

DFID's Humanitarian Emergency Response in the Horn of Africa



Independent
Commission
for Aid Impact

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Green: The programme performs well overall against ICAI's criteria for effectiveness and value for money. Some improvements are needed.



Green-Amber: The programme performs relatively well overall against ICAI's criteria for effectiveness and value for money. Improvements should be made.



Amber-Red: The programme performs relatively poorly overall against ICAI's criteria for effectiveness and value for money. Significant improvements should be made.



Red: The programme performs poorly overall against ICAI's criteria for effectiveness and value for money. Immediate and major changes need to be made.

Executive Summary

Millions of people in the Horn of Africa suffer chronic food insecurity and vulnerability. They live on the edge of crisis. When rains fail, they face hunger, malnutrition and loss of livestock; without help, they face death. This is exacerbated by conflict, corruption and lack of political will to acknowledge and address the extent of the crisis.

When the rains failed in late 2010 and again in early 2011, the chronic situation became a crisis. Over 12 million people were affected. Tens of thousands died. Despite early warnings from August 2010, the main humanitarian response did not take place until July 2011. This report assesses the value for money and effectiveness of DFID's emergency response in the Horn of Africa. DFID spent over £200 million on this response, making it the third-largest donor after the US and EU.

Overall *Assessment: Green-Amber* 

DFID played a leading role in the humanitarian response, applying pressure to host governments and other donors to act and working alongside them in a co-ordinated response. DFID's programmes benefited vulnerable people in the worst-affected areas. We made field visits to Kenya and Ethiopia, where we observed good impact and value for money.

DFID and the humanitarian system as a whole, however, lacked flexibility to respond to the emerging crisis in the region and more could have been done to anticipate what had become a chronic situation. Earlier action could have alleviated some of the suffering and loss of livelihoods.

There are significant challenges to building resilience and sustainability in this vulnerable region which need to be addressed to work towards longer-term solutions.

Objectives *Assessment: Green-Amber* 

DFID's humanitarian objectives were clear, relevant and realistic. DFID focussed on the needs of beneficiaries and showed a good understanding of national and regional contexts.

DFID aimed to balance the need for a speedy response with managing risks and exerting political influence to encourage national government ownership and burden-sharing among donors. While DFID was aware of the unfolding situation, it could have been better prepared in terms of resource and had more flexible mechanisms built into programmes.

Delivery *Assessment: Green-Amber* 

DFID's multilateral focus, funding via UN agencies and multi-donor funds, is appropriate to ensure a co-ordinated

response. There was, however, variable performance from selected agencies and delivery via consortia of civil society organisations was not always effective due to their lack of preparedness to work together.

The use of DFID's limited human resource could have been more efficient and processes for additional approvals were onerous. Overall, however, DFID delivered relatively well against its objectives.

Impact *Assessment: Green-Amber* 

DFID-supported programmes have benefited some of the most vulnerable people in the worst-affected areas. DFID applied good practices to be accountable to intended beneficiaries. Inflexibility in DFID and the humanitarian system, however, meant that action was delayed. Earlier action, especially in Somalia, could have alleviated suffering and, while death rates in Kenya and Ethiopia were not high, both livestock and livelihoods were lost.

Long-term resilience and sustainability require stronger political engagement and development strategy. Similarly, greater consideration of how to meet the specific needs of women and girls during a crisis is needed. DFID has engaged in these areas already and should build on this in the future.

Learning *Assessment: Green* 

DFID is widely respected for its experience and expertise. DFID has a strong focus on learning and improvement and is working to incorporate learning in a practical way. More robust and shared models for chronic situation management should be developed and disseminated.

Key recommendations

Recommendation 1: DFID should work towards a cohesive early-warning system, with triggers for action pre-agreed with other key organisations and governments. It should engage with key organisations on this issue within six months.

Recommendation 2: DFID should build on existing good practice to develop, within six months, a new model for flexibly addressing recurring crises in the Horn of Africa.

Recommendation 3: DFID should build on its existing engagement with host governments and key agencies to develop lasting solutions. It should target key areas such as infrastructure development that are needed to address chronic poverty. It should use its expertise and experience to tackle challenging areas such as the sustainability of pastoralism and refugee camps. This should be incorporated into DFID's plans for 2013-14.

1 Introduction

Introduction to the Horn of Africa

1.1 The Horn of Africa is a group of countries situated in East Africa. For the purposes of this report, we use 'Horn of Africa' to refer to Kenya, Somalia and Ethiopia, the three most severely affected countries in the 2011 food crisis.¹ The region contains large expanses of arid and semi-arid land and is prone to drought. The 90-100 million people living in these areas rely heavily on subsistence farming.² Approximately 15-20 million of these are pastoralists (nomadic herders), many of whom regularly cross borders in search of pastureland.³ These communities rely on regional rainfall patterns: the 'short rains' between October and December and 'long rains' between March and June each year. Periodically, these rains fail.

1.2 While the region faces common environmental challenges, the political contexts vary by country:

- **Kenya** is the largest economy in East Africa, where 'development is stubbornly constrained by high levels of corruption and impunity by political, government and business leaders'.⁴ Political tension and uncertainty remain following contested elections in December 2007 and post-election violence. The government allows aid agencies access but has not provided strong leadership for such agencies;
- **Somalia** is a failed state, without effective government since 1991. Southern Somalia suffers ongoing conflict and violence. Al Shabaab, a proscribed terrorist group, controls much of this region. Several major donors, including the United States of America (US) and some European Union (EU) member states, have drastically reduced funding due to their anti-terrorism legislation. Security concerns make access extremely challenging for aid agencies. In addition, Al Shabaab banned the

World Food Programme (WFP) and many international civil society organisations (CSOs) in 2010 and 2011; and

- **Ethiopia** is the second most populous country in Africa, with 80 million people. It has experienced strong economic growth in recent years. The government took power from the one-party communist state in 1991. Progress has been made towards democracy, although the Department for International Development (DFID) comments that 'there is still a long way to go'.⁵ DFID considers Ethiopia to have 'a capable government that is demonstrably committed to addressing poverty, with an impressive record of pro-poor spending, sound financial management and relatively little corruption'.⁶ The government maintains tight controls over development and humanitarian activities. CSO activities are restricted and have limited influence.

1.3 Refugees fleeing Somalia add a further dimension to the political context. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates there to be approximately one million Somali refugees in neighbouring countries, a third of whom left Somalia in 2011. Over 453,000 live in Dadaab, Kenya, the largest refugee camp in the world, which is over 20 years old, with another 167,000 living in Dollo Ado camp in Ethiopia. Within Somalia, a further 1.36 million people are estimated to be internally displaced.⁷

Chronic food insecurity and entrenched poverty

1.4 People in the Horn of Africa suffer chronic food insecurity. Periodic droughts afflict the region. When combined with a series of other factors (such as conflict, poor infrastructure, population increases, overgrazing of pastureland, competing political and ethnic agendas, desertification, global food price increases and competition with commercial interests for land) the effects are devastating. Communities lose crops and livestock,

¹ The Horn of Africa is the geographical region which often also includes Eritrea and Djibouti. The scope of this report focusses on Kenya, Somalia and Ethiopia – the three most severely affected countries in the 2011 drought.

² World Bank, 2009, <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL> and Kenya Census, Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2010, <http://www.knbs.or.ke/Census%20Results/KNBS%20Brochure.pdf>.

³ *Pastoralism and Conflict in the Horn of Africa*, Africa Peace Forum/Saferworld/University of Bradford, date unknown, <http://www.saferworld.org.uk/downloads/pubdocs/WebLaikipia.pdf>.

⁴ *Operational Plan 2011-2015*, DFID Kenya, updated June 2012, <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Documents/publications/1/op/kenya-2011.pdf>.

⁵ *Operational Plan 2011-2015*, DFID Ethiopia, updated June 2012, <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Documents/publications/1/op/ethiopia-2011.pdf>.

⁶ *Operational Plan 2011-2015*, DFID Ethiopia, updated June 2012, <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Documents/publications/1/op/ethiopia-2011.pdf>.

⁷ *Ethiopia Opens New Camp for Somali Refugees*, UNHCR, December 2011, <http://www.unhcr.org/4ed8d89a6.html>.

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entrenching poverty and making them even more vulnerable, as illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Knock-on impacts of drought

'Following the below-normal 2011 spring rains in the Horn, the food security of pastoralists and populations in marginal farming areas deteriorated sharply. In addition, shortages of grazing resources for livestock resulted in abnormal migrations, whereby pastoralists travelled long distances and grouped animals in areas with limited remaining pasture and water. This caused livestock health and market prices to fall markedly, with milk production declining significantly for most affected households.'⁸

1.5 As a result, millions of people live on the edge of crisis. When rains fail they face hunger, malnutrition and further loss of livestock; without help, they face death.

1.6 DFID has existing programmes aiming to address these challenges. DFID had allocated £427 million to the Horn of Africa for the 2011-12 financial year before the 2011 drought occurred.⁹ Of this amount:

- £49 million was allocated specifically to address long-term challenges of 'poverty, hunger and vulnerability'; and
- £48 million was allocated to meet more immediate humanitarian needs.

1.7 Following the drought, the humanitarian budget was increased and over £159 million was spent during the 2011-12 financial year.

2011 humanitarian emergency

1.8 A global weather pattern, known as La Niña, occurred during the summer of 2010. This led to the failure of consecutive rains in the Horn of Africa in late 2010 and early 2011 and the most severe drought since 1995 in some areas. The main areas affected were south-central Somalia and poor, rural areas of Kenya and Ethiopia, where people

are already vulnerable and have been historically poorly politically represented. These combined factors resulted in a food crisis in the region. Despite the early warnings, the humanitarian community did not significantly scale up until July 2011, as is discussed later in this Introduction. An inter-agency evaluation of the Somali response found that:

- 'Famine was not inevitable, nor was the scale of human suffering caused by the drought crisis. Earlier action could have prevented or at least substantially mitigated the worst aspects of the crisis. This did not happen on the scale required and the humanitarian system (including the donors) shares some responsibility for this'; and
- 'Between August 2010 and June 2011, there was a systemic failure of contingency planning and early action in response to the emergent crisis in Somalia in late 2010 and early 2011. This was a failure both of preventive action and of early relief, the combination of which could have mitigated some of the worst aspects of the crisis.'¹⁰

1.9 See Figure A1 in the Annex for a timeline of the 2011 drought.

1.10 The 2011 drought caused great suffering in terms of acute food insecurity and loss of livelihoods. It was Africa's worst food security crisis since Somalia's 1991-92 famine.¹¹ 12.4 million people were affected.¹² News reports suggested that a large proportion of livestock died in some regions. Tens of thousands of people are estimated to have died, mainly Somali women and children, either in Somalia itself or as refugees.¹³

⁸ *Drought in the Horn of Africa: Challenges, Opportunities and Responses, Notes by the Secretariat*, UNEP, August 2011, http://www.unep.org/roa/amcen/Amcen_Events/4th_ss/Docs/AMCEN-SS-IV-EG-4.pdf.

⁹ Of the £427 million included in DFID's Operational Plans for the region in 2011-12, £290 million was budgeted for Ethiopia, £44 million for Somalia and £93 million for Kenya.

¹⁰ *IASC Real-Time Evaluation of Response to the Horn of Africa Crisis – Somalia, Draft Report*, Valid International, 2012, <http://ochanet.unocha.org/p/Documents/IASC-RTE%20Somalia%202012.pdf>.

¹¹ *Somalia Dekadal Food Security and Nutrition Monitoring*, FSNAU and FEWS NET, 25 July 2011, <http://www.fsnau.org/downloads/Somalia-Dekadal-Food-Security-Nutrition-Monitoring-July-25-2011.pdf>.

¹² *Humanitarian Requirements Document for the Horn of Africa Drought 2011*, OCHA, 28 July 2011, http://docs.unocha.org/sites/dms/CAP/HRD_2011_Horn_of_Africa_SCREEN.pdf.

¹³ Due to restricted access, particularly in Somalia, actual impacts are hard to quantify. Some estimates of mortality in Somalia put the figure at up to 100,000. Estimates include: <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2011/08/04/501364/main20088015.shtml>; and <http://www.middleeasthealthmag.com/cgi-bin/index.cgi?http://www.middleeasthealthmag.com/sep2011/feature5.htm>.

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1.11 Figure 2a shows how food insecurity is classified. Figure 2b shows the extent of food insecurity in the region and populations affected.

