HUMANITARIAN DEVELOPMENT COHERENCE

WORLD HUMANITARIAN SUMMIT
PUTTING POLICY INTO PRACTICE

THE COMMITMENTS INTO ACTION SERIES

OECD

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Credits

The Commitments into Action series

Humanitarian needs continue to grow, with millions of people affected by conflicts, natural disasters and other crises every year. Simultaneously, these shocks undermine development gains and block the path out of poverty and towards sustainable development. Furthermore, these negative events can destabilise neighbouring countries and have regional or even global repercussions.

And yet, many humanitarian crises remain underfunded or forgotten. Donors and operational agencies make hard decisions about which operations to prioritise and which to let go. In short, there is insufficient quality money — money to reach all those in need, to purchase what they need and when they need it. Human suffering continues unabated.

In May 2016, the World Humanitarian Summit reflected on the shifting nature of crises and on the need for new ways of funding and delivering humanitarian assistance, so that humanitarian aid can remain a key and effective tool for the critical task of saving lives and preserving livelihoods. The question of how to better finance humanitarian operations – including how to finance some of the emerging good practices and new ways of working in humanitarian crises – was seen as key to delivering a better response.

The OECD, under its mandate to monitor the effectiveness of aid and to promote peer learning, will continue to support its members to deliver on the commitments they made at the Summit, especially the commitments around better humanitarian financing.

As part of this work, the Commitments into Action series was developed to provide straightforward, practical guidance for OECD Development Assistance Committee members and other humanitarian donors. It is aimed at helping them translate their humanitarian policy commitments into quality results in the field, deliver better finance and better engage with the humanitarian community on the key issues surrounding humanitarian responses in modern crisis situations. The series specifically targets professionals in donor agencies making decisions about humanitarian funding.

All guidelines are available on a dedicated website designed for humanitarian donors: http://www.oecd.org/development/humanitarian-donors/.

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1. Introduction

Humanitarian aid does not take place in isolation. Gone are the days when crises were seen as accidents on the road to development to be cleaned up with humanitarian aid. Crises are complex, displacements are prolonged, and in protracted crises, people's needs extend far beyond immediate, life-saving support.

Recognising this, the majority of humanitarian and development co-operation donor strategies now explicitly call for coherence between those two separate aid streams. However, today's donor aid architecture often places humanitarian and development teams into two different siloes with their own separate tools, funding cycles and decision-making processes. In addition, development co-operation tools are often unsuited to respond to the fast-evolving needs and unpredictable situations found in conflict and fragile contexts; these tools are often based on rigid programme objectives and approval processes that can be difficult to adapt to shifting realities on the ground. As a result, humanitarian aid is increasingly being used as an instrument to address long-term "development" issues in fragile contexts, a purpose for which it is not necessarily designed.

And thus - although there have been some positive experiences – coherent financing for protracted crises remains largely elusive.

Delivering on commitments to improve coherence will require new ways of thinking and approaches.

While ensuring the crucial capacity of donor systems, tools and processes to provide a coherent response, this guideline also focuses on the other aspects of coherence – how to develop coherent objectives, analyse the comparative advantages of financial instruments, and promote coherence through partnership.

Indeed, achieving greater coherence between aid instruments in crisis context requires several elements:

- A common or shared, risk-informed context and vulnerability analysis to define a collective outcome (*What do we want to do in this context?*)
- The mobilisation of aid instruments according to their comparative advantage to meet the objective (*What resources do we have to meet this objective?*)
- Political leadership and incentives to overcome institutional barriers and strategically review partnerships (*How do we make sure we mobilise our resources according to the objective, and not according to the availability and specific limitations of our instruments?*)

This guideline does not replicate the many papers that discuss the links between humanitarian and development aid. Rather it addresses some key principles of humanitarian-development coherence and proposes concrete ways to increase coherence in donor approaches to better address risks and vulnerability in a given protracted crisis context. It is also noted that the International Network on Conflict and Fragility (INCAF) has begun work on specific guidance on the broader humanitarian-development-peace nexus, given that peace and statebuilding are an increasing part of international crisis management.

