaborative
behaviour'. One way in which this might be achieved at the country
level is through regular meetings between representatives of the princi-
pal donors and the Humanitarian Coordinator at which a review of
the operation of the Collaborative Approach is a set item on the
agenda. The donor representatives could be made aware of any agen-
cies which are not being fully supportive of the Collaborative Ap-
proach. Encouragement or pressure could then be utilised by the do-
nors to encourage collegial behaviour. In a similar way the operation
of the Collaborative Approach could be regularly reviewed at the New
York level in meetings between the Emergency Relief Coordinator and
the principal humanitarian donors.

6.8   When does the need for assistance end?

The issues of when *displacement* can be deemed to have 'ended' and
when it is appropriate to end *assistance* to those who were displaced but
have 'returned', are recognised to be particularly challenging issues in
relation to IDPs and have been the subject of a series of international

workshops entitled "When Displacement Ends" (Brookings Institution et al. 2002). Return was a feature of the Angola, Indonesia, Kosovo, Afghanistan and Eritrea cases. The set revealed wide variation in approaches and experiences and it is apparent that this is an area requiring significant clarification in policy and practice.

Between the March 2002 ceasefire in Angola and August 2003 approximately 2.4 million IDPs[50] returned to their homes where all appear to have immediately been "declassified" (or more accurately 'reclassified') as "settled IDPs" – a category deemed to no longer require assistance. The termination of assistance to IDPs as soon as they had returned was strongly criticised by the Danida Angola evaluation which argued that "… when they return, not only do they need maintenance support, but they also need assistance to re-establish their livelihoods and assets" (p. 36).

In the areas of return visited, the Danida evaluator found that levels of assistance were generally low and varied significantly between provinces, with the situation of "settled IDPs" depending on:

– The province returned to and the policies being applied by the government and humanitarian actors in that province

– Levels of access to the areas returned to

– The cropping system (some root crops require nearly two seasons to be fully productive)

– Access to land (with access being denied to some UNITA ex-combatants by traditional rulers and to others whose land had been occupied by ex-combatants during their absence)

– Opportunities for petty trading or other economic activity in the area.

The point about the elapsed period between return and the prospect of achieving significant food production was supported by the ECHO Angola study which highlighted the significant labour requirements of field clearing and de-stumping after several years displacement:

"The point is that returnees face at least two seasons of exceptionally hard work before obtaining normal harvests and perhaps food security" (p. 27)

The Danida Angola evaluator asserted that the condition of returnees was significantly worse than those experienced by resident populations and this appears to have been supported by the June 2003 WFP Vulnerability Analysis for Angola (though it did not distinguish

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[50] This was the government's estimate. OCHA's estimate was substantially lower due to its use of the category of "Confirmed IDPs" as being those who were displaced and actually receiving assistance. The Government's figures of the numbers of displaced at the time of the ceasefire and thus of the numbers who returned were probably a more accurate estimate of the actual numbers involved.

between 'IDPs', 'Resettled' and 'Returned' and did not facilitate differentiation between those who were still displaced and those who had returned. The evaluation also highlights protection needs during the return phase, for families of ex-combatants (p. 79), and for returning IDPs 'given the impunity with which the police and military act in the areas of Angola to which they are returning' (quoting Human Rights Watch in Appendix 7).

Unfortunately the factors influencing such a significant and by all accounts inappropriate policy of prematurely terminating assistance were not fully explored by the Angola evaluations. According to the Danida evaluator "Declassification appears to happen for administrative reasons because some have difficulty with the idea of unassisted IDPs" (p. 77). What this seems to imply is that there was a belief within OCHA, the government and perhaps amongst donors also, that *assistance is only required during the period of actual displacement.* Though the reports do not implicate donors in the premature termination of assistance, it is quite conceivable that this could have been a factor.

The ECHO Angola evaluation argued that addressing the needs of returnees was very much within ECHOs mandate:

> " … the conditions in which returned IDPs and refugees (especially spontaneous returnees) find themselves are hardly an improvement on conditions during displacement. Basic services such as primary health, primary education, and market linkages are non-existent over large swathes of the territory. Community and family infrastructure such as safe water sources and sanitation are mostly yet to be rebuilt, causing daily potential exposure to life-threatening diseases. Angola's long war means that these conditions are so widespread and embedded that the humanitarian problem goes far beyond that of 'normal' under-development, and well into ECHO's mandate." (p. 50).

In trying to explain the mismatch of policy and needs in Angola the Danida study made the telling observation:

> "Part of the issue over the cessation of internal displacement comes from the intermingling of IDP status and the right to humanitarian assistance. Refugees do not necessarily lose their status when their physical needs are met. Similarly IDPs may be in the situation where they do not need humanitarian assistance, but are still displaced." and in a footnote adds "This criteria should be fairly obvious. Poverty is not a prerequisite for refugee or IDP status" Danida Angola (p. 25).

In Afghanistan, support to returnees and their areas of return appear to have been significantly more comprehensive and substantial than in Angola. Support took the form of programmes to provide access to clean water, improve irrigation systems, health and education services and assistance with the rebuilding of houses. UNHCR's coordination of, and provision of support to, returning IDPs alongside its much larger refugee returnee programmes appear to have been the main factors responsible for this more positive result. Other contributory factors were the comparatively limited numbers of returning IDPs and the long term presence in many rural areas of NGOs (international and Afghan) operating integrated rural development programmes.

> "With the exception of the Shomali Plain, the pattern seems
> to be one of relatively few IDPs returning to each area. It
> has, therefore, been relatively easy for NGOs to main-
> stream them [the IDPs] into existing plans to provide for
> the whole community" Danida Afghanistan Preliminary
> Study (p. 55).

Nevertheless, even in this context there are questions about the appropriateness of the withdrawal of IDP status from returnees and thus their ability to access additional resources. For instance, the Danida Afghanistan Preliminary Study indicated that a May 2003 study of IDPs by UNAMA had concluded that "those who have returned or locally integrated are considered to have attained at least a minimal level of self sufficiency" and this conclusion "resulted in the immediate halving of the official IDP figure from 600,000 to 300,000." (p. 17). The Preliminary Study questioned the assumptions underlying such decisions and argued that assistance to enable returnees to re-establish their livelihoods had been inadequate. It argued that evidence from agricultural surveys and interviews with returnees indicated a substantial reliance on off-farm sources of income and many families ensuring that one or more members work in Iran or Pakistan as a means of supporting the household. Property disputes were another source of difficulty for returnees who might find that their "land had been seized or re-allocated or ownership legally changed, often many times over" whilst they had been away (p. 29).

While the Preliminary Study acknowledged the various ways in which needs were monitored in the areas of return (by UNHCR, by WFP, by the Afghan Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development and by NGOs), it was critical of the lack of detailed impact assessment of how returning IDPs had survived on their return and the contribution of assistance to individual returnee households. The report suspected, though found difficult to verify, that a proportion of

returnees had found it difficult to exist in their home area and had subsequently moved-on (or 'displaced' once again) to Kabul with its wider economic opportunities.

In Indonesia the government was keen to portray the emergency phase as being over before it really had come to an end. In December 2003 it declared the IDP emergency over and in January 2004 withdrew IDP status from the remaining displaced in all regions (estimated to be 0.5 million people) with the result that they were shifted into the category of "vulnerable people" who were the responsibility of the provincial authorities. This move appears to have made it more difficult for agencies providing humanitarian assistance to those who were still displaced and those who were returning or had returned. For instance, the government's declaration made it difficult for OCHA to continue its role; the Sida Indonesia evaluation reported that OCHA was planning to phase out its operations during 2004. At the aggregate level, the government's declaration made it harder for agencies to obtain funding for their programmes in support of the displaced and returned.