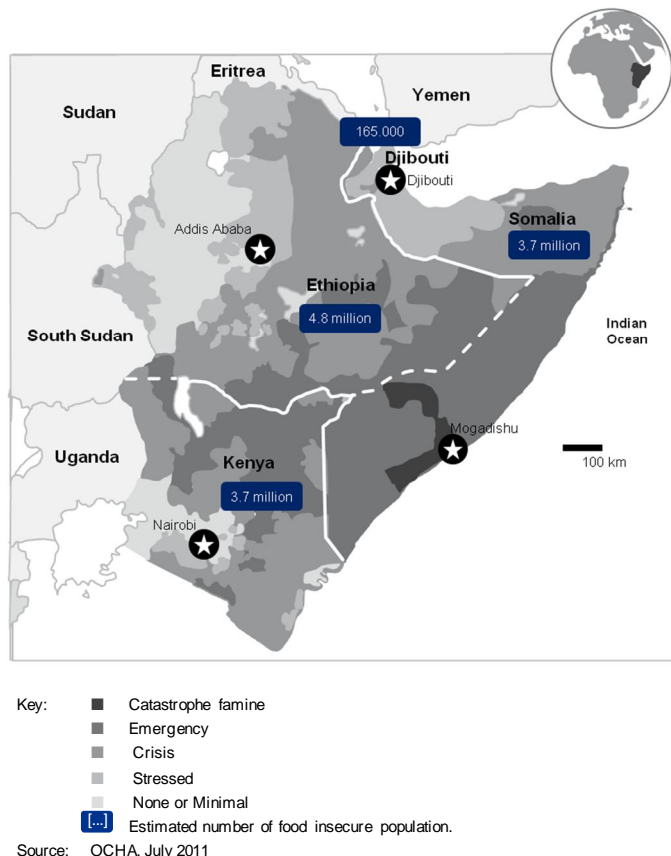
Figure 2a: Food insecurity classifications

Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) ¹⁴			
IPC classifications combine a range of indicators to give an overall view of food insecurity. The levels of food insecurity and some of the indicators are given below.			
IPC level	Crude Mortality Rate ¹⁵	Acute Malnutrition Rate	Livelihood Assets (e.g. livestock or farmland)
Stressed	<0.5	3%-10%	Unsustainable utilisation
Crisis	0.5-1	10%-15%	Accelerated and critical depletion or loss of access
Emergency	1-2	15%-30%	Near complete and irreversible depletion or loss of access
Catastrophe/famine	>2	>30%	Effectively complete loss; collapse

1.12 Empirical data suggest that delays in early action result in additional costs. It is much cheaper to prevent than to treat malnutrition, for example. A study by Oxfam found that protecting core livestock herds is up to 14 times cheaper than rebuilding them once they have been decimated by drought.¹⁶

1.13 Below, we describe the situation in each country.

Figure 2b: Food insecurity in July 2011 in the Horn of Africa



Somalia

1.14 Famine was officially declared by the United Nations (UN) on 20 July 2011 in the lower Shabelle and Bakool regions of southern Somalia.¹⁷ Significant numbers of people fled the drought and conflict in Somalia. UNHCR estimates that ‘as a consequence of the deadly combination of [the 2011] drought, insecurity and widespread human rights abuses, 300,000 Somalis – mostly women and children – had fled to neighbouring countries’ by the end of August 2011.¹⁸ These flows played a central role in escalating the crisis in the region.

1.15 Meanwhile, in Somalia, nearly 4 million people were in crisis. Among these, 3.2 million people needed immediate, life-saving assistance (2.8

¹⁴ *Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, Technical Manual Version 1.1*, IPC Global Partners, 2008, <http://www.fao.org/docrep/010/i0275e/i0275e.pdf>.

¹⁵ Crude Mortality Rate is defined as the number of deaths per day per 10,000 people.

¹⁶ *Briefing on the Horn of Africa Drought 2011: Disaster Risk Reduction – Fundamental to Saving Lives and Reducing Poverty*, Oxfam, August 2011; *Impact of a Commercial Destocking Relief Intervention in Moyale District, Southern Ethiopia*, Dawit Abebe, Adrian Cullis, Andy Catley, Yacob Aklilu, Gedlu Mekonnen and Yodit Ghebrechirstos, Overseas Development Institute, 2008.

¹⁷ *UN Declares Famine in Two Regions of Southern Somalia*, UN News Service, 20 July 2011, <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=39086>.

¹⁸ *2012 Regional Operations Profile – East and Horn of Africa*, UNHCR, June 2012, <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49e45a846.html>.

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million in the south).¹⁹ In early July 2011, 390,000 children under five were acutely malnourished and 170,000 severely malnourished. Figure 3 gives more information on how malnutrition rates are used as indicators.

- 1.16 Reasons for the severity of the effect of drought in Somalia were multi-faceted, as outlined above. In addition, donor funding in Somalia declined by half between 2008 and 2011, mainly due to the drop in US contributions. DFID maintained and increased much-needed humanitarian support in the region.

Figure 3: GAM and SAM

Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) and Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) rates are key indicators in a humanitarian crisis. GAM is defined as when a child is below 80% of the average weight-to-height ratio for a healthy population. SAM is defined as when a child is below 70% of the average ratio. Once the SAM threshold is reached, victims need to be admitted to a feeding centre and given specialist foods by medical personnel as they are in such a poor state of health as to be unable to care for or feed themselves. SAM remains a major killer of children under five years of age. See the Annex for further information about malnutrition rates.

Kenya

- 1.17 In Kenya, according to the May 2011 Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET) food security outlook, the food security of 2.4 million people was at stressed or crisis levels. They required immediate assistance as a result of drought and high food prices.²⁰
- 1.18 High levels of acute malnutrition were widespread in northern and eastern Kenya, with the Turkana East and Mandera West regions recording 37.4% and 32.6% GAM respectively.²¹
- 1.19 In the first five months of 2011, 53,641 new Somali refugees and asylum seekers had been registered

in Kenya. This compared to 27,651 during the same period in 2010. Most of the refugees arrived in poor health. The GAM rate among arrivals was 15% and diseases such as cholera presented a significant threat.²²

Ethiopia

- 1.20 In Ethiopia, although the number of people affected was large (4.8 million), this is not dramatically different from the average number of people affected by recurring drought in the country. Many of those already reliant on relief food aid, however, became fully dependent on it, increasing the scale of distributions required. The state-managed safety net programme, which has been in operation for several years, provided help to some existing beneficiaries suffering from the 2011 drought at an early stage.
- 1.21 While the immediate needs of Ethiopia's resident populations were broadly being addressed by mid April 2011, Ethiopia became host to 20,000 additional Somali refugees in the camps of Gode and Afder zones and an influx of 100,000 people to the newly-formed camps in Dollo Ado. In addition to the high numbers of people arriving in Dollo Ado, GAM was between 33.4% and 47% amongst the new arrivals.²³ This influx overwhelmed the capacity of UNHCR, the Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs and their partners. Experienced humanitarian workers told us that they were shocked by the constant streams of refugees that they witnessed.

Humanitarian response

- 1.22 Emergency response is about saving and protecting lives and livelihoods during a crisis. While mortality statistics are difficult to attribute to the effects of the drought, it seems that large increases in mortality were prevented among Kenyan and Ethiopian populations. In the refugee camps and Somalia itself, tens of thousands of

¹⁹ *Humanitarian Dashboard Somalia*, OCHA, 5 November 2011.

²⁰ Subsequently, the number was revised to 3.7 million.

²¹ *Eastern Africa: Malnutrition, Commodity Prices and Funding*, OCHA, as of 9 August 2011, <http://www.google.co.uk/url?q=http://ochaonline.un.org/OchaLinkClick.aspx%3FLinkId%3D1248561&sa=U&ei=g2noT9WkEIXf0QGhM3BCQ&ved=0OCBIQFjAA&usq=AFQjCNEaS12QeyW5WP91LuGO3D1jXwaXq>.

²² *Kenya Emergency Humanitarian Response Plan 2011 – Mid-Year Review*, United Nations, July 2011, [http://ochadms.unog.ch/quickplace/cap/main.nsf/h_Index/MYR_2011_Kenya_EH_RP/\\$FILE/MYR_2011_Kenya_EHRP_SCREEN.pdf?openElement](http://ochadms.unog.ch/quickplace/cap/main.nsf/h_Index/MYR_2011_Kenya_EH_RP/$FILE/MYR_2011_Kenya_EHRP_SCREEN.pdf?openElement).

²³ *Eastern Africa: Malnutrition, Commodity Prices and Funding*, OCHA, as at 9 August 2011.

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people died during the drought.²⁴ UN surveys from early 2012 showed a fragile improvement in the humanitarian situation in Somalia. The number of people affected by the famine fell significantly from a high of 750,000. Although famine conditions had ended by February 2012, there was a risk of further deterioration with humanitarian access shrinking.²⁵

1.23 The UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) is 'responsible for bringing together humanitarian actors to ensure a coherent response to emergencies'.²⁶ OCHA put the overall funding needs for 2011 at £1.8 billion. DFID provided over £159 million in 2011-12 (£200 million since October 2010).²⁷ Additional DFID funding was used in the Horn by partners drawing on DFID's global support to the UN, International Community for the Red Cross and Red Crescent (ICRC), European Community Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO) and selected CSOs. More details of OCHA and DFID's budgets are included in the Annex.

1.24 In addition to the £200 million spent by DFID at country level for humanitarian interventions in the Horn of Africa, the British public also donated privately to charity appeals. The Disasters Emergency Committee appeal raised £79 million to fund directly the work of its 14 members.²⁸ As this money is not Official Development Assistance and DFID is not responsible for how it is spent, it is not included in this review.

1.25 DFID funds a variety of programmes which may be scaled up, or new grant funding may be added, during a crisis. We categorise these programmes into three types, as set out below and in Figure 4:

- **Safety net programmes** focus on providing cash or food to vulnerable families on an ongoing basis. In Ethiopia, the safety net

programme includes a 20% contingency and a risk financing mechanism, which can either extend the duration or expand the coverage of transfers (food or cash). Safety net programmes are managed through various combinations of government agencies, the private sector and CSOs in Kenya and Ethiopia;

- **Pooled funds** are managed by OCHA in each country. These pre-existing funds can be accessed before or during an emergency with national government approval; and
- **DFID grants** are other, additional interventions funded by DFID to respond to an emergency. Pooled funds and DFID grants can be used to fund a range of interventions, including supplementary feeding for nutrition programmes, general food distribution, water trucking and renovation of existing water sources, hygiene education, supply of life-saving medicines and immunisation provisions, animal health care and livelihoods-related interventions.

Figure 4: Key types of programme funded by DFID

DFID-funded programmes by country can be broadly categorised as three different types			
Funding types	Kenya	Somalia	Ethiopia
Safety net programmes (ongoing support)	Hunger Safety Net Programme (HSNP)	None	Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP)
Pooled funds (pre-existing funds)	Emergency Response Fund (ERF)	Common Humanitarian Fund (CHF)	Humanitarian Response Fund (HRF)
DFID grants (responsive interventions)	Includes funding via UN agencies or direct funding of individual CSOs or consortia. This may be new programmes or scaling up of existing programmes.		

²⁴ *Horn of Africa – UK Response to the Crisis, Factsheet*, DFID, 28 January 2012, <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Documents/Horn-of-Africa-UK-aid-factsheet-28-Jan-2012.pdf>.

²⁵ *Horn of Africa – UK Response to the Crisis, Factsheet*, DFID, 28 January 2012, <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Documents/Horn-of-Africa-UK-aid-factsheet-28-Jan-2012.pdf>.

²⁶ *Who We Are*, OCHA, <http://www.unocha.org/about-us/who-we-are>.

²⁷ DFID expenditure for its financial year to the end of March 2012.

²⁸ *East Africa Crisis Appeal*, DEC, <http://www.dec.org.uk/appeals/east-africa-crisis-appeal>.

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Humanitarian Emergency Response Review

1.26 The Humanitarian Emergency Response Review (HERR), chaired by Lord Ashdown and published in 2011, examined the effectiveness of the UK Government's global humanitarian interventions.²⁹ The HERR's recommendations set out the need to:

- develop a more **anticipatory** approach to prepare for disasters and conflict;
- create **resilience** through both longer-term development and emergency response;
- improve the strategic, political and operational **leadership** of the international humanitarian system;
- **innovate** to become more efficient and effective;
- increase **transparency** and accountability towards both donor and host country populations;
- create new **partnerships** and build and strengthen existing ones; and
- defend and strengthen the **humanitarian space**.³⁰

1.27 DFID issued a response to the recommendations in the HERR in June 2011 and an updated global humanitarian policy in September 2011.³¹

Methodology

1.28 The five members of our evaluation team comprised both Kenyan and UK nationals. The initial phase of our work included a review of previous research and evaluations, including the HERR. Specific comments on DFID's performance relating to the HERR recommendations are included in the Annex.