2. Description and definition

Coherence or nexus: Many post-World Humanitarian Summit initiatives are calling for greater coherence or for operationalising the nexus between aid instruments. Not many are providing a definition for these terms

In this guideline, coherence describes the efforts of different actors and organisations to identify effective responses to a particular crisis context and ways to work better together, based on their respective comparative advantages, values and mandates. Coherence brings a logical connection or consistency between household and community-focused humanitarian aid, on the one hand, and development assistance focused on building the state and institutions, on the other. When relevant, these two tracks of assistance should complement and complete each other, delivering collective outcomes that tackle future risks, decrease vulnerability and build resilience. This guideline focuses on the coherent alignment of humanitarian and development aid within donor institutions and administrations.

Donors should see coherence as a way to reach collective outcomes more effectively, through careful layering of their different funding instruments and programming. Coherence helps to better meet the needs of the most vulnerable while also addressing the longer-term drivers of vulnerability and crises. In the absence of a natural supervising authority among all aid actors, coherence also implies that each donor agrees to adjust its action in relation to the actions of other donors, so that each action is consistent with the agreed collective outcome.

It is important to stress that coherence does not mean the integration of humanitarian assistance into a broader political agenda. Nor should coherence mean that humanitarian assistance becomes a political tool. Indeed, it is important that the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence are protected within the coherence agenda. This is because delivering on the coherence agenda during protracted crises will require ensuring that humanitarian personnel have safe and sustained access to affected people. Therefore the respect of humanitarian principles, which enables this access, will remain fundamental.[1]

New Way of Working: The New Way of Working is an initiative that was launched at the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit. It can be described as working over multiple years towards collective outcomes, based on the comparative advantage of a diverse range of actors including those outside the United Nations system. Wherever possible, those efforts should reinforce and strengthen the capacities that already exist at national and local levels. The New Way of Working is about offering a concrete path to removing unnecessary barriers between humanitarian and development actors as they jointly work towards strengthened investments in sustainable development, people and institutions, and doing so as early as possible. It is also about protecting sustainable development gains where possible and preventing the loss of peace dividends whenever a crisis or shock hits (AFH, 2016)

Collective outcome: A collective outcome is a commonly agreed and quantifiable result or impact in reducing people's needs, risks and vulnerabilities and increasing their resilience. As a result achieved at the end of three to five years, it requires the combined effort of development, humanitarian and other relevant actors. Collective outcomes are at the core of the New Way of Working (OCHA, 2017).

Crisis modifiers: A crisis modifier is a provision in a grant agreement that allows the national or local actor to move funds from development activities to crisis response; it may also allow the donor to provide additional funds for crisis response, without modifying the grant agreement.

3. Why coherence is important

Today's crises are complex and fluid, and there is not one point where people's needs stop being humanitarian and start being development in nature. Delivering an effective emergency response and building people's resilience to shocks requires a broad range of measures that address both emergency humanitarian needs and long-term development. Yet today's aid architecture is governed by a rigid compartmentalisation of humanitarian and development aid. Within that division, aid is often programmed according to sectoral silos. As noted above, often different teams or agencies manage humanitarian and development funds and programmes according to distinct rules, programming cycles, decision-making processes, budget envelopes and line management. In complex crises where structural needs overlay emergency needs, this aid architecture often leads to a disjointed assemblage of parallel activities that can be relevant individually but do not necessarily make the most of available resources.

Coherence can help deliver the Sustainable Development Goals in protracted crisis settings

Working in a coherent manner will help build synergies between humanitarian and development aid, therefore improving the effectiveness of the overall aid effort. It will also accelerate delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in protracted crises, which are the most difficult operating environments.

Coherence can increase government involvement

In many developing countries, the multiplication of un-coordinated development partnerships and funding sources can be confusing. The resultant strain on government capacities may erode capacity-strengthening efforts. When a country's partners align themselves to a set of agreed collective outcomes, the government is better aware of incoming aid flows and efforts and it can better allocate human and financial resources to those priorities.