Such findings are similar to those in the IDP literature. Writing in the Special Issue of Forced Migration Review in May 2003 Erin Mooney states:

> "Currently, decisions on when internal displacement ends are made, if at all, on an ad hoc basis. Moreover the methodologies used and, consequently the conclusions reached differ among actors, often dramatically." (Mooney, 2003)

In the same article she goes on to suggest three possible criteria that are not mutually exclusive but include overlapping elements that might be used to determine the end of displacement and assistance:

– Cause-based criteria, i.e. when the cause of the displacement has ended

– Solutions-based criteria, i.e. the opportunity to return or resettle

– Needs-based criteria, i.e. when the needs and vulnerabilities directly related to displacement no longer apply

Mooney concludes:

> "… the emerging consensus confirms the need for an integrated approach that combines solutions-based criteria and needs-based sets of criteria to ensure that IDPs have options – to return, resettle or integrate locally – and that the specific needs and vulnerabilities created by displacements are addressed so that these solutions are effective and durable, all the while recognising that cause-based criteria will often be an enabling factor" (Mooney, 2003)

Developing such an integrated approach will be necessary in order to avoid the regrettable situation that existed in Angola in 2003 and continues to exist in large parts of the country. It would be logical for donors to support such efforts and encourage the adoption of common definitions and approaches by the organisations that they fund.

However, what is not addressed by Mooney's call for an integrated approach are the funding and institutional responsibility disjuncts between relief and development. As shown by the cases cited above, it is difficult for OCHA to sustain a presence and funding once the displaced have returned or the host government declared the emergency over. Even in Afghanistan UNHCR appears to have had difficult in linking its support to returnees into the livelihood development programmes funded by the World Bank, UNDP and others. It needs to be recognised that 'humanitarian' or at least rehabilitation funding may be needed for 2–3 years following periods of major displacement. The alternative approach of relying on development-oriented organisations to step in and meet the needs of those displaced who have returned is, in our opinion less attractive. The needs of returnees in re-establishing their livelihoods are largely humanitarian in nature, especially if the threat of insecurity continues, and protection needs continue. Moreover the humanitarian agencies have the knowledge and experience, built up over years in a long-running emergency like Angola's. The record of development agencies picking up the reins following conflicts is not impressive.

7. Conclusions and Recommendations

7.1 Some reflections on the focus of our set

Synthesising the results of the evaluations contained in the set has yielded rich insights and some useful lessons for donor organisations and humanitarian agencies to consider.

Recognition of the relative neglect of the issue of internally displaced persons from the early 1990's onwards has stimulated considerable activity in the international community. As described in Section 4.2, much of the energy has been focussed on:

a) clarifying the legal position of IDPs in terms of existing international human rights and humanitarian law, and encouraging states to incorporate such provisions into domestic law; and

b) improving the institutional arrangements within the international humanitarian sector for responding to the assistance and protection needs of IDPs.

The evaluations in the set focussed almost entirely on the results of the second area of activity – as represented by humanitarian operations in ten countries. Inevitably there was some overlap between this focus and the legal area of activity, principally as a result of references to the Guiding Principles and their significance to the protection activities of humanitarian agencies. However, these activities are at an early stage of development in the humanitarian sector (with the notable exception of the ICRC) and the overlap was limited. On reflection it is somewhat surprising that there was not more of a focus in the set on the legal/rights area of activity. It is as though these two principal areas of activity have been proceeding in parallel with only limited cross-over. Though the linkages between the humanitarian sector and the human rights community have certainly increased over the last ten to fifteen years, it would

seem to us that there is much to be gained from a strengthening of these linkages.

As discussed in Section 6.5, significant differences of view were revealed on the issues of the 'categorisation' of IDPs. Many in the humanitarian sector view the identification of IDPs as a group as being somehow at odds with the principle of needs-driven humanitarianism. Greater dialogue between the human rights community and the humanitarian community on the very real conceptual and practical difficulties involved in treating IDPs a particular category among a large number of potentially vulnerable groups could be beneficial here. For its part the humanitarian community should do more to embrace the issue of protection and reduce its continued pre-occupation with the provision of material assistance. Put crudely, the humanitarian community should 'come out from its assistance corner' and 'raise its game' on protection, part of which would involve greater familiarity with, and stronger support for, the Guiding Principles on IDPs.

Having reviewed the results of the evaluations in relation to the six key evaluative criteria, we focussed upon six critical issues that had emerged during the synthesis process and which seem to us to be the principal policy issues to be considered by the humanitarian sector in general and donor organisations in particular. For each of these six critical policy issues we have developed recommendations that flow from our analysis of the findings of the set and the conclusions that we have drawn in our analysis. Some of our recommendations are somewhat tentative but we have articulated them below to provide a basis for discussion.

7.2   Conclusions and recommendations for the six critical policy issues

The rights of IDP

Conclusions

Since publication of the Guiding Principles in 1998 progress has been made on incorporating them into national legislation. In 2001 Angola became the first country to incorporate the Guiding Principles into domestic law and several countries have followed suit or incorporated the Guiding Principles into their cooperation agreements with UN agencies. However, there are many countries that have yet to incorporate the Guiding Principles. Experience in Angola and Colombia shows that incorporating the Guiding Principles into domestic law does not necessarily lead to better government policies or to automatic improvements in the rights of IDPs, but at least there is legislation in place against which governments can be held to account.

Recommendations

1. Donors should ensure that sufficient support is being provided to the Representative of the Secretary General and human rights organisations in order to significantly increase the number of countries incorporating the Guiding Principles into domestic law.

2. Donors, UN agencies and NGOs should ensure that sufficient support is being provided to national civil society organisations in raising awareness of IDP rights under domestic law and strengthening civil society's ability (where possible including IDPs themselves) to hold government to account.

3. Donors, UN agencies and NGOs should do more to encourage and support governments in the implementation of national policies relating to IDPs, for example through advocacy. Donor governments have a particularly important and influential role to play, through coordinated advocacy, to ensure that national authorities are held to account where they fall short of the Guiding Principles or international Human Rights and Humanitarian law.

The protection deficit

Conclusions

Where national government fail to protect IDPs, there is evidence of a continuing and substantial deficit in the protection work done by the international community. Practices and omissions contributing to this deficit include:

– Overlooking the protection needs of minorities
– The prioritisation of material assistance over protection needs
– The inability or unwillingness of implementing partners to engage in protection work
– European domestic asylum policy compromising in-country protection work
– Lack of access in areas of insecurity
– Lack of adequate monitoring of human rights abuses
– Conceptual confusion in donor organisations about their potential role in relation to protection
– Inadequate levels of funding being provided for protection activities in some cases

Recommendations

4. Donor organisations should take steps to clarify their role in relation to protection and provide clear direction to their country desks and missions in how to encourage and support improved protection for IDPs in the humanitarian and development operations that they fund.

5. Donor organisations should ensure that protection activities are not neglected relative to material assistance provision in their funding of humanitarian operations, and should encourage their implementing partners to strengthen their knowledge of, and capacity to undertake protection work.

6. Donor organisations, UN agencies and, where appropriate, NGOs should increase the level of human rights monitoring and advocacy in IDP situations. In particular the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights should be encouraged, and funded accordingly, to deploy more field missions to areas experiencing significant displacement to play a lead role in the monitoring of human rights abuses.

