2015

World Disasters Report

Focus on local actors, the key to humanitarian effectiveness

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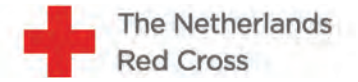

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The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is the world's largest volunteer-based humanitarian network. Together with our 189 member National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies worldwide, we reach 97 million people annually through long-term services and development programmes as well as 85 million people through disaster response and early recovery programmes. We act before, during and after disasters and health emergencies to meet the needs and improve the lives of vulnerable people. We do so with impartiality as to nationality, race, gender, religious beliefs, class and political opinions.

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Cover photo: *After an earthquake devastated central Nepal in April 2015, local people were the first to respond. They immediately set about removing the rubble from shattered buildings and ancient temples, seeking others trapped in the ruins. They are effective because they are local, because they understand the culture and the vulnerabilities of the communities affected. Local actors need the resources and technical expertise of international agencies, but they also need help to reinforce their role and build their capacity.*

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Local actors, the key to humanitarian effectiveness

The Ebola crisis in West Africa, the Nepal earthquake, the conflict in Syria, floods in Germany and Hurricane Sandy in the United States mobilized our humanitarian response. They were all very different crises, but they shared one common feature. Each of them highlighted the critical yet often undervalued role of local actors.

Local actors are always the first to respond. In Nepal, local volunteers and emergency workers were responding even as the dust from the earthquake still hung in the air. In West Africa, well before the world woke up to the true nature of the Ebola threat, local health workers and affected communities were treating and isolating the sick and burying the dead.

Their effectiveness goes beyond their proximity. They are also effective because of the perspective they bring. Because they are present in communities before a crisis hits, they see it not as an event in and of itself, but as something that is linked to the past, to unaddressed risks, vulnerabilities and inequalities. Emergencies – disasters, health crises, even conflicts – are not beginnings or ends, no matter how severe. They are moments that need to be overcome; simply overcoming them, however, will not put an end to the challenges faced by communities.

Local actors are uniquely placed to find solutions that reduce underlying risks because of their understanding of local contexts – of weather patterns, of community leaders, of vulnerabilities and of sources of strength. They are able to support communities to pre-empt and address future crises and threats, and to become stronger and more resilient in the process.

This year's *World Disasters Report* calls for the recognition of the role that local actors play. It invites governments and the international aid community to do more to reinforce and support that critical role. However, the whole responsibility for responding to large-scale disasters cannot be transferred to local actors. The international community still has a very important role to play, but a better balance needs to be struck. International actors can provide specialized resources and technical expertise, brought with humility, trust and respect, and with a true commitment to building local capacity.

This report is an important contribution to discussions about localized action that have been ongoing for many years, but that have gained increased profile this year as governments and aid groups re-evaluate how they work. It builds on discussions that were held at the beginning of the year during the United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai and more recently during the

process to finalize and adopt the Sustainable Development Goals. It makes a direct contribution to next year's World Humanitarian Summit where the localization of aid is one of the key thematic areas of focus. Each process has proclaimed the importance of reinforcing and funding national and local capacity. The ultimate success or failure of our responses will depend on how effectively we can find a better balance between global and local.

In that perspective, the IFRC earlier this year launched the One Billion Coalition for Resilience, a new initiative to rally communities and partners to dramatically increase action on resilience to save lives, preserve livelihoods and build the capacity of communities to bounce back better and withstand future shocks.

Elhadj As Sy
Secretary General

Chapter 1

Chapter 1

Setting the stage: local actors, the present and the future of humanitarian action

Just before midday on 25 April 2015, the ground underneath the ancient city of Bhaktapur, on the eastern corner of the Kathmandu Valley, started to shake. Sammeer Bajracharya, a 22-year-old engineering student, was at home. "As soon as the earthquake started, I knew what was happening," he said. "I made sure my family was okay, and then as soon as the shaking stopped I went out to direct people to safer places."

People like Bajracharya – people living in the affected areas and people affiliated with local groups like the Nepal Red Cross Society – were the first to respond. Even as news of the long-feared calamity reached the rest of the world, local volunteers and emergency responders were digging people from rubble, providing first aid and organizing the first elements of what would turn into a massive humanitarian endeavour.

The importance of local actors to humanitarian action has been increasingly recognized by the humanitarian community, scholars and donors (Ramalingam, Gray and Cerruti, 2013). This cannot simply be explained by their proximity. It is, in part, connected to the rise of the global risk reduction agenda, which asserts that humanitarian action must be better linked to building the resilience and preparedness of people, institutions and places affected by hazards. Even beyond this, there is a growing feeling that strengthening the role of local actors may finally help to redress some of the perennial challenges of humanitarian aid, such as shrinking access, fragmentation and incoherency in operations, and the gaps between response, recovery and development.

However, despite formal international commitments and the good intentions of many, post-disaster evaluations, research reports and anecdotes consistently highlight the little space that local actors are afforded by the international community as it carries out humanitarian operations. As one recent report put it: "The reality is that efforts to work with national and local actors do not play a central role in the majority of international humanitarian work" (Ramalingam, Gray and Cerruti, 2013).

This is perhaps most starkly illustrated in the area of humanitarian financing. In an example that has been cited numerous times, Haitian actors were entrusted with less than 10 per cent of the US$ 6.43 billion disbursed in the two

In the Solomon Islands, Silas Keve works with local NGO Kastom Gaden, which has introduced new methods of gardening to better adapt to climate change. Most national and international organizations recognize that buttressing local government and supporting non-governmental actors will increase the short- and long-term humanitarian impact.
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years following the January 2010 earthquake, according to the United Nations (UN). Of this:

- 9.1 per cent (US$ 582.3 million) was channelled to the government of Haiti through its national systems for public financial management and procurement
- a mere 0.6 per cent (US$ 37.1 million) was received by Haitian non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and companies (OSGSA, 2015).

This year's *World Disasters Report* explores the reasons behind this surge of interest in the role of local actors, as well as some of the factors that explain why this has yet to move them closer to the driver's seat in major humanitarian operations. It also discusses some of the barriers and concerns that have arisen with increasing global reliance on the efforts of local actors, particularly in conflict settings. Finally, it highlights some of the efforts that are under way to improve cooperation between 'traditional' humanitarians and local actors.

Overview

This *opening chapter* tackles a number of ideas and questions: the evolution of thought in the aid industry around the role of local actors; the disconnection between rhetoric and action in capacity development; major trends in humanitarian and development assistance and their connection to capacity development; the failures of capacity development; elements of volunteer management in regard to local credibility, and effective approaches to supporting local organizations. The chapter presents the variations in interpretation of who are local actors and what it means to work with them. It will also highlight the dilemmas and some of the consequences of current practices.

Capacity development is one of many determining factors and has defined a significant part of international–local engagement. The IFRC, with funding from the United Kingdom's Department for International Development, commissioned a global study to review learning from decades of evolving capacity development theory and practice. **Chapter 2** is a summary of the study and presents a clear message that investment in capacity development pays off in the long term in cases where it is driven by a real local need, where local actors are active in programme design and where cultural values are mixed with creative methods, rather than merely fulfilling donor requirements or facilitating delivery. This was evident, for example, in community warning system projects in Pakistan or the Minland Foundation in the Philippines.

Regulatory and normative frameworks for humanitarian assistance and disaster risk management play an important part in assigning roles when it comes to response operations. Finance, from both international and national sources, in terms of

channels, access and modalities, is critical to sustainable results. **Chapter 3** points out that the current profile of local actors in normative frameworks for disaster risk management is growing progressively stronger at both the international and the national levels, but the access of local actors to key decision-making forums has not yet caught up. What the international community has been funding and where such funding has gone is the focus of **Chapter 4**. Shifting donor priorities, barriers and opportunities for increasing access to international humanitarian funding are examined and supported by quantitative analysis of several cases.

The nature of humanitarian work has also undergone significant changes in fragile and contested environments. Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia, South Sudan and other cases continue to present challenges that all actors have to contend with. Chapters 5 and 6 focus on how both international and local actors had to adapt to such changes. On the one hand, remote management, the focus of **Chapter 5**, is becoming a necessary mode of operation but one that presents ethical dilemmas about risk transfer to local actors. On the other hand, in protracted conflict, as in **Chapter 6**, the picture is never clear, the situation is always fluid and in constant flux with shifting dynamics of modern conflict and proxy wars, and local actors are rarely neutral or impartial. Both chapters present good practice in programme approach where coordination and building trust could fulfil upward and downward accountability concerns.

Chapter 7 brings in an aspect that cuts across all crises, whether conflict or disasters resulting from natural hazards – technology in the hands of the population and used in either organic or organized ways by local actors is redefining the way crises are managed and dealt with. The chapter poses a central question: to what extent would technology contribute to changing the relationship between international and local actors or put local actors in the lead, thus altering any balance of power?

The definitions and questions

What is meant by 'local actors'? There is no single definition. Local is a shifting concept, which is highly contextual and dependent on one's point of view. National authorities and NGOs may be considered local in comparison to international responders in a crisis. National affiliates of international NGO networks are locally staffed and generally enjoy significant autonomy. Subnational authorities (such as provincial governors, mayors and neighbourhood officials) and community-level civil society organizations see themselves as local as compared to both national and international entities. Community-level branches and volunteers of national organizations, such as National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, are more local than their own national hierarchies. The

domestically contracted personnel of international organizations are 'local' in important ways.

This report does not seek to make a definitive determination about what 'local' ought to mean in humanitarian action. The main aim is to address some problematic questions and explore current experience and future trends in the roles of various kinds of actors that might be seen as local in the context of humanitarian work. For example, does local mean representative? Is local aid always better aid? What considerations are taken into account in identifying local partners? Does a partnership model mean a sacrifice in speed, quality and/or transparency of aid? Are 'partners' merely delivery support mechanisms? What gains and pitfalls might there be in encouraging greater local leadership over response operations?

The comparative advantages of local, as opposed to external or foreign, actors are increasingly recognized. Local actors often have access to population groups that foreign or external actors struggle to reach. Local actors are often much better connected to the populations they serve linguistically and culturally and can exercise a special kind of moral authority, as demonstrated in the case of the grandmothers' committees in Afghanistan (see Box 1.1). Moreover, as partners for international responders, local actors may offer, politically, an indispensable shortcut to local rapport and cooperation.

BOX 1.1 Grandmothers' committees ensure women's access to health services in Afghanistan

Afghanistan is among the few countries in the world with a sex ratio of more men than women (107.2 males for every 100 females) (World Bank, 2011). Afghan women face considerable discrimination from infancy to adulthood. In addition, a combination of factors, including cultural traditions, poor education and inaccessible or inefficient health care services, mean that women face an unacceptably high maternal mortality ratio.

Recent estimates (UNFPA, 2012) indicate the maternal mortality ratio is among the highest in the world, standing at 460 deaths per 100,000 live births.

Afghanistan also has a high adolescent birth rate with an annual average of 90 births per 1,000 women aged 15–19 years. However, births among 15- to 19-year-olds are associated with the highest risk of infant and child mortality as well as a higher risk of morbidity and mortality for the young mother.

The main causes of maternal mortality are haemorrhage, obstructed labour, pregnancy-induced hypertension and sepsis. A major contributory factor in increased maternal morbidity and mortality is the lack of trained female health care providers in the country; due to cultural barriers a woman must be seen by a female health professional. The percentage of preventable maternal deaths is 74 per cent and 67 per cent of deliveries that take place at home (UNICEF, 2015). Coverage of tetanus-toxoid vaccination is 60 per cent (WHO, 2011).

Afghanistan also has the lowest female literacy rates (12.5 per cent) in the world. As women are not allowed to travel without a male family member, almost all the educated or trained women work in the cities.

Grandmothers' committees

In the Afghan context, grandmothers play an important role in society. They are seen as respected and influential figures within the family unit and in the wider community. Recognizing this, the Afghan Red Crescent Society decided to create 'grandmothers' committees' in their community-based health projects in the provinces of Balkh, Samangan and Nengarhar. The grandmothers encourage young mothers and women to seek health care services and help convince husbands and fathers to let their wives or daughters visit health facilities, undergo health consultations and receive medical treatment. This change of behaviour is serving to reduce maternal mortality, enhance well-being and improve the health status of mothers, children and vulnerable communities.

The process of creating the grandmothers' committee begins with the Afghan Red Crescent approaching the village council (community *shuras*) and then forming a village health committee. After being made aware of the importance of creating a grandmothers' committee, the health committee holds a community sensitization session and the village council proposes a number of elderly women. Afghan Red Crescent female trainers select 20 grandmothers in each village, who are trained in reproductive healthcare. The five-day course covers safe motherhood, ante- and postnatal care, safe delivery, care of newborns, childcare and referrals. They are also taught community-based health and first-aid skills and other essential topics such as hygiene promotion, epidemic control, psychosocial support and behavioural change activities.

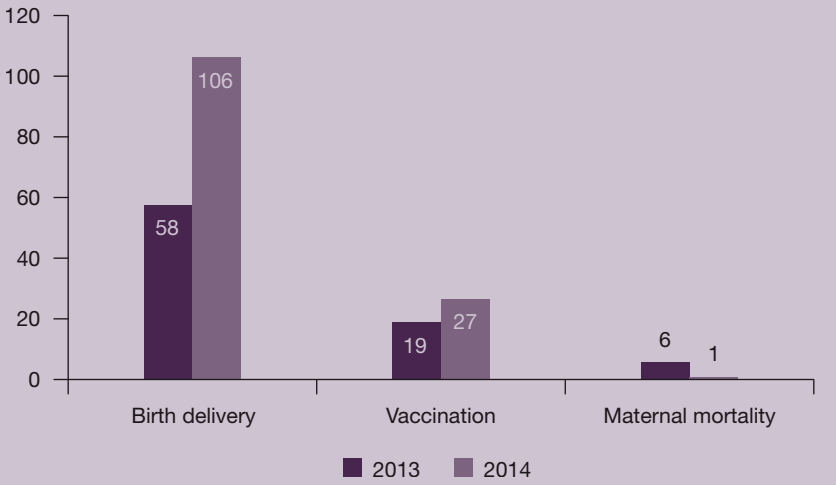
A referral mechanism is established with local health clinics and members of the grandmothers' committee are introduced to the provincial public health authorities. The grandmothers' committee then invites young mothers and pregnant women in the community to take part in household sessions on reproductive health. They also refer women to health clinics for proper maternal care and other reproductive health services.

Outcome and impact

The creation of grandmothers' committees has proven effective in providing guidance to women and young girls and promoting behavioural change through increasing their awareness on reproductive health issues and improving their access to maternal and child healthcare services.

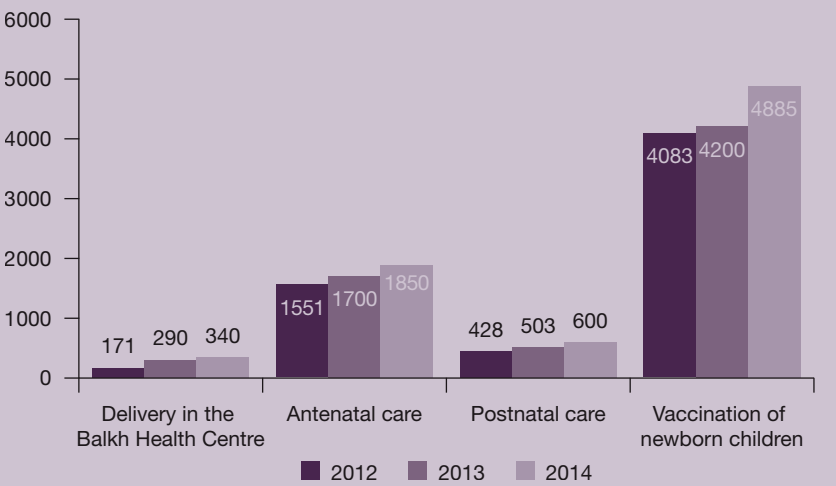
In 2014, four grandmothers' committees were established in Joy-Zhwandoon and HassanKhil villages in Samangan province. Women in the two project villages were encouraged to visit the health clinic to receive the maternal, newborn and child health services (antenatal, postnatal, delivery and family planning). This led to higher numbers of pregnant women giving birth in the health facility and a reduction in their mortality rates in the two villages in 2014. It also led to increased vaccination coverage of children under 5 years. A similar picture emerged in Balkh province where the impact of the grandmothers' committee could be seen in the village of Garshiqag of Dawlat Abad district (see Figures 1 and 2).

Figure 1 Samangan province



Source: Statistics were collected from Health Management Information System report on Samangan provincial health hospital concerning Joy-Zhwandoon and HassanKhil villages for 2013 and 2014.

Figure 2 Balkh province



Source: Statistics were collected from the Ministry of Public Health clinic in Garshigag village, Dawlat Abad district, Balkh province, 2012–2014.

Challenges and way forward

The Afghan Red Crescent is working to expand the number of grandmothers' committees, improve the programme and maintain the grandmothers as valued Red Crescent community volunteers. Many of the grandmothers face constraints on their time due to the demands of supporting income-generating activities in their own families such as carpet weaving, spinning and animal husbandry. Training approaches will also be modified and simplified as most women and grandmothers have little or no literacy skills. ■

But if there are so many advantages to working with local actors, what can explain the reluctance many international responders and donors have apparently shown in practice to actually do so?

One factor may be that, although many larger international organizations have screening protocols to identify partners, these can be hard to start implementing in the midst of a crisis. Thus, international NGOs might fall back on known partners or simply assume more of the work themselves, potentially seeking to gain the local angle through employing national staff.

Moreover, Ramalingam, Gray and Cerutti (2013) stress that it is important to distinguish between different phases of a disaster. In the immediate aftermath of a crisis, local systems might well be overwhelmed and international responders, as well as their donors, may feel that supporting local capacity is in tension with the 'humanitarian imperative' of saving lives and acting as rapidly as possible. While local actors might have much greater potential in needs assessment, programme development, disbursement and delivery, the scale of a disaster and the local capacity to respond may be seen to tilt the balance in favour of systems that claim to guarantee comprehensive coverage and rapid response.

In conflict situations, there can also be concerns about the actual or perceived neutrality and impartiality of local actors. Moreover, some international actors and donors worry about the quality of assistance that local actors can provide and their ability to report on their activities and results. In this respect, the Core Humanitarian Standard initiative, with its goal of simplifying and democratizing international standards for humanitarian quality and accountability, has the potential to create a stronger shared baseline between international and local responders if energetically marketed at the local level (see Box 1.2).

BOX 1.2 The SCHR and the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability

The Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response (SCHR) is a voluntary alliance of nine of the world's leading humanitarian organizations, including seven NGO networks (ACT Alliance, CARE, CARITAS, Lutheran World Federation, Oxfam, Save the Children and World Vision) and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. It was founded in 1972, at a time when no formal humanitarian coordination structures were in place, to find ways to improve coordination at the global level. Since then, driven by their common vision of a future in which affected populations actively participate in shaping the kind of assistance they receive and their relationship with aid providers, SCHR organizations have been working together to contribute to improving the quality of humanitarian action and the accountability of humanitarian organizations to people affected by crisis.

Over time, these organizations have supported and promoted a number of initiatives aimed at codifying and standardizing humanitarian action centred on people affected by crisis and based on humanitarian principles and good practices, such as the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief, initiated in 1994, which sets principles of conduct for organizations involved in humanitarian work (IFRC, 1994) and the Sphere Project, launched in 1997, which provides standards for what people affected by crisis have the right to expect in terms of humanitarian assistance (Sphere Project, 2011).

From 2000 to 2010, these organizations carried out two peer reviews of their own practices in addressing issues of sexual exploitation and abuse of people affected by crisis, and on their operationalization of the principle of accountability to affected populations, to identify areas for improvement and to learn from each other.

Around the end of this period, SCHR members – as well as a number of other humanitarian organizations – began to feel that the proliferation of humanitarian quality standards was becoming confusing for staff in the field. They were also concerned that the efforts of the small secretariats devoted to promoting some of the main standards were too separated and missing opportunities for economies of scale. They called for means to rationalize and harmonize the various approaches.

In response, thanks to the work led by the Humanitarian Accountability Partnership, the Sphere Project and People In Aid, and based on sectorwide consultations, the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability was launched at the end of 2014. It sets out nine commitments, which characterize effective and accountable humanitarian action and describe what needs to be done by organizations and their staff to achieve quality humanitarian action and be accountable to populations affected by crisis. The nine commitments focus on the following criteria for quality and accountable humanitarian responses:

- Action is appropriate and relevant.
- Action is effective and timely.
- Action strengthens local capacities and avoids negative effects.

- Action is based on communication with, participation of and feedback from people affected by crisis.
- Affected people's complaints are welcomed and addressed.
- Action is coordinated and complementary.
- Humanitarian actors continuously learn and improve.
- Humanitarian staff are supported to do their job effectively and are treated fairly and equitably.
- Resources for humanitarian action are used responsibly for their intended purpose.

These nine commitments are supported by key actions that describe what staff engaged in humanitarian action need to do to achieve high-quality response programmes consistently and to be accountable to those they assist, while organizational responsibilities outline the policies, processes and systems organizations need to have in place to support their staff to deliver high-quality and accountable responses.

The Core Humanitarian Standard aims to help people affected by crisis in two ways. First, by outlining what organizations need to do to deliver high-quality accountable assistance and protection and, second, by specifying what affected populations should expect from the organizations responding to their needs. It puts into operation and systematizes good practices and, as such, is applicable in all humanitarian response contexts, throughout all phases of the response, and helps ensure that humanitarian organizations work in coordination with one another and in support of local capacities.

People affected by crisis were consulted on the Core Humanitarian Standard as it was being developed and tested by more than 60 organizations in roughly 20 countries. Their systematic feedback will continue to inform the future revisions of the standard as it evolves.

Over time, SCHR expects that the Core Humanitarian Standard will be recognized and referenced by most humanitarian actors and stakeholders, including people affected by crisis, governments, businesses and academia. The committee also hopes that eventually it will help promote more coherence among the different donor reporting frameworks that humanitarian actors are currently bound to.

Organizations, which are interested in objectively demonstrating and reporting on their compliance with the Core Humanitarian Standard, should be able to access third-party verification services. Such services should be based on a methodology, which systematizes feedback from people affected by crisis, so as to contribute further to mainstreaming accountability to affected populations across organizations' work.

As more and more organizations engage in external verification and reporting against their compliance with the Core Humanitarian Standard, it should help to distinguish principled, effective and accountable organizations from others and will contribute to building the confidence of affected people, governments, donors and the public in those organizations which show commitment to clearly articulated standards and transparency about what they achieve and their limitations.

The Core Humanitarian Standard offers a framework for a consistent dialogue between humanitarian organizations, people affected by crises and other local stakeholders on what constitutes relevant, effective and accountable humanitarian action. It is also a means for populations affected by disasters to shape and influence the assistance and protection they receive and the way it is provided. ■

The changing story

These dilemmas are not new. However, much has changed in recent years that may make a shift in the power dynamics between local and other actors in humanitarian action much more pressing on the global agenda.

Since the adoption of UN General Assembly resolution 46/182 nearly a quarter of a century ago and resultant establishment of the 'formal' humanitarian system, the nature of humanitarian support has changed dramatically. It has grown exponentially, becoming an industry valued at nearly US$ 20 billion. Apart from the Red Cross Red Crescent with their 400,000 staff, an ALNAP study estimates that there are 274,000 aid workers worldwide (ALNAP, 2012). The largest international NGOs are important economic and political actors, with incomes of more than half a billion US dollars and workforces of more than 10,000 people.

As the international aid industry has expanded, the concurrent rise of the multi-polar world has pushed Western aid agencies and humanitarian organizations to greatly increase their attention to cooperation between international responders and their national and local counterparts. In the past 20 years, many former low-income countries have become middle- or even high-income countries. They have become both less reliant on outside assistance and better positioned to shape their international relationships, particularly the traditional donor–recipient one. This coincides with the appearance of new donors, in particular in the development sphere, that offer alternative approaches which not only blur the line between investment and assistance, but also signal a break from previous North–South relations. China's approach of seeking commodities in exchange for concessional loans for infrastructure has proved hugely attractive for many African countries and is often on a scale that dwarfs official development assistance (ODA).

This coincides with the rise of huge private foundations whose annual budgets not only match but surpass those of individual countries. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, for example, which works on many global health-related programmes, spends about the same amount of money on development as Switzerland. Such sources may create new opportunities for direct local funding, unburdened by the traditional hesitations of donor governments.

All these changes have taken place alongside increasing acknowledgement, in the wider development context, of the importance of working within national country systems, whether by supporting budgets directly or by consciously aligning donor plans with country plans. In 2008, the Accra Agenda for Action heralded an alternative ethos for development. "South-South co-operation on development", it declared, "aims to observe the principle of *non-interference in internal affairs, equality among developing partners* and respect for their independence, *national sovereignty*, cultural diversity and identity, and local content" (emphasis added). This was an important step beyond the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness in 2005, which had courted local governments as stakeholders with consultation rights. By the time of the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation declaration in 2011 though, local governments had become "full development partners with an equal say in how to foster sustainable growth, reduce poverty and share prosperity" (OECD, 2014).

In this connection, some countries insist that donors and responders, whether public or private, demonstrate how their activities – including disaster response and recovery initiatives – will conform to the priorities set out by ministries. On the whole this can and should be recognized as a positive development. However, it can also have a dark side. For example, on the grounds of greater transparency, civic organizations receiving external funding in Cairo, Baku or Moscow have been asked to publicly declare themselves 'foreign agents'. Recently, there have been proposals in the United States that any NGO giving evidence in a congressional hearing has first to declare the sources of its funding. In some contexts, stricter government controls are placing serious limits on NGOs' ability to operate within the current humanitarian structures.

The motivation story

The current humanitarian system is based on assumptions that seem increasingly at odds with the changing reality of the field. Despite protestations to the contrary, international humanitarian actors continue to expect that governments are either unwilling or unable to respond to the needs of their people and that both national and local actors do not have the appropriate response capacity. From the other side, the monopoly of Western donors and established international humanitarian organizations is increasingly called into question by national governments and NGOs. New forms of humanitarian action are emerging and a growing number of actors, including domestic actors (which increasingly also means urban actors, as described in Box 1.3), want to play their legitimate role.

BOX 1.3 The challenge for urban actors

In the coming decades, cities will have to make significant decisions on planning, land use and investment to support economic growth and enable growing populations to sustain livelihoods. Alongside these considerations, cities will be faced with the 'wicked problem' (i.e., a problem that is difficult to define clearly, has many interdependencies, has no right or wrong response and spans across governance boundaries) of the increased variability and unpredictability of the global climate system (Rayner, 2006). This wicked problem is especially daunting at the local level as local actors (agencies, citizens and NGOs) have limited experience of understanding and acting in a coordinated way – across infrastructure, planning and policy portfolios – to reduce climate-induced impacts.

Actions for building resilience to climate change in the urban context seek to respond to this wicked problem and take into consideration the ability of urban systems to withstand the impacts of climate-induced disruptions and maintain function in the face of them (da Silva et al., 2012).

The ACCCRN programme

Since 2008, the Asian Cities Climate Change Resilience Network (ACCCRN) has been "testing local approaches to building urban climate change resilience in institutions and systems serving poor and vulnerable communities" in four countries: India, Indonesia, Thailand and Viet Nam (Brown, Dayal and Rumbaitis Del Rio, 2012).

City-level engagement, capacity development, and climate risk and vulnerability assessments enabled cities to put together city resilience strategies and identify and develop proposals that would build climate change resilience at multiple scales within the city. ACCCRN helps cities to initiate and sustain action towards building resilience to climate change, which demands multidisciplinary and cross-sectoral approaches, processes and practices (Kernaghan and da Silva, 2014). The ACCCRN approach recognizes that the impacts of climate change are unique to local conditions, as are the capacities, governance structures and availability of resources that will determine a city's ability to act.

In practice

A feature of the ACCCRN approach has been early investment in pilot projects designed to test new ideas and forge relationships. In Indonesia, ACCCRN focused on complementing and advancing local work plans, developing institutional capacity locally and creating products and tools for further replication and to attract funding.

One pilot project was the Semarang Flood Forecasting and Early Warning System (FEWS) to address increasing tidal and riverine flooding. A key feature of the FEWS was bringing together local-level actors including key city government agencies, academia, NGOs and the community collaboratively to plan, design and deliver a FEWS. The success of this multi-disciplinary, cross-sectoral approach was clear when the early warning system itself was offline; a flood occurred yet the community was able to cope.

Across ACCCRN, pilot projects highlighted the rich existing capacity in city teams. Most projects addressed more than one sector and employed a range of approaches for building the robustness of buildings and infrastructure, flexibility and diversity in organizations and the community, and capacity

of governing institutions (da Silva and Morera, 2014). The need for a series of capacity development tools emerged first to provide a framework to understand the city system and, second, to mobilize the existing technical capacity and skills in the city.