Coherence can increase efficiency and reduce costs

There is general agreement that humanitarian aid has been over-stretched and excessively used for addressing structural needs in protracted crises, although its short-term funding cycles and avoidance of state structures make it poorly suited to this purpose. In addition, humanitarian aid can be more expensive, as it often relies on foreign staff and imported goods. It can also weaken local markets and institutions and foster dependency. Responding to predictable needs with unpredictable funds also increases operational costs, for example by limiting the space for negotiating longer-term leases on buildings and equipment.

Coherence, in contrast, means using the right mix of instruments — humanitarian aid and development co-operation — and the right delivery channels to reach a collectively agreed outcome, such as durable solutions for refugees. Mixing and matching different funding instruments in this way can also enable donors to engage more strategically in fragile contexts. For example, a coherent way to address malnutrition in an area with high malnutrition rates is

to combine humanitarian emergency nutrition with a longer-term livelihood, health, water and sanitation programme.

Coherence can increase sustainability

Chances for sustainability are maximised when aid instruments are coherent and geared towards collective outcomes that are agreed upon by government, civil society, the private sector and other national actors who can contribute to efforts once the aid investments phase out. When aid programmes all focus on a specific issue, the benefits of the outcome are likely to be more sustainable, even when donor funding wanes. For example, a national social protection system with a crisis window specifically designed to respond to future emergencies can provide effective emergency support; it also can obviate the need for the international humanitarian community to build a new system when the next crisis hits.

4. Commitments

It has long been acknowledged that more coherence is needed between humanitarian aid and development co-operation, and this is expressed in a broad spectrum of international commitments and technical guidelines. It was most recently addressed at the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit, reflecting the new policy momentum and appetite for a new way of working.

The following table presents the international community's coherence commitments, goals and guidelines.

Addis Ababa Action Agenda	Point 6: "We recognize the need for the coherence of developmental and humanitarian finance to ensure timelier, comprehensive, appropriate and cost-effective approaches to the management and mitigation of natural disasters and complex emergencies."
World Humanitarian Summit Grand Bargain	Commitment 10: Enhance engagement between humanitarian and development actors
New Way of Working	"We must bring the humanitarian and development spheres closer together from the very beginning of a crisis — to support affected communities, address structural and economic impacts, and help prevent a new spiral of fragility and instability."
Good Humanitarian Donorship	Principle 9: Provide humanitarian assistance in ways that are supportive of recovery and long-term development, striving to ensure support, where appropriate, to the maintenance and return of sustainable livelihoods and transitions from humanitarian relief to recovery and development activities

5. Know your objective

Coherence between humanitarian and development aid is built on mutual understanding —of the context, of each actor's respective comparative advantage, and of the complementarity between humanitarian and development instruments. Indeed, coherence is context specific and different protracted crisis contexts will present different opportunities for coherence. Coherence should not be about developing a one-size-fits-all approach and applying it in the same way to all protracted crises. Reaching coherence requires several elements:

• A common or shared risk-informed context and vulnerability analysis to define a collective outcome (What do we want to do in this context?)

• The mobilisation of aid instruments according to their comparative advantage to meet the objective (What resources do we have to meet this objective?)

• Political leadership and incentives to overcome existing institutional barriers and strategically review partnerships (How do we make sure we mobilise our resources according to the objective, and not according to the availability and specific limitations of our instruments?)

To date, a significant part of development programming focuses on global issues including climate change adaptation, migration prevention and gender balance, and towards achievement of the SDGs. While focusing on saving lives, humanitarian programming is also beginning to be linked to these global issues. The programming cycle is essentially top-down, starting from a consequence (such as poverty) and its perceived causes. A different, more inclusive programming approach, one in line with the "leave no one behind" core responsibility (UNSG, 2016), is to put people and their problems at the centre. After all, most vulnerable people who are affected by shocks would not identify climate change, migration or gender balance as their primary daily problem. Finding money for school fees, getting clean water, bribes demanded for administrative services, fake drugs being sold on the market, abusive interest rates on credit from the local shops — these are more tangible and daily issues.