Donor policy on IDPs

Conclusions

USAID recently became the first donor organisation to issue a policy statement in relation to IDPs. Currently several other donor organisations are in the process of reviewing and revising their overall humanitarian policies, though it would seem that few see the justification for a separate policy statement on IDPs. Whilst many donors lack formal policy statements in relation to IDPs all claim to be committed to the Guiding Principles. In practice however the policies (such as they were at the time the evaluations were undertaken) are not very evident at the operational level. One major donor (ECHO) has fundamental objections to the identification and treatment of IDPs as a separate group (see below). In Somalia the team found there to be 'policy evaporation' between the donor headquarters and the projects in the field. In Afghanistan a conflict was identified between domestic policies in donor countries and the policies of those donors in relation to IDPs in Afghanistan. Because of the difficulties surrounding the issue of 'categorisation' (see below) it would seem preferable for donors to develop policy statements in relation to vulnerability and vulnerable groups (including IDPs), in which a clear commitment to protection should figure, rather than to develop additional policy statements dedicated to IDPs.

Recommendations

7. Donor organisations should develop clear policy statements on vulnerability and their approaches to meeting the assistance and protection needs of vulnerable groups in which IDPs are considered as one among several potentially vulnerable groups.

8. Through the Good Humanitarian Donorship Initiative, donor organisations should seek to achieve greater coherence between their humanitarian policies, particularly their policies relating to potential IDPs and other potentially vulnerable groups.

9. As a matter of course, evaluations commissioned by donor organisations should include an assessment of the extent to which stated policy is being followed through and implemented on the ground, and identification of the learning points in relation to policy.

The 'categorisation' of IDPs

Conclusions

The evaluations revealed a strong vein of objection, not only to the *treatment* of IDPs as a separate category but even to their separate *identification* amongst all actual and potential vulnerable groups. The strength of such objections was somewhat surprising considering the widely held view that IDPs had been a relatively neglected group and the participation of many humanitarian agencies in efforts to address such neglect over the last decade. Such objections reflect an apparent unease within the humanitarian sector with the notion of IDPs as a separate category and this needs to be thought through and resolved by the sector.

   The factors contributing to this vein of objection are complex but include:

– the belief held by some of the evaluation teams and some agencies that identification of IDPs automatically meant that IDPs would be separately targeted in the provision of assistance and thus potentially privileged in relation to other vulnerable groups, and a consequent sense that separate identification was at odds with needs-driven humanitarianism;

– the observed reality that IDPs are not a homogenous group and that some IDPs are better off than some other vulnerable groups, including those who did not leave their homes in the face of insecurity and threats to their protection;

– the weakness of current needs assessment mechanisms in the humanitarian sector, particularly the lack of comprehensive assessments of need capable of identifying and prioritising differential needs across all potentially vulnerable groups (see below);

– the immense practical difficulties of accurately identifying IDPs from amongst other non-displaced populations, particularly in urban areas, and a consequent sense of mistrust of statistics on IDP numbers;

– the continuing pre-occupation of many humanitarian agencies with the provision of material assistance at the expense of their protection role and a consequent pre-occupation with the identification of households and individuals to be targeted with material assistance;

– an apparent lack of appreciation in some areas within the humanitarian sector of the benefits to be gained from monitoring

IDP numbers (as distinct from other potentially vulnerable groups) in order to inform policies and potential interventions to improve the situation of IDPs.

Recommendations

10. The humanitarian sector (i.e. donors, UN agencies, NGOs and national authorities) should review approaches towards the identification and treatment of different vulnerable groups (including IDPs) and improve procedures and guidance on the identification and targeting of different vulnerable groups. Within such a process and with specific regard to IDPs it is recommended that *displacement be used as an indicator of potential vulnerability rather than as a means of defining target groups*.

11. Linkages between the humanitarian and human rights community should be strengthened particularly with regard to IDPs and the particular challenges that humanitarian agencies face in identifying them and responding to their assistance and protection needs when there is a range of other vulnerable groups to consider. Greater dialogue between the humanitarian and human rights community could also serve to strengthen knowledge of protection work amongst humanitarian agencies.

Needs assessments

Conclusions

The picture conveyed by the set was distinctly unimpressive:

– There was an overall lack of needs assessments

– The quality of assessments was often poor

– Where needs assessments were undertaken, they were often undertaken by single agencies and actors with a particular focus or perspective. Consequently the assessments were disparate and difficult to integrate

– Comprehensive, multi-sectoral, inter-agency assessments of need are rarely undertaken

– Follow up to the recommendations of those needs assessments actually undertaken tends to be inadequate

Such findings are troubling when many humanitarian agencies (and donors) claim to be "needs-driven". Substantial improvements are required in the quality, coverage (both geographically and sectorally) and the levels of agency participation in joint needs assessment processes. Donors are aware of such shortcomings and, through the work of the Montreux group and the Good Humanitarian Donorship Initiative are seeking to improve the situation. Significant improvements in rela-

tion to needs assessment processes would go a long way towards overcoming the objections of those who see the identification of IDPs as a category of vulnerable group as being somehow at odds with needs-driven humanitarianism.

Recommendations

12. Donors, UN agencies, NGOs and national authorities should ensure that comprehensive, inter-agency, needs assessment processes are undertaken in all operations and on a regular basis. Such assessments should cover all areas and sectors and be capable of identifying the assistance and protection needs of all potentially vulnerable groups (including IDPs) *and of prioritising their needs.*

Coordination and the Collaborative Response

Conclusions

Efforts to improve the institutional arrangements in relation to IDPs (principally within the UN) have been taking place within the context of wider efforts to improve coordination in humanitarian operations. Over the last decade the UN system has taken the view that a coordinated, collaborative approach is the preferred model for effectively meeting the protection and assistance needs of IDPs. The 'Collaborative Approach' has encountered resistance from various quarters, including some UN agencies and donor organisations. On more than one occasion (but particularly during 2000), the model of a dedicated or lead agency (most probably based in or around UNHCR) has been championed, but eventually been rejected in favour of the Collaborative Approach. In 2002 an Internal Displacement Unit was created within OCHA to encourage and support the Collaborative Approach. The IASC has developed increasingly specific guidance to UN Resident Coordinators/Humanitarian Coordinators and UN Country Teams on the Collaborative Approach. The most comprehensive and specific guidance, the so called policy package was issued in September 2004. Only three months earlier, following an evaluation of the Internal Displacement Unit that was critical of its lack of impact on the UN system that was "not ready for change", the Unit was upgraded to the status of Inter-Agency Internal Displacement Division. In many respects then the current situation represents a new opportunity to 'make the Collaborative Approach work'.

Most of the evaluations were undertaken before the most recent spate of institutional changes so they do not provide the basis for a verdict on the current status and likely prospects for the Collaborative Approach. What they do reveal are valuable insights and lessons into what has worked and what has not worked in the past.

Where OCHA is responsible for overall coordination in relation to IDPs based on OCHA's experience in Angola it would seem to work best when:

- it is able to control a significant resource 'pot' (such as an Emergency Response Fund) and encourage and support implementing agencies to undertake programmes in particular areas or sectors;
- it has the respect and support of donors;
- it has a field presence at a provincial level that enables it to be knowledgeable about the local context and to provide coordination and support services to the implementing agencies closer to the actual area or operations.