A training toolkit called 'Successful Project Delivery' was developed to assist partners with the design and implementation of projects involving multiple partners (Arup International Development, 2013). The materials were delivered, tested and refined through application on ACCCRN projects in the Indonesian cities of Bandar Lampung and Semarang with Mercy Corps and Arup.

In Semarang and Bandar Lampung, the role played by multi-stakeholder city teams in championing resilience to climate change in their cities was key. These teams led the process of creating city resilience strategies, developing proposals and forming implementation teams to build resilience at the city scale. Building on this experience, Mercy Corps and Arup together developed a 'Successful City Teams' training toolkit to support cities establish and lead high-performing teams to champion resilience.

Sharing knowledge

Critical to the journey of building experience within and between city actors was the ACCCRN Knowledge Forums. These meetings followed a structured format over one or two days, employing a range of tools and techniques in order to facilitate knowledge sharing and discussion between peers. Facilitators worked with participants to create a safe environment in which both success and failure could be shared.

The forums also aimed to create a community with common interest in urban climate-change resilience as the foundation for direct exchange of information and ideas on an online knowledge platform. This combination of face-to-face and online knowledge management processes generated debate, discussion and materials, which provide a valuable resource for understanding the issues and challenges faced by local partners in seeding and promoting an urban climate-change resilience agenda.

Lessons learnt and next steps

ACCCRN's projects have shown that addressing challenges in cities needs to be grounded in the city and interventions for building resilience based on an understanding of the city's systems, their interdependencies, vulnerabilities and capacities. That is, through an urban systems approach.

A recent evaluation of ACCCRN highlighted that "the capacity of city partners to plan, finance, coordinate, and implement climate change resilience strategies has improved in all cities" (Veralum Associates, 2014). The contribution of contextualized training is a core part of developing this capacity, in combination with a structured process for sharing experiences and emerging knowledge on the successes and challenges of how to initiate and sustain action on building urban resilience. ■

In order to better understand the dynamics behind current approaches to partnerships, it is useful to inquire into the motives of the international actors that are reaching out. This can help clarify what drives cooperation modalities and how the relationship between international and local actors has been and is being shaped.

The success of cooperation often depends on the reasons behind the engagement. If the international NGO is simply seeking a local partner because of its unfamiliarity with the area, the benchmark might be the depth of local knowledge gained and its specific consequences for various activities. On the other hand, if working alongside local actors is designed to gain local acceptance, what about buy-in and local ownership? More sensitively, to what extent is the exercise donor-driven? In such cases, cooperation might be formally satisfied but, in practice, of limited effect and importance. Very often, local humanitarian partners do function as instruments to meet a funder's goals.

If international agencies' funding and, consequently, their longer-term survival are seen as dependent on finding suitable local partners, this creates a strong driver for developing local capacity and supporting local actors to function as competent partners. However, this sometimes brings about uncomfortable consequences. Bougheas, Isopi and Owens (2008) looked for explanations as to why donors chose to allocate funding to certain NGOs in Uganda. Noting a doubling in the absolute number of NGOs over five years, they found the most common reason to receive foreign funding was not how long the NGO had existed, not the experience of its leadership nor even the effectiveness of its work, but simply whether or not it had previously received a grant from a foreign donor.

It would be unfair to lay all the responsibility for shortcomings with international agencies. The sometimes-strident rhetoric of cooperation that affected governments express with regard to international responders is not always matched by their own behaviour as regards their domestic partners. For example, as mentioned above, the Paris, Accra and Busan declarations stress that subnational government capacity development is the responsibility of national governments rather than international donors. Although the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) points out that many national governments have proved adept at instituting review systems for monitoring development – 70 per cent of countries in the sample say that they do this – within that same sample only 46 per cent of those countries actually involve their subnational authorities in the process of overseeing spending (OECD, 2014). International agencies working with local actors need to be aware of this potential for conflict between national and local structures, particularly in areas where local elected authorities may have good reason to feel bypassed.

The sustainability story

To be sustainable in the long term, local organizations need to build a core identity, demonstrate their relevance and accountability, and maintain legitimacy in the eyes of key stakeholders. The decision to charge them with externally funded needs

assessment, distribution or service delivery clearly influences local ways of doing things. It can help transform unpaid voluntary action and support into salaried and titled positions. It can classify and quantify actions that had no formal labels beforehand and were relatively uncounted. Such changes can be positive, negative or neutral. Ideally, the relationship should be mutually rewarding and lead to better ways of working together.

However, research shows that many of today's international organizations' 'local partnerships' tend to rely on and maintain only a small set of repeat counterparts (Mosse, 2005). Moreover, critics are quick to highlight how local organizations in such pairings are sometimes transformed as they learn to be successful at maintaining resource flows by conforming to external requirements and adhering to the demands for accountability. Initially supporting their communities, such actors can find themselves accountable to the donor sphere rather than the local one.

The sustainability of local actors can be further undermined by a technocratic approach to capacity building by the international partner. Within this context, analysing capacity shortfall is often a technocratic exercise, focusing on the needs of Northern partners and their donors rather than enabling local humanitarian actors to move beyond the need for such support. If local humanitarian partners function principally as instruments to meet funders' goals, there are inevitably consequences:

- The individual organization is defined as the unit of analysis, rather than a part of a wider, interdependent ecosystem. Opportunities to strengthen the system as a whole are missed.
- It replaces holistic understanding of organizations with an emphasis on specific activities – often those that can be easily assessed by externally designed tools and can deliver quantitative outputs, such as training and equipment.
- It conceives of change as a linear process rather than an emergent one, sidelining the role of ongoing discourse in creating changed behaviours. As a consequence, developments do not gain legitimacy, policy documents remain on shelves and behaviours are largely unaffected by training and procedures.
- Systems and processes are created without regard to local resourcing environments, leaving organizations with unviable programmes once funding stops or a key person moves on.

- A culture of emulating Western organizational paradigms is promoted at the expense of local discourse and values, creating social distance and ignoring locally understood ways of working.
- A belief in ownership and accountability for project success is never fully transferred to the local organization. As a result, organizations do not have the opportunity to learn from failure, which rests largely with the donor or international partner.

Bano (2012) explores cultural expectations towards leaders of community-owned organizations in Pakistan. She describes how international aid gives incentives to organization leaders to both accept aid and maintain local support. According to Bano, one important value for local leaders to adhere to is self-sacrifice. However, it is common that aid-supported community leaders begin by receiving a locally significant salary. Second, it is expected that the community will have near-exclusive local control over decision-making and resource allocation, yet aid means that decisions over distribution and entitlement will no longer be local matters. These conflicts can easily compromise the core identity of local organizations, which can soon be seen as externally driven and no longer locally legitimate or accountable.

Probably the most local of all local actors is the community-based volunteer, an indispensable asset for organizations such as National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. This is particularly true for National Societies in low-income countries, where the average staff to volunteer ratio is 1:180 as compared to high-income countries, whose ratio is 1:9. However, achieving sustainability of volunteer programming can be an important challenge.

The status and meaning of voluntary labour varies with place, custom and history, and not always in a positive direction. In former centrally-planned economies, for example, state reliance on volunteers was a crucial if unwelcome way for maintaining the system. At the time, its function was to ensure that inbuilt economic and organizational inefficiencies did not lead to total breakdown. However, its legacy is a widespread suspicion towards volunteering and the worth of unpaid labour. Moreover, as the Burundi Red Cross example discussed in Box 1.4 makes clear, there are particular challenges to maintaining and working through a non-professional workforce, and poorly thought-out international cooperation may exacerbate them. On the other hand, growing calls for the professionalization of volunteering can create divisions that undermine community solidarity and forms of volunteerism that are spontaneous and rooted in local mores (Baillie Smith and Laurie, 2011).

BOX 1.4 Challenging the idea of a local humanitarian actor: the case of the Burundi Red Cross

In a community of Karuzi province, Burundi, a smartly dressed man stands in front of a group of 30 or so women and men wearing Red Cross tabards and carrying hoes. They come from a field, which they have been digging to help an old couple who can no longer look after their land.

Their work done for the week, the volunteers speak about what motivates them to come together to identify vulnerable people in their community and do what they can to help them. For some it is the sense of not being powerless in the face of poverty. For others, it is part of re-creating that sense of community solidarity that existed before the ethnic violence of the 1990s. For others, it is explicitly a sense of themselves having benefited from Red Cross help and wanting to give back.

This network of grass-roots humanitarian units has spread rapidly from the early pilots in Karuzi and Ruyigi provinces. In Burundi, 98 per cent of the country's 2,850 *collines* (the lowest administrative division) have Red Cross units of 50–500 volunteers out of populations of 2,000–3,000 people. Across the country, more than 400,000 people of a population of 10 million volunteer on a regular basis.

The *colline* units form a unique interface between immediate humanitarian response, local and national government and international expertise and resources. The local knowledge, acceptance and trust generated through their small-scale weekly activities give them cohesion, recognition and community acceptance when larger humanitarian issues arise.

In June 2013, when 25 Burundian refugees were expelled from Tanzania without warning, their needs for accommodation and food were wholly met by local units of Burundi Red Cross volunteers for three weeks before moving on.

When in August of the same year, the Tanzanian authorities proceeded with mass expulsions, local Red Cross units were again on the front line. However, this time locally mobilized resources were in no way adequate to support the thousands of returning refugees. Instead, units worked with the International Organization for Migration, the World Food Programme, the United Nations Refugee Agency, UNICEF and other agencies to provide food, water and sanitation and, eventually, to transfer refugees to other parts of the country.

The transformation of the scale and sustainability of humanitarian work carried out by the Burundi Red Cross in the past ten years has been noteworthy. It has moved from being a domestic actor based outside communities and highly dependent on international funding to an organization rooted in the fabric of the country's vulnerable communities.

While it is not possible to calculate the value of the humanitarian labour that this process has catalysed, one quantifiable indicator is that between 2007 and 2009 local volunteers constructed more than 8,000 traditional houses for returning refugees, with an estimated value of hundreds of thousands of dollars had the international community funded it. But the benefits of this mass humanitarian movement are in any case not just tangible. In a post-conflict society, volunteers speak openly of the role that the Red Cross has played in creating a neutral space in which different ethnic groups could work together and rebuild trust and solidarity.

For the IFRC, which with others has supported the leadership of the Burundi Red Cross in realizing its vision of scaleable and sustainable community humanitarian action, the following learning points come through:

- *Build on local values and culture.* In Burundi, *ikibiri* is the concept of mutual help within communities. Rather than speaking about abstract principles, the Burundi Red Cross anchors its humanitarian work in local understandings. In doing so, it underlines that it is a locally owned organization, distinguishing itself from other humanitarian actors.
- *Design for scale and sustainability from the start.* This organization was designed so that core activities should be manageable with community resources of knowledge and equipment, however limited these were. Without a sustainable model, it would have been impossible to replicate in other communities – costs would eventually have become too high.
- *Recognize the opportunities and limitations of international aid.* The value for aid agencies of having locally established and trusted units in the field is huge: the costs of accessing populations and building trust are minimal and the chances that practice and knowledge will be maintained in communities are high. But in a model in which local people's decisions are central, poorly-considered external intervention can destroy local initiative. So part of protecting local units is ensuring that they are fully involved in programmatic and resource decisions that might affect their communities, to the point of deciding how much people should be paid for any work that needs to be carried out and who should be employed. Educating partners in the needs and fragility of local units is an ongoing process for the coordination of the Burundi Red Cross.
- *A coordination system is crucial – but not easy to sustain.* While local units provide day-to-day humanitarian response and a first response to an emergency, they are not equipped for ongoing relief operations or for dealing with national and international partners. Similarly, quality control is an enormous task. Local units have crises, and it is important that any serious issues are dealt with quickly so that the good name of the organization is not damaged. For these tasks, a coordination structure is needed, in this case at communal, provincial and national levels. At provincial and national levels, staff, transport and offices require finance, even with minimal structures. While some of this is increasingly generated in-country, much relies on programme costs from international partners.
- *The role of a local humanitarian actor in a fragile political context is challenging.* In building the grass-roots base of the organization, much work had to be done to persuade the government at all levels that this was an apolitical exercise. With approaching national elections at the time of writing, an identified risk for the organization is that its neutrality is compromised by internal or external actors, damaging trust and potentially putting local volunteers at risk of reprisal.
- *For the IFRC, an investment approach to creating a strong organization, rather than more typical project financing, has been key to supporting the Burundi Red Cross through this change.* This meant committing funds in the expectation that a competent leadership would need to test and experiment and adapt the project, potentially radically. ■

Chapter 1

In 2013–2014, the IFRC undertook one of the largest-ever global studies on volunteering. The *Global Review on Volunteering* identified several critical issues facing volunteerism in both development and humanitarian response contexts, particularly in the global South (Hazeldine and Baillie Smith, 2015):

- In many countries in the global South, entrenched and acute poverty undermines the capacity of people to volunteer.
- Once a staple of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the 'lifetime' volunteer is disappearing as people are more mobile, lifestyles are changing, and there is less time to volunteer.
- Volunteers are increasingly looking for more from their volunteering experience, including professional opportunities, training, travel costs, etc.
- People are less likely to engage as part of a geographic community and more likely to identify either individually or as parts of more fluid communities.
- Volunteers operate in fragile environments or within protracted crises, where their physical and psychological well-being is threatened, often over long periods (50 Red Crescent volunteers have died in Syria alone since the start of the crisis).

As a result, the management of volunteers needs to adapt. The IFRC report found that these trends were common in most countries and that the compounding influence of economic problems has added significantly to the complexity of engaging volunteers to meet the needs of vulnerable people.

Whether in the case of offering development aid or supporting volunteering, what would an effective approach to supporting autonomous and effective local humanitarian actors look like (Andrews, Pritchett and Woolcock, 2012)? First and foremost is the need to clarify what are the short- and long-term goals. Are international partners seeking short-term fixes or long-term outcomes or both? As the latter is often the case, how are they negotiating the right balance with partners? Are they fundamentally prepared to accept the implications of success, which may well include greater local humanitarian autonomy and potential challenge to their own position within the existing global humanitarian set-up (as occurred to some extent in Tacloban after Typhoon Haiyan, as noted in Box 1.5)? It may also entail moving beyond the organization as the primary unit of analysis and, when necessary, supporting the development of the environment in which such organizations evolve.

BOX 1.5 Working with local actors in the Philippines after Typhoon Haiyan

By 2030, 4 billion people (or almost 50 per cent of the world's population) are predicted to live in the towns and cities of low- and middle-income countries (UNDESA, 2014). Up to 50 per cent of these urban dwellers are likely to live in informal settlements – located in hazardous areas, lacking access to basic services and highly vulnerable to a range of risks (Dodman et al., 2013). This urbanization of disaster risk presents a significant challenge for humanitarian agencies (IFRC, 2010), both in the complexity of responding to urban disasters and in operating in an environment in which traditional actors do not have significant experience and expertise.

On 8 November 2013, Typhoon Haiyan (known locally as Yolanda) devastated the Visayas region of the Philippines. More than 6,000 deaths were recorded while in excess of 14 million people were affected and approximately 4 million people were displaced (ReliefWeb, 2014). Approximately 5 per cent of the total damage to housing and settlements occurred in Tacloban City – where more than 23,000 houses were partially damaged and approximately 30,000 destroyed. All seven hospitals and 17 public health facilities sustained major damage, as did 90 per cent of all educational facilities, 36 public buildings and the city's electricity, water and communications networks (Tacloban City Government, 2014).

Prior to the typhoon, Tacloban City was the fifth fastest-growing city in the country. It was the social, economic, transportation and administrative hub of the Eastern Visayas region and had been granted 'highly urbanized' status in 2008 – giving it autonomy from the provincial government of Leyte. However, the city still had a housing shortage of almost 18,000 dwellings (Tacloban City Government, 2014) and its location and topography make it vulnerable to typhoons, landslides, storm surges, earthquakes and tsunami. Tacloban was "reduced to ruins" by a typhoon and storm surge in 1897 and "practically destroyed" by a similar disaster in 1912 (Luces, 2013).

One year after Typhoon Haiyan, a series of interviews were conducted with humanitarian practitioners regarding their experiences of the challenges and opportunities of humanitarian response in Tacloban (Maynard, 2015).

A common finding from this research was the number and diversity of stakeholders in urban areas – ranging from community-based organizations and cooperatives, landlords and banks, to universities, utility companies and the various levels and departments of local and national government. This meant that humanitarian agencies needed both the local knowledge and the time to understand and consult a large number of stakeholders in order to design and implement programmes. On the other hand, there were many more potential partners, which made it possible to provide a broader range of support.

A specific challenge of working in Tacloban (which was easy to get to and received significant media attention) was the number of actors providing humanitarian assistance outside the humanitarian system. These ranged from interventions by individuals and extended families to larger programmes of assistance from religious groups and the private sector. Actors such as these were less likely to register their activities with either the local government or humanitarian coordination systems – making it difficult to coordinate activities and levels of assistance.

Several interviewees commented on the higher levels of staff, skills and expertise within Tacloban City's government in comparison to local governments in rural areas. They found the city government an accessible and capable partner in terms of integrated recovery planning and programme design, with partnerships with local institutions to access specialist expertise. However, they also noted that:

- the city government was overwhelmed with requests and demands from national government, humanitarian agencies and communities, which limited their ability to provide services and work in partnership
- staff lacked key technical skills and experience in areas such as urban planning, livelihoods and shelter, and specifically in the application of these skill-sets in a post-disaster context
- the lack of surge capacity in key national government departments meant that staff who were affected by the disaster were expected to return to work, which caused harm to some of them.

Despite high levels of capacity, the city government was deprived of almost all of its income from local taxes and permits (50 per cent of its total income) after the typhoon. This left the city lacking the resources to implement activities identified in its Recovery and Rehabilitation Plan and dependent on assistance from national government and humanitarian agencies. National government delayed approval of the city's plan, claiming that it was too costly in comparison to other, predominantly rural, municipalities. Despite the plan's focus on infrastructure-led ("service-orientated") resettlement, both humanitarian organizations and national government were also unable or unwilling to invest in the infrastructure required for the holistic development of the proposed resettlement sites. National government argued that post-disaster funding should be allocated to repair and rehabilitation rather than new infrastructure, while the humanitarian agencies' funds were tied to assistance in specific sectors.

Politics were felt to play a much greater role in decision-making in Tacloban than in rural areas, with political allegiances subject to change much more frequently. One interviewee described how this can be a positive thing – for example, if shared objectives can be identified then government officials can be helpful in moving things forward. On the other hand, politics can bias decision-making or the implementation of projects and programmes can be obstructed. Another respondent highlighted the fact that Tacloban City government made (and sometimes implemented) decisions very quickly, for example, concerning relocating people to bunkhouses. The number and rapidity of decisions being taken about many different groups of people made it difficult both to keep up and to influence the decision-making process.

To maximize the opportunity of working with local actors in future humanitarian responses in urban areas, interviewees recommended that humanitarian agencies:

- establish close working relationships with city, regional and national governments
- undertake an immediate assessment of the pre-existing social and political structure of the city
- assess what programmes are already being undertaken by government, what the gaps are and what are the roles and responsibilities of the different agencies involved
- provide service-delivery, administrative and technical support to city governments to help them meet the increased demand for services, coordination, regulation and decision-making

- work with the government to deliver programmes by enhancing or adapting existing services and systems in order to strengthen the relationship between communities and government and build long-term capacity in the system
- are aware that cities may attract a large number of non-traditional humanitarian actors and establish mechanisms to coordinate activities with them
- work with the city government to establish a recovery and reconstruction platform involving all stakeholders including civil society and the private sector
- support the city government to develop an immediate action plan and a recovery and rehabilitation plan and update its long-term development plans and building codes. ■

Conclusion

Local actors are not yet being empowered to play the strong role that international rhetoric now expects from them in international response operations. But the political writing is on the wall – this is a change that is on its way, sooner or later. The question is whether it will be achieved in a way that is effective for the needs of affected people and the long-term sustainability of local actors themselves.

This section concludes the chapter with two important questions:

- Under what circumstances can international and local actors effectively collaborate?
- How can international and local actors create a more favourable environment for working together?

With regard to the first question, one set of answers may be borrowed from the results of a Disaster Response Dialogue conference that took place in Manila in October 2014 (DRD, 2014), gathering international humanitarian organizations, donors and disaster management officials from many States with recent experience of international disaster assistance. In their outcome statement, participants emphasized that:

- International responders and donors can and should do more to support, supplement and not supplant existing national capacities, for instance through ensuring that international responses are in line with national response plans.
- National governments can and should also do more to include potential international assistance in their own national disaster preparedness rules, plans and procedures.
- International disaster response and coordination systems must be tailored to the domestic system and context of each affected State.

- Domestic and international actors, including new and emerging funders such as the private sector, should work with national governments and civil society to develop financing tools and mechanisms that will provide resources directly to national responders.

As regards the second question, it is clear that building a favourable environment requires both sides to be pragmatic and flexible in their selection of potential partners as well as the use of appropriate principles and tools. On the international side of this equation, the following areas could be highlighted:

- *Allocating time and resources* to understand the contexts and cultures in which local humanitarian partners operate and the dynamics of the sector as a whole.
- *Investing in individual actors* on the basis of their strong local constituencies, their leadership and their track records. Openly discussing at leadership level the long-term goals, commitment and opportunities, but also the risks.
- *Ensuring that any support is negotiated* based on common understandings of where the local professionals are (with or without outside help), their current priorities and needs, and how international support can help their sustained development.
- *Moving away from project finance* as central to relationships. Instead, looking for investment-type modalities, which allow for self-sustaining activities to be tested or scaled through locally-led approaches.
- *Recognizing the value of the 'soft' aspects of partnership*: relationships, learning, solidarity and investing in this type of activity with the goal of benefiting both sides of the relationship.
- *Developing partnership models* that provide genuine opportunity for shared leadership and mutual gain, where local organizations seek less episodic or transactional relationships and more shared value enterprises.
- *Thinking of local actors on their own terms* rather than as endlessly flexible agencies that are there to implement a multitude of aid targets. Any training or capacity development should first enhance the main goals of the local organization, rather than simply advance the agenda of the international agency.

Humanitarian action operates in a given context and, at the same time, it shapes that context whether in terms of power structures, the influence of interest groups, the quality of inter-relationships, the agency of the affected people or the reach of their voice. Many case studies, including the recent post-earthquake operation in Nepal, are ample illustrations of these real-time impacts

(Sanderson and Ramalingam, 2015). When it comes to working with local actors, long-term change is complex. It can be double-edged and it is inherently political in a sector that professes to be apolitical. Learning and adaptation, failure and medium-term fluctuations in performance are inevitable costs in the process of re-establishing the direction of humanitarianism. At the core of this journey is the need to ask the right questions and to value people and the role they play in creating success.

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The 2004 tsunami caused devastation along the northern Sumatra coast. As part of its community-based disaster risk reduction activities, the Indonesian Red Cross (PMI) set up mangrove seedling houses, and community action teams have planted thousands of mangroves along the coast of Aceh as a protective barrier against the sea.
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Chapter 2

What works and what doesn't: capacity development for better disaster risk management

Each year, international donor agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) invest significant amounts of finance globally on disaster risk management (DRM) initiatives, often with the ultimate aim of strengthening the capacity of national and local actors to manage and reduce their disaster risk. In line with the overall message of this report, this follows the simple logic that national and local actors must be at the centre of DRM. Their capacity is fundamental to effective DRM and, furthermore, to be most effective DRM capacity should not just be developed, but must sustain itself over time. The small, but growing, literature on DRM capacity development highlights that interventions aiming to strengthen DRM capacity increasingly look to foster development of resources and decision-making mechanisms through a process of change that is locally driven and owned, and bring lasting improvements in the ability of DRM actors to reduce risks and manage crises (Hagelsteen and Becker, 2013; CADRI, 2011; Collymore, 2011; Tadele and Manyena, 2009). However, despite the number of related policy documents, toolkits and guidance notes on DRM capacity development that have been published in recent years, few are based on strong evidence taken from cross-country empirical analysis. There has been little independent evaluation of how effective DRM capacity development programmes actually are in generating and strengthening capacity on the ground and also little analysis of the conditions required for effective capacity development interventions, specifically within the field of DRM (Scott et al., 2014).

An improved evidence base is, therefore, needed to assist the design and implementation of initiatives for DRM capacity development. For this reason, in 2013, the IFRC, in collaboration with the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID), the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency and the Canadian International Development Agency launched a two-year research project as a first step towards filling the evidence gap. The research, conducted by Oxford Policy Management with the University of East Anglia in the UK, has involved six country case study visits and analysis of related global data. At the time of writing, the data collection and analysis is still under way. For this edition of the *World Disasters Report*, the authors can present only the ideas behind the overall approach to the research and some preliminary findings from the case

Floods in central Europe in 2013: developing the capacity of local civil society organizations to better manage disaster risk and cultivating local ownership of disaster risk management activities are as relevant and as essential for high-income countries as they are for low-income nations.
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studies. The research will be completed by the end of 2015 and more complete findings will be presented in a series of research outputs, including a synthesis report and several policy briefs. The results of the research will also be used to develop a monitoring and evaluation framework for use in DRM capacity development programmes around the world (IFRC, forthcoming).

Why conduct research on DRM capacity development?

The need for this research is based on three global problems identified by a group of international donors working on DRM-related issues. First, there is insufficient capture and systematic analysis of information about how national and local institutions can effectively build up capacity for DRM, especially in insecure settings. Second, DRM actors have inadequate systems for monitoring and evaluating DRM capacity development activities and approaches. And finally, development policy-makers do not have reliable and tailored evidence on capacity building for DRM. By using the activities outlined in the section below, the research aims to address these global problems, through sharing experiences and drawing lessons from a range of different cases and contexts.

However, designing and implementing robust research is only one part of the problem. Attention also has to be paid to translating the research findings so that they are of most use to policy-makers and practitioners, and ensuring that the research reports get read by those who are most likely and able to use them. Over time, the theory of change for the research predicts that, as the findings are disseminated appropriately, they will ultimately lead to policy change and enhanced programme design in low- and middle-income countries. It is hoped that the outcome of the research will be that DRM actors in low- and middle-income countries design and implement more effective DRM capacity development initiatives, at both the national and the local levels, leading ultimately to better DRM globally. (Figure 2.1 below shows this theory of change.)

How is the research being conducted?

The research project operates at two levels – a global study and a set of national case studies. Global analysis began with an extensive review of what is already known about capacity development for DRM, in order to use this knowledge as a foundation for designing the broader research project. The team surveyed academic articles, donor reports, evaluations and other resources across different disciplines including disaster risk, climate change, humanitarian interventions, public management and fragile states. This review was complemented with an international online survey of policy-makers and practitioners to gather current perspectives from those with 'on-the-ground' experience.

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The core research activity of the project has been a series of case studies of DRM capacity development programmes in six different countries. Key stakeholder interviews, focus groups and workshops were conducted in Ethiopia, Haiti, Mozambique, Myanmar, Pakistan and the Philippines, with the aim of including a broad range of low-income contexts, including fragile and conflict-affected areas, several geographic regions and contexts with differing levels of existing DRM capacity. In each country a small number of active or recently concluded DRM programmes were selected for in-depth study (either wholly focused on capacity building, or with a large element of the programme focused on capacity development activities). A total of 13 programmes were selected in the six countries.

The case study research is organized around six key principles – relating to flexibility, planning, ownership, interaction, functional capacity and resilience – that were repeatedly identified in the literature review as being critical for effective DRM capacity building (see, for example, Hagelsteen and Becker, 2013; CADRI, 2011; Daniel, Schrass and Warner, 2013; Allen, 2006). These principles are detailed in Table 2.1. The idea across the portfolio of study programmes has been to test how these principles are most effectively implemented in DRM capacity development programmes, what the obstacles are, what works well and how this varies across different contexts.