An analysis of the main issues for the most vulnerable people and the risks that they need to manage is the way to start. This will help to assess those vulnerabilities and define the best way to address them at different levels to ultimately achieve the SDGs. Then the crucial elements of coherent programming, will be a shared or common analysis and the careful setting of objectives based on people's vulnerabilities. For example, a coherent approach to the drug availability problem can integrate humanitarian aid (a primary health programme), development aid (the drug supply chain and national pharmacy management), and governance and peace measures (to avert counterfeiting, criminality, etc.). All of these elements align as well with SDG 3 (good health and well-being) and SDG 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions).

Know your value added

Donors should reflect on their particular value added to address people's problems when they design their country strategies (OECD, 2016). No single donor can do everything, and each donor may have a comparative advantage to address specific issues. These advantages should

be taken into account to achieve coherence. Some donors, for example, have a more agile structure, can focus on smaller or low profile crises, or can partner more easily with local humanitarian responders. Donors are best placed to identify their own comparative advantage in particular contexts, and should make sure that there is consensus and clarity about it among all their staff.

Define and incentivise collective outcomes

The next step in coherence is setting objectives to reach the collective outcome in a particular context. Those outcomes should be delivered collectively, in partnership with government, other donors, UN agencies, civil society and development banks among others, all depending on the individual context, There is no overarching authority that defines or designs collective outcomes. Nor is there a structured process to agree on what they should be. Consequently, donors can play an incentivising role in defining collective outcome through promotion of dialogue and funding. They should also take advantage of UN expertise by proactively engaging with the government as well as with the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator (UNRC/HC) and the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT),[2] who can assist in arriving at a collective outcome as well as defining accountability mechanisms to measure achievements.

Different ways to define collective outcomes have been tested including the OECD's resilience systems analysis framework (Box 1). In some contexts, the office of the UNRC/HC has assembled development and humanitarian donors and actors, multilateral development banks, civil society, and other actors to define a collective outcome. This happened in Haiti, for example, and led to the setting of the common objective to "eliminate new cholera outbreak and reduce transmission".

Box 1. The Resilience systems analysis

The OECD's resilience systems analysis (RSA) framework facilitates a common, risk-informed context analysis. It helps translate strategy into an effective programming that is multi-sectoral and integrated at different layers of society. The framework is based on a shared understanding of the assets and capacities that people and institutions need in order to maintain their well-being, as well as a shared understanding of the impacts of risks and stresses within a particular context. The key output is a resilience roadmap that helps to determine which humanitarian or development actor needs to do what and at which layer of society. It is based on agencies' respective comparative advantages.

The RSA convenes a range of actors including governments; bilateral development co-operation and humanitarian partners; the UN system; and other international, national and local agencies. The framework has been an important tool to help define collective outcomes for development, humanitarian, peace and statebuilding actors. It also can inform national frameworks and other common planning mechanisms such as UN Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs) and bilateral strategies. To date, the RSA has supported analyses in Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Kenya, Ethiopia, Senegal, Mauritania, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the Central African Republic.

For more on the OECD resilience systems analysis framework, see www.oecd.org/dac/conflict-fragility-resilience/risk-resilience.htm.

Once the objective is set in a particular context, a political and institutional analysis is needed to achieve the right balance between support to the state and institutions and support to people and civil society. This analysis — undertaken across institutions and with relevant embassies

and partners — should also look at the funding, channels and partners that are available and fit for purpose.

Shared analysis

No single donor can take comprehensive action at every layer of society to address the full spectrum of people's complex and changing needs. Co-operation and co-ordination are needed. Coherent programming using both humanitarian and development aid must also be based on shared, risk-informed context analysis. When humanitarian and development actors jointly analyse needs and risks, there is greater ownership among the partners and greater commitment to ensuring coherent programming. Shared analysis also increases the potential for channelling aid to the most vulnerable; allows more informed decisions on how risks should be reduced, transferred, shared or accepted; and helps identify the comparative advantage and complementarities between donor capacities and priorities (Mitchell, 2013). Shared analysis can take different forms. Donors intervening in a fragile or crisis context should work with the government and the UNRC/HC to provide input on needs, risks and priorities and the financing that can best support and address them.