1.29 We also spoke with key people in DFID headquarters, UN agencies, CSOs and others with experience of humanitarian emergency response.

1.30 Field work was carried out in April 2012 in Kenya and Ethiopia. For security reasons, the team was unable to visit affected areas of Somalia and refugee camps near the Somali border. We covered this aspect of the humanitarian response, therefore, in Nairobi, the base for most humanitarian organisations operating in Somalia.

1.31 In the first week, we visited the DFID Kenya and Somalia offices and key stakeholders based in Nairobi, including government officials, UN agencies, donors and CSOs. During the second week, two team members visited communities in the Marsabit region of northern Kenya, accompanied by one of the ICAI Commissioners. Three team members visited parts of Ethiopia, including Addis Ababa and communities near Dire Dawa and Haraghe in eastern Ethiopia.

1.32 During our field work, we met with communities of intended beneficiaries, people from DFID country offices, other donors, CSOs, UN agencies and local and national government.

1.33 Our evaluation particularly focussed on:

- linkages between early warning and early action and between humanitarian assistance and long-term development objectives;
- how DFID identified intended beneficiaries and the extent to which it met their needs;
- the choice and effectiveness of DFID's delivery mechanisms;
- how DFID influenced other key organisations; and
- how DFID learns in order to improve future responses.

²⁹ *Humanitarian Emergency Response Review*, March 2011, <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Documents/publications1/HERR.pdf>.

³⁰ Humanitarian space refers to the access and protection of humanitarian workers when providing humanitarian assistance. This requires assistance to be given on the basis of need and need alone in return for access and protection in conflict-affected areas.

³¹ *Humanitarian Emergency Response Review: UK Government Response*, DFID, June 2011, <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Documents/publications1/hum-emer-resp-rev-uk-qvmt-resp.pdf>;

Saving Lives, Preventing Suffering and Building Resilience: The UK Government's Humanitarian Policy, DFID, September 2011, <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Documents/publications1/1/The%20UK%20Government's%20Humanitarian%20Policy%20-%20September%202011%20-%20Final.pdf>.

2 Findings

Objectives

Assessment: Green-Amber 

2.1 In this section, we assess DFID's initial response to early warning signals. We also consider whether DFID's humanitarian objectives in the Horn of Africa drought response are clear, relevant, realistic and focussed on the desired impact. In particular, we consider DFID's:

- focus on the needs of intended beneficiaries and consideration of context; and
- long-term development objectives relating to sustainability and resilience.

Initial response to early warning signals

Early warning signals

2.2 The humanitarian system in the Horn of Africa has access to a large amount of data about weather, malnutrition, crop failure and other important indicators. There were indications of a potential humanitarian crisis as early as August 2010, when weather patterns suggested consecutive rains could fail. After the failure of the 2010 short rains, some agencies called for early action. At this stage, it was not clear whether the 2011 long rains would fail; by March 2011, this was looking likely. Yet it was not until July 2011, after the long rains had failed, that the global humanitarian response was set in motion at scale. Although DFID did start to scale up in Somalia in November 2010, the £21.8 million of additional money it had spent by March 2011 was insufficient to meet the needs.

2.3 Several reports have indicated that the early warning system gave clear messages before the 2011 long rains failed and that donors did not respond until spurred into action by mass media coverage in July.³² We found that the situation on the ground was more complex. Although it is clear that there is a lot of data available, we heard varying views about the quality and coherence of early warning indicators.

³² *A Dangerous Delay: The Cost of Late Response to Early Warnings in the 2011 Drought in the Horn of Africa*, Oxfam and Save the Children, 18 January 2012, <http://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/a-dangerous-delay-the-cost-of-late-response-to-early-warnings-in-the-2011-droug-203389>;

IASC Real-Time Evaluation of Regional Response to the Horn of Africa Drought 2011, OCHA, June 2012, <http://www.unocha.org/what-we-do/policy/thematic-areas/evaluations-of-humanitarian-response/reports>.

Early DFID response

2.4 DFID was well aware of the crisis in the Horn of Africa as it unfolded. Staff in DFID country offices worked closely with other agencies and CSOs implementing programmes on the ground, providing technical support and identifying areas of need.

2.5 During the early part of 2011, some existing DFID programmes helped to meet immediate nutrition, food aid and water needs:

- safety net programmes continued to support families that were more vulnerable to food shortages. Where these had pre-agreed mechanisms to scale up during a crisis, these were used, although not always quickly or as laid out in programme guidelines. In Ethiopia, for example, the PSNP contingency of 20% and risk financing mechanism were accessed to support existing and additional households facing transitory food insecurity.³³ The government's delay in triggering the risk financing reduced the effectiveness of this instrument;
- DFID and other donors in Ethiopia pushed for a scaled-up response using pooled funds in the first half of 2011 and the HRF, in particular, funded some crucial early interventions,³⁴ and
- DFID provided additional grants for the most pressing needs. It allocated a further £21.8 million for Somalia for a range of activities including emergency relief and drought mitigation to protect livelihoods. In Ethiopia, DFID and the US Agency for International Development (USAID) responded quickly to requests from agencies such as the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). These requests were based on reports of an increase in acute malnutrition admissions, rather than waiting for the results of a formal joint assessment to be released by the government.

³³ *IASC Real-Time Evaluation of Response to the Horn of Africa Crisis – Ethiopia, Draft Report*, Valid International, February 2012, <http://ochanet.unocha.org/p/Documents/IASC%20RTE%20Ethiopia%202012.pdf>.

³⁴ *Disasters Emergency Committee – East Africa Crisis Appeal: Ethiopia Real-Time Evaluation Report*, Valid International, January 2012, http://www.dec.org.uk/sites/default/files/files/Evaluations/East%20Africa/DEC%20RTE_ETHIOPIA%20Final_Feb12.pdf.

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2.6 Flexible and responsive mechanisms to scale up were, however, limited. While the US scaled up in Ethiopia in March 2011,³⁵ DFID's major scale-up took place in early July (mainly via a £38 million WFP contribution). Many other donors came on board even later.

Trade-off between short- and longer-term issues

2.7 DFID considered the challenging trade-off between moving fast (to save lives and alleviate suffering in the crisis) and pushing for national ownership and burden-sharing among donors (to achieve a better longer-term response to recurring crises). There are some good reasons for considering the latter point, including discouraging abdication of responsibility by host governments and ensuring that UK taxpayers get good value for money through burden-sharing with other donors.

2.8 DFID lobbied host governments and key agencies and CSOs from early 2011, both to meet political objectives and to prepare interventions.

2.9 The Kenyan Government did not declare a drought until 30 May 2011. DFID took a decision to encourage the Government of Kenya to take responsibility before a major scale-up; a position with which not everyone agreed.³⁶

2.10 In Ethiopia, DFID prepared funding and worked with WFP to plan interventions prior to the request from the government for support. The Government of Ethiopia initiated a response earlier than Kenya but it downplayed the extent of the crisis, with the result that insufficient resources were mobilised. DFID and other donors worked to encourage the government to increase resources and to find ways to make up the shortfall.

2.11 In Somalia, concerns over Al Shabaab and terrorism deterred donors. DFID considered threats posed by Al Shabaab early on and sought approval from the Secretary of State to accept the risks of operating in the worst-affected regions. In hindsight, earlier support for cash transfers through

CSOs, which proved very successful, could have helped stabilise communities earlier.

2.12 Senior DFID officials and the Secretary of State also lobbied donors and governments of a number of donor countries, emphasising the need to do more and do it more urgently. Staff working on Africa at DFID headquarters produced regular updates based on real-time information from the field and communication messages for DFID and the UK Government. A member of staff was deployed full time to keep track of donor commitments being made by different countries.

2.13 It is not possible to quantify the effectiveness of DFID's lobbying activity but it was recognised and welcomed by humanitarian agencies. A number of CSOs, humanitarian workers and DFID personnel in the Horn of Africa, however, felt that DFID would have galvanised more support earlier had it significantly scaled up its funding earlier. They felt that DFID should take more political risk and be prepared to 'stick its neck out' more. They argued that an earlier response from DFID would not only have addressed urgent needs but would also have encouraged other donors more convincingly than lobbying alone.

2.14 Our view is that it was appropriate to push for national ownership before significantly scaling up. Earlier action could have undermined the government and perpetuated a culture of donor dependency. Once national ownership was secured, however, DFID was likely to have had more impact by taking the lead rather than waiting to get other donors on board.

2.15 Critically, we believe that more pre-agreed triggers for action, combined with pre-approved and flexible funding mechanisms, are needed, both in DFID and the humanitarian system as a whole. This would help to improve burden-sharing and increase funding as a crisis arises, rather than once it is an emergency when the focus needs to be on action. Greater levels of preparedness within DFID could have been achieved through the pre-existing partnership agreements that are already in place with international non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Given that DFID knew that funds would be approved, ensuring that individual

³⁵ USAID's main scale-up in Kenya and Somalia did not take place until August 2011.

³⁶ *Food Assistance Integrity Study Analysis of the 2011 Drought Response in Kenya*, Transparency International, Kenya, March 2012, http://www.transparency.org/files/content/pressrelease/2012_TIKenya_FoodAssistanceIntegrityStudy.pdf.

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organisations and consortia were able to utilise the funds effectively in advance could have helped.

Focus on the needs of intended beneficiaries and consideration of context

2.16 DFID's programmes consider the needs of intended beneficiaries and have clear and realistic objectives. DFID also has a strong understanding of the context in each of the countries and regions and its interventions account well for these. DFID's local offices are highly respected for their expertise. Their personnel spent a good amount of time visiting programmes and affected areas and had good relationships with implementing CSOs and other key agencies. DFID's knowledge of the situation on the ground enabled it to identify intended beneficiaries' needs and develop strategies that supported and complemented the overall humanitarian response.

2.17 The main activities funded by DFID were supplementary feeding for nutrition programmes, food assistance, water trucking and renovation of existing water sources, hygiene education, supply of life-saving medicines and immunisation provisions, animal health care and livelihoods-related interventions.

2.18 DFID sought to assist some of the poorest and most vulnerable people. For example, DFID supported nutrition programmes in the poorest areas of Kenya, such as Turkana, where 94.3% of people live below the national absolute poverty line.³⁷

2.19 In Somalia, DFID focussed its efforts on the south-central region, which suffered the most from the drought. This was particularly pertinent given the reluctance of some other donors to act and the challenges of operating in this area. As many of DFID's conventional partners, such as WFP, lacked access in Somalia, DFID identified other means of delivery. For example, for food assistance, DFID supported ICRC, CSOs and an expanded UNICEF programme.

2.20 Girls, boys, women and men have different needs in a humanitarian crisis, which DFID addressed in some programmes.³⁸ Nutrition programmes tended to focus on the most vulnerable, typically children and lactating or pregnant mothers. Women were also targeted for cash and food distribution in Kenya. Otherwise, though, consideration of the specific needs and vulnerabilities of different ages and genders requires more attention, as is discussed further in the Impact section.

2.21 Women and children bear a disproportionate cost in terms of health, access to support and personal safety as a consequence of humanitarian crises and displacement. Specific attention should be given to interventions to ensure that disparities in access to support as well as prevention of physical and sexual abuse of women and children during times of crisis are identified and appropriately addressed. During the review period for this report, we were told that organisations were required to set out in proposals how they would take on these issues. It was acknowledged by both DFID staff and implementing organisations, however, that very little was actually done to ensure that these fundamental issues were specifically addressed outside of token references in proposals.

2.22 A key aspect of meeting intended beneficiaries' needs in the humanitarian context is ensuring a coherent approach throughout the humanitarian system. DFID, along with the US and EU, was widely seen by the humanitarian community as a leading agency in promoting a co-ordinated approach and engaging with host governments. DFID had also begun to build relationships with some non-traditional donors. This could be augmented, particularly given the important contributions from several Islamic states for the Somalia response.

2.23 DFID demonstrated understanding and leadership in relation to the Dadaab refugee camp. DFID played a key role in successfully advocating with the Government of Kenya and UNHCR the urgent need to open the Ifo-2 camp within Dadaab. DFID

³⁷ The Government of Kenya defines absolute poverty as 'a state where one cannot raise the income required to meet the expenditure for purchasing a specified bundle of basic requirements'. See <http://www.kippra.org/docs/WP6.pdf>.

³⁸ *Gender Handbook in Humanitarian Action*, Inter-Agency Standing Committee, December 2006, <http://oneresponse.info/crosscutting/gender/Documents/IASC%20Gender%20Handbook%20Final.pdf>.

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contributed £6 million of humanitarian funds for Dadaab through UNHCR, WFP, CARE International and Oxfam as thousands of Somalis arrived from across the border.

