

BOND submission for UK Government's Humanitarian Emergency Response Review

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The BOND Disaster and Risk Reduction Group (DRRG) welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the Humanitarian Emergency Response Review.

Disaster Risk Reduction is a fundamental humanitarian concern – it saves lives. Furthermore, DRR is also a critical development concern which adds long-term value for achieving development goals like the Millennium Development Goals. DRR reduces people's vulnerability to disasters, helps avoid the worst impacts, better survive the unavoidable and recover quicker whilst also promoting and protecting development. There is increasing evidence that DRR offers significant value for money; every \$1 spent on DRR prevents losses of \$7¹.

The degree to which DRR thinking is integrated within humanitarian work is a critical indicator of the impact, effectiveness, and value for money of humanitarian emergency response. Of course, humanitarian emergency needs must be met and amply resourced. But our submission focuses on how UK government should significantly increase priority for DRR as a core part of its humanitarian as well as development work at a time when effective spending is more important than ever.

Recommendations for the Humanitarian Emergency Response Review

- **Disaster Risk Reduction must be a priority for DFID's work overall**, including its humanitarian work. It must focus on at risk countries and communities in order to build preparedness and resilience prior to disasters. DFID should maintain its lead role in supporting DRR, retain its dedicated DRR funding and encourage other donors to also dedicate at least 10% of all humanitarian response funding to DRR.
- **DRR needs to be recognised as a global priority by all humanitarian as well as development actors.** DFID must maintain its leadership example in the donor community by prioritising the Global Platform on DRR and the delivery of the Hyogo Framework for Action in order to achieve the MDGs. A ministerial presence should be prioritised by all major governments for the UN-ISDR Global Platform in May 2011 and a clear commitment to support DRR delivery at a global level by DFID should be accompanied by financial support for effective delivery of DRR in vulnerable communities.
- **DFID should continue to support innovative DRR programming by humanitarian agencies and NGOs.** Working with NGOs provides a strong emphasis on community responses and targets the most vulnerable. However, integrating DRR at local level during response with many competing priorities remains a challenge. Dedicated long-term support is needed to ensure aid agencies are equipped to implement DRR in their humanitarian response work and are able to support local organisations to do so too. Conflict exacerbates vulnerability to disasters as well, and DFID also needs to

¹ Pg 14, Human Development Report 2007/8, Fighting Climate Change: Human Solidarity in a Divided World.

support more effective DRR approaches in such situations. Disasters disproportionately affect the most vulnerable, so DRR in poor communities also specifically targets marginalised groups like women and girls, urban poor or excluded communities.

- **DFID should support the integration of climate change adaptation, with disaster management and addressing long-term drivers of poverty and vulnerability.** The humanitarian community must adapt to the impacts of climate change in addition to mitigating the impact of environmental degradation. Some NGOs are ahead of donors in integrating DRR with climate change adaptation (CCA) and long-term development work that reduces vulnerability. Donors still tend to divide funding in very compartmentalised ways that encourage responses that do not take into account the impact of climate change on DM activities, or limit innovation in DRR, CCA and development.
- **DFID needs to support greater involvement of NGOs and civil society organisations in Post Disaster Needs Assessments (PDNAs), and also promote means to improve linkages between the cluster system and the World Bank.** NGOs and civil society organisations are often not involved or consulted effectively in PDNAs. There is a lack of a credible mechanism in place to ensure their participation. This greatly restricts their ability to engage and provide inputs into disaster recovery and risk reduction priorities. Community participation in identification and implementation of rehabilitation work also needs to be strengthened as part of this process. The lack of effective linkages between the cluster system and IFIs like the World Bank has reduced the effectiveness of the overall humanitarian response. In particular we would welcome a strengthened leadership role for the Humanitarian Coordinator in both DRR planning in-country and enabling adequate funding for DRR.
- **DFID should encourage and support humanitarian action that delivers DRR at the local community level.** There is a risk that donors and global institutions focus only on national level initiatives. While national-led plans are critical for integrating effective DRR, efforts must be made to prioritise genuine involvement at regional and district levels, such that policies and plans are grounded in the realities of local context, community-owned, cost effective and sustainable. For example, a strong health system is critical in mitigating disaster risk and responding in time of crisis – but national level planning must be supported by effective health service delivery at local level if communities are to be able to adequately prepare for and respond to disasters. Particular care should be taken to ensure the participation of vulnerable groups, women and children who are often not involved enough at local level in decision-making and planning.
- **DFID must prioritise support for local organisations and increase accountability to beneficiaries of humanitarian aid.** DFID should work to ensure that the international organisations recognise local community organisations to be key actors. This should include ensuring inclusive coordination mechanisms for UN clusters and support for innovative response and recovery involving or led by local organisations. DFID must ensure they are accountable to beneficiaries through their own work and must continue to support community based DRR and global initiatives like the Humanitarian Accountability Partnership standards.
- **DFID should ensure that work with the private sector in humanitarian response and recovery is built on examples of good practice and effectiveness at local level.** With increasing frequency and complexity of major disasters, private sector will also need to play an increased role, whilst also recognising what they cannot do. Examples of disaster insurance have shown opportunities for building preparedness

and accessing resources for recovery, but they need to focus better on meeting the needs of poor communities, often living in informal settlements. Not-for-profit professional institutions (especially logisticians, surveyors, etc) which have provided innovative models for promoting partnerships between private sector and humanitarian sector agencies should be encouraged. However, support for the private sector should require equal accountability and should also encourage engagement with local private sector like local chambers of commerce where appropriate.

- **DFID should ensure a better integration of DRR and longer-term recovery planning within humanitarian emergency response.** DFID has recognised that 'responses to disasters can themselves prolong crisis or create new risk'². Greater focus on longer-term recovery is required even during the emergency response phase to minimize the gap between emergency response and longer-term reconstruction and recovery. This includes ensuring humanitarian responses utilise local DRR planning, expertise, systems and structures where they exist, like Disaster Mitigation Task Forces (DMTF) along India's Andhra Pradesh coast. Furthermore, humanitarian responses should incorporate a better understanding of the root causes of risk and should include practical steps to integrate DRR into humanitarian interventions through lesson-learning, new guidelines etc.

As DFID reviews its policy and programmes to be 'fit for purpose', it is essential that, despite the separate review processes, the findings of DFID's HERR should be part of an overarching aid strategy that emerges from all these reviews; to ensure a focus on building resilience, provision of effective emergency assistance which also minimises the 'gap' between the emergency phase and recovery as well as longer term development.

This submission was put together by Bond and its DRRG (please see list of signatories below) with the understanding that individual agencies would be submitting evidence on issues relating to the wider terms of reference for the Humanitarian and Emergency Response Review. It should also be considered alongside Bond DRRG's submission for DFID's Multilateral Aid Review³.

This joint submission has been submitted by Bond, and formally endorsed by its DRRG members Cafod, CARE, Christian Aid, Handicap International, Merlin, Oxfam, Plan International, RICS BuildAction, Tearfund and World Vision.

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² Pg 3, DRR: A Development Concern (DFID Scoping Study, 2004)

³ Available from http://www.rics.org/site/scripts/download_info.aspx?downloadID=5860