Planning and programming

While it is usually possible to conduct a shared analysis of a situation in a given context, it is not always possible or desirable to take shared actions. In a conflict context where the government is part of the hostilities, for example, humanitarian principles should be carefully considered. Shared planning or programming aligned with government priorities is not a desirable option when these hinder humanitarian access to the civilian population affected by the conflict.

In cases where humanitarian principles are not jeopardised, coherence can be served through shared planning and sometimes shared programming. However, it is not always realistic to align different development plans with different humanitarian response plans even when there is an agreed collective outcome. A strategic alignment on a collective outcome can be translated into separate humanitarian, development and peace plans, as required and according to the context (UN Working Group on Transitions, 2017). Shared planning can also help donors identify development opportunities to help sub-national governments and civil society address longer term needs, and strengthen capacities alongside humanitarian action.

Coherence can also be improved when humanitarian aid is included in donor countries' strategy papers when they exist. Often it is only mentioned as a possible emergency response modality. In fragile contexts, however, both humanitarian and development instruments are deployed alongside one another for long periods of time. Development and humanitarian donor personnel should seize the opportunity of jointly designing or reviewing their country strategies, using shared analytical tools such as vulnerability assessments and, when relevant, clarifying the relationship between those instruments.

6. Select the instruments to reach a collective outcome

Once a collective outcome is agreed upon by stakeholders, donors should deploy the financial and technical assets that are best suited to reach the collective outcome.

Humanitarian aid is not a tool to address the root causes of crisis

Donors generally want to see an exit strategy for humanitarian programmes they support. These are not always possible to envision in complex and protracted crisis situations, where there is pressure to prolong humanitarian aid because it is more flexible and brings faster and more visible results than development programmes that often require the consent of a government. As a result, humanitarian aid often is inappropriately used to address structural needs even in contexts where the causes of vulnerability require a political or development response. A better solution would be to ensure that development programming in these contexts is adaptive and incorporates key mechanisms such as crisis modifiers so that the programme can address the root causes of crises while also being ready to respond to shocks when they arise.

Use early warning to prepare

Early warning tools are in place and functioning well in some sectors, notably regarding food security and drought. As soon as early warning tools signal an imminent crisis, or reach a predefined level of severity, donors should plan for a crisis response. For example, donors could top up their food security development programmes with emergency replenishment of the national food reserve (Box 2). Donors can also play a useful role when governments are not inclined to acknowledge crises or when they lack the capacity to design large-scale response plans. In such cases, donors should use their diplomatic voice to engage with the government and ensure that emergency preparedness and response are delivered in a timely and effective manner.

Box 2. The European Union in Niger in 2012

When food security early warning system signalled a looming food crisis in Niger in 2012, the European Union took effective early action. In September 2012, as part of its sectoral budget support, the European Union (EU) allocated EUR30 million to the government of Niger, on top of to the primary "regular" EUR10-million sectoral budget support for food security. These extra budgetary resources allowed the National Food Crisis Prevention Network (RPCA) facility to replenish food stock and purchase food for distribution. These allocations were in addition to the EU's on-going humanitarian effort, which was focused on food insecurity and malnutrition.

Source: OECD, 2012.

Engage development response early in the crisis

When a crisis occurs, coherence between humanitarian and development aid is possible only when development programmes do not stop and remain flexible enough to adapt to changing realities. (Box 3).

Box 3. Luxembourg health system in Mali in 2012

The Luxembourg development co-operation agency has operated in Mali since 1999, focusing its efforts primarily on rural development, vocational training, and decentralisation and governance. Following the military coup in March 2012 and the partial occupation in the North, Luxembourg continued to work at the decentralised level to address the most urgent needs of the population most affected by the crisis. With the adoption by the Malian National Assembly of the transition roadmap in February 2013, the Malian and Luxembourg governments agreed jointly to an interim development co-operation strategy for 2013-14. This strategy allowed Luxembourg to continue its ongoing development projects until mid-2015; to strengthen rule of law and peacebuilding measures; to adapt its interventions in Mali (and in particular, in the regions of Kidal and Timbuktu) to the crisis situation and

regional specificities; and to create the conditions for the identification of the multi-annual co-operation programme. In this context, Luxembourg continued its support to Mali's Agence Nationale d'investissement des Collectivités Territoriales, on the assumption that the territorial authorities are the main vector of development at the local level and are crucial to eventual North/South reconciliation. Throughout the crisis, Luxembourg remained one of the few bilateral donors in the North of the country to contribute to food security and provide humanitarian aid to displaced populations. The aid was mainly channelled through Luxembourgish NGOs, consultancies and specialised UN agencies.