Within the framework of the Collaborative Approach, UNHCR, with its substantial operational capacity and expertise in the provision of assistance and protection, can perform very effectively in the role of IDP lead agency. However, this is dependent on the extent to which it is prepared to fully embrace the lead agency role. It appears only prepared to do so when it is assured of consent by the host government and adequate resources for it to undertake the role. Whilst UNHCR's insistence on determining for itself those situations in which it will take on the lead role is understandable, it introduces a significant area of unpredictability into the coordination arrangements.

For their part, it would seem that donor organisations are not doing nearly enough to support coordination mechanisms whether for overall humanitarian efforts or those specifically relating to IDPs. Indeed, in several respects donor funding behaviours actively undermine coordination efforts within the UN system. The Consolidated Appeals process is a principal mechanism for achieving a coordinated response but they are consistently under-funded, even though donors declare their commitment to the process. This forces UN agencies to undertake constant reprioritisation of their proposed activities – a process that introduces or increases competitive behaviours between the agencies. Many donors fund 'outside the CAP', principally to NGOs. Whilst the factors influencing such decisions may be due to legitimate concerns about the relative merits of alternative channels this has the effect of weakening the CAP (and more significantly the Consolidated Humanitarian Action Plan) as an effective coordination mechanism. A bias towards the provision of food aid and away from covering the needs in other sectors and the practice of earmarking also detract from effective coordination.

Recommendations

13. Donor organisations should recognise that they have a critical role to play in making the Collaborative Approach work. Donors should use their funding allocations and relationships with IASC members to improve the incentives for 'positive collaborative behaviour' by agencies and strengthen the disincentives for 'negative collaborative behaviour'.

- At the country level regular meetings should be held between representatives of the principal donors and the Humanitarian Coordinator at which a review of the operation of the Collaborative Approach is a fixed item on the agenda.

- At the sector level the review of the Collaborative Approach should be a fixed item on the agenda in regular meetings between the Emergency Relief Coordinator and the principal humanitarian donors.

14. As part of the Good Humanitarian Donorship Initiative and/or the Montreux process donor organisations should undertake a more vigorous programme to address perceived weaknesses in the CA process and to reduce those funding behaviours and practices that detract from, or undermine, the operations of the Consolidated Appeals process and the preparation of the Consolidated Humanitarian Action Plan.

15. Donor organisations and NGOs should support, and where appropriate participate in, the dissemination activities associated with the Collaborative Approach and the recent IASC 'policy package'. In addition they should monitor compliance with the letter and spirit of the Collaborative Approach and work to hold all UN agencies to account in 'making the Collaborative Approach work'.

When does the need for assistance end?

Conclusions

The set revealed wide variation in approaches towards, and experiences of, ending assistance to IDPs. It is apparent that this is an area requiring significant clarification in both policy and practice. Among the issues revealed were:

- Decisions to end assistance are frequently based on inadequate assessments

- There appears to be a widely held belief that assistance is only required during the period of actual displacement despite widespread evidence that many returning households may require a lengthy period of assistance before they are able to re-establish their livelihoods, and that protection needs often persist after IDPs return home.

- Governments may take this stance because they may be anxious to declare an (internationally embarrassing) emergency over. Donors may take this view because they are anxious to end humanitarian assistance funding and return to their normal development activities in the hope that the problems faced by IDPs and recent returnees can be addressed through means other than humanitarian agencies.

– In some contexts the premature ending of assistance was wholly inappropriate and returnees experienced increased levels of hardship and vulnerability than compared to the levels experienced during their displacement when they were able to access international humanitarian assistance.

Recommendations

16. Donors, UN agencies, NGOs and host governments should urgently develop improved policies and guidance on when it is appropriate to end assistance to IDPs. Donors in particular should engage more actively in the 'When Displacement Ends' series of workshops and could use these as a vehicle for developing improved policies and guidance.

17. Donors should only halt the use of humanitarian funds to IDPs once objective assessments have demonstrated that their vulnerability is no greater than that of the average population (as opposed to the adjacent population which may be experiencing high levels of vulnerability due to the area being affected by prolonged conflict).

Putting this to the test

Recommendation

18. To provide a focus for the implementation of the above recommendations it is recommended that donors should focus upon two ongoing cases of massive displacement. The objective of such a focus would be to:

– Achieve an active engagement in the types of policy and practice issues described above

– Use this engagement in developing improved policies and practices

– Give particular and focussed support to the Collaborative Approach in these two important cases

Whilst the Good Humanitarian Donorship cases of DRC and Burundi might serve in this role as test cases, we would suggest that consideration be given to the massive and ongoing cases of Darfur and Uganda. The former provides a case of rapid scale-up, poor government-donor relations, and high levels of media interest. Uganda provides a case of slow scale-up, good government-donor relations, and low levels of media interest.

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Annex A
List of persons interviewed

Persons interviewed in Geneva by the team

Name	Position	Organisation
18th October		
Dennis McNamara,	Director, Inter-Agency Internal Displacement Division (IAIDD)	OCHA
Denis Vidal	External Relations Officer, IAIDD	OCHA
Anne-Marie Linde-Thalmann	Special Assistant to the Director, IAIDD	OCHA
Marc Vincent	Protection Officer, IAIDD	OCHA
Bjorn Pettersson	Human Rights Adviser, IAIDD	OCHA
Christoph Luedi	Head, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation	ICRC
Pascal Duport	Advisor, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation	ICRC
Patrick Saez	Head of Project, Central Tracing Agency and Protection Division	ICRC
Max Furrer	Central Tracing Agency and Protection Division	ICRC
19th October		
Matthias Behnke	Human Rights Officer	OHCHR
Ewen Macleod	Senior Policy Advisor, Development and Technical Cooperation Afghanistan Comprehensive Solutions Unit (CASWANAME)	UNHCR
Erika Feller	Director, Department of International Protection	UNHCR
Vanessa Mattar	Operational Policy Officer, Evaluation and Policy Analysis Unit	UNHCR
Kemlin Furley,	Senior External Relations Officer	UNHCR
Raouf Mazou	Head, Special Emergency Unit for Liberia, Africa Bureau	UNHCR
Josef Merkx	Senior Desk Officer (Colombia), Bureau for the Americas	UNHCR
Raymond Desarzens	Deputy Head of Operations for the Horn of Africa	ICRC
20th October		
Elisabeth Rasmusson	Resident Representative, Global IDP Project	NRC
Jens-Hagen Eschenbächer	Database & Communication Coordinator, Global IDP Project	NRC
Toby Lanzer	Chief, CAP Section	OCHA
Robert Smith	Financial Tracking Manager	OCHA

Persons interviewed in Brussels by Ralf Otto

Name	Study	Organisation
28th October		
Peter Billing	ECHO 4 General policy affairs	ECHO
29th October		
Peter Cavendish	ECHO 4 Head of Evaluation Sector	ECHO