TABLE 2.1 Key principles for effective DRM capacity development

Be flexible and adaptable	Capacity development interventions should be approached flexibly, ensuring that the design of the programme is adapted to the context in which it is applied, rather than being imposed by an external actor as a 'blueprint'. Examples include working with and reinforcing existing DRM skills, strategies, systems and capacities. This includes looking into the alignment of the intervention with international, national and local development strategies and its match with capacity needs. Programmes should include an understanding of the political, power and cultural dimensions that can either strengthen or undermine capacity development, and take them into account in designing programmes.
Plan comprehensively	The people targeted by capacity development programmes should have a leading role in shaping the programme's design and implementation. This helps to encourage the engagement of the target group and to ensure it is appropriate, effective and sustainable. Active participation contributes to ownership, along with possible strategies such as clear statements of responsibilities, engagement of leaders and alignment with existing DRM and disaster risk reduction (DRR) strategies, statements and plans.
Build interaction between scales and actors	As DRM has a cross-cutting nature, capacity development initiatives should enhance capacities to coordinate across scales and to work with multiple stakeholders. Capacity development programmes can act to bridge capacity and communication gaps that commonly exist between national and local levels. Initiatives can also focus on building the capacities of coalitions of stakeholders and on building local people's capacities to interact with other stakeholders.
Emphasize functional capacity building	Capacity development efforts often focus on technical skills and knowledge, but there is also a need to focus on and build the managerial and organizational capabilities to ensure that effective decisions and actions can flow from technical know-how. Examples include improving coordination and decision-making processes. Capacity development programmes can help to foster an enabling environment in very practical ways, such as by developing incentive structures for good performance and to ensure staff retention. Programmes can also promote the wider political conditions required to support DRR as a priority, for example, through establishing DRM committees and networks.
Contribute to DRR and wider resilience	Ultimately, DRM capacity development interventions need to adopt a more holistic DRR-influenced approach to DRM capacity. This includes moving beyond a short-term emergency management approach to focusing on building capacities in disaster prevention, mitigation and long-term recovery. This principle also includes giving attention to understanding and planning for long-term changes in risk, targeting the needs of vulnerable groups and addressing gender disparities in both vulnerability and capacity.

Source: Scott et al., 2014.

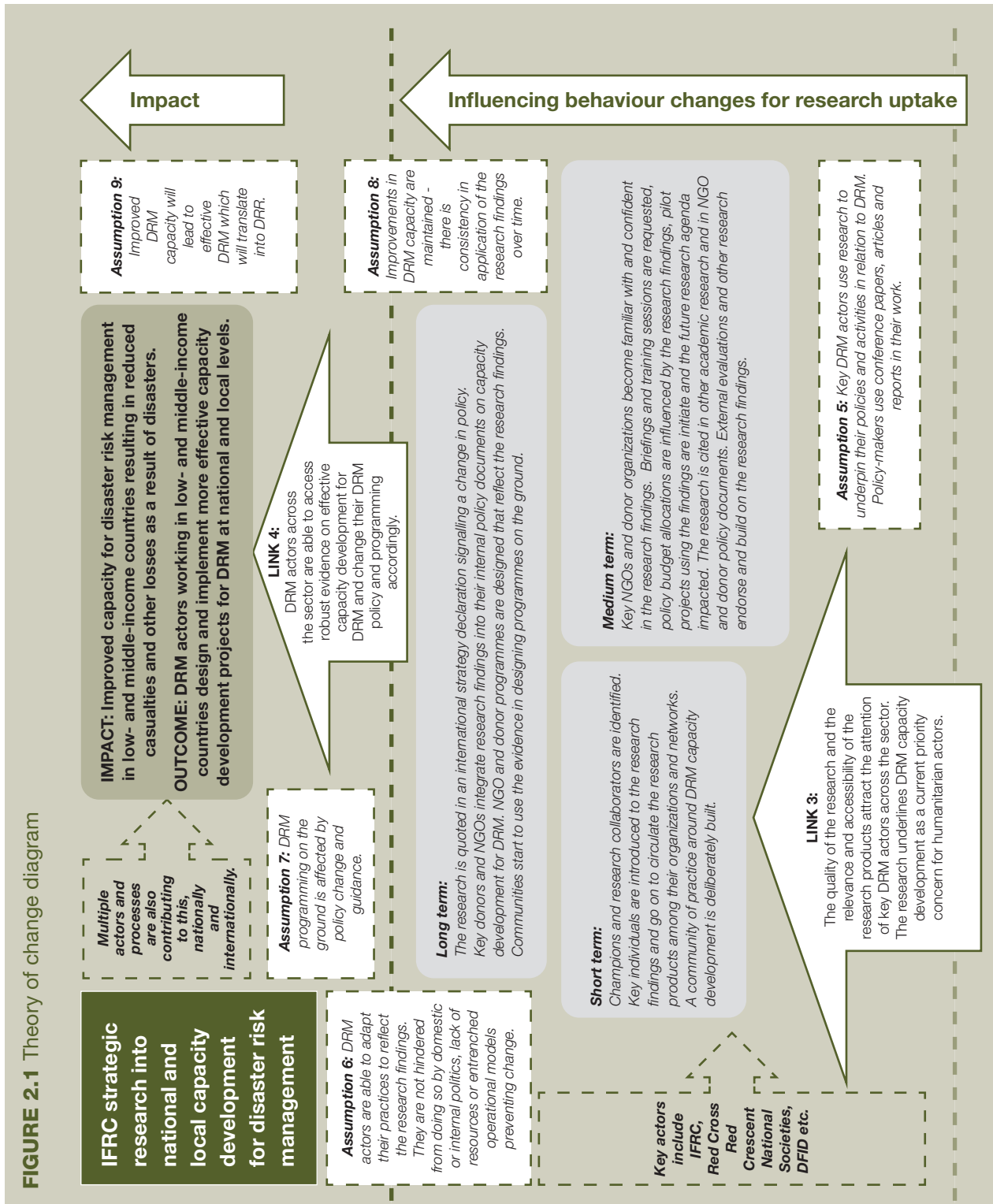
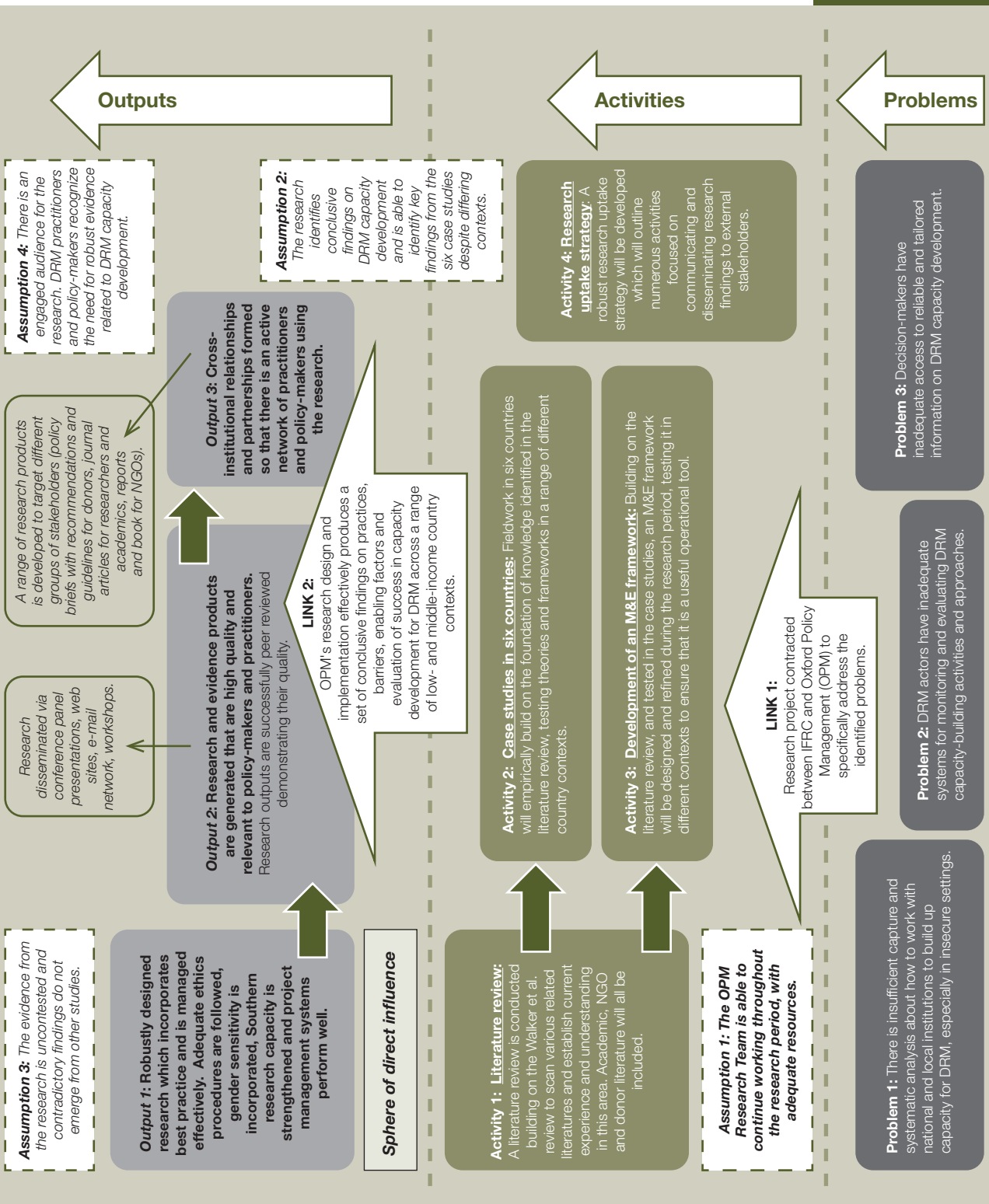


FIGURE 2.1 Theory of change diagram



Source: IFRC, forthcoming

The sections that follow concentrate on some of the key preliminary findings from the case studies to date, including identifying concrete examples of how to put the principles listed above into action (full analysis of the research will be available at the end of 2015).

How can the effectiveness of DRM capacity development initiatives be improved?

During the fieldwork, the research team was able to identify a number of specific capacity development initiatives where the 'nuts and bolts' of programme design appear to have been successful in improving the effectiveness of DRM capacity development. Four overall themes are outlined, each with boxes giving detailed examples of approaches that have been taken within the case study programmes and have been effective.

Building ownership through participation

One of the key principles identified by the literature review as being critical for effective DRM capacity development is ownership (Hagelsteen and Becker, 2013). This is true at all levels, ranging from national government to the community level. The vast literature on capacity development generally (non DRM-specific) emphasizes that active participation of those targeted by capacity development initiatives in design and implementation of the process is important not just to ensure the relevance of the programme to the situation on the ground but to strengthen motivation to utilize and maintain the level of capacity that has been attained (Sigsgaard, 2011; Lucas, 2013; Rosén and Haldrup, 2013). Participation is particularly important in a DRM context, because the best knowledge of both vulnerability and hazards typically lies with the communities themselves.

However, it is important to emphasize that ownership does not materialize simply from a desire to work in partnership: it requires genuine commitment of time, structured activities, creativity and flexibility from the actors involved. For example, a DRM capacity development initiative run by the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) in Myanmar found that extensive consultations and participatory involvement of stakeholders was key to ensuring the relevance and effectiveness of their programme. The target group were engaged in design consultations, consolidation workshops and a pilot, each with a strong deliberate emphasis on active participation. However, the trade-off was that this approach required a much longer timescale, with more time to engage and build trust with stakeholders. This kind of approach needs careful planning to ensure adequate time is available and does not result in project slippage, which typically means that a measure of flexibility on the part of the donor is also required.

It is clear from the case study research to date that grass-roots participation in DRM capacity-building initiatives is enhanced when culturally relevant methods are used, particularly if they are creative or unusual. Box 2.1 gives some practical, real-life examples from Ethiopia, Haiti, Pakistan and the Philippines in which innovative, culturally sensitive approaches have been used with positive results.

BOX 2.1 Making CBDRM initiatives more creative and culturally relevant

Community-based disaster risk management (CBDRM) tends to follow a fairly common model with consistent steps, but implementing agencies can successfully adapt these models to be more appealing to the specific context and more relevant to the local culture. Typical steps in CBDRM initiatives include training, provision of materials and emergency equipment, and the formulation and activation of DRM committees to implement local action plans. Forms of vulnerability and capacity assessments (VCAs) and hazard mapping are also widely used in communities as a way of building community capacity through facilitated self-learning. DRM capacity development programmes located in Haiti, Pakistan and the Philippines incorporated all of these elements into their CBDRM initiatives, but went beyond the norm to use innovative methods in an attempt to ensure that their programmes continue to be as relevant, accessible and memorable as possible.

In particular, a Community World Service Asia (CWSA) capacity development programme in Pakistan (implemented with funding from Christian Aid) and the Building Disaster Resilient Communities programme of the Mindanao Land Acquisition, Housing and Development (Minland) Foundation – Philippines (implemented with funding from Christian Aid and DFID) were able to demonstrate the value of linking efforts to build community capacity with appeal to local cultural norms. When approaching a community with a new objective or concept, it was useful to be able to demonstrate how it connected with the community's existing values. When the community can see how the activity is connected to their own beliefs, they tend to value it more and give it priority. For example, the Minland Foundation introduced an adapted VCA model that included aspects of the culture, such as landlessness, which was important to the target group. The DRM teams could then use their assessments to meet the specific needs of the community.

In another example of cultural relevance, practitioners from the CWSA programme in Pakistan used the story of Noah's Ark (present in the Koran, the Bible and rabbinic literature) to introduce the concept of DRR to a community and used other examples from the Koran to link DRR concepts to religious beliefs. During a community mobilization dialogue under their CBDRM project, the community asked CWSA field staff why they were providing training on DRR as the villagers believed that nothing could be done to avert disasters. So the field staff discussed the story of Noah and how he built a home for his family to protect them from flooding, storms and wild animals – using the familiar story to introduce the concepts of shelter, reduced vulnerability and ultimately disaster risk reduction. Though religion is sometimes associated with conservatism and fatalism by those in DRR education, this example shows that religion can also be a powerful entry point for DRM advocacy.

CWSA also encouraged community members to share their indigenous knowledge about hazards and disasters as part of the advocacy and training events to help galvanize interest and build on people's existing knowledge and understanding. In particular, villagers referred to the behaviour of animals, birds and insects, unusual sounds, changes in vegetation and the colour of clouds, changes in water flow and in the colour, smell and taste of water as signs of potential hazards. Examples included: "When a snake starts roaming around and climbing up the tree, people start to expect floods," "When ants start moving to higher places such as trees, carrying their eggs, flood is expected very soon" and "When the pelicans start flying south to north, rain is expected in the coming days." CWSA trainers developed a presentation using photographs to demonstrate how to observe environmental indicators and animal behaviour as a means of sharing this indigenous knowledge between communities.

Community-level capacity development was also enhanced through innovative and creative methodologies used by different agencies. For example, both the Africa Climate Change Resilience Alliance programme in Ethiopia and the Reducing Urban Disaster Risk programme supported by GOAL in Haiti (with funding from the United States Agency for International Development's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance), used colourful and engaging disaster risk games with different community groups. In Haiti, students stood on a large printed game board and tossed an oversized soft dice to answer questions and progress across the board. A competition between schools in an urban area to write a song highlighting vulnerability was also an effective means to raise awareness and aid understanding of DRR.

Also of note in this regard was CWSA's mobile knowledge resource centre (MKRC) model as an example of a creative and interesting way to highlight DRM and develop capacity. The MKRC is a colourful truck containing practical, removable equipment and models to demonstrate DRM. It visits villages and schoolgrounds for DRR training sessions. Research participants reported that the presence of the MKRC made the event more appealing and more memorable. The knowledge generated is, therefore, more likely to be sustainable. The MKRC approach was equally appealing to literate and illiterate groups and people of all ages, and the truck was able to access even hard-to-reach rural areas. ■

One of the problems that arises repeatedly when working with DRM initiatives involving poor communities is the likelihood that certain groups, often those who are most vulnerable to natural hazards, will face serious barriers to participation because of livelihood constraints. These constraints need to be factored into programme planning and flexibility needs to be shown by all programme actors in how to accommodate them. For example, in the Philippines case study, a disaster risk reduction and management (DRRM) capacity enhancement project funded by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) found that subsistence fishermen (their target group) were unable or reluctant to attend long training courses during the day or over the course of several consecutive days, because of the impact this had on their livelihood and ultimately on their ability to feed their families. Programmes in different countries have found several ways to work around this

issue, including compressing training, running evening training courses and providing in-kind incentives for attendance. However, in some other programmes and in other countries, organizers intentionally decided not to provide incentives (either financial or in-kind) for attendance for fear of undermining ownership, starting an unsustainable practice or attracting people to attend purely to get the 'payment'.

Creating an enabling environment

Discussions of capacity development increasingly refer to the importance of promoting an enabling environment as an objective (Matheson, 2011; CADRI, 2011). The term 'enabling environment' defies a simple definition, but in essence it refers to having conditions of sufficient support and prioritization of DRM that there is a strong drive within society to make it effective. Throughout the research, the team sought to identify examples of how capacity development programmes have contributed to the creation of an enabling environment for effective DRM. In general, they found that capacity development initiatives often implicitly contribute to building an enabling environment for DRM, even if it is not one of their stated objectives.

Advocacy events are explicitly about fostering an enabling environment and have been undertaken in relation to DRM in many countries. Some programmes have advocacy as a core aim. In the Philippines, for example, Christian Aid implemented the Philippines Resilience Programmes (which consisted of the Building Disaster Resilient Communities programme (2007-2010) and the Conflict, Security, Humanitarian and Justice programme (2011-2015), both funded by DFID) which involved working on strengthening a network of DRR NGOs, known as the Disaster Risk Reduction Network (DRRNet). The network is widely recognized as being a strong 'voice' for DRM and was instrumental in the development of the Philippines DRM law. It continues to advocate for favourable policies and regulations. DRRNet also created kits for legislators and made a film to be used at the national level to highlight grass-roots DRM issues.

However, in Ethiopia, Pakistan and the Philippines, the research team found examples of advocacy being successfully 'tagged on' to capacity development initiatives which had a different focus. Interestingly, in some cases, advocacy emerged as a dual function or by-product of high-level training events, such as seminars held for parliamentarians or senior government officials. This is significant as interviewees in several countries recognized that building political motivation for prioritizing DRM is a crucial capacity development challenge.

The term 'enabling environment' is typically used in relation to the national context. However, based on the case studies, the research team feels that an enabling

environment operating at all scales of action can, and should, be envisioned, including at the community level. If an enabling environment is seen as the motivational pre-condition for turning enhanced DRM skills, resources, mechanisms and structures into action, it could take effect in a number of ways – beyond national politics and legislation. One particularly effective way of creating an enabling environment at the community level is to link DRM with livelihoods. For example, in the Africa Climate Change Resilience Alliance (ACCRA) project in Ethiopia, demonstration models were used effectively to indicate how people can simultaneously strengthen their livelihoods and reduce their vulnerability to hazards such as landslides and flash floods. This provided a tangible dual rationale for prioritizing risk reduction measures. Concentrating effort on identifying locally appropriate mechanisms for building awareness and support can be highly valuable. The research team, therefore, encourages community-based capacity development programmes to consider how to create an enabling environment – perhaps as an explicit objective rather than an implicit assumption.

The establishment of a national cadre of DRM professionals is also key in creating an enabling environment for DRM. This workforce needs to be not only well trained, but also motivated to perform well (CADRI, 2011). One aspect of this is helping organizations to develop ways to encourage staff to stay in post. The literature emphasizes that high staff turnover is a major obstacle to the sustainability of capacity development (Tadele and Manyena, 2009; van Riet and van Niekerk, 2012) and the team's experience in six countries echoes this finding. Interviewees from each one of the case study countries have noted the loss of institutional memory through staff turnover as a major concern and barrier to sustainable capacity development. However, looked at from a national or systemic perspective, then capacity may not be entirely lost, as many individuals trained in DRM will take their skills and knowledge to other organizations working in the field and so capacity is retained to a certain extent. Box 2.2 outlines some steps being taken by organizations working in the DRM sector to reduce both turnover and its negative impacts.

BOX 2.2 Curbing the impact of turnover

Turnover of both staff and volunteers impedes DRM capacity development initiatives in a number of ways. First, staff in the implementing agencies can move on, resulting in project disruption and loss of institutional memory. Competition is strong for national staff members with DRM technical knowledge and skills. Inevitably they will move to the organizations that can offer them the best package. Second, there can be turnover in the target group, particularly in cases where government agencies are partners in a capacity development initiative. In many countries, for example the Philippines, governments employ staff rotational systems, so government officials change periodically and sometimes unpredictably. It can also mean that an individual can be placed in a DRM role despite not

having prior training or relevant experience. Elections are another periodic event which often result in changes to personnel and stakeholders in capacity development programmes. The impact of both of these types of turnover is the reduction of institutional capacity, emergent gaps in capacity and the destruction of the trust and relationships that have been built up with those particular individuals. These effects can be felt more keenly at local levels where it is often harder to attract and recruit qualified DRM personnel.

During the course of the research, the team found several organizations employing a variety of strategies aimed at reducing their organizational turnover. The most successful approaches centred on improving the working conditions of staff. Programmes in Haiti and Pakistan, for example, ensured that the salary scale was regularly updated and was, as far as possible, in line with other agencies. Organizations typically find that providing longer-term contracts for staff members helps to reduce high levels of staff turnover, although this can be difficult in resource-constrained environments where a contract is tied to a particular programme which has an uncertain future. One programme in Haiti, for example, was run in stages but, due to funding gaps of several months between the stages (a result of the funding arrangement with the donor), most staff left, resulting in a dramatic loss of capacity and institutional memory. In Ethiopia, some organizations used longer contracts as a reward for strong performance. Organizations in various countries, including Ethiopia, Haiti, Pakistan and the Philippines, also reported using training sessions, visits to different geographical areas, study tours and regular coaching and mentoring as strategies for rewarding good performance in an effort to act as an incentive for individuals to stay in post.

Many of those interviewed, whether in Ethiopia, Haiti, Mozambique, Myanmar, Pakistan or the Philippines, said that turnover was a huge problem for DRM capacity development. The best strategy is, therefore, to be prepared. But how can organizations implementing capacity development programmes best cope with both their own internal turnover and turnover among the target group? The answer is straightforward: expect it and plan for it. Organizations that sufficiently factor turnover into their programme design and timetables are less likely to suffer ill consequences when people leave. Examples of planning for turnover that resulted in retained institutional memory and DRM capacity were found in both Pakistan and the Philippines. For example, the CWSA programme to build capacity in Pakistan deliberately documented step-by-step work processes so that there was less reliance on individual knowledge and memory. Similarly, in the Philippines, Christian Aid's Philippines Resilience Programmes regularly published 'lessons learnt' case studies documenting experiences from implementing DRM programmes. The programmes also ran DRM learning events which had to be attended by two individuals from target organizations rather than one, and participants had to share what they had learned with other staff members when they returned to their offices. Participants also had to engage in action planning, termed 'exit plans', to detail exactly how and when the sharing of learning would take place when they returned to their offices.

Some programmes deliberately build in extra time to allow for inducting or re-training new staff or additional individuals from target groups, as was the case with the Institutionalizing Disaster Prevention in Mozambique programme implemented by GIZ (the German government's international development agency) and INGC (the Mozambican disaster management agency), and the ADPC's programme to strengthen DRR in Myanmar. Similarly, in the DRR and Livelihoods Recovery programme run by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Ethiopia, they strategically

formed larger task forces than were actually required for programme implementation to take into account that turnover was inevitable. However, these strategies require donors to be flexible with programme timetables and budgets, recognizing that additional time and resources may need to be made available at any point to build new relationships and develop the capacity of new stakeholders to meet the programme objectives.

A particularly innovative example is the Christian Aid programme in the Philippines where a national cadre of DRM professionals was established to mitigate the impact of staff turnover at a national, non-organizational level. NGOs that are part of the participating network are able to use DRM professionals from this cadre, regardless of the specific organization for which they work, and so some capacity is still retained and accessible. ■

Improving the impact of training

An important distinction is made in the literature on capacity building between technical and functional aspects (CADRI, 2011; UNDP, 2008). Allied with this is a drive to shift interventions more in the direction of the latter, such as the establishment of improved policies, planning, decision-making mechanisms and coordination within DRM systems. Training tends to be classed as technical capacity building. The literature articulates concerns about both the quality and the impact of training in low- and middle-income countries and outlines a number of obstacles to sustained capacity increase as a result of training (Hagelsteen and Becker, 2013). This includes concerns that training individuals does not translate into sustained institutional capacity, that training is often poorly delivered as a learning tool and that the impact of training is seldom evaluated. Despite these concerns, however, experience in the case study countries indicates that careful design and implementation of training programmes can ensure lasting capacity is built and, moreover, provide the platform for improved functional capacity. Capacity development may not be solely about training, but good training remains a key element of it, as several examples from the research highlight.

Although training tends to focus on passing on technical know-how and skills, courses can also be designed to ensure that functional capacity is developed at the same time. An example of this was found in the DRRM Capacity Enhancement programme in the Philippines, where sub-national government officials were trained in different aspects of DRM that relate to effective planning. Then, during the workshop, they drafted a local DRM plan and devised a system for reviewing and finalizing it post-event. Similarly, in CWSA's programme in Pakistan, Christian Aid's Philippines Resilience Programmes and GOAL's programme in Haiti, community-based DRM training sessions included time for establishing DRM committees, including identifying specific roles and individuals wishing to participate. Training sessions should, therefore, be designed with a clear idea of what practical steps can be taken during the course itself to establish or develop functional DRM capacity.

In several countries, training appears to be most effective when the individuals being trained are active participants in the intervention. At grass-roots level this is perhaps easier in relation to DRM than in some other fields, as participants in hazard-prone areas can generally provide information on the hazards and risks in their area and insights on how the community has learnt to adapt and mitigate disasters. The importance of this approach was noted in Pakistan where people in the communities targeted by the CWSA programme identified their own training needs and performed organizational and community self-evaluations, which guided the content and approach of the training course. This approach was instrumental in helping participants to view the training as part of a long-term process of securing effective DRM, rather than as a one-off event.

The 'training of trainers' (ToT) approach is used widely in DRM training in low- and middle-income countries. The individuals trained become the trainers themselves, passing on their knowledge to others. However, actors in some countries are concerned that taking a ToT approach can lead to a 'watering down' of both the quality and the effectiveness of the training as it cascades down. The JICA-funded DRRM capacity enhancement programme, which was implemented through the Philippines' Office of Civil Defense, carefully designed its ToT to ensure that quality did not diminish as the training was rolled out. The participants had to have had prior experience of training or teaching and were carefully observed during the initial ToT. Only a small percentage of participants were selected to become trainers themselves. A mentor was appointed to supervise and support each new trainer. The mentors were always present and provided daily face-to-face feedback. ToT should not, therefore, be seen as a low-cost, easy way of rolling out training – to be effective it requires intensive support and oversight.

This example of ToT in the Philippines also contributed to greater interaction between levels of government, as the training was rolled out first at national, then provincial, then municipal and finally *barangay* (community) levels. Similar evidence was found relating to an ADPC DRM training initiative in Myanmar, where the training course strengthened linkages between actors at different levels and increased the likelihood of cooperation and communication on the subject of DRM. Interviewees discussed how the programme gave them clarity on different roles and responsibilities for DRM, and improved their understanding of the perspectives of different actors (see Box 2.3).

BOX 2.3 Improve inter-scalar DRM capacity through training

Effective DRM takes place at different levels: national, regional, local and community. For this reason capacity development not only has to occur at each level, but the ability for DRM actors to themselves collaborate and work across levels is itself an important capacity to develop. Inter-scalar capacity building refers to the ability to communicate, consult and collaborate between the community, sub-national and national levels regarding DRM. This should not be confused with an organization working at different levels. It is specifically about empowering different levels to work collaboratively to make better informed decisions in relation to DRM.

In Myanmar, as part of the ADPC's DRR mainstreaming programme, a wide range of actors were brought together from the national and provincial levels for a series of meetings that effectively encouraged collaborative working. One representative from ADPC said in an interview, "Making sure we engage properly with primary and secondary stakeholders, encouraging them to lead and link to their own institutional mandate, is crucial to the success of an ADPC programme."

In the early stages of planning for DRR mainstreaming, ADPC cultivated a shared vision on the programme objectives with key stakeholders from the disaster management agency and the planning department and then discussed roles and responsibilities to achieve that vision. It was agreed that the disaster management agency would act as the focal department in coordinating and communicating with other government departments. The planning department would provide expertise in planning processes. ADPC would provide facilitation, technical and financial support.

At the higher levels of government, ADPC maintained regular contact with stakeholders and continued to advocate for mainstreaming. High-level officials were invited to workshops to increase their awareness and learn about issues and concerns of participants in DRR mainstreaming implementation. Interviewees reported that the inclusive programme design led to a high level of acceptance among the target group, sustained capacity (within the target group) for expanding technical knowledge in mainstreaming and improved disaster resilience in development plans.

Many of the programmes studied in different countries demonstrated that, in order to achieve collaborative working, stakeholders must have defined roles and responsibilities and a required output or goal to work towards together. Christian Aid's Philippines Resilience Programmes are a particularly good example of the capacity for inter-scalar working being developed. A key outcome of their work has been their contribution to the establishment of DRRNet – a network of NGOs that has acted as an important advocate for DRM. DRRNet was viewed by several interviewees as playing a pivotal role in getting the DRRM law passed and in monitoring the law at different levels.