Source: Luxembourg Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, 2013.

Adapt existing funding mechanisms before creating new ones

Complex crises involve a range of different issues. There may be a temptation to create specific funds for each of the issues, but this should be avoided. Too many funding sources result in artificial blending and reporting to donors. In addition, more funding instruments, notably for post-conflict contexts, do not automatically help actors in the field. For example, organisations intervening in complex crisis contexts may receive funds from refugees funding sources, humanitarian funding sources and migration funding sources — all to undertake the same activities for the same people in the same context. Agencies on the ground have to be agile and work across the whole spectrum of humanitarian, development and peace activities. Before creating new funding mechanisms, donors should first ensure their existing funding sources are flexible enough to adapt to rapidly changing contexts.

Flexible programming and financing

A flexible programme has a built-in flexibility mechanism to adapt to evolving situations and needs. These can include core or lightly earmarked funding to partners, where the operational partner has the leeway to modify the project when the situation changes.

Provisions such as crisis modifiers permit a programme toincrease or decrease ; they also may allow funding from different budget sources to be redirected for purposes different from those originally designated (Box 4). In fragile contexts, flexibility should also allow a programme's activities and delivery channels to be changed according to changing realities in the field.

Box 4. USAID : crisis modifiers and 10 per cent variance in the Horn of Africa

A long-recognised constraint to effective drought management in pastoralist areas of East Africa has been the delays in mobilising resources for early drought response. Drought is a slow-onset crisis, often involving successive rain failures, and evolving over many months or even years. Despite this, aid organisations still struggle to respond to drought until substantial asset losses have already occurred at community level. Within USAID, the crisis modifier is a funding mechanism designed to support a timely response to crises by USAID implementing partners who are already operational on the ground and running development projects. Crisis modifier in the Horn of Africa comprises an agreement with OFDA as an integral part of a typical development project's agreement between USAID and a partner, and allowing access to OFDA funding, with a pre-agreed ceiling.
In Eritrea, crisis modifiers, introduced in FY 1997 were seen as a mechanism to divert development funds towards humanitarian assistance in a context of a complex environment involving conflict with Ethiopia, large scale displacement and drought. The crisis modifier depended on two trigger points: a) the extent and severity of the drought, and b) the estimated impact upon Eritrea of a massive influx of refugees. The crisis modifier could equally be triggered by a significant increase in the number of internally displaced persons due to the war. Beside these conditions, a regional drought and influx of refugees from Sudan could also create a situation that would trigger the crisis modifier. During such a period, each of the Mission's strategic objectives would be temporarily modified and progress towards achieving expected developmental results would have to be curtailed.

Flexibility should also apply to the selection of partners in fragile contexts. Donors should ask their partners to adapt and then monitor their performance in adapting to evolving contexts and needs. Preparing for shocks should be an explicit part of any development programme so that it can align coherently with the humanitarian response when a crisis hits. Donors should encourage partners rather than seeking to prevent their partners from using this flexibility (Mosel and Levine, 2014).

Donors should have flexible governance arrangements so that they can change partners as the situation evolves. The European Union, for example can trigger Article 96 of the Cotonou Agreement (CA, 2000) to suspended direct financial support to a partner country's administration when the conditions for such partnerships deteriorate, while increasing its humanitarian aid and programme targeting the population directly.

Programmes based on a theory of change can be more flexible than rigid, logical frameworks that are not designed to factor in much flexibility (OECD, 2016).