Participants in the Workshop for Consultants Nov. 3rd 2004, Brussels

Name	Study	Organisation
Mette Visti	Danida, Evaluation of Danish Humanitarian and Rehabilitation Assistance in Relation to the Kosovo Crisis, 1999–2003	T&B Consult
John Cosgrave	Danida, Evaluation of the situation of the displaced and returned in Angola with an emphasis on Danida funded interventions from 1999 to 2003 ECHO Synthesis of Sudan, Angola and Afghanistan	Channel Research
Phil O'Keefe	DGIS Netherlands, Somalia	ETC UK
John Wilding	ECHO, Evaluation of ECHO's Humanitarian Intervention Plans in Afghanistan (including the actions financed in Iran and Pakistan under the plan)	Channel Research
Peter Marsden	Danida, Preliminary Study of Assistance to IDPs in Afghanistan	Independent
Sheila Reed	USAID, Evaluation of USAID's Humanitarian Response in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 2000–2004	Checchi and Company Consulting
Allison Oman	WFP, Summary Report of the Evaluation of the Eritrea Relief Portfolio	Independent
Claudio Schuftan	ECHO, Evaluation of ECHO's 1999 to 2002 funded actions in Sudan Evaluation of ECHO-funded Nutrition and Food Aid activities for Burmese Refugees in Thailand	S.H.E.R. Consulting
Aart van der Heide	Evaluation of ECHO's Global Humanitarian Plans in Angola, particularly with regard to treatment of IDPs and Assessment of ECHO's future strategy in Angola	Independent
Philip Rudge	Framework for a Common Approach to Evaluating Assistance to IDPs,Danida, Evaluation of Danish Humanitarian and Rehabilitation Assistance in Relation to the Kosovo Crisis, 1999–2003	Independent
Emery Brusset	Sida, Evaluation of Assistance to IDPs in Indonesia	Channel Research
Margie Buchanan-Smith	Team Member IDP Synthesis Study	Channel Research
Ralf Otto	Team Member IDP Synthesis Study	Channel Research
Marina Buch-Kristensen	Assistant	Channel Research

List of persons interviewed by telephone

Name	Position	Organisation	Date interviewed	Interviewed by
Manisha Thomas	Deputy Coordinator	ICVA	15 Oct	JB
Niels Dabelstein	Head of Evaluation Secretariat	Danida	29 Oct	MBS
Henrik Jespersen	IDP Focal Point, Humanitarian Department	Danida	29 Oct	MBS
Gilbert Collins	Advance Planning Team, OFDA	USAID	1 Nov	MBS
Joanna Crandall	Humanitarian Protection & IDP Advisor, DCHA, OFDA	USAID	4 Nov	MBS
Anita Menghetti	Donor Coordination Officer, Central Policy & Program Bureau	USAID	8 Nov	MBS
Julian Lefevre	Evaluation Department	WFP	2 Nov	MBS
William Carlos	Evaluation Department	DCI	5 Nov	MBS
Julia Compton	Team Leader, Sustainable Development & Governance, Evaluation Department	DFID	8 Nov	MBS
Iain Murray	Evaluation Department	DFID	9 Nov	MBS
Ted Kliest	Policy and Operations Evaluation Department	Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs	8 Oct	RO
Johan Schaar	Head of Humanitarian Aid Department	Sida	29 Oct	RO
Joost Andriessen	Head of the Humanitarian Aid Division	Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs	2 Nov	RO
Stefan Dahlgren	Evaluation Department	Sida	9 Nov	RO

Annex B
A review of the collaborative evaluation exercise in relation to IDPs

1. Introduction

The first, and the only, comprehensive joint evaluation by a large group of donors was the Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda in 1996. One of the unique features of this exercise was its system-wide scope. Despite many discussions since about repeating the exercise (for example, within ALNAP), this has never actually happened. There are various reasons for this, including the enormous management task which no individual or donor department is able or willing to take on, as well as a wariness of what such a major and high-profile evaluation can mean for individual agencies[51]. Instead, donors have occasionally come together in smaller groupings of two or three to conduct a joint evaluation of their programmes within a particular country.

The collaborative approach that has been piloted through this IDP evaluation exercise is a new initiative, the first of its kind for humanitarian assistance. The overall purpose of this collaborative exercise is 'to draw out key, system-wide lessons and thereby improve the provision of humanitarian assistance and protection to IDPs in the future'[52]. The approach uses a much more flexible and looser structure than would be needed for a joint donor evaluation exercise. The approach was deliberately informal to make it more do-able[53]. Donors are free to commission their own evaluations and to draft their own TOR guided by a common framework, contributing the findings to a

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[51] See Borton J., 2001, 'Doing Study 3 of the Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda: The Team Leader's Perspective', page 101 in Evaluating International Humanitarian Action: Reflections from Practitioners edited by Adrian Wood, Raymond Apthorpe and John Borton London: Zed Books

[52] See TOR for the synthesis study, and the Common Framework paper

[53] Personal communication, Johan Schaar, Sida

cross-donor, cross-country synthesis study. In this instance, it has been applied to a thematic issue – how best to protect and assist IDPs.

Within this overall initiative the degree of collaboration between donors varies. In the cases of three evaluations undertaken as part of this exercise, groups of donors agreed to include their agency's activities and expenditures in the scope of the evaluation but to entrust the management of the evaluation to one of their number. This represents the highest degree of collaboration and trust. Thus the Somalia evaluation was managed by the Netherlands but assessed the expenditures of Denmark, Sweden and ECHO as well as the Netherlands. The Indonesia evaluation was managed by Sweden but assessed the expenditures of Denmark, the Netherlands, the UK and ECHO as well as Sweden. The Preliminary Review of IDP Interventions in Afghanistan was managed by Denmark but considered the aid policies and roles of the UK, the Netherlands, Ireland, Denmark and Sweden. At the next level down, a single donor agency commits to incorporating the common framework into the TOR for their own individual evaluation. At the other end of the spectrum are evaluations that have been contributed and drawn upon in the synthesis that were commissioned totally independently, not as part of this collaborative exercise. See Table 6. As explained below, evaluations listed in columns A and B, where collaboration has been greatest, have not surprisingly contributed most to the synthesis.

Table 6. Range of evaluations contributing to this collaborative exercise

A. Joint donor evaluation, entrusted to one donor agency to manage	B. Single donor agency evaluation, using the Common Framework	C. Single donor agency evaluation, not guided by the Common Framework	D. Added to the set, but not part of the collaborative evaluation exercise
Evaluation			
– Somalia (Netherlands)	– Danida Angola	– ECHO Angola	– UNHCR Angola 2000
– Indonesia (Sida)	– Danida Kosovo	– ECHO Afghanistan	– UNHCR Angola 2002–03
– Afghanistan preliminary study (Danida)	– USAID DRC	– ECHO Synthesis	– WFP DRC
		– ECHO Sudan	– UNHCR Colombia
			– UNHCR Liberia
			– WFP Eritrea
			– OCHA – Internal displacement unit

As a way of strengthening shared learning across donors, this collaborative exercise is unanimously welcomed by representatives of all the participating donor agencies. It is seen by many as a pragmatic approach, that is relatively easy to manage, and that can accommodate individual donor agendas. There is a lot of interest in repeating the exercise. This section of the report looks at what has worked and what

has not, and at how the process could be improved to strengthen such collaborative exercises in the future.

2. Participation and buy-in

a) Within the international aid system

The Head of Sida's Humanitarian Department first suggested the idea for this collaborative evaluation exercise at an informal EU Humanitarian Aid Committee (HAC) meeting, during the Danish presidency in October 2002. Sida, Danida, DGIS (Netherlands) and ECHO first came together to take it forward as a group of self-selected donors. A few months later, DCI (Ireland), USAID and DFID joined the group, and also OCHA, UNHCR and WFP from within the UN system. The process of buy-in was deliberately informal. Word was spread about this exercise through various fora, but no formal invitations were extended.

Whilst this is an impressive list of seven donors (including ECHO) that have come together in this exercise, some donor governments are notable by their absence, specifically the Norwegian government and the Canadian government. Both have been active advocates for IDPs in recent years, and have been active participants in policy debates.