Christian Aid's interventions were also oriented towards building capacity for communities to voice their concerns upwards to levels of government. For example, the Ateneo School of Governance worked with communities to convey their messages effectively to the national policy level. In order to get to this stage, direct dialogue needed to take place between academics and the community to develop trust and mutual learning. Christian Aid, together with several civil society organization (CSO) partners, created a 'learning circle' which promoted inter-level learning and communication on DRM. Programme staff, looking for answers on why disasters kept happening in the Philippines, looked to their implementing partners and invited the participation of academia.

Programme staff found that in order to facilitate inter-scalar working, new ways of operating were required. Specifically, DRM messages were adapted and packaged in a way that was conducive to the receiver. Some of the more notable techniques that were used included:

- From the implementing partners, an assigned person was responsible for documentation of the communities' outputs from their VCAs and other planning activities. These maps and reports were designed for easy use by the other actors and local government.
- 'Reflection workshops' with collaborative responsibilities in knowledge sharing established trust and appreciation of different perspectives of stakeholders. Interaction between the diverse set of stakeholders became 'normalized'.
- Academics and scientists adapted methods and materials for teaching into short modularized sessions which were more easily digestible for CSOs.
- CSOs also adopted a more documented approach to sharing their knowledge. Whereas traditionally learning was more verbal and 'on-the-job', CSOs built their capacity to develop written training materials and case studies which were then useable by a wider national-level audience.
- An academic institution contributed by interpreting community messages into national policy level language. Kits for legislators were also developed which provided promotional information about DRM and the position of DRRNet on policy formation.
- CSOs created a video to share their experience of disasters with national-level policy-makers. This was seen as an effective way of sharing issues of concern across levels.
- The involvement of senior government officials and senior legislators acting as champions for DRRM advocacy improved the influence of CSOs at both the local and the national levels.

(Polotan de la Cruz, Ferrer and Pagaduan, 2011) ■

Indonesian Red Cross Society volunteers go door-to-door in Aceh, Indonesia, teaching families about disaster preparedness and health promotion. After the 2004 tsunami, which devastated coastal areas, the Red Cross trained local community members to prepare for disasters and spread information about hygiene, nutrition and disease prevention. © Jenelle Eli/American Red Cross

Supporting the mainstreaming of DRM into wider government processes

One key, but possibly overlooked, aspect of strengthening functional DRM capacity is support for the coordination of decision-making and action across multiple stakeholders and diverse governance institutions (CADRI, 2011; Daniel, Schrass and Warner, 2013). A DRR approach emphasizes the need to mainstream by integrating DRR into government planning processes across branches and other agencies engaged in development (WCDRR, 2015). When it is done well, mainstreaming DRR into development planning is a sustainable method to improve resilience and reduce vulnerability in a country. Where the research team found examples of mainstreaming as part of capacity development initiatives, the activities themselves required relatively low amounts of personnel and resources, but achieved high levels of impact.

Support for mainstreaming DRM was a prominent capacity development activity in programmes based in Mozambique, Myanmar and Pakistan. It is notable that each of these countries experience regular disasters. Frequent disasters in a country often have a devastating effect across several sectors, affecting many government departments and generally raising the issue of DRR on the political agenda. This 'sets the stage', creating an enabling environment for DRR mainstreaming. It was also useful that a DRM strategic plan already existed in each country and could be built upon.

Another key success factor for two of the programmes appears to have been their relentless determination to effectively engage high-level government representatives at the national scale. ADPC's Strengthening Disaster Risk Reduction Programme in Myanmar and the One UN DRM Programme in Pakistan both deliberately identified, targeted and successfully engaged stakeholders with decision-making authority, which led to the institutionalization of DRR mainstreaming.

BOX 2.4 Successfully mainstreaming DRR into development planning

Mainstreaming DRR into development planning was a primary activity of the following three programmes: One UN DRM in Pakistan, which was implemented with support from the National Disaster Management Agency and funding from UNDP; the Strengthening Disaster Risk Reduction in Myanmar with support from the ADPC and funding from the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs; and the Institutionalizing Disaster Prevention (PRO GRC) in Mozambique implemented by INGC with support from GIZ and funding from the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

In each of these programmes, having the right stakeholders involved in the programme activities emerged as an important success factor. While DRR mainstreaming does not require a large programme team, the team members need to have adequate skills to influence, facilitate and encourage meaningful collaboration between a diverse set of DRM stakeholders. For example, in the ADPC

programme, staff had to make strong individual efforts to be flexible in their own schedules so they could gain the attention of high-level government officials. This included waiting in government offices for hours for the officials to be available. ADPC found that patience, persistence and politeness worked well in establishing new and positive relationships with senior government counterparts.

It was also important to identify and engage the right stakeholders within government. Typically the most crucial stakeholders for DRR mainstreaming were disaster management, planning, finance and administrative staff. The programmes that specifically targeted the highest level of government were most successful at achieving the institutionalization of disaster mainstreaming. One strategy used by ADPC was to request that the same stakeholders attend all meetings related to the creation of mainstreaming guides and policies, which improved the quality of input from government counterparts.

Finally, the programmes that were successful in institutionalizing mainstreaming had a clear emphasis on establishing effective ownership and partnership with relevant stakeholders. This was achieved by first raising awareness of individual stakeholders on the current DRM status of the country and the cost-effectiveness of adopting a more holistic approach to DRM. Actors were then invited to participate in training sessions, planning meetings and workshops to take action. The events themselves were facilitated using inclusive processes which encouraged equal participation and agreed roles and responsibilities among participants.

The actual process of integrating DRR begins with a review of the vision and goals for mainstreaming, followed by an analysis of national development plans so that relevant stakeholders can identify entry-points together. The stakeholders studied existing policies, plans, contextual and poverty analysis reports and sectoral development documents. Taking these points into account, the groups identified appropriate opportunities for mainstreaming DRR into development plans. Two main approaches were used by the programmes studied:

- DRR is integrated as a separate section in the development plan. The section provides a clear, overarching risk reduction objective with strategies for enhancing resilience. The objectives are then translated into specific sectoral goals which are monitored. Development policies are also reviewed to ensure that risk reduction is taken into account and that they are aligned with the country's DRR initiatives.
- DRR is integrated as a cross-cutting issue in existing sections of the development plan. In this approach, DRR is included as a key consideration in sectors that are most likely to suffer from the impact of disasters. This approach requires a high level of support from individual representatives across sectors and training for government departments on how to mainstream.

In Pakistan, One UN DRM implemented the first approach with success and now development plans include a section on DRM. Another achievement regarded as highly significant was the inclusion of a DRR checklist in the planning commission's project appraisal forms. In this way all social infrastructure and economic projects such as dams, highways and other constructions at all levels must identify and consider disaster risks.

ADPC, in Myanmar, through its inter-scalar training and consultative meetings, was able to implement the second approach effectively and mainstreaming is currently institutionalized and practised. ADPC further strengthened capacity by creating a pool of trained DRR mainstreaming trainers from

the disaster management agency and sectoral planning departments who could meet multi-level learning needs. Efforts to include DRR as a separate chapter in development plans were also being made to further strengthen mainstreaming at the time of the research.

In Mozambique, the GIZ team attempted the first approach and added DRR as a separate section to district-level development plans, but found that the DRR-related elements were often cut at the provincial level to meet budget requirements. The district-level administration felt that since the new DRR section was added to the bottom of the plan, it was perceived as less important and was, therefore, considered expendable. After that experience, the programme had more success with the second approach. Mainstreaming advocacy at the provincial and national levels was lacking, however, which still limited the sustainability of the mainstreaming efforts.

The particularly compelling success levels of ADPC and One UN DRM resided in their attention to engaging high-level government representatives effectively at the national scale. The programmes identified and engaged stakeholders with decision-making authority which led to the institutionalization of DRR mainstreaming. ■

General observations from the case studies to date

The aim of the research was to investigate 'what works and why?' in relation to DRM capacity development initiatives. In the case studies, the team selected a promising range of programmes against different criteria, from which they expect to be able to derive a range of positive lessons in the final reports, in addition to those described above. Nevertheless, a number of critical observations are also emerging across the case study portfolio, which underline the areas for improvement in DRM capacity building that still need to be addressed.

In every case study country, a frequent complaint has been that the timescales for DRM capacity development programmes are too short. This issue is a common concern with capacity development programmes generally, given that developing individuals and organizations sustainably is likely to be a long-term endeavour (Brinkerhoff, 2007; Keijzer, 2013). It seems to be a particular challenge, however, in relation to building capacity for DRM, as programmes are often trying to shift a long-held institutional and cultural bias towards response in favour of a more holistic DRR perspective, incorporating principles such as mitigation and prevention. At the community level, DRR may well be a completely new idea, with new terminology and concepts that must be taught from scratch before they can be embedded. To be effective these processes will always require long time frames, but in all countries, the typical time frame for a DRM capacity development programme was two to three years, regardless of the size of the budget. Decisions regarding the length of a programme appear to be driven more by donor funding cycles than by what is deemed necessary during project design.

The focus continues to be on disaster response across geographical regions, with evidence from each of the case study countries of a general move towards a wider DRM perspective, but with a need to embed this as the prevailing approach. Somewhat inevitably, therefore, analysis of the DRM capacity development activities that were studied revealed a tendency to focus on preparedness, with less attention paid to building capacity for disaster prevention, mitigation and recovery (even if the wording of project documents suggested a broader approach).

In all the case study countries, the research team encountered an underlying perception that 'capacity building' refers to the provision of equipment and training to enhance technical knowledge. In contrast, a key theme emerging from the literature is that development of capacity should ideally be envisioned more widely, incorporating functional capacity to increase the chances of long-term change (CADRI, 2011; Hagelsteen and Becker, 2013). In many countries, however, these activities are often taking place but are not necessarily explicitly labelled as capacity development or capacity-building programmes. Equally, the development of functional capacity can be a by-product of other programmes that do not clearly focus on capacity development. As already noted, the team also observed that where training is carefully planned and integrated with practice, it can provide a crucial platform for raising functional capacity.

Despite the importance of functional capacity as outlined above, in some fragile contexts or countries with very low existing DRM capacity, there is evidence that technical DRM capacity development can act as a precursor or initial foundation for more functional capacity development. Technical DRM knowledge helps people to realize that aspects of risks can be controlled (vulnerabilities reduced and capacities strengthened). Based on this knowledge foundation, they begin to recognize the importance and potential of DRM. This finding emerged very strongly from the case studies in Myanmar and Pakistan. There may be, therefore, a benefit to sequencing initiatives in such environments – first ensuring that sufficient technical know-how and skills have been developed before focusing on wider, functional capacity development interventions, and accepting that partial successes may only be possible until stronger technical capacity has been established. Sequencing initiatives may also allow the necessary trust to be built with communities.

An obvious starting point for a capacity development intervention is to conduct a capacity needs assessment to determine the existing resident skills, resources and knowledge within the organization or community. This should be done in relation to both technical and functional DRM capacities. It is an essential step to ensure that the programme is appropriately designed to build on DRM capacities and is well documented as best practice in the literature (Lucas, 2013; Hagelsteen and Becker, 2013). Despite this, it was apparent that DRM capacity development

programmes are often designed and implemented without a rigorous capacity needs assessment being conducted. In particular, there were few examples of capacity needs assessments being undertaken at the very initial stages of programme design. Assessments were more typically made after the programme design had been partially conceived. In programmes in Ethiopia and Pakistan, staff did not conduct prior needs assessments because they felt under pressure to get on and start implementing activities. This, again, indicates a need to reconsider how funding mechanisms can support effective capacity development.

In all the case study countries, the quality and robustness of programme monitoring and evaluation are generally weak. Only approximately 50 per cent of programmes had completed or planned for an evaluation to be conducted by an external party. In terms of routine monitoring and evaluation, programmes tend to monitor activities and outputs, with less attention paid to outcomes and impact. This is not surprising, as outputs are much easier to monitor than outcomes and impact can usually only be determined after several years. For this reason, the team has used the research findings to devise a monitoring and evaluation framework for programmes to employ that focuses on linking activities on the ground with higher-level outcome and impact indicators (IFRC, forthcoming). Monitoring and evaluation programme activities were typically driven by the demands of the donor – if they were not a specific requirement from the donor, then these activities tended to be forgotten. Unfortunately this demonstrates how monitoring and evaluation is currently perceived to be a tool for funding accountability rather than an instrument for improving impact and effectiveness (Simister and Smith, 2010; Brinkerhoff, 2007).

Gender dimensions should be a key consideration in DRM capacity development because the relationships and dynamics between men and women impact on both individual and community vulnerability to disasters, as well as on risk management capacities (Enarson, Fothergill and Peek, 2007; Harvey and Smyth, 2012). However, in the DRM capacity development programmes that were studied, attention to gender considerations in programme design or implementation was generally weak. In a small number of cases, programmes had a target in relation to women's participation, for example, that a local DRM committee should be 50 per cent female or that a certain number of training participants should be women. However, consideration of how women and men may be affected differently by certain hazards or disaster risks did not appear to have been taken into account in most of the programmes in the case study countries. Similarly, the way in which the design and implementation of a capacity development programme potentially has differential impacts on men and women was not a routine consideration in planning or delivery. When asked about whether and how gender had been considered, many programme implementers said it had been 'mainstreamed', but were usually unable to provide examples or evidence of specific steps taken or the impact of this approach.

A major concern in the literature is with the sustainability of capacity development interventions (Baser, 2011; Matheson, 2011; Walker, Rasmussen and Molano, 2011; Hagelsteen and Becker, 2013). Despite this, in most of the capacity development programmes studied in depth as part of the research, sustainability was insufficiently addressed. A common, if often implicit, assumption is that the capacity raised by a programme will continue to exist after withdrawal of support, but meaningful sustainability planning is rarely undertaken and exit strategies are either poorly developed or, often, entirely absent. There is a need to understand why this is the case, although it seems likely that it is linked to funding. Some programmes expect their funding to continue from the same donor for many years, which creates a sense that there is no pressing need for an exit strategy. At the other extreme, other programmes experience a much more 'hand-to-mouth' existence and are always unsure of the next stage of funding. This has an impact on their sustainability planning by creating a misguided view that if follow-on funding is uncertain, then there is no point in thinking about the future.

Conclusion

Despite the significant amounts invested annually in building and further developing the capacity of national and local actors for disaster risk management, to date evidence has been limited as to what makes programmes work. In particular, there is a need for a better understanding of how to increase the chances that capacity gains will be sustained and reinforced. Based on preliminary findings from a set of case studies, the research team has identified in this chapter some key lessons for the successful implementation of DRM capacity development programmes and key lessons on what to avoid. The team's approach and the lessons drawn from the research to date hinge on the importance of flexibility and adaptability, ownership, comprehensive planning, interaction between actors and scales, and functional capacity development, as well as the need to foster cross-sectoral capacity for a broad-based DRR approach.

In general the research team argues that external organizations seeking to engage in capacity development for DRM are taking a refreshingly progressive approach to forging partnerships with national and local actors in the case study countries. Most recognize the need to work with established expertise and DRM structures and take concrete steps to engage key domestic organizations in the planning and/or implementation of programmes. At best, partnerships between actors are demonstrably horizontal in terms of decision-making. However, a sense of ownership is a condition that goes beyond formalized partnership or participation mechanisms. Facilitating ownership requires flexibility on both sides, creativity in how organizations approach capacity development and the building of trust – all of which are difficult if funding cycles and constraints place operational demands

for rapid execution on initiatives. A comprehensive approach to planning and the design of capacity development programmes is also being held back in most of the cases studied by the low priority given to preliminary capacity needs assessments, appropriate timescales, sustainability strategies and monitoring and evaluation.

The thematic orientation of the capacity development initiatives studied shows that it is difficult in practice to specify a clear distinction between what has been termed 'technical' and 'functional' capacity development. Training, often the mainstay of what is seen as technical capacity building, remains a crucial foundation for functional capacity development, if it is undertaken with careful thought to content, delivery and sustainability. This is particularly the case in governance situations in which the move towards a more holistic DRM has been weak to date. Increasingly, capacity development interventions in this field integrate training with joint establishment of decision-making mechanisms, plans, regulations and structures. Moreover, often acting subtly within the capacity development activities is an implicit (or sometimes explicit) contribution towards generating an enabling environment – at a range of scales from community to national level. The key challenge in capacity development, as for DRM in general, lies in fostering an enabling environment for the shift towards wider DRR. The case studies provided only limited evidence of capacity development programmes' attention to gender dimensions, vulnerability reduction, disaster prevention or mitigation and sustainable recovery.

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Chapter 3


International Federation
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Chapter 3

Beyond operations: law, governance and the role of local actors

If local actors are not being supported to take on an important role in humanitarian relief and disaster risk management, is it because of gaps in the rule book (in other words, the key laws and norms)? Is it because rules favouring their participation are not enforced? Might it be because, when the important decisions are being made, local actors are not in the room?

The answer to these questions depends on whether the focus is on rules at the international or the national level, on who is meant by 'local actor' and on whether the rules or structures primarily address humanitarian relief or disaster risk reduction (DRR). There is also a significant difference in the degree of take-up of the role of local actors between legally binding and less formal policy instruments. Overall, however, the existing 'hooks' in policy language might already have been expected to produce a result much more favourable to local actors than the experience that many of them report on the ground.

This chapter will review these issues through the lens of law and governance. The literature about governance in the field of disaster risk management often employs that term in a very broad sense. For instance, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has referred to 'disaster risk governance' as "the way in which public authorities, civil servants, media, private sector and civil society coordinate at community, national and regional levels in order to manage and reduce disaster- and climate-related risks" (Aysan and Lavell, 2014) and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) has noted that "[t]he concept of governance includes formal and explicit mechanisms such as legislation, policies, mandatory standards and administrative procedures through which societies are organized as well as the wide range of informal and implicit arrangements that mediate social, economic and political relationships and the management of territory and resources" (UNISDR, 2015a).

Without taking issue with this wide-ranging approach, this chapter will focus its analysis mainly on the more formal aspects of governance – the laws, norms and rules and the bodies and structures charged with decision-making and rule-making – looking first at the international and then at the national level. It will, however, take a broad view of the notion of 'local actor', considering not only the situation of community-level authorities and civil society entities, but also that of authorities of affected states and organizations at the national level with respect

After Typhoon Haiyan hit the Philippines in 2013, the country successfully implemented innovations in managing relationships between international responders and domestic actors. But, as in many other countries, more needs to be done at the local level, where there still appears to be a certain confusion as to the roles of local actors.
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to international response and risk reduction efforts. While this approach may be somewhat unusual, it has the virtue of aligning with how most such national-level actors see themselves – as decidedly 'local', with local sensibilities, expectations and rights, vis-à-vis the international community.

Local actors and the governance of international disaster response

It has been argued that there "is no humanitarian system" (Hilhorst, 2002) or specialized body of law for humanitarian relief (Clement, 2014). In 2005, the *World Disasters Report* itself called humanitarian assistance "the world's largest unregulated industry" (IFRC, 2005).

These assertions bring out some important truths about the piecemeal nature of international disaster response law (IDRL) and the rather limited powers of the primary decision-making mechanisms for disaster assistance at the international level. However, for all their gaps, rules and mechanisms do exist and they do have an influence on practice. There is, therefore, a governance system for humanitarian relief to which local actors might aspire.

What the international rules say about local actors in disaster response

The global and regional treaties related to international disaster response uniformly reserve the primary role in operations to the affected state. For instance, the Tampere Convention on the Provision of Telecommunications Resources for Disaster Mitigation and Relief Operations of 1998 provides that "[n]othing in this Convention shall interfere with the right of a State Party, under its national law, to direct, control, coordinate and supervise telecommunication assistance provided under this Convention within its territory" and article 3 of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Agreement on Rapid Disaster Response to Natural Disasters of 2011 provides that "[t]he Requesting Party shall exercise the overall direction, coordination, and supervision of the assistance within its territory."

These treaties generally make no particular mention of sub-national authorities (such as governors, mayors or departments reporting to them) in relation to disaster relief. However as part of government, they would be considered to be representative of the 'state' as defined by international law and thus also subject to the state's rights and duties, to the degree responsibility is accorded to them under domestic law (ILC, 2001).

This is not the case for local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other civil society organizations in the affected state. While a handful of IDRL treaties (such as the 1998 Tampere Convention and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response of 2005) do

refer to NGOs in the context of humanitarian relief, the context normally indicates that their intended scope extends only to those deploying internationally. The same holds true in the current version of the International Law Commission's 'Draft articles on the protection of persons in the event of disasters', which is likely to be finalized and presented to states in the next few years in the form of a draft global treaty (ILC, 2014). One (rather weak) exception to this rule is the Inter-American Convention to Facilitate Assistance in Cases of Disaster of 1991, which allows that states requesting assistance "may" apply some of the facilities in the convention to "a nongovernmental organization, be it national or international". However, to date, this treaty has yet to be evoked in an operation.

In sum, the most formal 'instruments' at the international level are very clear about the role of national-level authorities but do not have much direct to say about other local actors in humanitarian response. However, the treaties in this area are not as well known or implemented as the key non-binding documents, in any case. Probably the most authoritative among the latter is United Nations (UN) General Assembly resolution 46/182 of 1991. This resolution sets out key principles, describes the role of the Emergency Relief Coordinator and his secretariat, now known as the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) (a policy-making body made up of UN humanitarian and development agencies with standing invitations to additional partners), as well as shared understandings as to how relief is to be carried out and commitments to preparedness, risk reduction and recovery.

With regard to local actors, resolution 46/182 mainly follows the same lines as the IDRL treaties. It asserts the primary role of the affected state in humanitarian response without making specific reference to sub-national authorities, and generally refers to NGOs in a way that would seem to intend those acting internationally, though it does encourage the UN's highest country-level officials, the resident coordinators, to promote the use of all locally or regionally available relief capacities.

On the other hand, more recent resolutions of the UN General Assembly and Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) have evolved significantly in this respect. Starting in 2006, for example, both bodies have adopted annual resolutions encouraging states to "provide an enabling environment for the capacity-building of local authorities and of national and local non-governmental and community-based organizations" with respect to humanitarian assistance (UN General Assembly resolution 61/134, 2006; ECOSOC Resolution 2006/5, 2006).

ECOSOC has further recognized "the importance of involving, as appropriate, relevant entities, including non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations, that provide humanitarian assistance in national and local

coordination efforts, and invites those entities to participate in the improvement of humanitarian assistance, as appropriate" (ECOSOC resolution 2006/5, 2006). It has also become increasingly insistent that the United Nations and other international responders should support the role of sub-national and civil society actors (ECOSOC resolution 1993/1) and dedicate efforts to "building of good relations and trust with national and local governments" (ECOSOC resolution 2011/8).

Similarly, in 2007, the state parties to the Geneva Conventions and the components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement adopted the *Guidelines for the domestic facilitation and regulation of international disaster relief and initial recovery assistance* (also known as the IDRL Guidelines). The IDRL Guidelines call on domestic authorities to take a strong role not only in facilitating outside assistance, but also in monitoring its quality and appropriateness and regulating it as necessary. They affirm that affected states have the primary responsibility in disaster risk management but also that "National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, as auxiliaries to the public authorities in the humanitarian field, and domestic civil society actors play a key supporting role at the domestic level" (para. 3).

The IDRL Guidelines also include, among the key responsibilities of international disaster responders, the duty to abide by domestic law and coordination measures and to build upon and conduct their activities so as to strengthen local capacities (para. 4(3)(h)). They call on national governments to encourage other domestic actors with authority over areas of law or policy pertinent to international disaster relief or initial recovery assistance, including sub-national authorities, to take the necessary steps at their level to implement the Guidelines (para 8.3).

An evolution towards a more inclusive approach can also be found in guidance documents produced for the use of humanitarian agencies. For instance, in 2005, the IASC approved a new 'cluster approach' to improve planning, coordination and accountability in international response through a series of sectoral 'clusters' led by selected operational agencies. The IASC's *Guidance Note on Using the Cluster Approach to Strengthen Humanitarian Response* insists that a "key responsibility" of cluster leads is building on local capacities and maintaining strong links with local authorities and local civil society (IASC, 2006).

In 2007, a set of Principles of Partnership were endorsed at a separate Global Humanitarian Platform meeting of humanitarian organizations, calling for the recognition of the diversity of the humanitarian community, expressing an intention to treat UN and non-UN humanitarian organizations on an equal footing and recognizing "local capacity" as "one of the main assets to enhance and on which to build" (Global Humanitarian Platform, 2007). It was expected that these principles would be used by the clusters as well as by individual humanitarian organizations in their relations with each other (NGO Humanitarian Reform Project, 2010).

Chapter 3

In 2011, the IASC issued a supplemental *Operational Guidance for Cluster Lead Agencies on Working with National Authorities* emphasizing that appropriate governmental authorities (both national and sub-national) should be invited to co-chair the clusters where appropriate and practical. It also emphasizes that international actors should "organize themselves to support or complement existing national response mechanisms rather than create parallel ones which may actually weaken or undermine national efforts" (IASC, 2011).

A somewhat similar development has taken place within international NGO networks that have reached out to include affiliates in the global South, such as World Vision, CARE, Oxfam and ActionAid, moving from a corporate structure to one closer to confederation (Stoddard, 2003). For example, in 2009, ActionAid changed its legal status from a foundation to an association under Dutch law in order to develop and incorporate Southern affiliates – providing each of them equal representation and voting rights in the organization's assembly and the right to be elected to its international board (ActionAid, 2010).

For its part, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement has long integrated both Northern and Southern members around the world. While its internal governance procedures have accordingly provided for equal voting power for decades, there have also been developments in recent years on the particular rules related to arrangements between the components of the Movement and international disaster assistance, with an emphasis on providing greater regard for the local 'sovereignty' of the National Society in an affected country (see Box 3.1).

BOX 3.1 Local 'sovereignty' and disaster response within the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

In 1969, the International Conference of the Red Cross adopted a set of Principles and Rules for Red Cross Disaster Relief, drawing on earlier operational principles documents developed by the Board of Governors of the League of National Red Cross Societies (now known as the IFRC). This document (not to be confused with the Movement's separate Fundamental Principles) set out some basic expectations as to how the League, the National Red Cross or Red Crescent Society of the affected country and foreign National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies were to relate to each other when international support was needed to respond to a (non-conflict) disaster.

The Principles and Rules identified the League as the "information and co-ordination centre for all international assistance in the event of a disaster", provided that National Societies should direct any requests for international assistance through the League and expected them to work with a League liaison officer whenever outside aid was at issue. At the same time, it included some key aspects of local sovereignty, including the expectation that foreign National Societies obtain permission from the

National Society of the affected state before sending any goods or personnel to the country. Though amended several times over the years, the general character and expectations of the Principles document remained quite stable until recently (as noted below).

In 1997, the Movement adopted a separate Agreement on the Organization of the International Activities of the Components of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, known as the Seville Agreement. The Seville Agreement set out criteria for when the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), IFRC or the National Society of the affected country may be considered as the 'lead agency' in coordinating Movement response to a particular emergency (including in armed conflicts, where international humanitarian law already provided a specific role for the ICRC).

Several years on, however, concerns arose among National Societies that the Seville Agreement was too centred on the roles of the ICRC and IFRC and failed to pay enough attention to National Societies. It was also noted that, in the intervening years, many National Societies had increased their capacity for coordination and had developed greater "ownership of their own planning and priorities" (Standing Commission, 2005).

As a result, in 2005, the Movement adopted Supplementary Measures for the Seville Agreement. The Supplementary Measures clarify that, even when the ICRC or the IFRC is serving as lead agency, the 'Host National Society' retains its role and mandate as the only National Society of that country and is a 'primary partner' of the lead agency, to be consulted on all aspects of the Movement's response (Standing Commission, 2005).

This evolution towards increased sovereignty of the 'host' National Society subsequently continued with a thorough revision of the Principles and Rules in 2013, now known as the 'Principles and Rules for Red Cross and Red Crescent Humanitarian Assistance' and currently pending approval by the 32nd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, scheduled in December 2015. They affirm, among other things, that the National Society of the affected state "shall define the strategic objectives for Red Cross Red Crescent humanitarian assistance" and a commitment that international assistance will be provided only with the consent of the National Society in the disaster-affected country (IFRC, 2013). ■

Local actors' access to international decision-making structures for disaster response

To some extent, the actual access of local actors to international decision-making structures for disaster response has grown along with the evolving language of the relevant documents (and, of course, it is precisely because of growing demand for such access that the relevant textual evolutions have taken place). However, there is still clearly progress to be made.

It is striking that the national governments of disaster-affected states are among those most vocally frustrated with the current situation. Notwithstanding the very clear language as to their 'primary' role, in both the binding and the non-binding governance documents, many feel that they are not really in the driver's seat – either

with regard to global decision-making or with respect to international response efforts in their territories (DARA, 2014; Harvey and Harmer, 2011).