Long-term objectives: sustainability and resilience

2.24 In response to the recommendations of the HERR, DFID outlined its new global humanitarian policy in 2011. This lays emphasis on promoting innovative and evidence-based approaches to building resilience and responding to humanitarian crises.³⁹

Many of the humanitarian activities we observed supported the HERR's finding that sustainability and building resilience are not yet adequately considered in humanitarian programming. DFID is aware of and is one of the leading agencies working to address this, despite challenges discussed in the Impact section.

2.25 In spite of the short timescales since the publication of the HERR, DFID's work in the Horn of Africa showed evidence that DFID has begun to respond to the HERR's recommendations. DFID's humanitarian personnel demonstrated a good understanding of DFID's global strategy and the HERR's recommendations. When planning programmes, DFID country offices have been among those pushing to improve flexibility and long-term resilience. There is still some way to go in this area, though, in the humanitarian system and within DFID. As we note in the Impact section, there are also complexities relating to the concepts of sustainability and resilience in the Horn of Africa which require further attention.

2.26 One of the ways in which DFID is working to incorporate resilience and sustainability more into its objectives is DFID's support of transformative programmes within remote and underdeveloped areas in the Horn of Africa. DFID worked with other donors to reduce the impact of drought and chronic and transitory food insecurity in Kenya's arid and semi-arid lands and dry regions of Ethiopia.

2.27 In Kenya and Ethiopia, DFID supports ongoing safety net programmes. In Kenya, for example,

HSNP assists 68,360 households to build community resilience.⁴⁰ HSNP aims to reduce the poverty gap in vulnerable areas, providing improved food security, retention of assets during shocks and improved access to health and education. A second phase of HSNP covers approximately 130,000 households in five districts (almost 700,000 people). DFID also has ongoing programmes for nutrition and health in Kenya.

2.28 In Somalia, DFID grants funded a cash transfer programme to support families of malnourished children and women (including men and non-lactating women in the selected families). This has made food accessible to families and has helped to increase the supply of food by supporting local markets. The project area covers five districts, providing cash grants of around £75 per month to targeted households facing food and livelihood crisis.⁴¹

Conclusions

2.29 In the circumstances in which DFID found itself at the onset of the crisis, it performed relatively well. DFID's approach to the 2011 drought response was to scale up, wherever possible, funding for existing mechanisms and institutions which address transitory and chronic food insecurity. DFID's efforts were targeted appropriately given the circumstances. The lack of sufficiently flexible mechanisms to scale up did, however, limit DFID's ability to respond quickly and incorporate resilience-building and sustainability into interventions. By the time interventions took place, the focus had to be on protecting lives and livelihoods.

2.30 Given the chronic situation in the region, DFID could have been better prepared and we would be disappointed if these challenges were not better addressed in the next response. Internally, DFID is already exploring options to improve its own flexibility and planning, including multi-year funding

³⁹ *Promoting Innovation and Evidence-Based Approaches to Building Resilience and Responding to Humanitarian Crises: A DFID Strategy Paper*, DFID, February 2012, <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Documents/publications1/prom-innov-evid-bas-app-build-res-resp-hum-cris.pdf>.

⁴⁰ *SCUK Consortium DFID Proposal*, DFID Kenya, Kenya Resilience Info Note, 30 April 2012. It is proposed that, in phase II, the programme will cover 130,000 households (890,000 beneficiaries); Hunger Safety Net Programme (HSNP). *Ending Hunger, Protecting Assets*, HSNP News, February-April 2012.

⁴¹ The Integrated Phase Classification details five levels of decreasing food security: Generally Food Secure, Moderately/Borderline Food Insecure, Acute Food Security and Livelihood Crisis, Humanitarian Emergency and Famine/Humanitarian Catastrophe.

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and greater use of flexible drought response mechanisms. This includes looking at good practices from other donors, such as USAID's 'crisis modifier'. This is a clause within some development programmes obliging the agency to respond to humanitarian emergencies or potential humanitarian concern in their area, should such arise during the project. The crisis modifier allows funds to be reallocated to the area of need and can make additional resources available at a later stage should they be required. DFID's efforts should be continued and enhanced. In parallel, DFID should push more strongly for a shared longer-term strategy with government agencies and the wider humanitarian community to address structural issues, particularly on infrastructure. Development in infrastructure (especially for transport, electricity and water) would enable access to markets and provision of affordable and reliable supplies of food and water. Without this, it is difficult to see an end to the cycle of poverty and vulnerability that keeps so many people on the edge of crisis.

Delivery

Assessment: Green-Amber 

2.31 This section considers how DFID chose to deliver its objectives and ensured resources were used as planned, including:

- DFID's multilateral approach;
- how DFID works with CSOs;
- efficiency of delivery; and
- managing risks.

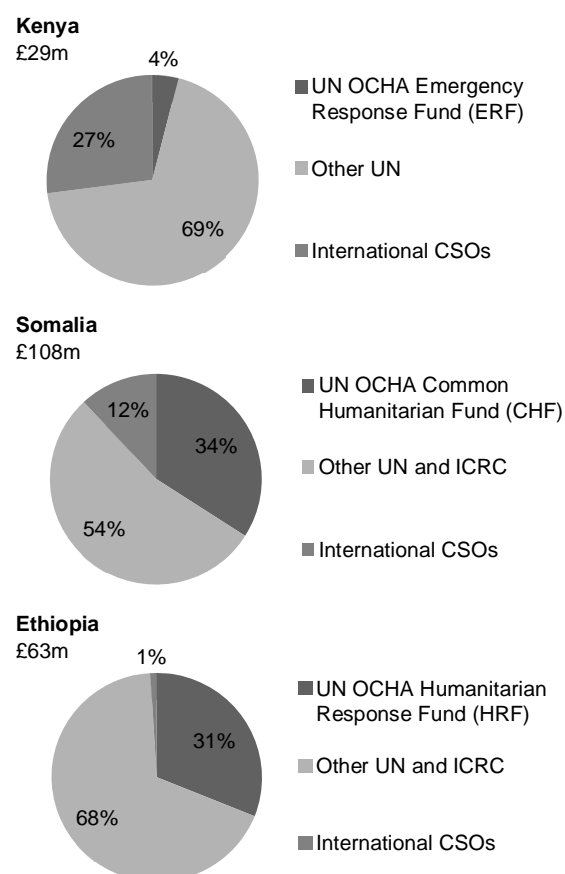
Working with others – a multilateral approach

2.32 DFID has promoted a multilateral approach and deepened its engagement with other donors and governments during the response. Almost 90% of DFID's £200 million humanitarian budget for the Horn of Africa from October 2010 to March 2012 has been allocated through UN agencies, multi-donor funds or the ICRC, to promote a unified response. Figure 5 shows the mix of agencies funded by DFID.

2.33 There are some risks in working multilaterally, particularly if a co-ordinating agency performs

poorly. For example, in Kenya, WFP had a severely delayed implementation whereas, in Ethiopia, it was one of the quickest to respond. (See the Annex for an example of the importance of country-level management of WFP.) Working towards an effective multilateral approach is nevertheless essential to prevent a haphazard response that would fail to ensure that humanitarian needs are met. DFID's multilateral focus is therefore appropriate.⁴²

Figure 5: DFID humanitarian budget allocations from October 2011 to March 2013⁴³



2.34 DFID and the EU were seen as leading the multilateral response (although the EU does not itself contribute to multi-donor funds). DFID

⁴² Humanitarian Emergency Response Review: UK Government Response, DFID, June 2011, <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Documents/publications1/hum-emer-resp-rev-uk-gvmt-resp.pdf>.

⁴³ Data supplied by DFID.

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provided support for pooled funds in Kenya, Somalia and Ethiopia, as well as supporting OCHA in each of the countries and the World Health Organization (WHO) in Somalia to co-ordinate the humanitarian response. This was critical, as there were hundreds of agencies on the ground in the early weeks requiring co-ordination.

- 2.35 In Ethiopia, DFID already provided multi-year support to the HRF. DFID's support was scaled up in 2011 in response to the drought and refugee crisis. Total HRF expenditure in 2011 was approximately £45 million from nine donors, around 30% from DFID. Half of the HRF's expenditure was on emergency nutrition.
- 2.36 DFID took the lead in supporting pooled funds. As the Ethiopia experience shows, pooled funds can be effective instruments for speedy decision-making and allocation of resources in a transparent and accountable way. In Kenya and Somalia, however, fund administration was slow and proved inadequate to facilitate early action. DFID cannot control this but is an important influencer. It used its influence to push for improvements, as we saw with WFP in Kenya. This type of influence and direction should be further built on by DFID to ensure that pooled funds provide an efficient and effective mechanism for responding to crisis.

Working with others – working with CSOs

- 2.37 DFID supplements its multilateral focus with targeted grants to CSOs. Around 13% of DFID's 2011-12 financial year expenditure for humanitarian programmes was allocated for grants to CSOs. Programmes were selected to supplement multilateral mechanisms – particularly where existing CSO programmes could be scaled up – and focus areas were selected with the same level of care and expertise.
- 2.38 DFID's preferred delivery mechanism for CSO grants shifted towards funding consortia as opposed to individual grants to multiple agencies during this response. This was ostensibly done to reduce the administrative costs and burden of grant processing while helping to encourage a co-ordinated approach.

- 2.39 We found that where consortia were established in advance, where there were clearly defined roles assigned to members' areas of expertise and where co-ordination was strong, consortia could be very effective. In good cases, such as the Somalia Cash Consortium, agencies brought complementary skills and worked effectively together with reduced management costs and greater impact. Conversely, where roles were not clear or leadership was poor, such as a key DFID-funded consortium we observed in Kenya, inefficiency and delays to implementation occurred. Forming a consortium during a crisis as in the Kenyan example, rather than in advance, is likely to increase this risk. Where consortia are not properly formed, apparently low administrative costs may mask a reduction in the overall value for money obtained.
- 2.40 Selection of the most appropriate CSOs for each role is also critical. While risk management procedures were followed, there was not always a clearly documented rationale for the selection of CSOs for specific roles. This increased the risk that partners were not selected on the basis of their ability.
- 2.41 At present, it is very difficult for local CSOs to receive direct grant funding from DFID or pooled funds. Many receive sub-grants from international CSOs. Many international CSOs provide some capacity-building support but we saw little evidence of efforts to build local CSO capacity to the point where they can be funded directly by DFID grants or pooled funds.
- 2.42 CSOs and UN agencies have begun to respond to DFID's increased focus on measuring impact and value for money. While a few saw these priorities as additional bureaucracy, most viewed them as positive principles. There was confusion, however, about what DFID meant by the terms and what it expected. DFID has an opportunity to take these agendas forward through establishing or supporting CSO working groups on value for money, impact assessment and resilience.

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Efficiency of delivery

2.43 As the flexible funding mechanisms that existed were insufficient to meet the humanitarian need, additional funding was requested by DFID offices in the region. DFID's processes to approve this funding took a significant amount of humanitarian advisers' time during the height of the crisis.

2.44 All humanitarian expenditure needed to be signed off by the Secretary of State. This process took place quickly and provided high-level oversight but required much work to prepare and multiple layers of review. Combined with responding to regular demands for information for press releases, DFID's humanitarian specialists spent a large amount of their time providing information to DFID headquarters. Although turnaround timescales remained acceptable, this reduced the time DFID staff had available to spend in the field. Our view is that much of the preparation could have been done in advance.

2.45 The lack of standard DFID systems to capture results and report on value for money data was also a challenge. Country offices developed ad hoc spreadsheets and partner-reporting processes at a time of extreme pressure for both DFID staff and partners. DFID's central Conflict, Humanitarian and Security department provided much-needed additional short-term staff. Most of this support was provided for approximately three months, some for much less. This is common for humanitarian responses, where conditions can be very challenging. In this case, most staff were based in Nairobi or Addis Ababa, areas that were not significantly impacted by the crisis. Longer postings would, therefore, have been feasible and more efficient. Given the chronic situation and cyclical occurrence of drought in the region, DFID has recruited more staff in-country, which will help. Other ways to free up humanitarian advisers' time should be considered, such as considering press liaison support to help with reporting or outsourcing monitoring and evaluation (as in the Pakistan flood response, for example).

2.46 A number of organisations are seeking to do more to measure and report value for money and attributed this to DFID to a large degree. Some

agencies were measuring unit costs, tracking cost-benefit ratios, benchmarking against good practice and striving toward continuous improvement in their operations. In Ethiopia, the HRF has developed a system for comparing all grants and operations against unit costs of delivery at community level (for example, the unit cost of providing livelihood support or the cost of delivery of water) and management costs of implementing agencies.