Some of the donors who joined in the second wave have been less engaged in the process than the first wave donors. The two UN agencies have also been somewhat peripheral to the exercise, in more of an 'observer' role in the words of one donor representative. They have attended some of the meetings throughout this collaborative process, but have not commissioned any evaluations according to the Common Framework. However, WFP has contributed the Eritrea evaluation to the set and the synthesis team chose to include WFP's DRC IDP study in the set. A selection of UNHCR evaluations/reviews have also been drawn upon by the synthesis team. For at least one of the UN agencies, limited capacity in their evaluation department constrained their fuller participation.

In order to draw out 'system-wide' lessons, the greater the number of donors participating in the exercise the richer and more comprehensive the findings and learnings will be. As the UN institutional framework for responding to IDPs is so central to the international humanitarian response, greater involvement of UN agencies is also critical to contribute system-wide lessons. In this particular exercise, the limited involvement of the UN system has been deliberately supplemented by the synthesis team by interviewing officials from some of the key UN agencies and reviewing key documents, to ensure the findings are appropriately located within current debates and institutional developments in relation to IDPs.

Ideally, such a collaborative exercise would include a large number of donor governments – certainly the most influential donors in terms

of funding and involvement in debates – and would include the relevant (to the issue) UN agencies participating as full members. However, the larger and less homogenous the group, the more challenging the management and leadership task becomes. Some donor representatives interviewed for the synthesis study feel that it is more practicable to limit the number of donors to those who are truly interested and have the capacity to engage, which may also result in a more homogenous group. Initially, this less ambitious approach may be appropriate, expanding to more inclusive groups of donors and UN agencies as experience of these collaborative evaluation exercises develops, and as they become better known within the international aid system.

A positive by-product of the donors coming together periodically in the planning process of this collaborative exercise is that it appears to have encouraged more donors to participate in joint evaluations within one country. For example, the Afghanistan evaluation was discussed at the Brussels planning meeting in February 2004, and at least two more donors joined this exercise.

b) Within donor agencies

This collaborative evaluation exercise has mostly been driven by heads of evaluation departments within the respective donor agencies. This group is particularly concerned to find ways of improving shared, system-wide learning. The engagement of their colleagues from the respective humanitarian departments is varied. Some have been centrally involved, while others have been aware of the process, but from more of a distance. In the latter case the humanitarian aid officials have much less, if any, sense of ownership of the process. However, many of the learnings and recommendations from this collaborative evaluation exercise are targeted at humanitarian aid officials. The more engaged they are, the more likely they are to absorb and act on these learnings and recommendations. Yet they are often working under pressure, with limited capacity. It may be more realistic to expect their engagement at the beginning and end of the process, rather than throughout. In particular, it would be good to have their participation in a final workshop when the findings of the synthesis study are presented and possibly in the evaluation team-leader workshop discussed in section 7.8 below.

One of the learnings from this IDP exercise is the importance of ensuring that the donor agency representative who is fully engaged in the collaboration is also the person responsible for (or at least involved in) commissioning that donor's evaluation. This is the most likely way of ensuring that the common framework is fully reflected in the TOR.

This collaborative IDP evaluation exercise has been driven by donor agency headquarters. The synthesis team has had limited feedback on the extent of buy-in from field staff, although at least one

evaluation team leader reported that field staff were given insufficient warning of the evaluation team's arrival and of their need for documentation and interviews. There are two possible ways of strengthening buy-in from the field:

a) consulting donor agency field staff in the early stages of deciding which thematic issue should be the subject of such a collaborative evaluation in future;

b) giving more time to the planning phase, to ensure field staff are fully briefed, and that the evaluation schedule fits with the schedule of the field office

3. Choice of countries for individual evaluations

For this IDP evaluation exercise, individual donor agencies decided which country they wanted to focus on in their particular evaluation. For some agencies, for example ECHO, this was pre-determined before the collaborative exercise was launched. (Some donors, such as ECHO, set their evaluation plans a year in advance, with little flexibility to include other, more strategic evaluations into a process such as this). Other donors chose countries that were particularly significant in terms of their aid investment, for example Danida and Angola, USAID and DRC, or because of particular concerns/interest in the IDP issues in a specific country, for example Sida and Indonesia. Some piggy-backed the IDP focus onto an evaluation that was due to go ahead for other reasons, for example Danida's evaluation of Kosovo.

Many of the evaluations that were conducted as part of this collaborative initiative (see Table 6), were attempting to fulfil a number of different objectives. For example, the principal objective was to evaluate the donor agency's entire humanitarian programme in that country, a specific IDP focus was added on, and there was an institutional agenda to involve a number of different departments within that one donor agency. Fulfilling a number of different agendas is challenging, but not impossible. But unless these different objectives are clearly stated and understood up front, some target audiences may feel 'shortchanged' by the findings, which appears to have been the case in at least one of the donor evaluations.

More problematic is the actual choice of country. Whilst leaving this choice to each individual donor was a pragmatic approach, it resulted in the initial 'core' set of evaluations that could have been more inclusive and representative of the wide range of contexts in which displacement occurs and in which support to IDPs is provided. Of the ten countries in the world with the largest IDP populations, only two were included in the original 'core' set. Countries such as Uganda and Sri Lanka, where there are known to be important learnings about assistance to IDPs, have not been included. Others, such as Colombia and

Liberia were included in the additional set of six evaluations proposed by the synthesis team as a result of fortuitously finding relevant UNHCR evaluations.

The set includes a wide range of different contexts in which people have been displaced, for example civil war affecting the whole of Angola, but in Sudan affecting only part of the country; internal insecurity exacerbated by external military intervention triggering large-scale displacement in Afghanistan and Kosovo; countries with strong states such as Indonesia, compared with weak or failed states such as Somalia and DRC. Whilst this throws up a wide range of findings and learnings, there is a danger of 'comparing apples and pears': the learning from one environment may not be replicable or appropriate in another.

Therefore, at the outset of any future collaborative evaluation exercises, it would be beneficial for the participating agencies to take time to ensure that the set is strategic, and doing some categorisation of the different contexts to ensure that all relevant contexts are included, and that there will be sufficient material for fair comparisons to be made.

4. Evaluating policy or programmes?

Three levels of policy are relevant here: donor policy on IDPs generally; donor policy for the specific country, whether focused on IDPs or on humanitarian assistance more broadly; the national government's policy towards IDPs in the country concerned.

The TOR for the different evaluations (that are specifically part of the IDP Evaluation Group Initiative) vary in their emphasis on evaluation of policy versus programming. For example, ECHO was particularly concerned to get feedback on their policy of non-categorisation of IDPs, but otherwise sought to focus on programming. The policy questions from the Common Framework appear clearly in the TOR for the USAID DRC evaluation, but are implicit in the TOR for some of the other evaluations.

The coverage of donor policy in the evaluation reports is similarly mixed. Programming is by far the main emphasis of all, although some do throw light on policy as well.

Review of policy is strongest in some of the joint donor evaluations – the preliminary IDP Afghanistan study and the joint donor Somalia evaluation – than in most of the others. What is missing in most of the evaluations is a response to the policy-related questions in the common framework, in paragraph 21, on 'Fundamental requirements of an agency: questions to be addressed by the evaluation'. This is a significant gap. For instance, it means that we can draw only limited conclusions about donor advocacy on the UN Guiding Principles, and whether donor policy commitment to the Guiding Principles makes much difference on the ground – two fundamental issues. Some of these questions simply do not seem to have been raised.