At the political level, the UN General Assembly, ECOSOC and top-level committees for key UN agencies (such as the UN Refugee Agency's Executive Committee and the World Food Programme Executive Board) are widely representative of states, including those with recurrent needs for international disaster assistance. However, sub-national authorities do not participate directly, civil society organizations may participate only as observers, and major structural changes are not always fully regulated by these bodies. For example, the cluster approach was developed and its roll-out begun prior to any clear signal from ECOSOC or the General Assembly (Stoddard et al., 2007).

Moreover, other very influential state-run committees in the field of international disaster response, such as the OCHA Donor Support Group, the Humanitarian Liaison Working Group and the Good Humanitarian Donorship initiative, are made up entirely or primarily of traditional donor states (Harvey and Harmer, 2011). For their part, regional (and subregional) organizations active in disaster response generally involve all governments in their jurisdictions and many actively engage with sub-national authorities and civil society, in particular through exercises, training and information-sharing activities (Ferris and Petz, 2013). However, decision-making remains limited to national-level authorities of the member states.

Both governments and local NGOs have complained about lack of access to the IASC, the central policy-making body of the humanitarian community. At present, IASC members come exclusively from humanitarian and development organizations – there are no national or local governmental officials. In addition to UN agencies, the IASC includes, among its 'standing invitees', the ICRC, IFRC and three NGO consortia: the Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response (SCHR), Interaction and the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA). Of these, only the IFRC and ICVA include local civil society actors directly among their membership, though both SCHR and Interaction have members that are themselves networks of local NGOs, churches or similar organizations. The IASC is, therefore, sometimes referred to as a "network of networks" (Collinson, 2011). Nevertheless, a recent external review of the IASC concluded that it is "generally seen as a 'Western club'" and that the NGO consortia were not perceived to be sufficiently representative by Southern NGOs (Pantuliano et al., 2014).

At the country level, the picture is also quite mixed. While officially intended as a mechanism for coordination and information sharing, the cluster approach has become an important locus for strategic and operational decision-making about international response at the field level. However, it has also been dogged with allegations of failing to adequately integrate domestic authorities (both national

and sub-national) or local NGOs. The first external review of the cluster system in 2007 found the lack of interaction with local NGOs to be "among the most disappointing findings regarding the cluster approach" (Stoddard et al., 2007). The second external review in 2010 similarly found that "clusters have largely failed to integrate national and local actors appropriately and have thereby undermined national ownership" (Steets et al., 2010). On the other hand, that review also pointed out that domestic authorities must share some of the blame for their own lack of engagement, including not always taking very seriously the status of 'co-chair' urged on them by the external agencies.

Still, a number of governments have adapted to and even internalized the cluster concept. As noted in Box 3.2, government engagement with the clusters was seen as a positive aspect in response to Cyclone Pam in Vanuatu, though not all problems were solved. Likewise, the Philippines has integrated the cluster approach directly into its own regulatory framework. After Typhoon Haiyan in 2013, this was seen to have brought important benefits at the national level, where the clusters had been active in the preparedness phase, though some gaps and confusion arose in the implementation at field level, where the structure was less familiar (Hofmann et al., 2014).

More recently, significant progress has been reported in including local NGOs in the clusters. Nevertheless, national NGOs may still feel sidelined, for example when executive bodies intended to facilitate faster decision-making are developed, such as a 'head of NGO' group that was set up independently in Zimbabwe (Serventy, 2013; Humphries, 2013). Likewise, local NGOs in Kenya have expressed the feeling that cluster coordination at the national level had "added little value for local engagement" (ALNAP, 2012).

BOX 3.2 Governing international aid after Cyclone Pam in Vanuatu

According to the United Nations Institute for Environment and Human Security's *World Risk Report,* Vanuatu is among the most disaster-prone countries in the world (UN, 2014). Earthquakes, volcanoes and storms are frequent realities for its inhabitants. However, the ferocity of Cyclone Pam, which slammed into the country in March 2015, tested Vanuatu's preparedness to respond and the global humanitarian system to assist.

Outside assistance poured into Vanuatu from its neighbours in the Pacific and from around the world. It came in the form of tarpaulins, shelter kits, clean drinking water and humanitarian workers, from as close as Fiji and as far as Finland. The huge influx of international agencies placed considerable strain on the absorptive capacity of Vanuatu's national structures and institutions and, at least in the initial stages, frayed nerves. Early reports carried mutual recriminations between some officials and aid agencies about alleged lack of coordination and stalling of emergency aid. "I do apologise but I have to

state the facts. We have seen this time and time again," one national official asserted. "In nearly every country in the world where they go in they have their own operational systems, they have their own networks and they refuse to conform to government directives" (ABC News, 2015). At the Vanuatu National Lessons Learned Workshop held in the capital Port Vila in June 2015, the government called on international actors to respect the sovereignty of disaster-affected countries and to streamline their efforts with the existing protocols of the government in order to build and maintain trust.

Vanuatu's National Disaster Plan states that international agencies wishing to provide assistance should ensure their interest is channelled through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which would then either accept or reject the offer based on an assessment of needs. The ministry would also outline the process for coordination and accountability for that international actor.

However, many international responders failed to follow this process and, indeed, were completely unaware of the requirements. As a result, many agencies did not come under the coordination of the government and went straight to the field. During one health cluster meeting in Vanuatu just three weeks after the cyclone hit, it was noted that 12 registered medical teams were carrying out work in Vanuatu under the coordination of the government, but the whereabouts, activities and competence of three other teams were unknown.

Nevertheless, both governmental and humanitarian sources reported that the Vanuatu Humanitarian Team (VHT) – Vanuatu's domestic 'cluster' system – had added important value. The VHT was established in late 2011 as a partnership between Vanuatu-based NGOs, the Vanuatu Red Cross, UN and government agencies. Coordinated by Oxfam with the support of OCHA's Regional Office Pacific, it focuses on improving the coordination of humanitarian preparedness and response in support of government agencies in disasters. Government line ministries act in cluster lead roles in emergencies and VHT members act as co-leads. The VHT is recognized as a key coordination mechanism in Vanuatu and is also included in government plans.

However, while the VHT generally works well on a domestic level, its effectiveness was challenged by the influx of international assistance during Cyclone Pam. This highlighted the need to take a closer look at the interface between international assistance and domestic systems. It was assumed that international assistance would enter Vanuatu and seamlessly merge with the established VHT cluster system; however, this was not the reality on the ground.

In addition, Vanuatu was not spared from some of the negative aspects of the tide of goodwill that flooded in from every corner of the globe. Unsolicited goods are a problem at almost every disaster in the world, whether the affected country is rich or poor, big or small. To combat what they knew could drastically hamper relief efforts, the Vanuatu government issued a policy letter on unsolicited goods requesting that those wanting to send relief items liaise with cluster heads or send money. The various clusters also posted specifications for required aid on the internet, outlining qualities, standards and accepted types of aid. Unfortunately, however, this did not prevent the entry of a large volume of unsolicited goods and left the government feeling as if the country was being used as a dumping ground for containers upon containers of goods, many of which were completely unusable.

Since 2011, the Vanuatu Red Cross has also been working with the government to strengthen legal preparedness for international disaster response. Vanuatu was the first country in the Pacific

to undertake such a review. Although the review recommended procedures for the management of international relief be included in the National Disaster Plan, National Disaster Act and other laws, these recommendations had not been implemented when Pam struck. The government, however, drew on them in the procedures developed to respond to the storm. Following the storm, the government has also renewed the review of its legislation to ensure that, before the next disaster, it will be fully prepared. ■

Accordingly, there is a trend towards greater inclusiveness both in the assertions of international normative documents and in at least some of the instances of international decision-making bodies for disaster response. However, many local actors remain dissatisfied.

Local actors and international governance for disaster risk reduction

As in the case of humanitarian response, the international normative framework for disaster risk reduction is currently dominated by non-binding norms, though there are important treaties, particularly at the regional level. However, the distinction between binding and non-binding instruments when it comes to local actors is not as sharp. Moreover, while far from complete, the direct participation and engagement of local actors in international decision-making structures for DRR has grown more quickly than in the field of humanitarian response.

What the international rules say about local actors in DRR

A clear understanding in international normative instruments is that states – and particularly national governments – bear the main responsibility for reducing disaster risks. On the other hand, some of the same disaster-focused treaties that pass over sub-national authorities and civil society organizations in their provisions on response do remember them when they turn to risk reduction. For example, article 3 of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response of 2005 provides that "[t]he Parties, in addressing disaster risks, shall involve, as appropriate, all stakeholders, including local communities, non-governmental organisations and private enterprises, utilising, among others, community-based disaster preparedness and early response approaches" (ASEAN, 2005). Likewise, the Agreement Establishing the Caribbean Disaster and Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) of 2011 expects the CDEMA Coordinating Unit to "establish collaborative arrangement and mechanisms with regional disaster management stakeholders to promote disaster loss reduction" and calls on member states to "develop and implement a comprehensive disaster public awareness information and education programme involving media

houses, schools, voluntary agencies and other institutions in order to ensure public participation and community involved in the disaster management system".

The story is somewhat more mixed with regard to treaties related to the prevention of slow-onset disasters. The International Convention to Combat Desertification in Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa of 1994 includes not only clear responsibilities for national governments in addressing drought (whether due to natural or human causes), but also detailed requirements as to the empowerment and engagement of sub-national authorities and NGOs (whose "special role" is emphasized at the outset). Regional treaties on the same topic, such as the Agreement Establishing the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development of 1996 and the Convention Establishing a Permanent Inter-State Drought Control Committee for the Sahel of 1973, are more national government-centred. Similarly, language about climate change adaptation in the United Nations Climate Change Convention of 1992 and the Kyoto Protocol of 1998 only refers to states, and without particular reference to sub-national authorities.

Still, the most central international governance instruments related to disaster risk reduction have been non-binding documents, specifically: UN General Assembly resolution 44/236 of 1989 (declaring the 1990s the International Decade of Disaster Risk Reduction), the Yokohama Strategy for a Safer World of 1994, the Hyogo Framework for Action of 2005 and, most recently, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction of 2015. All four affirmed the central role of national authorities in risk reduction, but also referred to the roles of sub-national actors.

In the latter respect, both resolution 44/236 and the Yokohama Strategy were rather tepid. Resolution 44/236 called on states to "encourage their local administrations to take appropriate steps to mobilize the necessary support from the public and private sectors" and stated that "non-governmental organizations are encouraged to support and participate fully in the programmes and activities of the Decade". Similarly, the Yokohama Strategy called on states to "give due consideration to the role of local authorities in the enforcement of safety standards and rules" and to "consider making use of support from non-governmental organizations".

Ten years after the Yokohama strategy, however, the Hyogo Framework was more emphatic, asserting that "[b]oth communities and local authorities should be empowered to manage and reduce disaster risk by having access to the necessary information, resources and authority to implement actions for disaster risk reduction" and calling for states to "decentralize responsibilities and resources for disaster risk reduction to relevant subnational or local authorities". It also

observed that "[c]ivil society, including volunteers and community-based organizations, the scientific community and the private sector are vital stakeholders in supporting the implementation of disaster risk reduction at all levels".

The 2015 Sendai Framework went yet further. While reaffirming the primary role of national governments for risk reduction, it also acknowledged that "[d]isaster risk reduction requires that responsibilities be shared by central Governments and relevant national authorities, sectors and stakeholders, as appropriate to their national circumstances and systems of governance". More specifically, it provided that "[w]hile the enabling, guiding and coordinating role of national and federal State Governments remain essential, it is necessary to empower local authorities and local communities to reduce disaster risk, including through resources, incentives and decision-making responsibilities, as appropriate".

It also called for "[e]nhance[d] collaboration among people at the local level to disseminate disaster risk information through the involvement of community-based organizations and non-governmental organizations" and for states to "[e]mpower local authorities, as appropriate, through regulatory and financial means to work and coordinate with civil society, communities and indigenous peoples and migrants in disaster risk management at the local level". In a section on "roles of stakeholders", it provided an additional laundry list of desired activities from "civil society, volunteers, organized voluntary work organizations and community-based organizations", ranging from support in developing normative frameworks to disseminating public information.

While not as strongly stated, the (non-binding) Cancun Adaptation Framework adopted by the conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 2011 similarly "[r]ecognizes the need to engage a broad range of stakeholders at the global, regional, national and local levels, be they government, including subnational and local government, private business or civil society. . . ." and "invites relevant multilateral, international, regional and national organizations, the public and private sectors, civil society and other relevant stakeholders to undertake and support enhanced action on adaptation at all levels".

Local actors' access to international decision-making structures for disaster risk reduction

At the close of the International Decade, the UN General Assembly approved the Secretary-General's proposal to create a small UN secretariat (UNISDR) and an "inter-agency task force", designed mainly to coordinate the approach of the various UN agencies and to identify and suggest solutions for policy gaps.

The membership of the task force was limited to 14 representatives from UN agencies, eight from regional organizations and eight from civil society and professional sectors (UNISDR, 2005a). Governments were not directly represented, but a significant number of diplomats participated as observers to the meetings and some officials were also involved in thematic working groups established under the task force umbrella. Civil society organizations in the task force were mainly international NGOs rather than domestic entities (UNISDR, 2005b).

In 2006, in the wake of the World Conference on Disaster Reduction in Kobe, Japan, the inter-agency task force was disbanded and its functions were shifted to the Global Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction, in part to widen the group of stakeholders involved (UN Secretary-General, 2007). Sessions of the Global Platform were convened biannually starting in 2007 and have been increasingly well attended (the participants' list for the 2013 global platform runs to 274 pages), welcoming not only diplomats from low-, middle- and high-income countries, but also significant numbers of other national and local officials, civil society representatives, scientists and academics, the private sector and other stakeholders. Similarly, for the last several years, regional platforms have been organized with participation from a wide base of stakeholders. As in the case of humanitarian response, network organizations like the IFRC and the Global Network of Civil Society Organizations for Disaster Reduction (the latter established in 2007 and now representing some 850 organizations) have also been a mechanism for increasing the influence of local civil society actors in these meetings.

While the global and regional platforms have certainly played an important role in building a sense of community among disaster risk management practitioners and in encouraging information sharing, their products have tended to be informal – generally a chair's summary and a report of proceedings. Their impact as governance instruments has thus been limited and they are seen more as technical platforms than decision-making forums (Jones et al., 2014).

In addition to the platforms, however, periodic World Conferences on Disaster Reduction have also been held. These produced the major international risk reduction instruments described above – the Yokohama Strategy, the Hyogo Framework and the Sendai Framework – which were clearly weighty (if non-binding) global normative instruments. Like the global and regional platforms, these conferences have featured ever-increasing attendance, including by local actors (Corredig, 2012) and civil society organizations, particularly those working through networks, both of which have clearly had an important influence on the overall shape of the frameworks (Oleru, 2010).

However, the final say on these texts remains in the hand of states – and in particular their diplomatic representatives. For example, in the run-up to the 2015 World

Conference in Sendai, UNISDR and other partners organized 167 consultative events with various stakeholders – including many sub-national officials and local civil society representatives – over a two-year period (UNISDR, 2015b), resulting in a zero draft of the Sendai Framework produced by UNISDR in October 2014. Nevertheless, that draft then went through extensive changes in a subsequent state-only negotiation process, which included several preparatory sessions both before the conference and at very late-night sessions during the conference itself (Wilkinson, 2015).

Civil society actors play an even more visible but possibly also more secondary role when it comes to the more politically fraught decision-making in the climate change context. Since the first conference of the parties (COP) of the UNFCCC in 1995, the involvement of non-state observers has risen to nearly 1,600. Most of these, however, are made up of industry representatives and independent or research NGOs, whereas indigenous peoples' organizations, trade unions, farmers, women and gender groups or youth groups each account for only about 2 per cent of all organizations (Betzold, 2013).

The very openness of these conferences to a wide variety of outsiders has led to problems of effective access. For instance, at COP 15 in Copenhagen, some 30,000 civil society representatives were registered for a meeting centre with a maximum capacity of 15,000 (Eastwood, 2011). On the other hand, this openness has definite limits – non-state observers have only the power to be heard, not to propose texts or vote, and many individual meetings are closed to them. As one commentator explains: "When observers are allowed, the Parties are not really, let's say, behaving how they should behave constructively, getting to the point; sometimes they are just giving long speeches just to demonstrate their devotion, to present themselves" (Nasiritousi and Linner, 2014).

Unlike the case of the DRR frameworks, negotiating texts are not developed on the basis of full stakeholder consultations but rather remain top-level state processes from beginning to end. Accordingly, "members of civil society regularly talk about their role in UN deliberations as 'damage control' or 'holding governments' feet to the fire' as most policy decisions are not as strong as CSOs [civil society organizations] would like them to be". This is achieved, for the most part, through background advice and lobbying with like-minded states and through media-oriented protest (Eastwood, 2011).

Civil society has also achieved entry, but a contingent one, in the direct governance of global climate finance. For example, the World Bank's Global Environment Facility (GEF) and Climate Investment Fund have long included and even funded the participation of some civil society observers to their decision-making bodies. These observers are 'self-selected' from networks grouping many organizations, though some critics charge that the process privileges international over local NGOs and

that their ability to make statements does not necessarily amount to significant influence (Sharma, 2010). Guidelines for the funds also expressly call for the engagement of local civil society in the development of projects at the country level, though some have questioned the effectiveness of their implementation (Bretton Woods Project, 2011).

Similarly, two years after its creation in 2011, the Green Climate Fund was opened to some NGO observers (Godoy, 2013). In 2014, it also created a Private Sector Advisory Group consisting of ten private sector and civil society experts (Green Climate Fund, 2014). Its initial general guidelines for country programmes require country programmes to engage stakeholders, including governments, sub-national institutions, civil society and the private sector. Inasmuch as this fund has only just received sufficient pledges to begin allocations this year, the effectiveness of this commitment to engagement is yet to be seen.

In the area of DRR (and the allied field of climate change adaptation), therefore, the actual access of local actors to international decision-making forums has caught up to a significant extent to the rhetoric of international norms, but is still in a decidedly secondary position.

The role of local actors within their national disaster risk management governance

As might be imagined, the role of local actors in disaster risk governance varies significantly from country to country, depending on a wide range of factors, including the overall political context and governance system (Aysan and Lavell, 2014). Nevertheless, some trends can be identified.

Domestic rules on international assistance

In the area of international disaster response, domestic governance structures remain sparse. In 2007, after six years of dedicated research and consultations, the IFRC found that few states had existing national legislative and policy frameworks in this area (Fisher, 2007). As a result, international response operations suffered from recurrent problems of overregulation in some areas (such as delays in customs clearance and imposition of taxes on relief items) and underregulation in others (such as oversight of foreign medical teams). Moreover, without clear procedures, many national authorities struggled to stay in the driver's seat in terms of their expected "primary role in the initiation, organization, coordination, and implementation of humanitarian assistance within its territory", as described by UN General Assembly resolution 46/182 of 1991.

For example, when the 2005 earthquake struck Pakistan, there was no provision in national law designating a responsible institution for coordinating relief. Likewise, after Tropical Storm Stan in Guatemala, it was reported that the central disaster management authority did not understand its role to be coordinating the whole relief effort, thus leaving most NGOs to act on their own (Fisher, 2007).

After the adoption of the IDRL Guidelines in 2007, National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the IFRC have assisted interested national authorities to review their laws and procedures for receiving international response in more than 40 countries. To date, some 19 countries have adopted new laws and procedures drawing on recommendations of the Guidelines (IFRC, 2015), including Indonesia, which is now setting the standard for legal preparedness for international disaster cooperation (see Box 3.3).

BOX 3.3 Indonesia sets the standard for legal preparedness for international assistance

Located in the Pacific 'ring of fire', Indonesia is faced with the constant threat of disasters, ranging from volcanoes and earthquakes to floods and tsunami. Having suffered from one of the worst disasters the world has seen – the Indian Ocean tsunami in 2004 – Indonesia now has one of the most comprehensive legal frameworks for disaster management and response in the world. The effects of the 2004 tsunami had a profound impact and were a catalyst for significant legal and institutional reform. Before that fateful day, Indonesia did not have any overarching disaster management law in place and procedures were unclear on how to guide the huge influx of international assistance that poured into the country.

This lack of legal preparedness contributed substantially to the chaos of the response operation and revealed a significant number of regulatory issues which hampered the response. These hurdles included high taxes and duties on the import of relief goods, lengthy procedures for customs clearance, inconsistency and confusion surrounding visas and work permits – many of which were addressed on an ad hoc or case-by-case basis, rather than through a clear and transparent system. In the years following the tsunami, the Indonesian Red Cross Society (Palang Merah Indonesia or PMI), worked together with the government, NGOs and key humanitarian actors such as the UN to develop a legal framework to address these issues comprehensively.

Indonesia adopted a new disaster management law in 2007, followed by a series of regulations and guidelines, including a government regulation on the role of international institutions and foreign NGOs in disaster response (2008). A guideline developed by the country's National Disaster Management Authority, BNPB, in 2010 provides even more detailed direction on the role of international assistance in relief operations. This framework set Indonesia on the path to becoming an exemplar across Asia and globally in terms of disaster law.

Indonesia's investment in its disaster management systems and governance arrangements has stood the country in good stead, especially as regards emergency response. Recent disasters such as the Padang earthquake in 2009 and the Mount Merapi eruption in 2010 have seen the system put

to the test. And while some progress is still to be made in the implementation and understanding of the legal framework, great strides have been taken in terms of national and local capacity to respond.

Indonesia knows through experience that it is not a matter of if, but when, another mega disaster will hit. In light of that, PMI and the national authorities recognize the need constantly to test, revise and improve their national laws and frameworks. PMI and BNPB have continued to work together to assess and improve the legal framework for disaster management and response, with technical assistance from the IFRC and other partners. These steps have included simulation exercises to test roles, responsibilities and coordination mechanisms; new research and consultations on the impact and implementation of the existing legal framework (PMI and IFRC, 2014); ongoing dissemination and advocacy about IDRL including at universities across Indonesia; the review of existing guidelines on international assistance and the development of a new guideline on emergency response command structures. The Indonesian parliament is due to review the national disaster management law (Law 24/2007) in 2015 and 2016, and PMI are playing an active role in this process. Plans to develop a National Response Framework for Indonesia are also under way.

Although Indonesia was forced to learn the hard way, the 2004 tsunami has led to a level of legal preparedness that sets a benchmark for the rest of South-East Asia and beyond. "The 2004 tsunami was a huge wake-up call" says Ritola Tasmaya, PMI secretary general. "It opened our eyes, and we saw the need to have the right laws and institutions in place to be able to prepare for, and respond to, disasters. PMI will continue to support, and promote, our national disaster law progress." ■

Among the gaps that remain in many countries' regulatory frameworks is clarity as to the role of sub-national authorities with regard to international responders. For example, after the Great East Japan earthquake of 2011, the World Bank reported that local governments were not up to the task of coordinating and overseeing international relief providers (World Bank, 2012).

Domestic rules on local actors in response and risk reduction

In a large number of national laws and policies, a disaster is partly defined as an event that exceeds local capacities. The designation of an event as a disaster, therefore, entails a shift of (at least some) operational responsibility and power from local authorities towards their provincial and/or national counterparts (OAS, 2011). Although it is a fairly basic aspect of national disaster laws, this process is nevertheless often difficult, confusing and politically charged. Depending on the circumstances, both local and national authorities may hope to keep operational control over the situation in order to meet public expectations of leadership or, on the contrary, to shift responsibility (and blame) to the other.

A very visible example of the latter occurred in the United States after Hurricane Katrina, after which federal, state and municipal authorities publicly clashed over their respective roles and engaged in mutual blame for delays in aid distributions and efforts to ensure law and order. Two weeks after the storm, the mayor of New

Orleans, C. Ray Nagin, said, "We're still fighting over authority… A bunch of people are the boss. The state and federal government are doing a two-step dance" (Shane et al., 2005).

With regard to DRR, many countries have decentralized responsibilities for key activities to sub-national (particularly municipal) authorities. However, this delegation is often not accompanied by a corresponding access to the necessary resources or expertise to carry out the tasks. As noted by a comparative study of laws for DRR in 31 countries published by IFRC and UNDP in 2014: "There is little empirical evidence that decentralized governance necessarily strengthens DRR, and some sources suggest that decentralization may even have a negative effect on disaster risk if legal authority is not matched by resources and capacity" (IFRC and UNDP, 2014). Similarly, a separate UNDP review noted that the Mid-Term Review of the Hyogo Framework for Action had found that only 20 countries had dedicated budget allocations to local governments for disaster risk management, even though 65 per cent of the countries had made local governments legally responsible for this activity (Aysan and Lavell, 2014).

The IFRC–UNDP study also found a range of approaches in domestic law and policy to the participation of local civil society organizations in DRR. Some 13 of the 31 countries studied were found to have specific legislative (or policy) provisions in this regard, 10 had general obligations to be inclusive of non-governmental stakeholders, and 5 were silent. In some of the countries that included express provisions, there were nevertheless problems with implementation. For instance, the study notes that, in the Dominican Republic, civil society was represented, but stakeholders felt that the law was not clear on exactly what their roles should be, while in New Zealand, the overall success of community representation through local government was not matched for Maori communities, who are reportedly not yet well integrated into pre-disaster planning and emergency response (IFRC and UNDP, 2014).

Likewise, UNDP has separately found that the integration of local civil society in planning for national climate change adaptation has often been dependent on external pressure from donors, with inconsistent results. For instance, in Viet Nam, "the national government has made a commitment to national implementation of a community-based disaster risk management system (Decision 1002), presumably due to calls from the United Nations and non-governmental organizations. However, it has not allocated significant resources to rolling this out, leaving the agenda effectively in the hands of the non-governmental organizations who are managing small and scattered pilot projects" (Aysan and Lavell, 2014).

Of course, the disaster risk management sector is not alone in this respect, as the role of civil society in any aspect of social governance remains in its infancy in some countries and has been seen to roll backwards in some others (International Center

for Not-for-Profit Law, 2013). However, the news is certainly not all bad when it comes to support for local actors in disaster risk management. As noted in Box 3.4, both Mexico and Colombia have recently adopted new laws placing a particular accent on involving sub-national authorities and civil society, and a similar trend can also be seen in recent policy and legal documents in a number of other countries in Latin America.

BOX 3.4 Building local engagement through disaster risk management legislation – the examples of Mexico and Colombia

Both Mexico and Colombia recently adopted major revisions to their national civil protection acts, with the particular goal of increasing the priority of risk reduction as part of their disaster management systems and sharing responsibilities among a wide group of national stakeholders.

The Mexico example is striking with regard to the multi-year negotiation that took place between the national government and the states, which have significant autonomy guaranteed by the constitution when it comes to disaster risk management.

The new General Civil Protection Act, adopted in 2012, established an important milestone, mainstreaming the concept of integrated risk management in various sectors, including spatial planning, construction, environment and climate change. In order to involve stakeholders, the national civil protection organization (SINAPROC) was set up as a multi-sectorial forum involving representatives of all entities and dependencies of the federal public administration, the civil protection systems of state entities, municipalities, volunteer and neighbourhood groups, civil society organizations, fire departments, the private and social sectors, communication media, investigation, education and technological development centres.

The act established specific requirements for the involvement of communities in DRR activities, providing that communities be informed and participate in risk management, and emphasizing the importance of education about civil protection and disaster prevention by making the topic compulsory at all levels of public and private education. Moreover, municipal civil protection councils were established in accordance with the new act, which allow communities to consult the public authorities before, during and after disasters, also making the municipalities directly responsible for their communities in response to disasters. Another example of citizen empowerment established through the act are the municipal councils for social participation in education, responsible for supporting the municipalities in civil protection activities and school emergencies. These councils are formed of parents, teachers and local authorities and responsible for strengthening preparations for potential emergencies.

An important next step for Mexico is the harmonization of existing federal, state and municipal laws to bring them into line with the dispositions of the General Civil Protection Act.

In Colombia, Law 1523 of 2012 created a comprehensive disaster risk management system where, for the first time, entities at all levels (national, department, district and municipal) are involved.

Colombia's national Disaster Risk Unit was upgraded institutionally, with its director now reporting directly to the president of the country, substantially improving its ability to coordinate with other ministries and departments. The aim of the new law was to evolve from a system that was entirely based on disaster response to a system that is now focused on DRR, risk knowledge and disaster management.

Article 2 of the law states that "disaster risk management is the responsibility of all authorities and inhabitants of the territory of Colombia" and requests that public and private entities and communities develop and execute risk management processes in the context of their competences, sphere of application and jurisdiction. According to the act, all public entities, the private and not-for-profit sectors and communities are part of the disaster risk management system. However, the act does not detail the modalities for the participation of communities and the not-for-profit sector in DRR activities or the role they play at department, district and municipal levels.