2.47 Humanitarian interventions in Somalia show that value for money is not simply about cutting costs. Security and access challenges make it expensive to operate while also making it more difficult to ensure that funds are spent appropriately. For example, treatment of SAM costs about £145 per child in Somalia but only about £82 per child in Kenya.⁴⁴

Managing risks

2.48 DFID was well aware of the substantial financial, governance and security risks, especially in Somalia. It put in place good measures to manage them. DFID's own systems appeared adequate to manage its direct funding, based on our review. DFID has also worked to develop good practices to help manage fiduciary risk, including community-level monitoring, electronic payments (in Kenya and Somalia) and triangulation of data from remote control agencies.⁴⁵ DFID in the region is also in the process of developing more robust pre-grant due diligence procedures, to build on basic checks that are already in place.

2.49 DFID primarily relies on UN agencies to manage the delivery chain directly. This passes some of the risk to the agency but also reduces DFID's visibility. As a result, while there are some good practices among the agencies, DFID does not always have a full picture of how well multilateral organisations apply their risk management systems and therefore cannot be certain that all key risks are appropriately managed.

⁴⁴ *Addressing Acute Malnutrition in Arid and Semi-Arid Lands of Kenya – Business Case Annexes*, DFID, April 2012.

⁴⁵ 'Remote control agencies' refer to local implementing partners which cannot be visited by the donor for security or any other reasons and therefore other means of evaluation are required. Monitoring in Somalia is risky work: of aid workers killed in Somalia, we were told that the largest group were involved in monitoring.

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Nevertheless, DFID appeared to work closely with other agencies to encourage good practices. See the Annex for some examples.

- 2.50 Reports and reviews conducted by the implementing agencies and inter-agency real-time evaluation (RTE) of the Somalia response indicate that the systems have been working well to minimise any leakage.⁴⁶
- 2.51 For example, in Kenya, HSNP uses an electronic payment system. A National Audit Office (NAO) review in late 2011 found that DFID 'has played a wider role in increasing access to financial services in Kenya. Electronic payments are accessible, reduce direct and hidden transaction costs, improve financial control and reduce risks of fraud or theft of funds. Conversely, manual payments are inherently prone to inefficiency and risk'.⁴⁷ In Ethiopia, controls for the PSNP, where electronic transfers are not yet possible, have been independently evaluated and found to be effective.⁴⁸
- 2.52 Overall, the key challenges with delivery can only be resolved before the next crisis. In a crisis, the focus has to be on delivering as well as possible in the existing framework. With the right mechanisms, especially pre-prepared and pre-approved responses and consortia and engagement with governments in advance of the next crisis, the efficiency and effectiveness of delivery could be greatly improved.

Impact

Assessment: Green-Amber 

- 2.53 In this section, we consider whether DFID's programmes delivered clear, significant and timely benefits for intended beneficiaries in an accountable and transparent way. We look at both the immediate impacts of the humanitarian

response and longer-term sustainability and resilience-building.

Overall impact

- 2.54 DFID appeared to have a strong overall impact but could achieve better impact in future by investing in mechanisms that allow for scaling up as a crisis unfolds (as was discussed in the Objectives section). DFID-supported programmes have benefited some of the most vulnerable people in the worst-affected areas. As the third-largest donor, DFID's contribution to the overall impact is key. It is also strategically important. The largest donor, the US, does not contribute to multi-donor funds and was not active in south-central Somalia. ECHO can only make annual commitments and is less able to engage politically.

Pooled funds

- 2.55 DFID was the largest contributor to the three pooled funds in Kenya, Somalia and Ethiopia in 2011 (£33 million of the total of £91 million).⁴⁹ In Ethiopia, the HRF was essential to enabling an early response. Thanks to government systems, early actions taken by agencies and the existing safety net and nutrition programmes, which DFID funds, Ethiopia averted a potential famine.
- 2.56 In south-central Somalia, the worst-affected area, a combination of increased relief assistance and good short rains contributed to the decrease of famine-affected populations (measured in terms of extreme mortality rates, malnutrition levels and access to food) from a high of 750,000 to much lower levels by early 2012. Having provided nearly 10% of new financial contributions in 2011,⁵⁰ the UK can claim a material share of this success.
- 2.57 In many cases, it is difficult to obtain impact information. In such cases, proxy indicators combined with research or observation help to give an indication of the impact. For example, in southern Somalia, since August 2011, the UK funded the treatment of 15,000 children with SAM, around 9% of the estimated 161,000 children suffering from SAM in southern Somalia (it is not possible to determine how many could have been

⁴⁶ IASC Real-Time Evaluation of Response to the Horn of Africa Crisis – Ethiopia, Draft Report, Valid International, February 2012, <http://ochanet.unocha.org/p/Documents/IASC-RTE%20Somalia%202012.pdf>.

⁴⁷ *Transferring Cash and Assets to the Poor*, National Audit Office, November 2011, <http://www.caregiversactionnetwork.org/atomicDocuments/CANDocuments/20120531114805-10121587.pdf>.

⁴⁸ *The Impact of Ethiopia's Productive Safety Net Programme and Its Linkages*, International Food Policy Research Institute, 2008; *Social Safety Nets – An Evaluation of World Bank Support 2000-2010*, World Bank, Independent Evaluation Group, 2011, [http://inweb90.worldbank.org/oed/oeddoclib.nsf/DocUNIDViewForJavaSearch/66C2D03CAE69AE53852578C7004CFFDF/\\$file/ssn_full_evaluation.pdf](http://inweb90.worldbank.org/oed/oeddoclib.nsf/DocUNIDViewForJavaSearch/66C2D03CAE69AE53852578C7004CFFDF/$file/ssn_full_evaluation.pdf).

⁴⁹ *Country-Based Pooled Fund Activity*, OCHA, 3 April 2012.

⁵⁰ *Briefing Note SOS Somalia Results*, DFID Kenya, 26 January 2012.

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prevented from becoming malnourished through earlier interventions). Research indicates that, without such interventions, 20-30% of them would have died. The UK, therefore, could claim that some 3,000-4,500 lives have been saved.⁵¹

Grant funding

2.58 In Kenya, DFID's grants to WFP and a CSO consortium provided blanket supplementary feeding and cash or food vouchers to affected communities. All of these were targeted at severely affected areas. In Marsabit, GAM came down from 27.1% in May 2011 to 12.8% in November 2011; and SAM declined from 5% to 2% over the same period.⁵² According to the 2011 short rains assessment findings, the food security status of pastoralists and farmers in arid areas has improved considerably after above-average short rains in many areas.⁵³ In April 2012, 2.2 million people were classified as in crisis or stressed, down from 3.7 million in June 2011. There were exceptions to this: SAM rates were still above emergency levels despite slight improvements in Mandera and Wajir – two areas where humanitarian access has been limited due to insecurity.⁵⁴

2.59 One of the important initiatives grant-funded by DFID in Somalia during 2011 was the cash and voucher programmes implemented by NGOs (Save the Children, Action Against Hunger, OXFAM, Concern and UNICEF partners), which distributed cash to 110,000 targeted households, scaled up in July 2011 from 10,000.⁵⁵ Earlier in 2011, key target areas of the cash programme were controlled by Al Shabaab, which banned food aid but allowed cash interventions.⁵⁶

2.60 The NGO Cash Consortium (of which some DFID partners were members) noted that, after three

months of cash transfer, none of the sample households in the project locations reported going without food for an entire day, compared to rates of between 70% and 100% at the start of the project in late 2010. Save the Children reports that, in its area of operation, at the start of the project, all intended beneficiary households had at least one severely or moderately malnourished child. The data gathered in December 2011 indicated that 72% of all the children in the sampled households were healthy and 28% had moderate malnutrition. No cases of severe malnutrition were recorded. The neediest beneficiaries had also been receiving therapeutic nutritional care so this improvement cannot be credited to the cash intervention alone. Better rains towards the end of 2012 also contributed to an improved situation. Nevertheless, the results indicate an improvement in the nutritional status of beneficiary children.⁵⁷

2.61 We visited several DFID grant-funded water projects in Marsabit, Kenya. The work involved the rehabilitation of defunct boreholes. The work was good quality and plans to sustain it through local government support were in place. We saw a similar project with good community involvement, in a rural school for nomadic girls.

Safety net programmes

2.62 We also saw positive impacts from DFID-funded safety net programmes. We saw first-hand how DFID-supported programmes have benefited some of the most vulnerable women and children in the worst-affected areas in Kenya. Through HSNP, cash supplementary support reached families during the drought. Operating in Turkana, Marsabit, Wajir and Mandera, this mechanism was scaled up, doubling the cash grant to its 60,000 beneficiary families from 2,150 to 4,300 Kenyan shillings for a period of two months.⁵⁸

2.63 In Ethiopia, examining the effects of the PSNP, the International Food Policy Research Institute concluded that direct support improves food

⁵¹ This assumes that care met Sphere Project standards of 75% recovery rate, 15% defaulter rate and 3% mortality rate. See www.sphereproject.org for more on the Sphere Project.

⁵² *Nutrition Survey Marsabit District Kenya*, UNICEF, May 2011.

⁵³ *The 2011/12 Short Rains Season Assessment Report*, Government of Kenya, http://www.wescoord.or.ke/documents/Assessments/2011_2012SRAFinalReport.pdf.

⁵⁴ *Kenya Nutrition Business Case*, DFID Kenya, 17 April 2012.

⁵⁵ The additional 1,000 households received two payments together so as to catch up with the payments made to other beneficiaries.

⁵⁶ Since January 2012, with the invasion by Ethiopian forces, some of the areas are no longer in the control of Al Shabaab.

⁵⁷ *Cash and Voucher Monitoring Group, Save the Children – Hiran. Quarterly M&E Report* (October – December 2011), revised draft, 20 March 2012.

⁵⁸ *Food Assistance Integrity Study Analysis of the 2011 Drought Response in Kenya*, Transparency International Kenya, 2012, http://www.transparency.org/files/content/pressrelease/2012_TIKenya_FoodAssistanceIntegrityStudy.pdf.

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security as measured by the number of months that the household reports that it can meet its food needs. In the few cases where average direct support transfers have been large, this effect is substantial.⁵⁹

2.64 A recent inter-agency study found that the PSNP was a major contributor to a response in 2011 that saved lives.⁶⁰ By making the assistance to 7.8 million people more predictable, people received food and cash in time to prevent mass starvation. While the PSNP largely prevented people from starving, it does not appear to have built up or protected assets in 2011. Some news reports suggested that up to 90% of livestock died in some regions, although this figure has been disputed by a number of organisations. Although the PSNP prevented some depletion of livestock and deterioration of farmland, assistance came too late for many recipients. Earlier studies found that, in good years, the PSNP can help households build up assets. This suggests that there is a race between building assets (allowing families to escape from chronic food insecurity) and the depletion of assets through shocks that can lead to destitution.⁶¹

2.65 There were challenges in Ethiopia due to the official figures of those requiring assistance being lower than the number of those actually in need. In Fedis Woreda, Haraghe and Dire Dawa, we visited local communities, CSOs and local governments and committees who assess needs. We learned that official figures were 20% lower than the needs identified locally. We were told how families that receive aid share with those who do not. As women tend to eat last, they often suffer the most.

2.66 We were also told that a lack of sufficient food forces many subsistence farmers to enter the informal labour market. This results in abandoned farms becoming poorly managed and labour

markets overcrowded, perpetuating the cycle of poverty.

2.67 The beneficiaries we spoke to in Fedis Woreda told us how important the PSNP, food aid and nutrition programmes were to them. We were also told that communities preferred to receive food rather than cash; the food is worth more since local traders push up food prices, so with cash, the hungry cannot buy all that they need.⁶² The women we spoke to told us that their husbands often used some cash for chat or khat (a mild stimulant with effects similar to a strong coffee), so there is again less for food. The cash programmes tend to focus on families as a whole without sufficient consideration of intra-family gender dynamics.

2.68 The disproportionate effect of inadequate provisions on women is understood by DFID, which also understands that women and girls are at a heightened risk of sexual violence during a humanitarian emergency. Kenyan and Somali programmes tended to have a greater focus on women. This is more challenging in Ethiopia as the government has severely limited engagement on rights-based issues. DFID should build on its existing work on the needs of women and girls and gender more broadly. The newly established DFID/Nike Foundation Girl Hub in Ethiopia may provide opportunities to explore ways in which the needs of girls and women can be met more effectively in a humanitarian context.

2.69 The RTE of the response in Somalia concluded that 'earlier action could have prevented or at least substantially mitigated the worst aspects of the crisis'.⁶³ Most deaths of people started between April and August 2011 in Somalia and animal deaths began in January 2011, which intensified food insecurity. In Ethiopia and Kenya, however, the humanitarian response was early enough to prevent mass loss of life. Livelihoods, particularly for those reliant on livestock, were depleted in Kenya and Ethiopia but the timing and extent of the response was largely reliant on the governments.