Table 7. Policy focus of evaluations and studies that were commissioned to be part of the IDP Evaluation Group Initiative

Country	Commissioning organisation	Did TOR specify evaluation of donor policy?	Did evaluators look at donor policy?	Did evaluators look at national government policy?
Angola	Danida	No, but specified review of UN policy framework	No – but did look at UN policy/ institutional framework	Yes
	ECHO	Limited – reviewing ECHO's policy of non-categorisation of IDPs	Limited – review of ECHO's policy of non-categorisation of IDPs, and review of ECHO's country policy in Angola	No
Somalia	Netherlands	TOR not seen by the synthesis team	Yes	National government does not currently exist in Somalia
Indonesia	Sida	Yes	Limited	Yes – given greater coverage than donor policy
Kosovo	Danida	Refers to Common Framework for IDP component – there-fore implicitly yes	Yes – both general Danish policy, and Kosovo-specific	Limited
Afghanistan	ECHO	Limited – reviewing ECHO's policy of non-categorisation of IDPs	Limited to comments on categorisation	No
	Danida (pre-study)	TOR not seen by the synthesis team	Yes	Yes
Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)	USAID	Yes	Yes	Limited
Sudan, Angola, Afghanistan	ECHO	Limited – reviewing ECHO's policy of non-categorisation of IDPs	Limited to review of ECHO's policy of non-categorisation	Not relevant

In at least one instance, evaluation of policy sat uncomfortably with the donor agency which wanted to take a country programming perspective; some officials felt that the findings on policy could not be sufficiently thorough when the evaluators were only considering one context.

A few looked at donor policy for that specific country. It was a strong component of the Danida Kosovo evaluation, of the preliminary IDP study on Afghanistan, and the joint donor evaluation of Somalia. A number – but not all – of the evaluations review national government policy with respect to IDPs, for example the Sida Indonesia evaluation, the Danida Angola evaluation and the UNHCR Colombia evaluation.

The Common Framework encouraged the evaluations to look at policy issues, but donor representatives interviewed for this study had differing views on the importance of evaluations reviewing donor policy as well as programmes. Whilst some felt it is critical in order to have high-level impact, others felt it was hard to do in country-level evaluations. One donor representative suggested that this be done as a separate institutional study, across donor agencies, to complement the country-level evaluations.

The view of the synthesis team is that it is essential that evaluators evaluate policy as well as operational programming. It is hard to understand and assess the role of implementing partners without understanding the policy(ies) – explicit and implicit – that resulted in them being selected and funded. In some areas this may be a sensitive issue, where policy is very different from one donor to another, and where aid policy is strongly influenced by other government policies, for example foreign policy. However, if such a collaborative exercise is truly to result in system-wide learning, then it is essential that it evaluates donor policy as well as programming. And for IDPs in particular, where responsibility for protection and assistance rests primarily with the national government, it is also very important that the whole evaluation gives proper consideration to the national policy context.

5. Planning the exercise

The planning process for the collaborative exercise was kept deliberately light. For example, planning meetings were backed onto other events that brought the key actors together, such as the ALNAP meeting in Copenhagen in June. Donor officials with hectic schedules have been appreciative of this approach. The process has been characterised by a cooperative spirit between donors. For example, Sida and Danida have shared the workload of commissioning and managing the synthesis study to compensate for reduced staffing within Danida's Evaluation Department – evidence of strong commitment to this collaborative exercise.

The planning process has been quite rapid and flexible. This flexibility meant that it was possible to include evaluations commissioned before the common framework had been finalised, but this has also had its downside in that evaluations that have not used the common framework have contributed less to the overall findings. A fine line needs to be found, between keeping the process light and manageable, yet with sufficient rigour to produce comparable findings.

A key constraint to be taken into account in future collaborative evaluation exercises is the advance notice that many evaluation departments need to adjust their schedule of evaluations in order to contribute. Officials within some evaluation departments talked of a 12 to 18 month planning timeframe that they operate within, with limited scope

to adapt the evaluation schedule they have committed to. Thus, they recommended a 6 to 12 month lead time from a collaborative exercise being agreed upon, to some of the individual evaluations actually being commissioned. There are other advantages to a longer lead-time: greater opportunity to get buy-in from all potentially interested donors, and within donor organisations from relevant departments and from missions in the field, also from the principal implementing partners; and longer to discuss and ensure shared understanding of the common framework

6. The 'Framework for a Common Approach'

A 'Framework for a Common Approach to Evaluating Assistance to IDPs' was commissioned by Danida in July 2003.[54] This resulted in a 14 page paper in two parts: the first part set out the key issues – at both policy and operational levels – that must be highlighted and prioritised in such evaluations. The second part translated this into key questions to be addressed in order to evaluate the overall impact and effectiveness of assistance to IDPs, broadly following the DAC evaluation criteria. The draft framework was shared with, and commented upon by all the donor and UN agencies participating in the collaborative exercise – all done electronically. The final version was produced in October 2003.

Donor agency representatives and evaluation team leaders (those who had seen it) are in broad agreement that a common framework is essential for setting out the issues and to provide a common platform for such a collaborative exercise. However, it was very partially used. For example, none of the ECHO evaluators had seen the common framework, although this was partly an issue of timing: the ECHO Angola and ECHO Sudan evaluations had been commissioned before the common framework became available. This has, however, hampered the ability to draw out system-wide lessons, when the evaluations have not covered a core set of common issues.

Views on the format of the common framework are mixed. Some (evaluators and donor representatives) found it very useful. Others have commented that it was too long, in particular the list of questions under the evaluation criteria. Different donors have responded to this list in different ways – some regarding it as a menu from which certain topics can be selected, others treating it as a comprehensive list to be somehow incorporated into the TOR. One donor representative questioned whether it is too complicated, assuming a degree of knowledge of the topic on the part of donor officials and consultants that may not

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54 One of the authors of the Common Framework was also a member of the Synthesis Team. Whilst this creates the potential for a lack of objectivity in the assessment of the value of the Common Framework, the contribution of the two other members of the Synthesis Team have helped to ensure that the views expressed in this section are objective.

exist. It was regrettable that there was not a chance for the authors of the common framework to meet with the participating donor and UN agencies during the process of drafting. In future, some of these problems could be overcome in such a meeting.

The synthesis team have identified the following ways in which the common framework could be strengthened:

1) It should continue to present a short background briefing on the topic, related to current debates and raising key issues and challenges facing the international aid community

2) The first draft should include a 'long list' of relevant policy and operational questions

3) In a meeting between the authors and the donors and UN agencies participating in the collaborative exercise, this 'long list' should be whittled down to an agreed core list of the most important policy and operational questions to be addressed in *all* the evaluations. It is suggested that this list be no longer than a dozen questions to make it manageable and to ensure that they are taken on board in all TOR. The questions should be pitched at a sufficiently high strategic level to generate insightful and full findings.

4) The common framework should also include a list of key sources of background information on the topic, to be consulted and used by all evaluators. Indeed, a CD with key briefing materials could be prepared, and given to each evaluation team.

At this one day preliminary meeting, to finalise the common framework, some time should be allocated to provide background briefing on the topic to be evaluated. This investment of time at the outset would undoubtedly pay off, if differences in understanding were acknowledged and dealt with at the beginning. Indeed, it is much more likely that a shared understanding would emerge between all commissioning agencies as a result of such a one-day workshop.