To achieve its objectives, the act creates three national committees, with their equivalent at departmental, district and municipal levels, i.e., the territorial councils, responsible for ensuring the articulation of DRR, risk knowledge and disaster management. These committees are mainly composed of representatives of inter-sectoral governmental entities assuming functions pertinent to disaster risk management. Civil society and the public sector are also represented in these committees. The National Committee for Disaster Risk Reduction includes public and private universities and the Federation of Colombian Insurers, while the Colombian Red Cross is included in the National Committee for Disaster Response and in territorial councils. For its part, the National Committee on Risk Knowledge includes representatives of the Association of Regional Autonomous Corporations and Sustainable Development. It is noteworthy, however, that the role of other members of civil society and NGOs is not defined in the law. It would be opportune to define their role in the established DRR mechanisms and committees.

Three levels of government are involved in developing the National Plan for Disaster Risk Management and the act requests that they develop a disaster risk management plan and an information system for each department, district or municipality. The act also calls for development plans to identify risk factors and threats to prevent construction in zones at risk and pre-establish response procedures in case of emergency. It also requires the creation of a national fund for disaster risk management and new funds at department and municipal levels, managed directly by mayors and governors, which has decentralized and empowered local decision-making. ■

The gaps in the normative and actual empowerment of local actors in disaster risk management governance in national law are thus similar to those described above with regard to the international governance frameworks. However, a similarly positive trend is also manifest in many countries to bridge these gaps. This is a good thing because they are likely to have much greater consequences at the domestic level. Of particular concern is the disconnect between the common reliance on local actors to implement key rules and activities relevant to risk management and the authority, resources and capacitation actually available to them to do so.

Conclusion

Prevailing attitudes about the role of local actors in humanitarian assistance and disaster risk management have changed over time, and both international and national norms are evolving along with them.

With regard to the role of affected states, international norms, both binding and non-binding, have been consistent that they are to have the primary role when it comes to international humanitarian relief in disasters. This is also clearly asserted in agency guidance documents. Nevertheless, affected states feel increasingly that a large gap exists between this normative expectation and their experience of the actual behaviour of international responders. Some of the blame for this situation, however, may also be placed on the lack of domestic rules and procedures in many countries, domestic capacity limits and half-hearted attempts in some cases to play a full coordination role.

With regard to sub-national authorities and civil society, binding international law is mainly silent as to their role in international humanitarian operations, but it does find a place for them in DRR. In both areas, however, the key non-binding norms, including resolutions of ECOSOC and the UN General Assembly as well as the main international frameworks, have grown increasingly insistent about recognizing the importance of these actors.

In light of the unmistakeable language, one would expect to see them very strongly represented in the main decision-making forums. This has not yet been achieved when it comes to international humanitarian mechanisms, whether at the international or at the county level. Greater access does seem to have been granted in governance forums most focused on DRR and climate change adaptation. However, the ability of these actors to actually participate in meaningful decision-making there is not as great as might be imagined, either because the forums produce weak products (at least from the point of view of exercising governance power) or because the actual decision points are not completely open to them. Further development of binding norms – including the International Law Commission's potential global treaty – might lend additional normative pressure for more inclusive results in practice. On the other hand, some states remain wary of a 'slippery slope' in sharing ever more space in traditionally inter-governmental processes and question the real representativeness and legitimacy of civil society organizations.

With regard to national systems, the picture is more mixed. It is clear, however, that many states have not yet fully prepared themselves in a regulatory sense to manage major international disaster assistance operations. Some of them have strongly enshrined the role of sub-national authorities and civil society in their laws and policies, but not always with full success. Here too, though, a trend

towards greater inclusiveness is noticeable and to be welcomed, even if the real-world power of the local actors has not always kept pace with the legal ambition. In addition, it does seem evident that some countries could strengthen their legal and policy provisions related to local actors.

Overall, the relevant normative frameworks seem to be moving in the right direction when it comes to recognizing and promoting the role of local actors. Local actors are fairly well represented in the rule books. It is simply time for the mechanisms of decision-making to catch up.

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It often falls to local communities to organize relief in the aftermath of disaster, as here in the Philippines after Typhoon Haiyan. But the roles of local actors, although improving, are not always fully recognized and promoted in the normative frameworks of affected countries. © Jarkko Mikkonen/ Finnish Red Cross

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Chapter 4

Chapter 4

Follow the money: are funding patterns keeping pace with trends and evidence?

International humanitarian actors have long expressed formal recognition of the need to respect, support and strengthen the capacities of local and national responding actors (see Box 4.1), yet operational realities diverge significantly from these aspirations. In many cases, international humanitarian response remains 'state avoiding' (Harvey, 2009), including in contexts where there is no operational necessity for maintaining an independent distance from governments. Local and national civil society actors too are often bypassed or marginalized in international responses. Indeed, approaches which assume that local and national capacity requires substitution have become the default response mode for the international response system and heavily influence culture and practices (Ramalingam and Mitchell, 2014). The overwhelming majority of international humanitarian financing follows this pattern and continues to flow via international actors.

The challenges of respecting principled commitments to work effectively with local and national actors extend well beyond the humanitarian community and are also felt among international development actors. For instance, despite the compelling case for the cost efficiency of investing in disaster preparedness (Kellett and Peters, 2013; Cabot Venton, 2013), financial aid to support the capacity of national actors to respond to and to manage and reduce disaster risk lags well behind commitments.

Calls for a change in the status quo, however, have emerged from many quarters, not least from local and national actors themselves, and the need to modify the international modus operandi to reflect realities in which national actors play a critical role has become increasingly apparent. Regional consultations for the World Humanitarian Summit, for instance, have given a global platform for local and national civil society actors to express concerns at their marginalization within international humanitarian decision-making, policy-setting and resource allocation. Participants have called for the role of national and local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to be better appreciated and financially supported – and "not just as vehicles enabling international response" (World Humanitarian Summit, 2015).

When Cyclone Pam devastated Vanuatu in March 2015, the Vanuatu Red Cross was among the first to distribute aid to vulnerable people. That local people and organizations play an ever-more crucial role in responding to crises is increasingly apparent. Current financing of humanitarian aid, however, tends to favour international actors.
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Increasingly, low- and middle-income states are leading their own crisis responses and influencing the terms on which international humanitarian actors engage (Ramalingam and Mitchell, 2014). Notably, the government of the Philippines did not request international assistance to respond to Typhoon Hagupit in 2014; the governments of Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey have strongly influenced a conceptual shift towards a more sustainable nationally led response to support refugees displaced from Iraq and Syria; and the government of Ethiopia has played a seminal role in creating a progressive government-led response to food security shocks. And over the last 15 years, international actors have also been adapting to operational realities in highly insecure settings where remotely managed response through local and national responding actors has become the norm.

Among development actors, too, there are growing calls for change as crises and shocks are increasingly recognized as a major threat to sustainable development. The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, for example, notes that states taking part in the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in March 2015 reiterated their commitments with a "renewed sense of urgency" in light of evidence that exposure of people and assets in all countries has increased faster than vulnerability has decreased, contributing to new risks and steadily rising disaster-related losses (UN, 2015).

Increased recognition of changes in contexts, risks and demands for international assistance and growing calls for changes in the ways international actors work with and support local and national capacities to manage, prepare for and respond to crises provide the backdrop to this chapter. The following discussion examines the current status of international humanitarian and, to a limited extent, development financing, for local and national actors, focusing on civil society (primarily local and national NGOs) and crisis-affected governments. The discussion also considers obstacles and opportunities in achieving a more collaborative collective response that upholds principled commitments to respect and support local and national response capacities.

BOX 4.1 Examples of key international commitments to support local and national response capacities

Principles of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Response Programmes (IFRC,1994)

We shall attempt to build disaster response on local capacities.

Relief aid must strive to reduce future vulnerabilities to disaster as well as meeting basic needs.

23 principles and good practices of good humanitarian donorship (2003)

Strengthen the capacity of affected countries and local communities to prevent, prepare for, mitigate and respond to humanitarian crises, with the goal of ensuring that governments and local communities are better able to meet their responsibilities and co-ordinate effectively with humanitarian partners.

Support mechanisms for contingency planning by humanitarian organisations, including, as appropriate, allocation of funding, to strengthen capacities for response.

European Union [EU] Consensus on Humanitarian Aid (EU, 2007)

The EU will examine how best it can offer support to capacity-building activities for sustainable strengthening of local disaster response, and encourage implementing partners in fostering partnership with local organisations in affected communities. In practical terms, this means anticipating disasters, reducing risk exposure, strengthening the resilience of vulnerable communities, using risk transfer mechanisms where appropriate, and strengthening national and international response capacity and leadership. Humanitarians should focus on preparedness, including work to strengthen early warning systems and to boost the capacity of local communities and civil society organisations to respond to crises.

Principles of Partnership: A Statement of Commitment, The Global Humanitarian Platform (GHP, 2007)

The diversity of the humanitarian community is an asset if we build on our comparative advantages and complement each other's contributions. Local capacity is one of the main assets to enhance and on which to build. Whenever possible, humanitarian organizations should strive to make it an integral part in emergency response. Language and cultural barriers must be overcome.

The Secretary-General's Five-Year Action Agenda (United Nations, 2012)

Enhancing collaboration among humanitarian organizations, particularly from the global South, at the local, national and regional levels, to strengthen community resilience and emergency response, and establishing a monitoring system to assess progress on the implementation of preparedness measures.

Terminology and definitions

The **international humanitarian system** comprises a set of actors which are operationally or financially related to each other and share common overarching goals, norms and principles in responding to humanitarian needs.

The interdependent elements, which make up this complex system, include international NGOS; UN agencies, offices funds and programmes working on humanitarian assistance; the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (International Committee of the Red Cross, IFRC and National Societies); national NGOs that partner with and/or receive funding from international humanitarian entities for humanitarian operations; host-government entities (such as interior ministries and national disaster management authorities), with formal roles in overseeing the receipt and implementation

of international humanitarian assistance; and regional intergovernmental agencies engaged in humanitarian activities; and, finally, donor-government agencies or offices that provide financing for international humanitarian response (based on ALNAP, 2012).

International humanitarian assistance or international humanitarian response is the reported financial resources directed to international humanitarian action from international governments and from private donors (individuals, private foundations, trusts, private companies and corporations) (based on Development Initiatives, 2015a). ■

International financing for affected government-led response

The relationship of local and national organizations to international actors is often of less consequence to them than their relationship to domestic authorities. International discussion of 'national and local capacity' can however sometimes conflate governmental and non-governmental actors. Although they are clearly distinct, what these two sets of actors have in common is that they are largely bypassed by the dominant model of international humanitarian response. The following section considers international humanitarian financing to the governments of affected states in a shifting geographic and economic landscape of humanitarian response.

International humanitarian financing to national governments

Affected states have the primary duty to prepare, respond and rebuild. Although large-scale international humanitarian responses can still overwhelm national systems, there is greater acknowledgement of the role of the responsibilities of authorities in the affected states. This is growing, partly prompted by shifts in the contexts of humanitarian response, as the geographic concentration of displaced people shifts from sub-Saharan Africa to the Middle East and as more people find themselves displaced to or affected by conflicts and disasters caused by natural hazards in middle-income countries (Development Initiatives, 2015a).

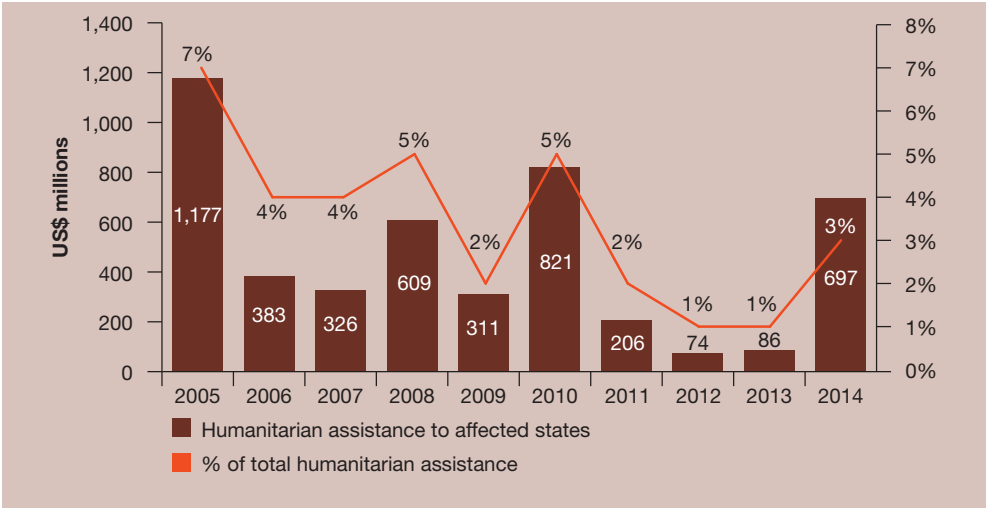
In keeping with the greater recognition of the role of the state in the humanitarian response, the majority of the 2015 United Nations (UN) Strategic Response Plans now include some description of existing national and local capacity to respond to humanitarian needs. In some cases this is nominal but in many non-constrained settings, this goes further to an explicit commitment to support the capacity of national actors (for example, in Gambia and Niger) or to an alignment with national plans. The Syria Regional Refugee Resilience Plan (3RP) (UNHCR and UNDP, 2015) goes furthest among these, presented as "paradigm shift" to a "nationally-led, regionally coherent strategy which is built on the national response plans of the countries in the region".

Chapter 4

There is, however, a difference between alignment and funding – the appeals might recognize the role of the state, but they do not include affected governments as recipients and remain coordinated and primarily implemented by international agencies whose institutional models favour channelling funds through non-governmental (primarily international – see below) rather than governmental entities. And while funding to these UN-coordinated appeals does not represent the totality, or even necessarily the majority, of international humanitarian assistance, it does reflect a general tendency to channel funding outside the affected state. In some conflict-affected settings where the state is party to the conflict, this is necessary for a principled response; in other disaster settings it is less appropriate.

The proportion of reported humanitarian assistance directed to the affected government remains small. In 2014, 3 per cent of humanitarian disbursements reported to the financial tracking service (FTS) of the UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) was channelled through affected state governments, a small proportion but a significant rise from the previous two years. Peaks in the volume and proportion of this have been prompted by rapid-onset disasters: in 2005 the Indian Ocean tsunami and earthquake; in 2010 flooding in Pakistan and the Haiti earthquake; and in 2014 the Ebola virus outbreak (see Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1 Trends in the share and volume of international humanitarian assistance channelled to governments of affected states, 2005–2014

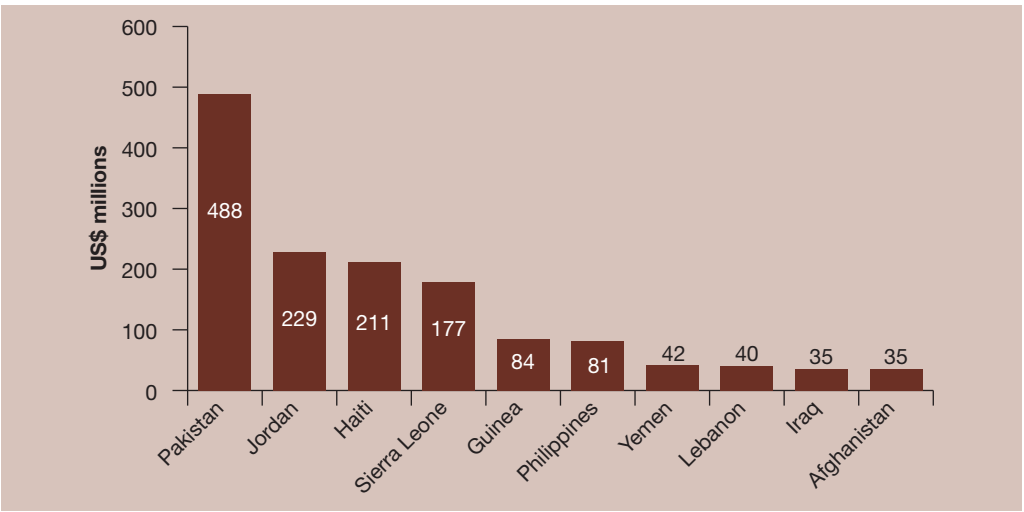


Source: Development Initiatives based on OCHA FTS data.

Note: This refers to humanitarian assistance reported by OCHA's FTS. As reporting is voluntary and many donors only report part of their financial assistance to crisis-affected countries, the total is likely to be higher.

The Syria refugee crisis has also prompted funding to be channelled to host governments in the region, making the Jordanian government the second largest recipient of humanitarian assistance channelled in this way over the past five years. Nearly all (more than 99 per cent) of the humanitarian assistance directed to the Pakistani government during this period was received in 2010, the year of the floods which affected more than 18 million people (see Figure 4.2) – although this only represented 3 per cent of the total reported to FTS for Pakistan that year. Humanitarian response to subsequent, and less internationally high-profile, disasters and displacement reverted to being channelled via international agencies.

Figure 4.2 Ten largest recipients of international humanitarian assistance to the affected state government, 2010–2014



Source: Development Initiatives based on OCHA FTS data.

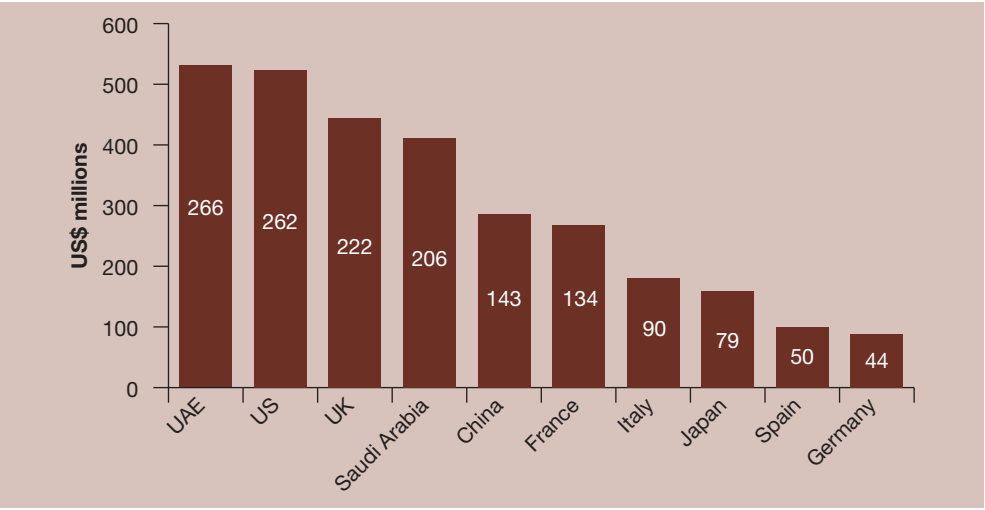
Note: US$ 162.3 million was reported as going to Syria. However, project descriptions make it clear that this amount was actually spent in Jordan, so it has been reallocated to Jordan's total.

While many major Western donors might be constrained from providing humanitarian assistance directly to affected states due to concerns around fiduciary risk and the need to ensure an impartial humanitarian response, other donors may be impelled to do so by commitments to South–South solidarity and state sovereignty.

Donors outside the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) group show a greater preference for providing bilateral support to affected governments than their DAC counterparts. These donors provided 6.7 per cent of the total reported humanitarian assistance to the FTS from 2010 to 2014, but they provided 44 per cent of all funding channelled

to affected governments over the period (see Figure 4.3). It should be noted that these figures for funding to affected states may in fact represent a fraction of the real total – the FTS is a self-reporting system and though reporting from many non-DAC donors is improving, much has gone, and still goes, unreported.

Figure 4.3 Ten largest donors of humanitarian assistance channelled via the affected state, 2010–2014



Source: Development Initiatives based on OCHA FTS data.

Note: UAE = United Arab Emirates.

International development financing for government-led response

Commitments recognizing the critical role of states in pro-poor development (the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, the New Deal and the Fragile States Principles) and commitments to manage disaster risk and climate change (the Hyogo and Sendai Frameworks for disaster risk reduction) have shaped modes of engagement increasingly in favour of harmonization and support to the developmental and risk management agendas of governments in low- and middle-income countries.

Increasingly, multilateral development banks are providing governments with direct access to post-disaster finance and technical support to put in place financial preparedness measures against the cost of the reconstruction and recovery elements of crisis response (see Box 4.2). For example, in response to Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines, the largest humanitarian funding contribution to the government was a grant of US$ 3 million from the Asian Development Bank's (ADB) Asia Pacific Disaster Response Fund – a specifically humanitarian

contribution that was just a fraction of a wider US$ 0.9 billion package of support to the government from the ADB that also included US$ 500 million for early recovery. Multilateral development banks have developed dedicated post-disaster financing instruments such as contingent credit facilities (World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank), which can provide significant volumes of funds to governments for early recovery and reconstruction relatively rapidly (typically within a few weeks), hold some concessional resources in reserve in case of a disaster (ADB and World Bank) or can convert balances of existing loans for disaster response purposes (all multilateral development banks).

Domestic crisis risk financing capabilities remain limited for many governments, but in the future a far greater share of the costs of meeting response will likely be borne by governments of affected states and governments will use market-based risk transfer instruments, such as insurance, to enhance their financial management of disaster risk.

BOX 4.2 A quiet technical revolution in government financing for disaster response

The consequences of a failure to make adequate provision for post-disaster financing needs may be devastating for individuals affected, who may receive inadequate relief and support for rebuilding and recovery, but it may also pose major shocks – and indeed an existential threat – to governments. Meeting the costs of post-disaster needs can create acute fiscal shocks, lead to a loss of public confidence and set back longer-term economic progress. And as populations grow and become increasingly concentrated in urban, disaster-prone centres, and as infrastructure and other physical assets increase in number and value, the financial costs of disasters are expected to increase sharply.

The rise in popularity and the possibilities of disaster-risk financing represents an area of shared interest and mutually beneficial outcomes both for humanitarian and development actors and for states and communities vulnerable to shocks. For development actors, managing disaster risk helps to ensure the sustainability of development investments and to protect states from destabilizing fiscal shocks. From a humanitarian perspective, ex-ante disaster-risk financing speeds response efforts, improves domestic financial resilience to disasters and should reduce demands for external post-disaster relief and reconstruction financing.

Financial preparedness against risk has received high-level political support and endorsement at the global level, including being recognized as a priority in the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015 and the more recent 2015 Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. As well as growing political support, opportunities for putting in place financial preparedness measures are increasing and an ever-greater number of governments are learning from the experiences of their peers, benefiting from new financial products and analytical tools, with the technical support of multilateral development banks and the global insurance and reinsurance industries. Sovereign disaster-risk financing strategies in general include layers of financial protection drawing on different types of finance negotiated in advance of a crisis event, including budgetary allocations, contingent credit and risk transfer products (typically insurance and bonds).

Mexico was one of the early adopters and innovators in disaster-risk financing and has become a leading global advocate among disaster-prone countries. The government of Mexico faces demands for post-disaster relief and reconstruction financing in excess of US$ 1 billion most years and from the mid-1990s, began to shift towards an ex-ante approach to financial preparedness to better manage these frequent budgetary demands. As well as establishing the institutional architecture and a suite of disaster-risk financing tools and facilities, Mexico has established a legislative framework, crucial to guaranteeing budgetary provisions for disaster-risk financing. In 2006 a federal budget law was enacted that required the Ministry of Finance and Public Credit to commit a fixed percentage of its annual budget to finance its key disaster facilities and activities.

In 1996 the Mexican government created a large national disaster financing facility, the National natural disaster fund (*Fondo Nacional de Desastres Naturales*), known as FONDEN, which was established as a recurrent line item in the annual federal budget. FONDEN funds prevention, relief and reconstruction of federal and state infrastructure, low-income housing and environmental assets through several 'layers' of financial protection. These layers are based upon an annual budgetary allocation of US$ 800 million to meet relief and reconstruction needs from medium-frequency disaster events.

In addition to making provision for and retaining financial risk for medium-frequency events, FONDEN also 'transfers' higher levels of risk to the insurance and reinsurance industry and financial markets, securing access to finance for less-frequent disaster events. FONDEN negotiates up to US$ 400 million annually in traditional indemnity insurance, and in 2006 it issued the world's first governmental parametric catastrophe bond providing US$ 300 million in financial protection from global financial market investors against low-frequency, high-impact hazards. The Mexican government has issued three successive catastrophe bonds and has expanded to cover earthquake and hurricane risk. Any additional financial costs over and above the protection provided by these layered instruments are borne by the federal budget through budgetary reallocations.

In addition, the government of Mexico also provides weather index insurance coverage for small-scale farmers. Farmers with holdings of less than 8 hectares (20 acres) are automatically enrolled in the scheme that sees premiums purchased by federal and state governments and payouts provided if rainfall drops below established thresholds (Fuchs and Wolff, 2011; Mahul et al., 2013; World Bank, 2012).

Until relatively recently, sophisticated sovereign disaster-risk financing strategies was the preserve of better resourced middle-income states. In 2014, however, with the support of international partners including the World Bank, a number of government donors and the World Food Programme (WFP), the African Union (AU) launched the African Risk Capacity (ARC) regional risk financing tool. ARC provides insurance coverage of up to US$ 30 million per country, per season, for AU member states against severe drought events, with early adopters Kenya, Mauritania, Mozambique, Niger and Senegal holding insurance contracts as of June 2015. ARC enables members to pool resources and diversify their risk profiles, which allows them to negotiate collectively much more cost-effective insurance and reinsurance coverage.

Payouts are determined against an objective parametric index – the Africa RiskView satellite weather surveillance and software system developed by WFP – and are triggered when rainfall deviation and estimated response costs cross pre-agreed thresholds.

In January 2015, ARC paid US$ 25 million in drought insurance claims to Mauritania, Niger and Senegal to finance early drought interventions agreed in pre-approved contingency plans, almost a month before the UN's Strategic Response Plan funding appeal was launched.

The logic of financial preparedness against risk is compelling but in practice carving out fiscal space to prepare for crises may be extremely challenging politically, when immediate needs compete for budgetary resources and are more likely to capture public support. Establishing sovereign risk preparedness, therefore, is not only a technical and financial matter, but a highly political one that requires leadership and commitment. Moreover, there remain major unanswered questions as to the affordability of domestically financed risk financing measures for some of the world's poorest and most at-risk countries. With the best will and commitment in the world, some governments may simply be exposed to more risk than they can reasonably afford and may require medium- to long-term international financial support to manage the costs of risk (Poole, 2014). ■

International financing for local and national civil society response

Below the surface of the many fine humanitarian policy commitments lie powerful disincentives and vested interests in maintaining the status quo, which overwhelmingly favour concentrating direct funding in the hands of international actors. The following section considers the current realities of funding for local and national NGOs and reflects on some of the major obstacles to increased direct funding.

Funding is marginal and often mediated

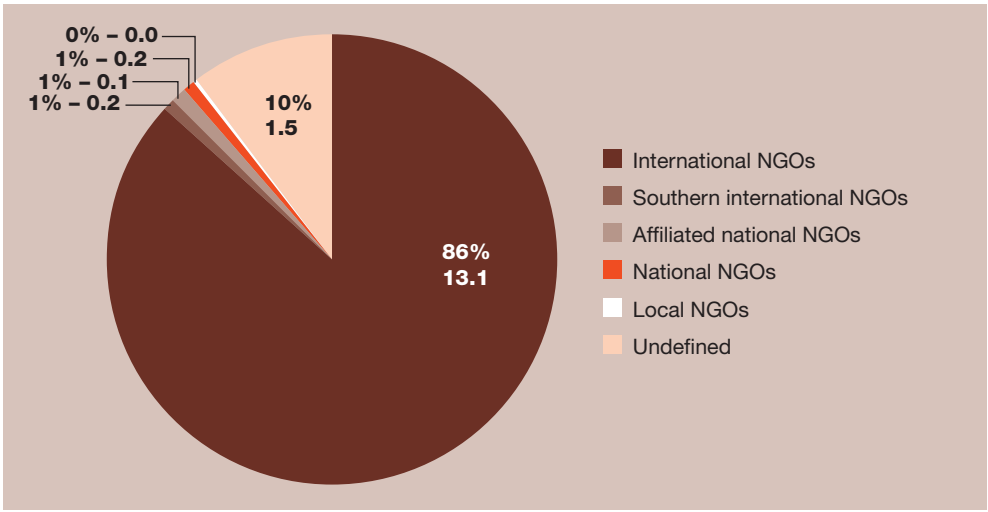
Local civil society actors are frequently well positioned and physically proximate to crisis-affected communities and able to respond where international actors cannot reach. They often also respond to disasters which do not register on the radar of the international system. Local actors typically have substantial comparative advantages in terms of understanding the local needs and providing culturally appropriate responses. In addition, they may have far higher levels of acceptance, mutual trust and accountability towards the populations they serve and often remain present both before and long after crisis events, responding to the changing recovery, risk reduction and emergency preparedness needs of vulnerable populations.