⁵⁹ *The Impact of Ethiopia's Productive Safety Nets and Household Asset Building Programme: 2006-2010*, Guush Berhane, John Hoddinott, Neha Kumar, Alemayehu Seyoum Tefesse, International Food Policy Research Institute, 30 December 2011.

⁶⁰ *IASC Real-Time Evaluation of Response to the Horn of Africa Crisis – Ethiopia, Draft Report*, Valid International, February 2012, <http://ochanet.unocha.org/p/Documents/IASC%20RTE%20Ethiopia%202012.pdf>.

⁶¹ *The Impact of Ethiopia's Productive Safety Nets and Household Asset Building Programme: 2006-2010*, Guush Berhane, John Hoddinott, Neha Kumar, Alemayehu Seyoum Tefesse, International Food Policy Research Institute, 30 December 2011.

⁶² Note that there may be other reasons why prices change, including general inflation and localised inflation in a drought, which are unrelated to the cash payments but that are attributed by the recipients to cash receipts.

⁶³ *IASC Real-Time Evaluation of Response to the Horn of Africa Crisis – Somalia, Draft Report*, Valid International, 2012, <http://ochanet.unocha.org/p/Documents/IASC-RTE%20Somalia%202012.pdf>.

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Accountability to intended beneficiaries

2.70 DFID has good practices in place to ensure accountability and transparency to intended beneficiaries. These tend to be considered during programme design and incorporated into programming.

2.71 We saw several examples of this at the community level. For example, the Kenyan HSNP has community monitoring which includes a complaints mechanism and dispute resolution systems. In Kenya, assessments of those in need of assistance appear devoid of data massaging by authorities (unlike in Ethiopia, as set out in paragraph 2.65). Checks and balances in the operation are well thought through, with administrative, financial and complaints systems being dealt with by separate entities. This promotes ownership and accountability of the companies or traders who deal with payments, as well as allowing the implementing agency to have oversight of issues at community level. These are high trust societies, thereby limiting the risk of abuse.

2.72 In Somalia, for example, DFID grant-funded CSOs in the Cash Consortium also use a community monitoring and complaints mechanism to ensure transparency and accountability at the community level. The use of the trust-based Hawala system for money transfer, in conjunction with contractual guarantees, further reduces the risks of abuse.⁶⁴

Sustainability and resilience

2.73 Emergency response is about saving and protecting lives and livelihoods during a crisis. As highlighted in the HERR, to build long-term sustainability and resilience, life-saving and livelihoods interventions need to strengthen people's ability to withstand future shocks and disasters. Disaster response needs to lead to disaster risk reduction by way of broad development and application of policies, strategies

and practices. This would minimise vulnerabilities and disaster risks throughout communities.

2.74 We saw evidence of DFID supporting these concepts already. For the Kenyan HSNP, we met with around 200 people, in groups, who have been assisted over three and a half years. Around 25% had acquired livelihoods assets (such as a cow to fatten up and sell), besides having their immediate survival needs met. It is difficult to say that these people have become self-sustaining, due to the fragile livelihood system in the harsh terrain of arid Marsabit. It is clear, however, that HSNP is making some movement towards greater resilience. HSNP is also part of a wider DFID strategy to strengthen social safety nets in Kenya, including sustainable financing mechanisms for social protection. The secretariat for HSNP is situated within the Ministry for Development of Northern Kenya and Other Arid Lands and there are plans to transfer full responsibility to the government.

2.75 In terms of reducing the vulnerability of the poorest, key donors including DFID have helped to shift the agenda towards the chronically food insecure. The main objective of the Ethiopian PSNP is to address chronic food insecurity in a more sustainable and predictable way.⁶⁵ It aims to provide food or cash to people who have predictable food needs in a way that enables them to improve their livelihoods and thus become more resilient to the effects of shocks in the future.⁶⁶

2.76 DFID has facilitated the introduction of index-based livestock insurance through Equity Bank in Marsabit,⁶⁷ using Kenya as a pilot. As an experiment, it is too early to draw firm conclusions,⁶⁸ although we consider that such market-based interventions could bring much-needed financial services closer to the poor. This,

⁶⁵ *DFID Country Programme Evaluation Ethiopia*, Christopher Barnett, Teigist Lemma, Joe Martin, Mohammed Mussa, Charlotte Vaillant and Lissane Yohannes, DFID, April 2009.

⁶⁶ *How Ethiopia's Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP) Is Responding to the Current Humanitarian Crisis in the Horn*, Matt Hobson and Laura Campbell, Humanitarian Exchange Magazine, Number 53, March 2012, <http://www.odihpn.org/humanitarian-exchange-magazine/issue-53/how-ethiopia-productive-safety-net-programme-psnp-is-responding-to-the-current-humanitarian-crisis-in-the-horn>.

⁶⁷ Equity Bank is a privately-owned commercial Kenyan bank.

⁶⁸ The uptake was slow to start in its first year and, after two rounds of pay-out last year, there is greater interest among small herders. The bank considers the operating costs too high due to the sparsely populated areas it has to cover to enrol new clients.

⁶⁴ *Combined Risk Analysis*, Somalia Cash Consortium, 4 November 2011.

Hawala (also known as hundi) is an informal money transfer system based on performance and honour of a huge network of money brokers. It is an alternative remittance system that operates outside of, or parallel to, traditional banking or financial channels.

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combined with HSNP, has already seen some poor and vulnerable families open bank accounts, which could make them eligible for investment loans in the future. Whether this can be scaled up to have a widespread impact on the sustainability of herds remains to be seen.

2.77 Efforts have been made by DFID and other agencies towards sustainability and resilience. There are, nevertheless, systemic challenges within the humanitarian system which mean that the region remains vulnerable. At present, there is little evidence of long-term strategic approaches that would ultimately obviate the need for humanitarian assistance.

2.78 The concepts of sustainability and resilience pose their own challenges in the context of the Horn of Africa. This is most evident in the cases of refugee camps (which are not intended to be long-term solutions and yet can exist for decades) and pastoralist communities. The combination of population growth, repeated droughts and climate change and desertification means that sustainability should be considered. Further information about each of these challenges is included in the Annex.

Learning

Assessment: Green 

2.79 In this section, we consider how DFID carried out monitoring and evaluation work and incorporated learning from previous work in the region and other humanitarian interventions. We also consider DFID's processes for learning from the 2011 drought response and how this is being used to improve the humanitarian situation in the Horn of Africa and beyond.

Monitoring and evaluation

2.80 We were told by DFID field staff that field visits and monitoring and evaluation work particularly suffered due to the onerous approvals process for humanitarian grants described in the Delivery section (see paragraphs 2.44 and 2.45 on page 14). On one hand, DFID has increased its focus on accountability and measuring and reporting impacts; on the other, internal approval processes and information demands from DFID headquarters meant that there was insufficient staff time to do

actual monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and community engagement.

2.81 Reports received by DFID from partners tended to be focussed on activities and outputs rather than outcomes and impact. More investment in M&E prior to the next crisis, especially of DFID's monitoring of grants to CSOs, would be beneficial. This is particularly important as OCHA is planning to reduce the administrative costs claimable by CSOs under pooled funds from 11% to 7%, which could threaten CSOs' ability to invest in good M&E processes.

2.82 Many agencies involved in emergency response use RTEs during the peak of operations to obtain feedback on their work and make course corrections. The Under-Secretary General (humanitarian affairs) of the UN commissioned an inter-agency RTE in all the affected countries in the Horn. The reports of these RTEs are shared with all agencies and donors like DFID use them to get a real-time picture of the progress and obstacles in the response. DFID country offices engaged actively with all the RTE processes and used the reports for dialogue with agencies and CSOs funded by DFID.

Innovations and best practices

2.83 We saw evidence of learning from previous interventions in each country and between countries. There was good knowledge of other humanitarian responses that helped inform programming, as discussed in the Objectives section. DFID also applied learning from the response in the Horn of Africa, particularly on political influence and burden-sharing, to the subsequent Sahel drought response in West Africa.

2.84 DFID has demonstrated learning in relation to co-ordination, although stronger leadership is possible. Implementing and co-ordinating agencies told us that DFID had a strong focus on learning and innovation and encouraged them with its partners. Some commented that, while DFID was still one of the go-to organisations for technical advice, its technical capacity had reduced in recent years. DFID should consider cost-effective ways to maintain its reputation. Examples of this could be

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co-ordinating hubs for innovation in areas such as measuring and understanding impact and value for money. This could also help to embed these principles in the sector.

Cash transfers

2.85 The heavily supply-oriented conventional humanitarian assistance delivery system has its merits in some contexts. Where markets are functioning, however, providing cash tends to be much better value for money. Cash tends to be a cheaper and logistically easier option than transporting food long distances. It is often less susceptible to corruption and can help stimulate markets, while food aid can depress them. Cash programming goes beyond food and enables people to choose what they buy. This can help them to fight malnutrition and sustain livelihoods.⁶⁹ Cash programming in Somalia (and to some extent in Kenya) was an innovative approach for the region which may change how humanitarian aid is delivered in the future.⁷⁰

2.86 On the other hand, cash can distort markets and exacerbate unequal access to food by women and girls. Our observations saw both positive and negative impacts. In Ethiopia, where needs were underestimated, we saw that women and girls can lose out (this was also the case with food aid) and may inflate prices (while food aid can deflate them). In Kenya and Somalia, however, cash appeared to be more effective in reaching people in need without some of the negative impacts on women observed in Ethiopia. Cash, therefore, can be effective but improvements to delivery should be explored, particularly in Ethiopia.

2.87 CSOs (Save the Children, Horn Relief, Danish Refugee Council and Action Against Hunger) working on the cash transfer programme found that markets in Somalia tend to continue functioning during and after emergencies. Sometimes, however, there may be higher transportation costs and other access constraints that may temporarily increase the cost of goods, mainly due to conflict.

Horn Relief's experience in Somalia has been that whenever there is a cash injection into the local economy, markets open. There may, however, be short delays in bringing in all the required commodities from peripheral markets. Increased beneficiary purchasing power stimulates response by traders. Data gathered by the Cash Consortium showed increased commercial cereal imports and cross-border inflows of cereal supplies in southern Somalia, representing a boost for the economy.⁷¹

2.88 Overall, the cash programmes appeared to perform well and often got help to where it was needed faster than food aid and for a much lower cost. Where markets are not managed, there is a risk of traders exploiting recipients of cash aid and artificially inflating prices when cash is distributed. In addition, gender relationships within families need to be looked at more carefully to ensure that all family members have their needs met.

Sharing lessons learned

2.89 Drawing lessons from the Ethiopian PSNP, the new phase of the Kenyan HSNP programme plans to register all households in target counties and establish a single register. Previously, only those receiving assistance were registered. We met communities in Marsabit where some families not on HSNP had become poorer than some of the beneficiaries. This highlights the importance and value of registering everyone, although this is not without its challenges.

2.90 Learning from the Ethiopian PSNP contingency mechanisms and similar mechanisms such as USAID's 'crisis modifier' used in Ethiopia, DFID is exploring setting up a 'risk facility' to provide extra finance to scale up the size and coverage of cash payments in bad seasons. This will include expanding the index-based livestock insurance pilot and commercial destocking projects in advance of a drought,⁷² improving fodder production and storage, livestock health improvement and building community assets such as water storage. A similar risk facility is being

⁶⁹ *Investing Cash Transfers to Raise Long-Term Living Standards*, Gertler, Martinez and Rubio-Codina, 2012, <http://www.povertyactionlab.org/publication/investing-cash-transfers-raise-long-term-living-standards>.

⁷⁰ *Combined Risk Analysis*, Somalia Cash Consortium, 4 November 2011.

⁷¹ *Combined Risk Analysis*, Somalia Cash Consortium, 4 November 2011.

⁷² Commercial destocking projects purchase livestock from farmers at commercial rates. This is in contrast to destocking programmes where farmers are paid for otherwise unsalable livestock once they have become emaciated.

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explored for a new three-year emergency nutrition programme. In Somalia, where the needs are chronic, the feasibility of a multi-year humanitarian programme is being explored, led by DFID.