7. The methodology of the individual evaluations

Understandably, the methodology of the different evaluations has been quite varied, according to the varied TOR and principal focus of each evaluation, and to some extent reflecting the preferred approach of the evaluator. It seems appropriate that there should be this flexibility. Heavy-handed or bureaucratic attempts to systematise the methodology could kill the initiative.

Instead, there could be some agreed guidelines for the methodology. In this set of IDP evaluations, there appears to have been limited consultation with IDPs themselves, with two or three notable exceptions, such as the USAID DRC evaluation, the Danida Angola evaluation and the Danida Kosovo evaluation. Limited time appears to have constrained

some of the evaluation teams. The extent to which consultation with affected people should be part of any future collaborative exercise could be discussed between participating agencies during the planning phase, to ensure a more uniform approach. It is also noticeable that most of the evaluations focussed entirely on the work of the respective donor(s) in-country. Only a few show signs of having consulted a wider literature, on IDPs or on conditions in that country (for example available political economy analyses; the Global IDP database). Once again, time constraints may have been an issue. As a result, familiarity with current debates and policies related to IDPs varied amongst the evaluators. If lack of time is an issue, then agreement between donor agencies at the outset, to allow their evaluation teams time to consult a wider literature would almost certainly improve the final reports. Indeed, consultation of the wider literature should be a requirement of the evaluation teams.

8. Learning across the individual evaluations

The first contact between the evaluation teams was a one-day workshop, organised as part of the synthesis process. The workshop was held in Brussels, in early November, and brought together almost all the evaluation team leaders (or at least a team member). Common findings discussed related to policy and the programming of assistance to IDPs. This was an invaluable exercise. It was appreciated by the evaluators who rarely get this kind of opportunity to discuss their findings with such an experienced peer group[55]. And it was valued by the synthesis team who gained useful information and insights in addition to what can be gleaned from the written evaluation reports and studies. The benefits of this kind of gathering were evident, and should be programmed into future collaborative exercises. Indeed, donor officials would also gain from participating in this kind of event. It is worth considering a two-day event – one day for the evaluators to get together and compare findings, facilitated by the synthesis team – and one day for these common findings to be discussed with key donor officials.

Few donor officials have been able to read the evaluation reports other than their own. This emphasises even more the role of the synthesis study in capturing and disseminating the key lessons in an accessible form, and the value of the core donor group meeting with the evaluation team leaders.

Whilst it would be good for the evaluation teams to have more contact with each other during the process of conducting the individual evaluations, this is probably unrealistic given travel schedules and the potential size of the group.

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[55] In post-workshop discussions, it transpired that the participants at the workshop had, between them, visited at least 80% of the approximately 200 countries in the world.

9. Conclusions for future collaborative evaluation exercises

This collaborative evaluation exercise is an important and promising initiative to promote shared learning and understanding across a group of influential donors. It has real potential to push forward policy debates, which could be truly evidence-based. It is an exercise that has proved popular with all the participating donors and, in the words of one interviewee, it has encouraged a much broader perspective in some evaluations beyond the programming of a single donor. As such it provides a model that is very much in alignment with the Good Humanitarian Donorship initiative that aims to increase the accountability and consistency of donors within the functioning of the wider humanitarian system.

To what extent has it achieved its overall purpose of drawing out key system-wide lessons? By conducting these evaluations across a number of donors and across a number of countries, this purpose has been substantially but not completely achieved. Two key constraints, as described above, are:

(i) the varied use of the common framework by the donor agencies

(ii) the selection of the evaluations to be included in the set could have been more considered and strategic with greater attention being given in the planning phase to the different contexts of internal displacement and inclusion of those countries where substantial learning on the issues had already occurred.

A deliberately light and informal approach to planning and managing this collaborative exercise has been followed. This has meant it could be achieved within a relatively short time-scale, and has facilitated donor participation. A more structured management process could have slowed it down. But there has been a cost to this lightness of approach, in particular the donors not using the common framework to the same extent, thus inhibiting comparable findings.

Future collaborative exercises are strongly commended, but with a bit more rigour and discipline, and conducted over a longer time period, both of which will contribute to a higher quality final product.

Recommendations for future collaborative evaluation exercises

1. A larger number of donors should be invited to participate in such a collaborative evaluation exercise in future. Realising that not all may be interested or have sufficient resources to engage, efforts should be made to include the most influential donors, in terms of funding and engagement in policy debates. The relevant UN agencies should also be involved as full members of the exercise, to ensure that the findings of the evaluations are truly system-wide.

2. The expected contribution of all donors and UN agencies engaged in the collaborative exercise should be agreed and clearly stated at the outset, to ensure commitment and clarity of expectation. This might include:

   – commissioning (or being part of) at least one evaluation that is relevant to the exercise

   – commitment to include key questions from the common framework in the evaluation's terms of reference

3. A longer time frame for planning such a collaborative evaluation exercise is recommended, with a six to twelve month lead-time. This will:

   a) give participating agencies more flexibility to commission individual evaluations that can contribute to the overall theme

   b) give agencies more time to encourage buy-in from relevant thematic or geographical departments, and from the field

   c) enable more time to be spent discussing and agreeing the key policy and operational questions to be addressed in the collaborative evaluation

4. A common framework should again be commissioned to guide such a collaborative exercise, highlighting key policy and operational issues. It should be discussed in a one-day briefing meeting between the authors and the participating agencies, when decisions should be made on a core list of the key policy and operational questions to be covered by each and every individual evaluation. Once this core list is agreed, the authors of the common framework could than propose a common format for the evaluation reports. Whilst donors may want to add extra sections on topics of particular concern to them, at least having some core sections in common would facilitate cross-country and cross-donor learning, and would thus greatly contribute to achieving the overall purpose of such a collaborative evaluation in terms of system-wide learning. This one-day meeting would also be an opportunity for selected data and information to be shared between donor agencies on the topic of concern, in other words for a general briefing. For example, on IDPs – the Global IDP Project could have been asked to prepare such background briefing materials, to serve the donors and also the evaluators when they start work.

5. Although a light management approach to such a collaborative exercise has many advantages, there should be overall agreement during the planning phase on the countries to be included in the set of evaluations, to ensure that it is representative of the varied contexts and strategic in terms of including key countries and those where significant learning has already taken place.

6. Towards the end of the exercise, there should be a two-day workshop scheduled with the team leaders of the individual evaluations. The first day is an opportunity for the team leaders to explore their common and varied findings; the second day is an opportunity to communicate those findings to the donor and UN agencies involved.

Following a proposal made by Sweden at a meeting of the EC Humanitarian Aid Committee (HAC) in May 2003, a group of representatives of donor organisations agreed to undertake a collaborative evaluation process focussing on the theme of support to Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). The group comprised the Danish and Dutch Ministries of Foreign Affairs, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), the European Commission Humanitarian Office (ECHO), the US Agency for International Development (USAID), the UK Department for International Development (DFID), Development Cooperation Ireland, OCHA, UNHCR and WFP. It was chaired by Danida's Evaluation Department.

This synthesis report is based on 17 reports covering operations in ten countries: Angola, Somalia, Indonesia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Colombia, Liberia, Eritrea, and Sudan.

Seven critical issues are identified: the rights of IDPs, the protection 'deficit', donor policy on IDPs, the categorisation of IDPs, needs assessments, coordination and the collaborative response, and when does the need for assistance end? These critical issues are discussed in detail in the report and recommendations on how to deal with them are presented.