In practice, international humanitarian response already relies heavily on local responding actors, particularly in highly insecure settings where remotely managed response has become the accepted modus operandi. In Iraq, Somalia and Syria, for example, front-line humanitarian response is overwhelmingly carried out by local civil society actors including NGOs, community groups, associations and local National Red Crescent Societies. Many international organizations work in some

form of partnership with local and national responding actors in arrangements which span straightforward subcontracting to long-term reciprocal partnerships.

Yet, looking specifically at local and national NGOs, between 2010 and 2014 these directly accessed only US$ 243 million or 0.3 per cent of total humanitarian assistance reported to OCHA's FTS. This represents just 1.6 per cent of the total given directly to all NGOs (international, regional, national and local) (see Figure 4.4). Their share of total humanitarian funding has halved from 0.4 per cent in 2012 to 0.2 per cent in 2014, and their share of the total amount given to all NGOs has almost halved – from 2.3 per cent to 1.2 per cent.

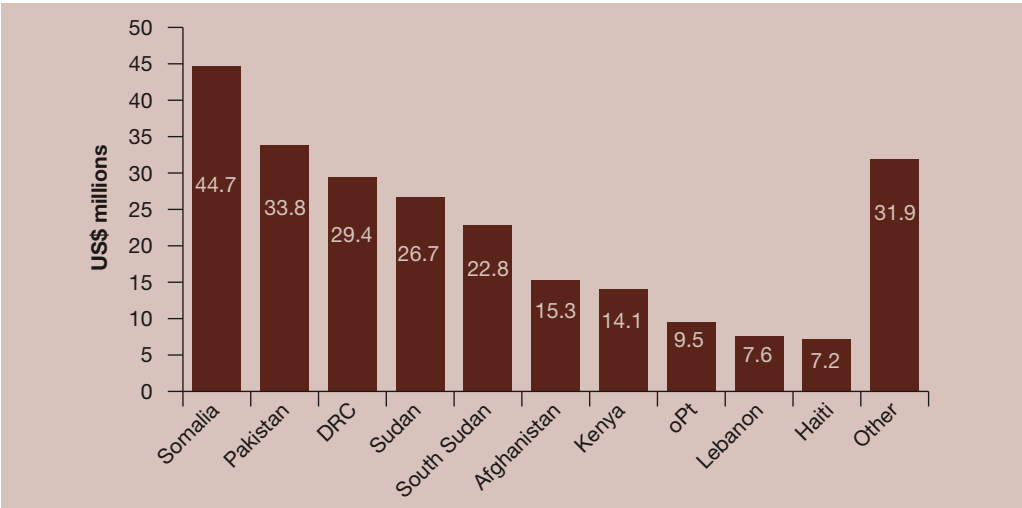
Figure 4.4 Humanitarian assistance to NGOs, by type, 2010–2014, US$ billions



Source: Development Initiatives based on OCHA FTS data.

The majority of this direct funding to national and local NGOs tends to be directed to insecure contexts which are less conducive to international presence, unlike funding to affected governments which focus on disasters in settings conducive to international cooperation. Somalia – where international access has been constrained and local and national NGOs have been relied on to reach affected populations – accounts for the largest share of this funding over the past five years (see Figure 4.5).

Figure 4.5 Ten largest recipient countries of funding to local and national NGOs, 2010–2014



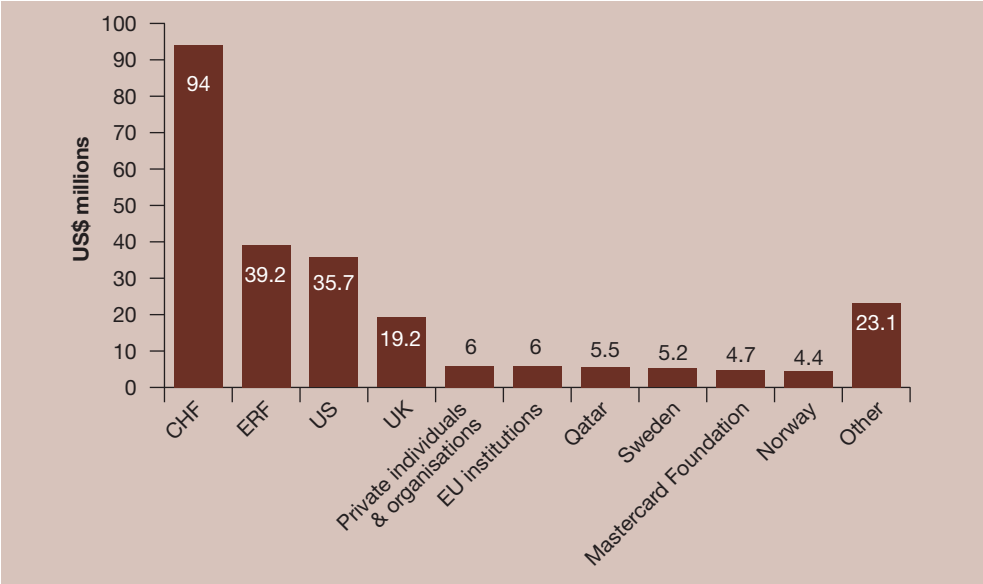
Source: Development Initiatives based on OCHA FTS data.

Note: DRC = Democratic Republic of the Congo; oPt = occupied Palestinian territories.

A very small number of local or national NGOs have direct access to this international funding. Only 16 local NGOs and 80 national NGOs were reported as recipients, down from 22 and 95 respectively in 2013. This is in contrast to a growth in the number of international NGOs receiving such direct funding – up from 300 in 2013 to 339 in 2014. Furthermore, funding is concentrated among an even smaller number of local and national NGOs – in 2013, 86 per cent of the total to local NGOs went to the top ten recipients (out of 16), while the top ten national NGOs (out of 80) received 51 per cent of the share to their group.

Country-based pooled funds (CBPFs) currently operate in 17 countries and should provide a means for these local and national NGOs to access international humanitarian funds, counterbalancing bilateral donor reluctance to handle the risk and administration of such small grants. Indeed, the largest donors to these NGOs every year for the last five years have been CBPFs and all of the top ten recipient countries (see Figure 4.5) have CBPFs. Over the past five years, these have provided 55 per cent of all direct funding to local and national NGOs. Yet the proportion of CBPF funding directly accessed by local and national NGOs is relatively small – for example, between 2010 and 2014, they received 13 per cent of the total Emergency Relief Fund (ERF) disbursements to NGOs, while international NGOs received 81 per cent.

Figure 4.6 Ten largest donors to national and local NGOs, 2010–2014



Source: Development Initiatives based on OCHA FTS data.

Note: CHF = Common Humanitarian Funds; ERF = Emergency Relief Funds.

BOX 4.3 Country-based Pooled Funds

Country-based Pooled Funds are multi-donor humanitarian financing instruments managed by OCHA at the crisis level under the leadership of the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC). The first CBPFs date from the mid-1990s with the creation of Emergency Response Funds. A second generation of much larger funds was born under the 2005 Humanitarian Reforms as part of a set of measures to provide more adequate, timely, flexible and effective humanitarian financing. In 2014, US$ 593 million was channelled through 13 CBPFs (Development Initiatives, 2015a).

CBPFs are considered critical to supporting OCHA's humanitarian coordination mandate and are an important tool in ensuring a needs-based financing response at the crisis level. CBPFs receive unearmarked funding from donors and allocate it to meet priority humanitarian needs through joint planning and an inclusive and field-driven decision-making process (OCHA, 2014). This means that CBPFs can smooth the effects of bias and individual preference in bilateral funding decisions and can allocate funds to cover gaps in funding for priority needs identified at the crisis level. CBPFs are also an important source of relatively rapid funding to meet unforeseen needs.

CBPFs have several important advantages from the perspective of local and national responding actors. First, they are one of the most accessible sources of international financing at the country level and during the last decade, CBPFs have allocated a growing share of their resources to local and national NGOs. From just 1 per cent of total funds in 2006, local and national NGOs received 10 per cent of funds disbursed through CBPFs in 2014. Second, the participatory prioritization process associated with CBPFs provides incentives for local and national actors to participate in co-

ordination, thereby, CBPFs "promote diversity and partnership by supporting a variety of humanitarian actors, including national NGOs, with the resources they need to contribute to humanitarian response operations, and by engaging them in the governance and management of CBPFs" (OCHA, 2014). Third, CBPFs are adapting their service offerings at the country level in some cases to specifically target investments in capacity-building support to local and national NGOs. In particular, the Turkey Humanitarian Pooled Fund created in 2014 is mandated to strengthen the capacity of Syrian NGOs through providing direct access to financing, undertaking participatory capacity assessments to identify capacity needs and financing international actors providing technical capacity-building support to Syrian national NGOs. ■

Given the paucity of direct funding to national and local NGOs, it is likely that they access significantly more funding indirectly, primarily from international NGOs and UN agencies. Yet it is not currently possible to know the sums involved, nor the length and cost-effectiveness of the transaction chains by which the funding reaches these ultimate implementers. The FTS only captures the first-level recipient of funds and is not designed to follow the funds beyond this to the next levels of transaction. Case studies from specific agencies may provide some illustrations, but they cannot provide the global picture and may also self-select the most efficient examples. Humanitarian effectiveness and financing discussions have repeatedly raised the question of reducing transaction costs, but without consistent and comprehensive tracking from donor to final recipient it will be hard to provide a baseline for designing or evaluating improvements (see Box 4.4).

BOX 4.4 What value the middle-man?

The volume of funds received directly by local and national NGOs does not represent the whole picture and, in fact, the majority of international humanitarian funds are mediated by international actors. For example, in 2013, of the US$ 1.2 billion the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) passed on to implementing partners, one-third (US$ 387 million) was channelled to local and national NGOs. A lack of transparency and evidence around the scale, cost-efficiency and value-added of mediated funding contributes to the increasingly frequently voiced case for 'cutting out the middle man'. However, international mediators of funding provide a number of important functions, which are examined in brief in this case study, drawing on examples from a variety of humanitarian organizations.

Taking responsibility for risk

In accepting grants which are intended to pass on funds to local and national partners, international mediating actors provide a useful service for donors in assuming the transaction costs associated with managing numerous partnerships at the affected-country level, as well as taking on legal and fiduciary risks.

In addition to the administrative work involved in the practical business of identifying, assessing, contracting and monitoring partners, and mediating international funding to third parties, funding mediators take on responsibility for the risks associated with contracting funds to front-line responding partners, significantly increasing their own corporate risk exposure. This includes being liable to legal proceedings, possible funding sanctions and reputational risk in the event partners are found to have mismanaged or abused funds. In some instances, international fund mediators have been obliged to pay back funds when diversion or fraud has been confirmed, even when those funds could not be recovered from the third party at fault. Organizations and, in certain cases, individual staff may be liable for criminal prosecution under donor-country counterterrorism financing rules. In highly insecure humanitarian crises, such as Somalia, Syria and parts of Afghanistan and Pakistan, access to monitoring is limited and exposure to risk is high, yet there may be little or no alternative to access crisis-affected populations than to support local and national partners. Accepting responsibility for risk, therefore, is an essential service and one which requires considerable investments on the part of the international fund mediator to ensure that reasonable measures and systems have been taken to reduce and manage risk.

Capacity-strengthening

Partnerships may also provide a variety of useful benefits to local and national actors. In practice partnerships vary hugely, from straightforward contracting activities to long-term relationships brokered around shared values and objectives and where capacity-strengthening is a key element of the partnership. For example, NPO/RRA, an Afghan NGO, has benefited from long-term partnerships with Norwegian Church Aid, Cordaid and Helvetas. The process of partnership developed from emergency and short-term projects that met humanitarian needs towards longer-term partnerships that provide technical support and training, including building the institutional procedures and capacity necessary to navigate the many quality and accountability requirements of international donors.

International partners may also provide a range of less easily quantifiable benefits to local and national partners, including informal coaching and technical assistance, support to coordination, advocacy and influence, and access to international resources through their networks, which local and national actors could not achieve alone. For example, through their membership of the START Fund, CAFOD, a British NGO, negotiated three grants of between US$ 80,000 and US$ 140,000 for partners in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sri Lanka and Turkey to respond to emergencies in 2014 and 2015.

In many cases one of the longer-term goals of capacity-building investments is to support organizations on a trajectory towards financial independence. Oxfam America has supported a platform of national associations of civil society actors, brokering financial support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Oxfam subsequently referred and supported this group to negotiate funding directly with the Gates Foundation, where Oxfam America plays a far more limited technical supporting role including providing monitoring and accountability services.

Networks and influence

Association with an internationally recognized humanitarian brand may also help to lend credibility and visibility to local partners. World Vision International's progressive partnership model, for example,

supports the development of independent local World Vision affiliates, which can ultimately become separate legal entities with their own boards of directors, connected to World Vision International through a 'covenant of partnership'. In the response to Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines in 2013–2014, World Vision Philippines received almost US$ 20 million in contributions from international governmental and private donors, according to OCHA's FTS.

Evaluating added value of mediated funding

There is little evidence and scrutiny applied to the terms and quality of internationally mediated financing relationships. The UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) is one of the few funding mediators which systematically tracks and publishes onward contracting of funds to front-line responding organizations and, therefore, provides a useful illustration. Of US$ 235 million of CERF support on which UN partners reported their subcontracting in 2014, 82 per cent was retained by the first-level recipient and US$ 51 million passed on to implementing partners. This represents an increase over the previous year in the volume of funds passed on to implementing partners, but whether it corresponds to an appropriate apportionment of resources and whether funds were transferred on reasonable terms is extremely difficult to determine. Far greater transparency in reporting on onward contracting of funds to local and national partners is needed in order to strengthen trust and accountability and to ensure cost efficiency.

There are few indications of cost efficiency of mediated funding. In the case of OCHA-managed CBPFs, however, the costs are transparently stated. In 2014 for example, 5 per cent (US$ 8 million) of the total value of donor contributions to the South Sudan CBPF of US$ 160 million were spent on covering the costs of managing and administering the fund at the country and global levels, including providing a monitoring service (OCHA, 2015).

Whether this represents an acceptable level of cost efficiency is open to debate and somewhat open to interpretation. From the perspective of donors, however, such mediated funding is considerably more cost-effective than five or six donor contributors to a country-based pooled humanitarian fund establishing a physical presence and capacity to identify partners and projects in a crisis-affected country. ■

Donors are not sure they can risk it

Increasingly stringent rules to manage the risks of corruption, bribery, money laundering, fraud and terrorism financing have contributed to two important trends with respect to financing for humanitarian NGOs.

First, it has contributed to a narrowing of funding opportunities. In addition to the need to achieve economies of scale in contracting, the growth in controls associated with counterterrorism legislation has also been a factor in the consolidation of donor funding among a smaller group of 'trusted' international NGO partners and multilateral organizations and funds, which have the resources, procedures and capacity to provide adequate assurances of compliance with national counterterrorism legislation (Mackintosh and Duplat, 2013). The application of more stringent risk management controls has raised the bar for entry for prospective funding partners and increased the volume of work and cost of compliance such that smaller, less experienced and less well-resourced organizations

find it much more difficult to compete for funds. For example, some larger international NGOs in the United Kingdom now use relatively expensive private vetting services to screen staff and partners against lists of proscribed terrorist individuals or groups (Metcalfe-Hough, Keating and Pantuliano, 2015). Many large international organizations have multiple staff dedicated to ensuring grant compliance and have developed sophisticated internal procedures, tools and training. These services and capabilities may be prohibitively expensive for smaller organizations, however, and since standards and requirements vary according to donor and there are no industry-wide standards, it is difficult for organizations to know where best to target their investments in developing their due diligence and risk management capacities.

The second set of effects is a growth in caution and conservatism among international organizations including in their partnerships. Partners assume responsibility for ensuring compliance with national counterterrorism legislation, including in many cases providing assurances that their partners are also compliant. In some contexts, international partners may consider the difficulty of meeting counterterrorism measures and the risks of exposure to the negative consequences of non-compliance, including criminal charges, too great. Some UK NGOs, for example, report having deciding to discontinue working with local partners in Syria and have shifted instead to direct implementation (Metcalfe-Hough, Keating and Pantuliano, 2015). More broadly, counterterrorism measures are observed to have had a 'chilling effect' on the decisions of humanitarian actors to intervene at all in areas where they cannot be sure of compliance with counterterrorism legislation (Mackintosh and Duplat, 2013).

In addition, partner capacity assessments have proliferated in recent years and have become duplicative and unnecessarily costly both at the aggregate level and from the perspective of funding applicants. One national NGO in Afghanistan consulted for this study, for example, noted that they had undergone at least 20 separate partner capacity assessments in the last five years, with a number of them carried out by the same private sector contractor and in most cases drawing on the same information and evidence. Moreover, partner capacity assessments heavily prioritize fiduciary control measures rather than operational capacity to respond. Many smaller and newer organizations, which might not have had the benefit of international support to develop their financial management and governance policies and procedures, are unable to meet exacting due diligence standards of many partner capacity-assessment processes.

Local and national actors lack power and influence

Local and national actors are clearly in competition with international actors. But they compete on an uneven playing field with respect to their ability or capacity to meet donor requirements and their ability to shape and influence the system.

The largest international NGOs are highly successful lobbyists and fund-raisers, leveraging funding from domestic private donors, quickly adapting to service the changing compliance requirements and policy priorities of institutional donors, and using their influence to ensure they retain access to direct funding from their home-country donors. In fact, many leading donors cannot either by law or by institutional rule, fund NGOs that are not headquartered in the donor country.

Local and national civil society actors have little or no access to the corridors of power of major donors, are extremely diverse and disconnected, and have few opportunities to articulate their priorities and concerns in international debates. One of the great achievements of the World Humanitarian Summit consultations so far has been to provide an opportunity for local and national actors to contest the status quo in the most high profile of policy forums. But for the longer term, local and national civil society actors have yet to establish platforms to advocate common advocacy positions on access to financing as international NGOs currently do.

In addition, local and national actors are far less likely to have spare staff capacity to divert to attending meetings, which are in most cases held at capital-city level. International coordination meetings are culturally exclusive, often held in English and replete with arcane technocratic language. In the response to Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines in 2013–2014, for example, national NGOs reportedly felt out of place in cluster coordination meetings and "absented themselves" (Featherstone, 2014).

Local and national civil society actors are also disadvantaged by their limited voice and influence in negotiations with funding intermediaries. International actors typically package up and present funding proposals on behalf of their national partners, and their role in developing priorities and approaches, and the terms on which partnerships are negotiated, is largely unknown and seldom scrutinized.

Greater transparency in funding decision-making processes may significantly improve opportunities and terms on which local and national actors receive international funding. In some situations where local and national partners have been able to participate in transparent competitive funding allocation processes, they have fared somewhat better. In the early years of operation, Common Humanitarian Funds (CHFs) were criticized for enabling UN agencies to secure a disproportionate share of funds. Stoddard et al. (2006), for example, noted that UN agencies were "reaping a windfall" in 2005 and 2006. UN agencies occupied cluster lead positions which permitted undue influence over allocation decisions. They were criticized for subcontracting funds to NGOs while providing little or no discernible additional value and increasing the lead-time and overall cost of financing considerably. NGOs have successfully argued for their right to occupy formal roles in the decision-making architecture including in cluster co-lead positions and pass-through funding is strongly discouraged, which enables NGOs and UN agencies to compete for funds in

a very transparent and consultative process. CBPFs have proved to be one of the most accessible sources of international funding for local and national NGOs. The NGO-led START Fund similarly reports that their transparent peer-review process often leads to funding awards in favour of national NGOs, which may offer more cost-effective, timely and appropriate responses than their international counterparts.

Responsive capacity may be limited

The capacity of local and national actors to scale up rapidly may also be limited in some cases and may not yet match the policy aspirations of the current movement for locally led response.

In response to Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines in 2013–2014, for instance, local and national actors provided the greater part of the overall response by drawing on domestic resources, while international actors largely bypassed and substituted for local capacity and yet, the capacity of local NGOs to scale up was in practice limited. International NGOs working in partnership with local NGOs noted, for example, that the volumes of funds they were able to channel to their partners were in fact quite limited due to constraints in the administrative and responsive capacity of their partners (Featherstone, 2014). Very few civil society organizations capable of delivering humanitarian assistance existed at the onset of the crisis in Syria and international actors have had to invest in building the administrative and responsive capacity of national actors at the same time as channelling response funding to them. OCHA estimates, for example, that 600–700 local civil society groups have been formed since 2011 to respond to needs arising from the Syria crisis (Svoboda and Pantuliano, 2015).

The principled case for supporting local and national responders is clear, but the reality of the existence of civil society actors capable of absorbing and programming international funds in crises does not always match these aspirations. A separate stream of investment in building responsive and administrative capacity is necessary to ensure that local and national actors can both compete successfully for funds and deliver humanitarian response at speed and scale.

Drivers of change are often external

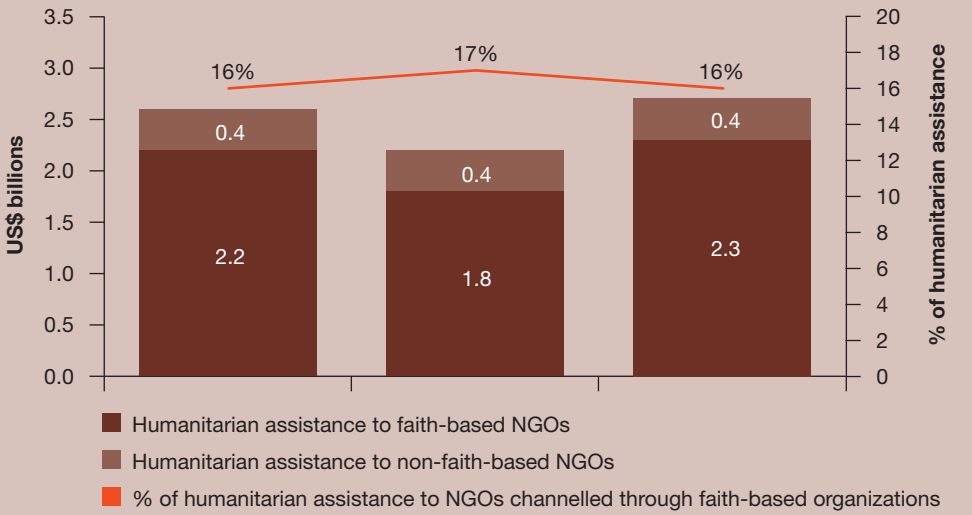
Civil society actors may have access to domestic and international sources of financing independent of international humanitarian financing flows, including from domestic private sector actors, diaspora funding or their own governments, and through revenue-generating provision of goods and services. Islamic social financing, for example, is a major source of revenue for organizations responding to crises affecting Muslim people (see Box 4.5). International financing actors

have yet to fully appreciate the contributions of other financing sources and to calibrate their contributions in complementarity. It may be that in future, independently funded local and national organizations will play a prominent role in shaping the terms on which internationally funded responses are brokered.

BOX 4.5 Zakat and humanitarian financing

Faith-based networks are an important part of local response – the role of the Muslim and Christian leaders in reaching Ebola-affected communities with goods and public health messages is a prime example (CAFOD, 2014). All of the world's major religions include some principles of charitable giving, so faith-based organizations are also important mobilizers of humanitarian funds. In 2013, faith-based organizations received and delivered between US$ 420 million and US$ 434 million (15–16 per cent) of all international humanitarian assistance channelled through NGOs (Development Initiatives, 2015b). If the five largest Christian and Islamic humanitarian agencies were classed alongside international donors, their combined private humanitarian assistance of US$ 396.7 million would have made them the 12th largest provider of humanitarian assistance in 2013.

Figure 1 International humanitarian assistance channelled through faith-based and non-faith-based NGOs, 2011–2013



Source: Development Initiatives based on OCHA FTS data.

Note: Values and proportions of funding channelled through NGOs vary within FTS data depending on different reporting headings used by reporters. Data presented here are based on 'agency code' figures.

There is increasing focus on Islamic social financing as an actual and potential source of humanitarian financing, particularly as needs grow in the Middle East. Driven by the conflicts in Iraq, Syria and Yemen, 12.5 million people were displaced in the region. And according to 2013 estimates, 75 per cent of people living in the top ten recipient countries of humanitarian assistance in 2013 were Muslim (Pew Research Centre, 2011; Development Initiatives, 2014).

One of the main Islamic financing tools, zakat is the mandatory Muslim practice of giving 2.5 per cent of one's accumulated wealth for charitable purposes every year. It is explicitly intended to reduce inequality and is widely used in Muslim countries to fund domestic development and poverty-reduction efforts, as well as humanitarian response.

Flowing largely outside the international humanitarian 'system', this form of giving is a significant source of support for both national and local response. Zakat can be paid in a number of different ways to a variety of different institutions, either governmental or non-governmental, often depending on the country a Muslim lives in or on their sect of Islam. In some Islamic countries, it is collected by state authorities, while globally much also flows directly between individuals – sometimes funding local organizations, sometimes overlapping with remittances as a means of reaching affected households.

Given the diversity of its formal and informal channels, there is no accurate figure on the global financial value of zakat, nor how much goes to support national or local humanitarian response. Estimates suggest that the global volume of zakat collected each year through formal mechanisms alone is, at the very least, in the tens of billions of dollars. Combined with funds collected through informal mechanisms, the sum is potentially in the hundreds of billions of dollars. By way of illustration, Indonesia, Malaysia, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Yemen make up 17 per cent of the world's estimated Muslim population (Pew Research Centre, 2011) and in these countries alone, government-managed institutions collected a combined total of at least US$ 5.7 billion annually. With many people choosing to give their zakat outside of these formal institutions, the total may in fact be much higher.

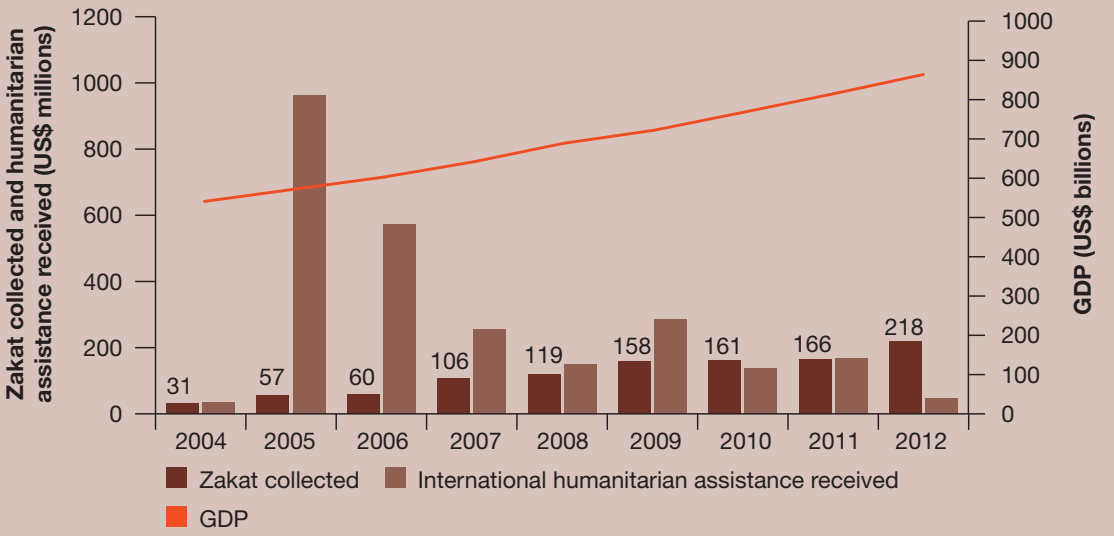
Zakat and national humanitarian response in Indonesia

Indonesia is a long-standing member of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and is home to the largest Muslim population in the world – some 205 million people. It also has a high level of environmental vulnerability and has faced more than 100 disasters and emergencies since 1990, including the 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake–tsunami. In the past two years, Indonesia has been affected by flooding, landslides, volcanic eruptions and earthquakes, and the UN has predicted that climate change will contribute to an increase in frequency and severity of future disasters.

Since 2011, the Indonesian government has collected zakat through its national board of zakat (BAZNAS). While payments can also flow through private channels and through a state-endorsed community institution (LAZ), BAZNAS is thought to manage the bulk (62 per cent) of zakat raised in Indonesia (Islamic Research and Training Institute, 2014). Over the past decade, the totals raised have increased more than seven-fold, reaching an estimated US$ 218 million in 2012 and with projections of economic growth, is set to continue rising. Over the same period, levels of international humanitarian assistance have varied significantly mirroring the scale of disasters experienced each year –

there was a record high of US$ 962 billion in 2005 following Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami, while 2012 levels were, in comparison, just US$ 47 million (see Figure 2).