- 2.91 Another important aspect of the HSNP programme is the size and duration of payment needed to reach a point where a household can sustain itself without continuous support. Systematic research is underway to determine the assistance level at which a household moves out of absolute poverty and can withstand periodic shocks like the drought of 2011. This means that a small increase in payments in the short term may deliver significant value. At present, as the NAO noted, DFID's programmes 'are generally set with reference to the cost of average household food needs, without analysis as to how far different payment levels might offer better benefits relative to cost'.⁷³
- 2.92 In Ethiopia, we saw evidence that DFID humanitarian and development advisers were working to improve linkages between their areas. It was also clear that DFID played a key role in supporting learning with other agencies. As noted in the Impact section, although there was rigorous analysis of the issues affecting the people of Ethiopia, there was a lack of gender considerations in targeting and emphasis with partners. DFID should use its role as a leading development thinker and advocate for supporting the most vulnerable within society. This would ensure that the needs and opportunities of girls and women within crisis situations are specifically addressed and monitored.
- 2.93 DFID has helped to foster strong working relationships with key donors, including the US and EU. Since 2011, the three agencies have increased focus on disaster risk reduction and resilience within the Horn of Africa and globally. For example, the African Risk Capacity (ARC) project will provide a framework for drought risk financing (for example, reserves, contingency lines of credit, weather-indexed insurance, catastrophe bonds). This will emphasise crop monitoring and early warning, vulnerability assessment and

mapping, emergency response and financial planning and risk management.⁷⁴

- 2.94 In April 2012, with the support of major donors including DFID, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development co-hosted a conference which led to the formation of a Global Alliance for Action for Drought Resilience and Growth. The partnership aims to strengthen co-ordination amongst development partners and between them and the private sector, with a view to increasing economic growth and reducing food insecurity. International donors have collectively committed more than £2.5 billion towards resilience efforts in the Horn of Africa.⁷⁵
- 2.95 In Kenya, an extended Market Access for the Poor (MAP) programme was being planned in April 2012. This aims to help strengthen market linkages and build a commercial enterprise based in the arid and semi-arid lands in a range of markets. It is hoped that once HSNP II (the second phase of HSNP, covering about 130,000 households), the Arid Lands Support Programme (ASP) and MAP are up and running, the delay witnessed in the 2011 drought response may not reoccur. This, along with the ongoing nutrition programme, could save thousands of lives and livelihoods.

⁷³ DFID – *Transferring Cash and Assets to the Poor*, National Audit Office, November 2011, <http://www.nao.org.uk/doc.ashx?docid=fb061f0e-635c-4d08-937c-34966a6a1fce&version=-1>.

⁷⁴ Frankenberger, T, J Campbell, J T Njoka, T Spangler & S Nelson, *Discussion Note – Building Resilience to Food Security Shocks in the Horn of Africa*, March 2012, http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/2012_frankenberger_note.pdf.

⁷⁵ See <http://allafrica.com/stories/201204050055.html>.

3 Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

- 3.1 DFID played a leading role in the humanitarian response, supporting some of the most vulnerable people in Kenya, Somalia and Ethiopia. We made field visits to Kenya and Ethiopia, where we observed good impact and value for money.
- 3.2 DFID's multilateral focus, combined with strategic funding of CSOs, was appropriate and well thought through. More could be done in future to build the capacity of local CSOs, which typically are only used as sub-grantees to international CSOs. Local CSOs can help to bring local perspective and ownership and help to hold their governments to account. DFID should also enhance its focus on ensuring that the specific needs of women and girls are met. Overall, however, DFID made a real and positive difference to the lives of millions of women, men and children in dire need.
- 3.3 Given the chronic situation in the region, DFID could have been better prepared for the unfolding crisis. The key issues that DFID needs to focus on in this region and in other chronic situations are:
- the readiness and flexibility of DFID and the humanitarian system as a whole to respond to crises in a timely manner; and
 - how to build sustainability and resilience to work towards longer-term solutions.
- 3.4 DFID aimed to balance the need for a speedy response with managing risks and exerting political influence to encourage national government ownership and burden-sharing among donors. DFID worked hard to influence host governments and other donors to act.
- 3.5 We believe it was appropriate to push for national ownership before significantly scaling up assistance. Once this had been achieved, however, DFID was likely to have had more impact by taking the lead rather than waiting to get other donors on board, especially in Somalia. This may also have been better value for money, as prevention is generally less expensive than trying to deal with the consequences of malnutrition and loss of livelihoods.
- 3.6 DFID's push for accountability and value for money is vital but needs to be balanced with the ability to

act quickly. High levels of central control were observed during this crisis. DFID should develop more flexible mechanisms and pre-approved budgets and triggers, with central input, which then free up country staff during a crisis to focus on implementing the plan for which they will be held accountable. Real-time evaluations provide an opportunity for efficient and timely reviews. We support DFID's engagement in this kind of assessment.

- 3.7 Substantive improvements can only be achieved by addressing weaknesses in the entire humanitarian system and engaging national governments *before* the next crisis occurs. As a respected and influential agency, DFID has an important role to play in establishing coherent and flexible mechanisms.
- 3.8 Efforts have been made by DFID and other agencies towards sustainability and resilience. Nevertheless, there are systemic challenges within the humanitarian system which mean that the region remains vulnerable. Linkages between humanitarian responses and development programmes (for example, climate change programmes) are beginning to be established and DFID is playing a leading role. DFID is well respected by those we spoke to within UN agencies, government and civil society. It therefore has the opportunity to use its influence to help prevent or alleviate humanitarian crises and work towards longer-term solutions.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: DFID should work towards a cohesive early-warning system, with triggers for action pre-agreed with other key organisations and governments. It should engage with key organisations on this issue within six months.

- 3.9 DFID in the Horn of Africa should continue to encourage the development of more effective early warning capabilities across the region. While good data are available, they need to be pulled together in a coherent way that facilitates early action. DFID should work with governments and co-ordination

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agencies to establish pre-agreed triggers for humanitarian action. DFID globally should also reinforce the importance of engaging with governments to prepare for emergencies.

Recommendation 2: DFID should build on existing good practice to develop, within six months, a new model for flexibly addressing recurring crises in the Horn of Africa.

3.10 This model should address three key areas:

a) Funding: flexible funding mechanisms are needed to improve responsiveness.

3.11 DFID in the Horn of Africa should continue to push for more flexible funding mechanisms and create meaningful contingency plans, building on existing approaches and exploring other options. Such approaches include contingencies, pooled funds and 'crisis modifiers' (such as those used by USAID in Ethiopia) to allow for a rapid response and protect development achievements. Pre-approvals for scaling up should be sought where possible, allowing for a speedy response once agreed triggers are reached. As crises in the region are recurring and underlying vulnerabilities are increasing, all CSO applications for grants for development programmes in the region should be required to consider how they will respond in a drought. This will help to protect ongoing development initiatives and link better with humanitarian interventions to build long-term resilience.

3.12 DFID should also increase its engagement with governments and co-ordinating agencies in the region to encourage and assist them to do the same.

b) Staffing: DFID should consider how best to use and bolster its personnel during a crisis.

3.13 DFID in the Horn of Africa should review its personnel needs during the 2011 crisis. During future food crises in the region, DFID should aim for surge staff being deployed to Nairobi or Addis Ababa to be posted for an average of six months or more (this will need to be balanced by the need to attract the right people). DFID should consider whether additional humanitarian advisers are needed permanently, particularly to assist with

engaging in long-term issues and improving linkages with development projects.

c) Partner selection: DFID should consider how best to use NGOs and CSOs in a crisis, to achieve objectives and build capacity.

3.14 In the Horn of Africa, DFID should review the effectiveness of CSO/NGO consortia to deliver humanitarian interventions. Where possible, consortia should be formed in advance, rather than during a crisis. International CSOs should also be encouraged and incentivised to build capacity of local CSOs so they can play a greater part in future delivery. Selection of CSOs should also be made more transparent, to be able to demonstrate that funding is given to the most appropriate organisations.

Recommendation 3: DFID should build on its existing engagement with host governments and key agencies to develop lasting solutions. It should target key areas such as infrastructure development that are needed to address chronic poverty. It should use its expertise and experience to tackle challenging areas such as the sustainability of pastoralism and refugee camps. This should be incorporated into DFID's plans for 2013-14.

3.15 DFID in the Horn of Africa needs to play a clearer and stronger role in influencing governments to make the necessary strategic infrastructure investments in the region. In Kenya, the new devolved budget model, giving more autonomy to vulnerable regions, provides a potential platform for a focussed and clear strategy that is needed to ensure long-term development and resilience-building. In Ethiopia, DFID should increase its efforts to encourage the government to work towards longer-term solutions. In Somalia, engagement needs to be at the global level with the international community, building on the London Conference on Somalia held in early 2012, to find lasting solutions to the conflict and violence.

3.16 DFID should apply its expertise and experience to tackle challenges in building resilience and sustainability for communities such as pastoralists and refugee camps. More work needs to be done to consider what the long-term options are and

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how to achieve them, taking account of challenges such as climate change and population growth. Similarly, DFID should aim to become a leader in implementing gender-sensitive humanitarian programmes that meet the specific needs of girls, boys, women and men, for example considering

gender-based violence and intra-family relationships.

- 3.17 These recommendations are focussed on DFID in the Horn of Africa. Centrally, DFID should consider how these could be applied more generally for recurring crises in chronically vulnerable regions.

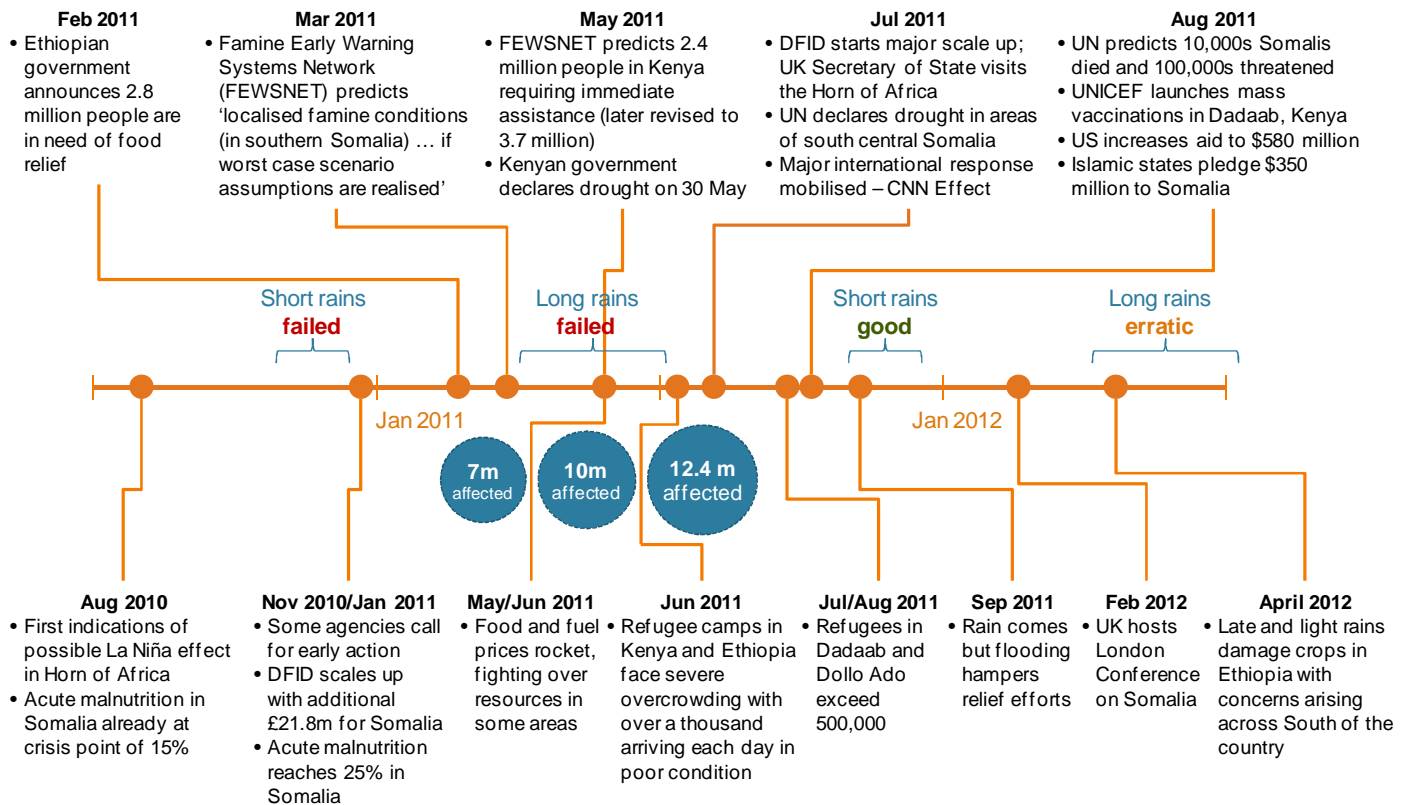
Annex

1. This Annex sets out further contextual information underpinning the report. It includes:
 - a timeline of the 2011 drought;
 - country-level budgets in 2011; and
 - malnutrition as an indicator of crisis and trends.
2. Further examples are also given on:
 - WFP in the Horn of Africa;
 - sustainability and resilience in the context of pastoralist and refugee camps;
 - accountability practices; and
 - DFID's performance in relation to the HERR recommendations.