Coherent targeting

A common understanding and mapping of vulnerabilities and risks helps achieve coherence between different types of aid. Humanitarian and development actors often work in different geographical areas and work with different categories of populations but that does not mean they are incoherent. The same target population can be reached by very different humanitarian and development programmes. For example, a humanitarian programme providing health services in rural Eastern DRC may be coherent with a security sector reform programme in the same area when in such cases, improvements in the security environment help increase access to health facilities.

Delivering humanitarian assistance through cash-based programmes can also increase coherence, if links can be created between the cash programmes and existing social safety nets, for example by ensuring that the targeting criteria of the cash based programme and the safety nets are aligned, thereby allowing the safety nets to take on humanitarian beneficiaries in times of drought or other crises .

Reasonable expectations

Donors should have reasonable expectations about the coherence of their aid. The complexity of crises and the multiple organisations involved in crisis response, each with its own programing cycle and legal constraints, represent formidable challenges to achieving coherence. However, aid coherence should be reviewed regularly for each context and country so that any incoherence is acknowledged and understood for possible improvement in an

iterative process. The designing process of country strategies and evaluations are good times to review aid coherence.

7. Leadership and incentives

Generally, different government teams or development agencies manage humanitarian aid, stability programmes and development aid separately. This not only isolates teams, budget and programmes in silos, but it also creates sometimes self-defeating competition for budget funding and other resources. There may be few incentives for these different teams and agencies to work coherently in a way that puts people's problems at the centre of programming. Each team reports to a different management line and focuses on its own work, with interaction often limited to little more than an exchange of information.

An agreement on a collective outcome for a given context should be accompanied by the necessary incentives, including high-level political support for all relevant parts of donors to work coherently. These should aim to overcome the organisational barriers that prevent a donor country from mobilising all its development instruments in alignment towards a collective outcome. For example, if a donor country aligns itself to the collective outcome of eliminating cholera in a cholera-prone area, both humanitarian and development aid should be deployed to tackle the emergency needs of people affected by cholera and also to work with the government in supporting stable access to clean water, decent sanitation and health infrastructure.

Decentralise

The potential for coherence is increased when donors have a field presence, whether through their embassy or/and development agency and sufficient delegated authority. The local knowledge of field staff can be essential for the overall risk and context analysis, and can help to strengthen coherence. Delegated authority is also critical so that staff can adapt development programmes according to evolving needs. For example, a sudden disease outbreak can put in jeopardy development programmes' outcomes. But field staff with sufficient delegated authority can take immediate action to co-ordinate responses at country level and adapt programmes with other development partners and/or the government.

Donors who do not have a field presence should take advantage of alternative delivery channels that foster coherence, such as country-based pooled funds. Donors supporting such funds in protracted crises should remain engaged with the funds and pay attention to their objectives and results and coherence with development programming.

Set responsibilities

Traditionally, coherence is seen as a humanitarian issue. However, it is development actors working in fragile contexts with their greater capacity, field presence and budget volume who will need to be the main drivers behind the coherence agenda.

Overcome barriers, create incentives

Humanitarian, stability and development aid instruments are generally managed by different teams or agencies, and tap into different budgets. Incentives for these separate teams to work together and share information are often weak, especially when the three aid streams are handled by entirely separate agencies. Competition over resources can arise, especially when different donor funds are created for fragile contexts. As a result, teams may simply focus on their own work while mostly ignoring other teams' work or programmes.

Donors should create incentives for teams to work together towards collective outcomes. Donors' humanitarian and development teams can learn from each other and every occasion for synergies should be seized. These can take the form of shared country or thematic analysis, shared risk mapping, or exchange of information on partners, for example. Each field visit in a fragile context should be done jointly when possible. (Box 5)

Box 5. Spain's innovative approach in supporting recovery

Spain's development agency has, in the past, encouraged the use of development funding early in the response cycle. Under the agency's management contract, all development desk officers were responsible for supporting recovery and liking to the humanitarian programme – moving away from the traditional donor model where the onus is usually on humanitarians to build the bridges. The humanitarian office has also promoted 50% co-financing of recovery-focused projects to stimulate the entry of Spanish development funding earlier in the recovery and state-building process.

Source: OECD, 2011a.

Support field leadership

Many different donors can be engaged in the same crisis, but their individual coherence in strategy and programming does not guarantee a coherent overall response in country. Coherence in the field is as important as each donor's internal mechanisms.

Support UN Resident Coordinator (UNRC) and Humanitarian Coordinator (UNHC) leadership in the field. In contexts where most humanitarian aid is channeled through multilateral organisations and pooled funds, coherence between humanitarian and development programmes depends more on the UN team in the country than on donors' specific policies. Therefore, donors can help ensuring coherence when they support an UN-led humanitarian response. However, the current aid architecture gives a co-ordination role but little authority to the UNRC/HC. This does not facilitate coherence among agencies that have both a humanitarian and a development mandate, might have distinct agendas and compete for funding. The New Way of Working initiative calls for stronger leadership from the UNRC over the overall UN response in each country. Donors should clearly support the UNRC/HC leadership but also hold them accountable for aid results and preservation of humanitarian principles.

8. Risk management

Coherence between humanitarian and development aid may present some risks, depending on the context. The table below lists some of the potential risks and examples of mitigation measures.

Risk	Examples of mitigation measures
Dilution of humanitarian principles	• A collective outcome does not threaten humanitarian principles when it focuses on people's needs and not on political objectives. For example, keeping malnutrition under a specified rate is a collective outcome that allows coherence between principled humanitarian action and development action. • Humanitarian concerns over shared planning should be taken into account. Raising awareness in the humanitarian community of development principles, such as do no harm, may be useful in terms of allaying fears.
Data privacy	• When a collective outcome implies sharing data collected by humanitarian actors with development programmes, notably programmes such as social protection that are led by the government, particular attention must be given to data privacy. In certain contexts, there are acceptable reasons for humanitarian actors to not share data, for example data collected on sexual exploitation and abuse, or data that – if released – might pose a threat to the personal safety of individuals or communities.
Development programmes are not operating in the crisis environment	• Development programming with built-in shock absorbers or crisis modifiers allow them to adapt and continue delivering, even if a crisis hits. For example, a food security programme can have built-in provisions to adapt to early warnings of drought or other food crises. • Projects that are governed by a theory of change, rather than by particular activities or set results, have greater flexibility to adapt in fast moving crisis environments • A shared risk analysis helps donors define what levels of risk they can accept for both their humanitarian and development programmes.

Donor co-ordination

Shared analysis occurs at field level and is often undertaken by the UN system; by donors such as the European Union joint programming exercise; or by an external entity such as the OECD (Box 1). Donors with a field presence have a responsibility to promote overall coherence through participating and promoting shared analysis.

9. Impact and monitoring

The monitoring of a development or humanitarian programme in fragile contexts should include a review of how the programme is adapting to changing realities and needs, and not only focus on its initial activities.

Aid coherence cuts across humanitarian, transition and development funding. As a result, it can be better assessed through country-level evaluations including country strategy and programming. As outlined by Mosel and Levine (2014), the following questions about programmes can help frame such assessments:

- How well has the programme met the changing needs of the most vulnerable?

- How appropriate was its design for insecure environments with a constantly changing context?

- How has long-term work helped in crises, for example, by reducing a particular problem or risk or by supporting people so that they can cope better?

- How well has the programme encouraged links on the ground between people and institutions or organisations that support them in the longer term?

- Where only short-term aid was given, could support have been more effective if given in a longer-term way?

- How adequate were the strategy processes, the level of context and political analysis, how appropriate were the models employed, and what are their current impact and likely future impact?

Notes

1 For more on the humanitarian principles, see https://docs.unocha.org/sites/dms/Documents/OOM-hmanitarianprinciples_eng_June12.pdf.

2 The Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) is a strategic and operational decision-making and oversight forum established and led by the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) who can also be the UN Resident Coordinator. The HCT includes representatives from the UN, International Organization for Migration, international nongovernmental organisations (INGOs), and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. The HCT is responsible for agreeing on common strategic issues related to humanitarian action. https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/about-clusters/who-does-what

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