Timeline of the 2011 drought

3. Figure A1 shows some of the key events in the lead-up to and during the 2011 drought.

Figure A1: 2011 drought timeline



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Country-level budgets in 2011

4. Figure A2 shows key data and some of DFID's main humanitarian programmes for each country.

Figure A2: Country overview and DFID's 2011-12 financial year budgets

Country	Kenya	Somalia	Ethiopia
Total population	43 million	10 million	82 million
Affected population	3.7 million	4 million	4.5 million
Somali refugees/IDPs	534,000 Dadaab	1.36 million	211,000 Dollo Ado
Humanitarian funding (OCHA)	£408 million	£873 million	£524 million
DFID Humanitarian Assistance (HA) budget in operational plan	£9 million	£19 million	£20 million
DFID HA expenditure in financial year 2011-12	£22.6 million	£79.6 million	£57 million
Main humanitarian expenditure	Refugee partners (UNHCR, WFP, NGOs): £9.5 million UN World Food Programme: £5 million UNICEF: £3.2 million Save the Children UK: £3 million	UNICEF: £30 million Common Humanitarian Fund: £20 million UN Food and Agriculture Organisation: £10 million International Committee of the Red Cross: £4.5 million	UN World Food Programme: £38 million Humanitarian Response Fund: £14 million Dollo Ado (UNHCR): £8 million
Total DFID HA expenditure Oct 2010 - March 2012	£29.1 million	£108.3 million	£63.1 million
DFID total operational plan budget	£93 million	£44 million	£290 million

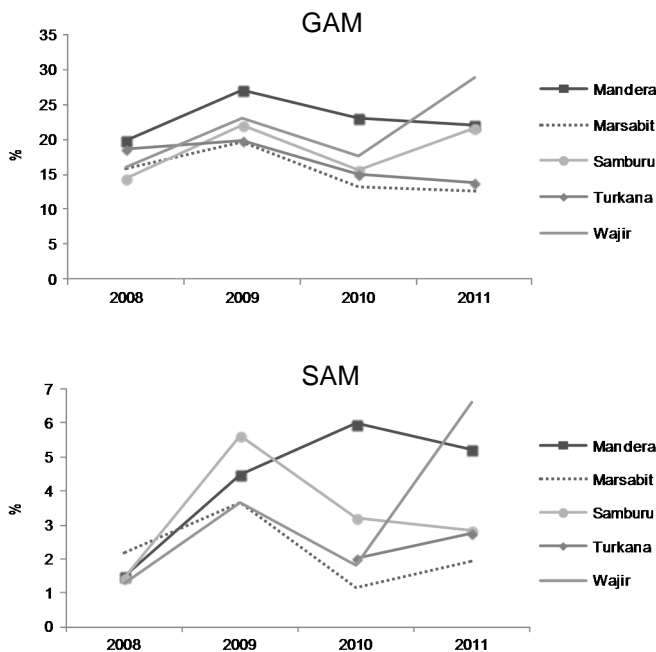
Malnutrition as an indicator of crisis and trends

5. The nutritional status of a population is one of the main indicators, together with the crude mortality rate (CMR), used to assess the severity of a humanitarian crisis. To measure Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) in an emergency situation, the weight and height of children between 6 and 59 months are measured and the ratio is used as a proxy indicator for the general health of the entire population. The weight-to-height index is compared to the same index for a reference population that has no shortage of nutrition. All children with weight less than 80% of the median weight of children with the same height in the reference population are classified as GAM.
6. Children with weight less than 70% of the median weight in the reference population are classified as having Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM). SAM is a result of recent (short-term) deficiency of protein and energy together with minerals and vitamins leading to loss of body fats and muscle tissues. Acute malnutrition presents with wasting (low weight-for-height) and/or presence of pitting oedema of both feet.
7. Commonly used thresholds for GAM are: if 10% or more children are classified as suffering from GAM, there is generally considered to be a serious emergency; with over 15%, the emergency is considered critical.
8. According to the IPC, a famine is declared if three conditions exist. First, at least 20% of households face extreme food shortages with limited ability to cope. Second, GAM prevalence exceeds 30%. Third, CMR exceeds two persons per 10,000 per day. During 2011, the conditions in some parts of the Horn of Africa met all three criteria.

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9. Figure A3 shows how malnutrition rates have changed over time in northern Kenya.

Figure A3: GAM and SAM trends in the worst-affected Kenyan regions



World Food Programme in the Horn of Africa

10. WFP has the mandate to co-ordinate responses with host governments and CSOs in a food crisis. In general, WFP has been effective in delivering food aid globally. The quality of its response in the Horn of Africa crisis, however, varied considerably in the three countries affected in 2011.
11. Within Ethiopia, there was considerable contact between DFID and WFP's senior management during the first half of 2011. They worked to prepare a food pipeline for what both organisations saw as an imminent food crisis in parts of the country. This close and constructive co-operation was seen both by WFP and other agencies we spoke with as pivotal in ensuring the stability of food distribution and emergency response within the country in the later part of 2011.
12. During the crisis in Somalia, WFP's relationship with Al Shabaab broke down before the famine in Somalia hit and Al Shabaab barred WFP from working in Al Shabaab-controlled areas in early

2010. During early 2011, DFID (and others) had concerns that the management of WFP Somalia was not able to respond adequately to the growing crisis within south-central Somalia. DFID put considerable effort into working with WFP's head office in Rome, including requesting the UK Secretary of State's involvement in discussions, to strengthen WFP Somalia's management team.

13. DFID's role in identifying institutional gaps and placing political and organisational pressure to ensure efficient and effective crisis response demonstrates DFID's positive influence in the global humanitarian system. As with the Ethiopia example, DFID's interactions with WFP during the crisis were pivotal in ensuring support to communities within the Horn of Africa that were in distress.

Sustainability and resilience in the context of pastoralist and refugee camps

Pastoralist communities

14. Pastoralist livelihoods within the Horn of Africa have been coming under increasing pressure over the last decade. This has resulted from increasing weather pattern disruptions, widely attributed to the effects of global warming. It has resulted in loss of pasture and watering holes and ultimately large-scale and widespread herd decimation.
15. Even where, previously, pastoralists had the ability to recover from frequent shocks to their livelihoods, the increasing frequency of these events, long-term loss of grazing and the permanent loss of waterholes have resulted in pastoralist livelihoods becoming unsustainable for a large segment of the population.
16. This situation has segregated the pastoralist communities into three distinct groups. The first are where large-scale herders are still able to sustain economically viable herds and provide a long-term sustainable income for their households (livestock contributes 12-15% of Ethiopia's GDP, to which pastoralists contribute).⁷⁶ A middle segment of

⁷⁶ *Preparing for the Future? Understanding the Influence of Development Initiatives on Adaptive Capacity in Ethiopia*, Africa Climate Change Resilience Alliance, 2011.

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pastoralist communities has herds at levels unable to provide sustainable returns to households and unable to breed and replace lost animals fast enough to bring herders out of near destitution. The final segment has entirely lost its livestock and has dropped out of pastoralism completely, now living in destitution within urban areas.

17. Although there are destocking and restocking programmes within these areas, designed to support households during times of stress, these programmes' overall effects on building sustainable and resilient communities are uncertain. Consideration of the extent to which pastoralism can be sustainable is needed. This needs to be linked to the potential impacts of climate change, recognising systemic change in weather patterns within the Horn of Africa. DFID needs to look at how to develop communities that are still viable, while supporting the necessary transition of the households who, either through choice or necessity, have dropped out of pastoralism.

Refugee camps

18. By definition, refugee camps should be offering short-term protection and support for their residents during times of crisis. In Dadaab camp (unofficially the third-largest city in Kenya) and a large number of other similar camps within East Africa, a significant proportion of its population has been resident for decades, with little prospect of a safe return to their home areas for years to come.
19. There is, therefore, a need to understand what sustainability and resilience mean in this context. It may seem counter-intuitive to deny vulnerable populations access to resilience programmes such as HSNP. There is a difficult balance, however, that must be addressed within these situations. Resources available within the refugee camps should not create perverse incentives for even greater population movements to the camps but must, at the same time, protect basic human dignity. Enabling the refugee population to have access to income-generating activities, education and small-scale agriculture, or freer movements of people outside the close proximity of the camps,

could build greater levels of human dignity, enabling skills and time to be put to more productive use. To some extent, this is permitted by the Government of Ethiopia, which has relatively progressive refugee policies.

Accountability practices

20. We observed the following examples of good practice in relation to accountability on DFID-funded initiatives:
- providing cash and food vouchers, instead of transporting food, has minimised risks of aid diversion;
 - CSOs implementing cash and food voucher transfers in south-central Somalia came together under the Cash and Voucher Monitoring group to adopt a common M&E approach;⁷⁷
 - an online mapping tool was developed to track cash responses in Somalia. The tool tracks beneficiary numbers and transfer amounts and aims to improve co-ordination; and
 - the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) was sub-contracted, together with a team of independent field monitors, to determine whether cash and voucher interventions provide a viable and effective large-scale response to humanitarian crisis.

HERR learning

21. The HERR argued for humanitarian response and development aid to be seen and used as a coherent whole. The idea was to help to prevent disasters and enable states and communities to withstand and bounce back from crises more easily. Subsequently, DFID made a commitment to focus on early response and resilience as a core component of all development work everywhere. Furthermore, DFID reiterated its commitment to promoting a multilateral response; working with others to improve UN humanitarian leadership; promoting accountability and impact assessment at all levels, including accountability to communities;

⁷⁷ *Cash and Voucher Monitoring Group, Save the Children – Hiran. Quarterly M&E Report (October – December 2011), revised draft, 20 March 2012.*

Annex

and ensuring that humanitarian aid is delivered on the basis of need alone in a non-politicised way.

22. DFID's leadership of the humanitarian and donor community was well recognised during the response. The people we spoke with were clear that DFID was one of the most vocal and articulate champions of a co-ordinated and concerted effort to respond to the crisis on a scale that was proportionate to the needs of the affected people.
23. DFID's support to the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC)-led mechanism for humanitarian co-ordination and leadership in each country was crucial for the co-ordination of international humanitarian response with national response systems. At the regional level, DFID's engagement with inter-governmental organisations played a catalytic role in galvanising national plans for the 2011 response as well as future disaster risk reduction.

Figure A4: HERR recommendations and DFID's response

Anticipation	DFID made some good early contributions to mechanisms such as the HRF in Ethiopia and was one of the main donors to the Somalia CRF. It may have had more impact with an earlier scale-up.
Resilience	DFID was one of the major activists in efforts to promote resilience in the region through safety net programmes in Kenya and Ethiopia. A stronger focus on resilience is needed in humanitarian responses going forward.
Leadership	DFID was seen as a leading donor in the Horn of Africa crisis and was active in advocacy with other donors, the UN and regional governments. DFID also supported co-ordination efforts across the region, through funding to OCHA.
Innovation	There have been several innovations over time in the Horn of Africa, strongly supported by DFID, such as the safety net programmes and, in Somalia, the switch to cash-based programming. DFID also demonstrated a strong learning culture and willingness to try new ideas and approaches.
Accountability	DFID worked hard to ensure all of its partners were accountable for resources they received and worked with partners to resolve problems as they arose.
Partnership	DFID was largely seen as a strong and committed partner by governments, other donors, multilateral agencies and CSOs.
Humanitarian space	DFID was largely able to support independent and impartial humanitarian agencies in the 2011 humanitarian response to the Horn of Africa crisis, with large support to traditional agencies such as the ICRC. DFID also advocated with governments for greater freedom for humanitarian agencies to work.

Abbreviations

ARC	African Risk Capacity project
ASP	Arid Lands Support Programme
CHF	Common Humanitarian Fund
CMR	Crude Mortality Rate
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DFID	Department for International Development
ECHO	European Community Humanitarian Aid Office
ERF	Emergency Response Fund
EU	European Union
FEWS NET	Famine Early Warning System Network
GAM	Global Acute Malnutrition
HA	Humanitarian assistance
HERR	Humanitarian Emergency Response Review
HRF	Humanitarian Response Fund
HSNP	Hunger and Safety Net Programme
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
ICAI	Independent Commission for Aid Impact
ICRC	International Community for the Red Cross and Red Crescent
IPC	Integrated Food Security Phase Classification
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MAP	Market Access for the Poor
NAO	National Audit Office
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
PSNP	Productive Safety Net Programme
RTE	Real-time evaluation

Abbreviations

SAM	Severe Acute Malnutrition
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
US	United States of America
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

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