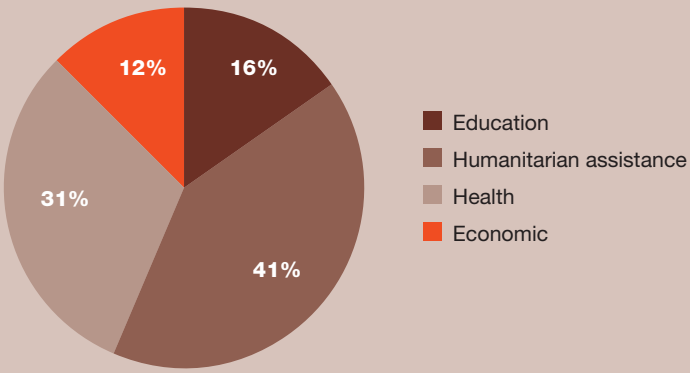
Figure 2 Total estimated zakat collected, international humanitarian assistance received and gross domestic product (GDP), Indonesia, 2004–2012



Source: Development Initiatives based on OECD DAC, OCHA FTS data, World Bank and Islamic Social Financing Report, *2014.*
Note: All figures are in constant 2013 prices.

BAZNAS allocates zakat to four different categories: health, education, economic development and humanitarian aid. In 2012, humanitarian assistance saw the largest expenditure, and although available data do not specify where it was spent, it is likely that a large part was spent domestically.

Figure 3 BAZNAS expenditure by category, 2012



Source: Development Initiatives based on Islamic Social Financing Report, *2014.*

Zakat is estimated to have the potential to provide the equivalent of between 1.6 per cent and 3.8 per cent of Indonesia's gross domestic product (Islamic Research and Training Institute, 2014), amounting to between US$ 13.8 billion and US$ 33.2 billion annually. Indonesia's two main zakat-collecting institutions, BAZNAS and LAZ, spend on average 34 per cent of their collective income on humanitarian assistance, and it seems likely that much of this is spent domestically (Independent Commission for Aid Impact, 2012). So, based on these figures, zakat could have the potential to provide between US$ 4.7 billion and US$ 11.3 billion for humanitarian assistance in Indonesia each year.

State-collected zakat is, therefore, a major source of financing for national response. In 2012, a year of relatively low disaster losses in Indonesia, the Indonesian government spent an estimated US$ 1,053 million on its domestic humanitarian response, nearly twice the amount it received in international humanitarian assistance that year. ■

Conclusion: towards transformational investments in local and national response capacity

The current humanitarian financing architecture favours international actors for a variety of principled and pragmatic reasons, including the practical requirement for donors to ensure standards of accountability to their tax-paying publics and to reduce the administrative burden on understaffed aid departments. International mediators of funds provide a number of important services and functions including bearing risk and undertaking the practical work of identifying, assessing and contracting front-line responding partners. International actors often provide critical capacity-building support and access to international networks of resources and influence for their national partners. But for all the possible benefits of international partnerships, in reality, international actors are often in direct competition with national actors, yet the odds of receiving funding remain heavily stacked in favour of international actors.

The financing architecture – its systems, standards and culture – is entrenched and unable to adapt to changing realities concerning who is best placed to respond. This is in large part because those who benefit most from the status quo – international mediators of funds, who control the terms on which funds are passed on – are those who have the greatest influence in shaping the system. Discourse and practice is beginning to change but until national and local actors can assert their voices in policy discussions and, more importantly, in decision-making processes, system-wide transformation is unlikely. And until all international actors are brought to account for their lack of transparency in partnership practices, there is likely to be little progress in establishing trust and reaching common understandings of what constitutes fair, cost-efficient, timely and enabling partnerships.

Beneath debates on an appropriate division of labour, based on comparative advantage and inequalities in access to international humanitarian funding,

runs a deeper financing challenge: the need to invest in sustainable standing local and national capacity to respond. International humanitarian and development actors, and governments and communities at risk of and affected by crises, can find common cause on this issue, however, as each stands to benefit significantly from increased investments in local and national capacities to respond.

Growing interest and commitment to strengthen sovereign financial preparedness against risk among governments in low- and middle-income countries and the creation of new technical capabilities and instruments within multilateral development banks to support nationally financed and nationally led response is an important shift. But approaches across humanitarian and development communities remain incoherent and ad hoc. International humanitarian actors struggle to secure funding for capacity-building work, particularly in a global context where there is a huge gap in financing simply to meet immediate humanitarian needs. Meeting the capacity-building needs of non-state actors, therefore, falls to no one in particular and remains a persistent gap. Ensuring that 'no one is left behind' in joint efforts to achieve sustainable development for all will require a collective rethink and reorganization of investments to ensure that local and national actors are much better positioned to lead response wherever possible.

Chapter 4 was written by Sophia Swithern, Programme Leader of the Global Humanitarian Assistance (GHA) programme at Development Initiatives, and Lydia Poole, an independent humanitarian consultant specializing in financing. Boxes 4.1, 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4 were written by Lydia Poole and Box 4.5 by Sophia Swithern, based on research by Chloe Stirk and Alexandra Spencer from the GHA programme, who also provided data analysis throughout the chapter.

This Russian Red Cross Society volunteer is helping refugees from eastern Ukraine. Like her, local actors understand local needs, provide culturally appropriate responses and often have higher levels of acceptance and mutual trust towards the populations they serve than international actors. © Jarkko Mikkonen/ Finnish Red Cross

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Chapter 5

Chapter 5

Remote partnership: aid delivery in insecure environments

The concept of remote management emerged over a decade ago and has become one of the principal strategies used by humanitarian agencies to maintain access to affected populations in highly insecure settings (Stoddard, Harmer and Renouf, 2010). Remote management involves a reactive adaptation to insecurity and primarily, but not exclusively, international staff having their movement restricted or being relocated from the context, sometimes to a third country location. The risks and responsibilities for the operations are transferred to local staff and local partner organizations. In the past, the transfer of responsibilities was often done in an ad-hoc manner, with little preparation and planning. More recently, in a small but critical set of humanitarian crises, organizations have begun to acknowledge the permanency of their operating constraints, some of which include areas that international staff have been almost permanently locked out of for many years. This recognition has driven the development of policies and investments in a range of innovations to guide, support and monitor remotely managed operations. Overall, however, the policy environment remains limited compared to the scope of application of remote management.

It is in these most difficult of operating spaces that remotely managed programming has, perhaps inadvertently, opened up significant opportunity for increased local partnership. And yet in these environments, it is undoubtedly more difficult to build the basis for trusted partnerships, and they are the least ideal contexts for the humanitarian community to test the long-standing rhetoric of increasing local ownership (Howe, Stites and Chudacoff, 2015; Svoboda and Pantuliano, 2015). While some critical analysis has been undertaken, a significant evidence gap remains on how local–international relationships among aid actors work in remotely managed programmes. There is also a need for ongoing lesson learning, documentation and adoption of good practice regarding working with, and supporting, local partners.

This chapter explores these issues, including the history and current practice of remote management, with a focus on the role and experience of local partner organizations. It reviews the key issues of locally negotiated access, humanitarian principles, the ethics of risk transfer and the challenges in remote coordination and monitoring. It draws on primary sources and grey literature produced over the past decade as well as secondary reports and literature reviews. It also highlights initial findings from an ongoing four-country study examining Secure Access in

In Vanuatu, Red Cross helicopters conducted aerial surveys of damage and distributed food and other items after Cyclone Pam. The skills and drive necessary to help recovery after disaster or conflict often exist in communities. Empowering local institutions to become active actors and agents of change can be an effective way of achieving results.
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Volatile Environments (SAVE) and reflects on some of the key questions that this research is exploring.

Background and definitions

Definitions

Early definitions of remote management identified the practice as primarily involving a reduction of international personnel from the field and a transfer of greater programme responsibility to local staff or local partner organizations (Stoddard, Harmer and Renouf, 2010). While that practice continues to be a main feature of remote management, recent, more nuanced, definitions make distinctions not just according to whether staff are international or local, but also by their relevant professional experience and specifically assessed security risks (Steets, Reichhold and Sagmeister, 2012; Rivas, 2015).

In all cases, the defining feature of remote management is the continued international ownership and responsibility over the programme, while staffing or organizational presence changes in reaction to insecurity (Stoddard, Harmer and Renouf, 2010). The withdrawal of certain types of personnel often occurs quickly, in response to new threats. For example, in northern Syria, aid actors withdrew the majority of their international staff in 2014 as the conflict intensified and some aid actors came under direct attack. Or projects can be specifically designed for remote implementation, as is often the case in Somalia, which has faced protracted conflict for more than two decades (Rivas, 2015). While this more planned approach suggests commonality with agencies that develop long-standing relationships with local partners as their normal way of operating, the posture of remote management in both cases was chosen mainly as a response to insecurity, rather than for other reasons.

Charting the history of remote management practice

During the Cold War, local entities such as solidarity groups, religious structures or the 'humanitarian' wings of warring parties were often used to channel internationally provided assistance into areas of conflict (Donini and Maxwell, 2013). Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, remote management was used in conflict areas such as Afghanistan, Chechnya, Somalia and Sudan, but not much attention was given to it, generally because it was seen as a temporary measure (Stoddard, Harmer and Renouf, 2010). As the political appetite for intervention grew after the Cold War, international humanitarian actors further increased their engagement in conflict contexts, and consequently faced a range of threats, including collateral violence, direct hostility from armed groups and violence from criminal actions (Stoddard, Harmer and Haver, 2006). In response to these challenging dynamics, organizations employed various adaptations in order to maintain their programmes while keeping

staff safe. This included cross-border or 'long-arm' programming often involving quick runs across the border; low visibility tactics; increasing the reliance on national staff, local agencies and private contractors; and partnership arrangements with local authorities (Karim, 2006; Stoddard, Harmer and Haver, 2006; Stoddard, Harmer and Renouf, 2010).

From 2004, driven mainly by two devastating attacks in Iraq against the United Nations (UN) headquarters and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the approach of relocating international staff to a third country (in that case Jordan) gained recognition as a new strategy for maintaining service delivery in insecure environments (Hansen, 2008a; Laurence and Poole, 2005; Stoddard, Harmer and Renouf, 2010). For a period of time after Iraq, analysts sought to parse out the distinctions between different remote management approaches, including:

- 'remote control', where managers make all programming decisions and very little authority is delegated to the field
- 'remote support', with partial or temporary delegation of decision-making powers to the field
- 'remote partnership', entailing an equal partnership and a substantial handover of responsibility to local actors (Hansen, 2008b; Stoddard, Harmer and Renouf, 2010).

Approaches vary from agency to agency, but generally there has been increasing acceptance that remote management in some contexts is no longer a 'last resort' and instead the 'new normal' (Rivas, 2015) or 'one among other' possible modes of operation (Donini and Maxwell, 2013).

BOX 5.1 Remote management in Afghanistan

Remote management in Afghanistan dates back to the Soviet occupation in the mid-1980s, when donors funded cross-border programmes to opposition areas. Following Soviet withdrawal, security conditions ameliorated and so remote management approaches were dropped. However, as attacks on aid workers increased along with other armed violence during the period from 2006 to 2011, a phase of 'bunkerization' in the humanitarian community began (Donini and Maxwell, 2013). From this, the practice of remote management made a marked resurgence, with many agencies citing its necessity in order to access remote and vulnerable populations. For example, Save the Children's research in Uruzgan, a highly insecure province in southern Afghanistan, where an estimated 35–45 per cent of the province lies outside government control, suggested that the initial expansion of basic services throughout the province was only possible through local staff (i.e., from the same area); the two least-secure districts could only be accessed by non-local staff less than 20 per cent of the time (Barber, 2012).

Research by Tearfund in Afghanistan (Norman, 2012) indicated that the majority of aid organizations surveyed (68 per cent) were in favour of remote management for insecure locations. With adequate attention to improving remote monitoring and accountability practices, agencies felt they could safeguard technical quality, mitigate against fraud and corruption, and maintain accountability to donors. However, approximately one-quarter of organizations opposed remote management, arguing that mitigating measures (particularly for programme quality, security and financial management) were ultimately inadequate. The concern was not from distrust of national staff, but because remote management hindered the measurement of programme quality – it was difficult to cross-check and triangulate data in order to supervise programmes effectively (Norman, 2012). In Uruzgan, for example, district-level human resources are extremely limited, with the population's general literacy levels at less than 5 per cent and the vast majority of people with only primary-school education. This limited monitoring options through remote management set-ups, as agencies were often reduced to simple yes/no verification checklists which rarely capture qualitative information about whether projects reached the most vulnerable people and also about the quality and sustainability of interventions (Barber, 2012).

The recent state-building expansion in Afghanistan fundamentally shaped, for good and bad, operational modalities of remote management, particularly through the Basic Package of Health Services (BPHS) programme. In 2001, the new Ministry of Public Health inherited a devastated health system and some of the worst health statistics in the world; it rebuilt the health system through BPHS. Expanding nationwide by subcontracting healthcare provision to local non-governmental organizations (NGOs), between 2004 and 2011, BPHS doubled the number of health facilities, dramatically increasing access to healthcare for women and in rural areas (Newbrander et al., 2014). Today, BPHS covers around 65 per cent of the population (OCHA, 2014) and, accordingly, BPHS-implementing local NGOs have become central in the humanitarian architecture, sometimes monopolizing health and nutrition sectors. Humanitarian agencies are often forced to channel programmes through BPHS local NGOs by authorities, so as not to create parallel systems of healthcare. While logical, this structural arrangement had unexpected effects on the remotely managed humanitarian response.

The three-year provincial BPHS contracts means local NGO providers are frequently 'cycled', which appears to have hindered longer-term capacity building of local-level health systems and unfavourably forced financial competition among local NGOs (OCHA, 2014). Moreover, high turnover rates of local trained staff who seek better-salaried positions outside of local NGOs further undermine capacity-building intentions. Financial competitiveness over BPHS contracts, so crucial for local NGOs, has sometimes meant that the organizations bid so low that they have insufficient operational resources to deliver basic services and have often concealed low-quality programming from international partners and donors, particularly when external supplementary funding is used to report against minimal targets from core BPHS contracts (OCHA, 2014).

More generally, local partners communicating 'perfect reports' and 'zero losses' to international agencies in Afghanistan are difficult to deal with. Incentives are unclear for international aid agencies to examine the dysfunction in partner relations and performance. Indeed, agencies are often not fully transparent about the frailties of partnerships and partners, and the recent nationalization of field offices (due to reduced funding) will perhaps compound internal disincentives to report, pushing

performance issues 'deeper underground'. To counteract this, the adoption in Afghanistan of the UN Risk Management Unit (RMU) in 2014 planted a collaborative mechanism for UN agencies, at least, to be better informed of partners' performance and risks.

There are three issues that the humanitarian community needs to consider regarding the way forward with remotely managed programming in Afghanistan.

First, as the multinational stabilization mission comes to an end, Afghanistan will now slip down the international agenda for both foreign policy and humanitarian funding prioritization. Some commentators predict that because of the 'diminishing returns' of remotely managed activities, these will be the first to be cut (Donini and Maxwell, 2013). And yet, remotely managed programmes require potentially more resources than directly delivered programmes.

Second, for international aid agencies, remote partnerships can be a double-edged sword. Local partners embedded in difficult areas of Afghanistan have, perhaps inherently, connections with local formal and informal authorities and work with community elites, inevitably making it difficult to deliver assistance to the most vulnerable people (e.g., Savage et al., 2007), without micro-level diversion. Given this, agencies should reflect on whether they are trading risks to independence and impartiality for access through remote partnerships?

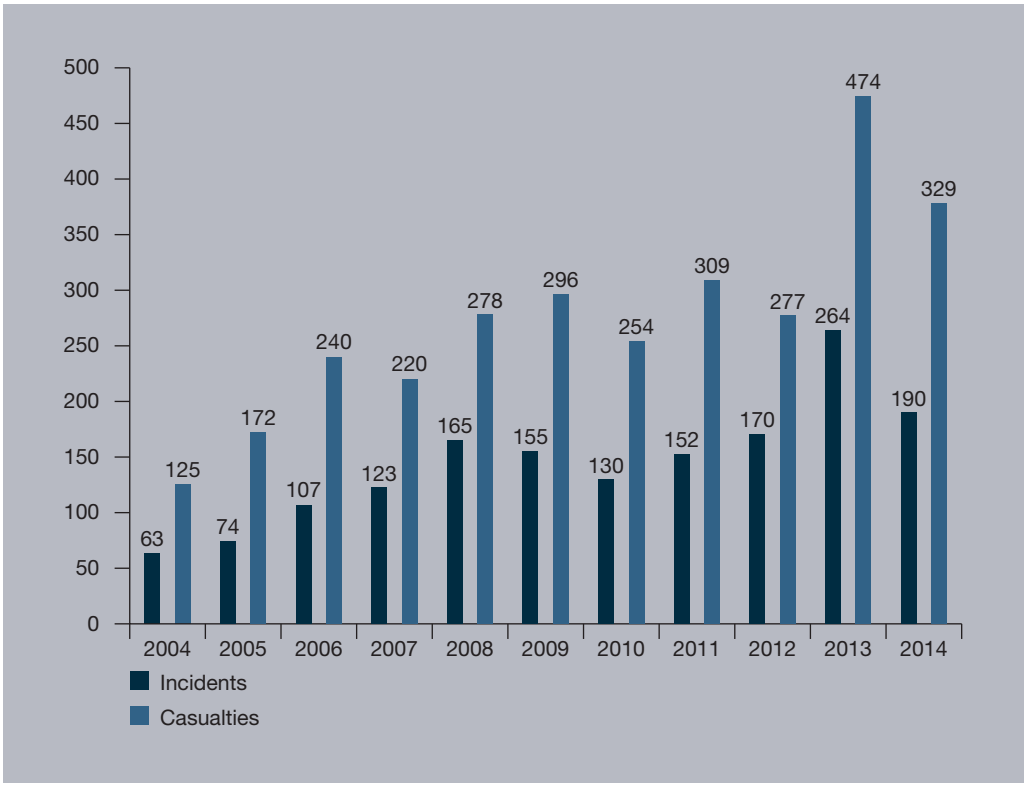
Lastly, in Afghanistan, a combination of supply-driven partnerships, unrealistic notions of capacity building and insufficient oversight had led to a dysfunctional political economy of humanitarian aid. The aid community is increasingly aware of hidden risks and good practice, and there are strategic steps forward, including the RMU, the Common Humanitarian Fund's (CHF) Accountability Framework including multi-monitoring approaches and capacity assessments, and a four-year, DFID-funded, international–local NGO 'twinning' programme to build local NGO capacities in order to access CHF grants directly. These structural advances will improve the efficiency of remote partnership programming and reduce risks. However, the aid community must examine whether they reduce fiduciary risks sufficiently, whether remote systems are robust enough to ensure that humanitarian funds have meant that the right person has received the right assistance at the right time or whether systems are too fallible and, if so, what else is needed to assure aid effectiveness. ■

Growing insecurity: the threat environment for humanitarian operations

The backdrop to the steady rise in the practice of remote management is the increasing incidence of violence against aid workers. Although the number of highly violent operating environments remains small, over the past decade these have become more challenging, due both to increasing political impediments to humanitarian access and to targeted attacks against aid workers and their operations (Humanitarian Outcomes, 2014). Findings from Humanitarian Outcomes' *Aid Worker Security Report* 2014 show that aid worker casualties have tripled since 2002, reaching over 100 deaths a year. The worst year on record was 2013 with 474 aid workers injured or killed by major attacks. Verified figures for 2014 (see Figure 5.1) indicate fewer incidents overall (190 incidents involving 329 casualties), although

this does not reflect more secure settings, but rather a reduced or reconfigured operational presence in some settings including South Sudan and Syria (Humanitarian Outcomes, 2015).

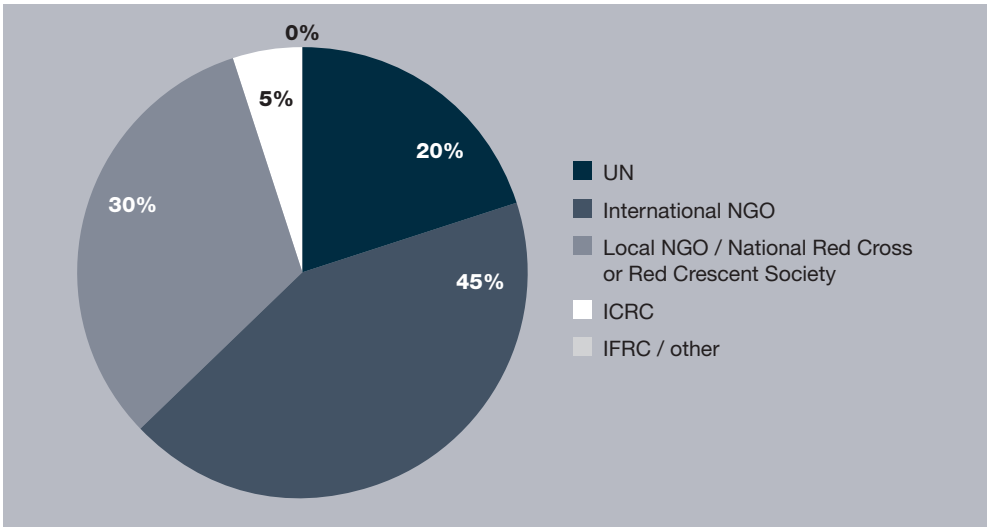
Figure 5.1 Aid worker security incidents, 2004–2014



Source: Humanitarian Outcomes, Aid Worker Security Database*, https://aidworkersecurity.org/.*

Most of the casualties (approximately 90 per cent) are national staff of international or local organizations, including staff and volunteers of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. Of the different organizational entities, those that suffered the greatest number of attacks are NGOs, including local international NGO staff, local NGOs and National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. These actors and entities tend to be both the front-line implementers in the 'deep' field and the staff that undertake the most exposed roles and are often in direct contact with armed actors (Humanitarian Outcomes, 2011; Fast, 2014).

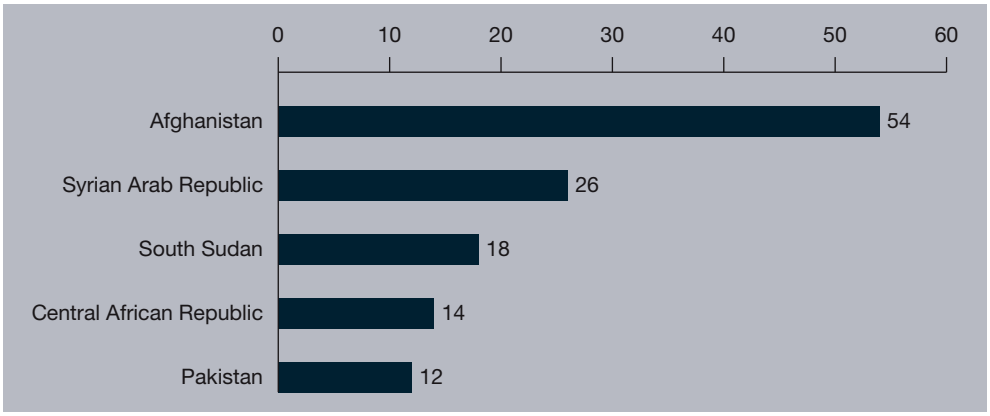
Figure 5.2 Aid worker casualties in 2014, by agency



Source: Humanitarian Outcomes, Aid Worker Security Database, *https://aidworkersecurity.org/.*

It is important to note that the majority of attacks have occurred in only a handful of extremely violent environments, which for the past five years included Afghanistan, Pakistan, Somalia, Sudan and Syria. In 2014 the Central African Republic (CAR) joined this group and South Sudan appeared for the third year in a row. These are also the contexts where aid agencies routinely employ remote management practices, with the exception of CAR and South Sudan, where national aid workers have been targeted by ethnic violence and international staff have faced fewer security risks than in other contexts (Humanitarian Outcomes, 2015).

Figure 5.3 Most violent settings, 2014 (total numbers of major attacks on aid workers)



Source: Humanitarian Outcomes, Aid Worker Security Database, *https://aidworkersecurity.org/.*

Remote operations: policy-light, application-heavy

Policy and operational guidance

Despite the now well-established practice of remote management, as recently as five years ago there was a limited body of policy and guidance on the subject, both within organizations and at the inter-agency level (Norman, 2012). The lack of operational guidance was primarily because agencies saw the practice as a temporary measure and not their normal way of programming. Remote management has also been seen as a less-than-optimal and potentially negative operational model, which reduces the willingness of agencies to dedicate resources to developing formal policy and guidelines on it (Stoddard, Harmer and Renouf, 2010; Rivas, 2015).

Recently, a number of organizations have developed policies and good practice for remote management but these have not always been supported by appropriate systems to support local partnerships. A recent study on remote management and partnerships in Iraq and Syria (see Box 5.2) found that the mechanisms for sustaining operations through remote management in the context of war are largely ad hoc, often taken at the field level and without a standardized industry or between-country approach for engaging local actors (Howe, Stites and Chudacoff, 2015).

BOX 5.2 The conundrum of capacity in remote management in the Syria response

The question of capacity – who has it, who does not, how to build it, how to measure it – is central to the concerns of many international agencies seeking to partner with local organizations. The emphasis on capacity is only heightened in remote management settings, where insecurity is high or where governments and non-state armed actors restrict access for humanitarian operations. In this vein, the Feinstein International Center at Tufts University (United States) undertook a study on partnerships between international and local organizations working cross-border from Turkey into northern Syria in 2013 and 2014 (Howe, Stites and Chudacoff, 2015).

The study team collected data on the different understandings of capacity. They found wide discrepancies in both how organizations perceived capacity and how they felt it should best be developed. One of the clearest inconsistencies in the overall conception was between organizational capacity and operational capacity. Put simply, organizational capacity refers primarily to the structures and systems for management and governance. Operational capacity refers to the ability to carry out programmes and projects. International organizations are normally stronger in organizational capacity and, not surprisingly, they value local partners with demonstrated financial, management and documentation skills. In contrast, the local organizations in this study were more likely to be stronger in operational areas and to emphasize the importance of their networks, relationships with affected populations and ability to meet needs on the ground. This difference in priorities can lead to misunderstandings and can damage the partner relationship. For example, a common complaint of international organizations was a delay in the submission of financial reports by their partners.

Meanwhile, their local counterparts were appalled at what they perceived as a lack of international willingness to respond quickly to changing needs on the ground in, for instance, the wake of a chemical weapons attack.

Most international organizations have management systems and structures in place before they engage in any operational activities. In contrast, most of the local organizations working in northern Syria during the time of data collection were scrambling to establish their organizational structures while simultaneously running operations in a complex and highly insecure environment. In other words, their operational capacity preceded their organizational capacity. Analysis indicated that many of the international actors did not take seriously the extent of this challenge for their local counterparts.

Questions of capacity normally refer to the ability of the local organizations to meet requirements and conduct the work in a way that is deemed satisfactory by their international funders. Less frequently does the capacity lens focus on international organizations or donors. Data for this study showed, however, that the capacity of the international organization to partner was crucial. Key considerations included the institutional view on partnerships – were partnerships part of the institutional mandate of the organization or were they simply expedient when access was constrained? Another consideration was the end goal of the international organization – to build civil society within Syria and promote sustainability of local organizations or to meet process-based indicators for aid delivery? In addition, the tolerance for risk on the part of multilateral or bilateral donors was an important component of an international organization's capacity to partner. Were the donors able to take on the inherent risk of supporting local organizations in a conflict environment? Did they understand that interaction with armed groups was, by definition, what allowed access to populations in need? During the study, one major country donor pulled millions of dollars of support from their international grantee that had partnered with a local organization working in and around an ISIS-controlled area. The donor had been aware of the project locations, but a media report drew public attention to the use of taxpayer funds in this province. As a result, the partnership chain ultimately collapsed and, as the local organization said, "Syrians who had been counting on aid in this area are the ones to ultimately suffer" (Howe, Stites and Chudacoff, 2015). The study found that international organizations with limited capacity to partner should not be operating in remote management settings such as Syria and that international donors with limited ability to absorb risk should not seek engagement in these settings.

A key question is how best to build capacity. The team gathered data on the forms of capacity building taking place along the Turkey–Syria border and found that training sessions were by far the most common method for capacity development. Local organizations felt that training was most beneficial when it was small, carefully tailored towards specific needs and aimed at a mutually defined (in contrast to externally imposed) end goal. Unfortunately, most local organizations reported that few of the training sessions they had attended met these criteria. One of the central problems with the training model in this study was the depletion of resources already in very short supply, mainly personnel time. The head of one Syrian NGO said, "We had five days of training and it wasn't at all what we wanted. They [the international NGO partner] are not studying our needs. I have to recover all the hours I spent in the training at night. Now they want me to send all my senior staff to Istanbul for nine days. How am I to do that? What will happen to all of our operations and our obligations to

other projects and donors?" (Howe, Stites and Chudacoff, 2015). This example speaks to the difference between organizational and operational capacity: extensive, excessive and poorly targeted training can deplete the area in which the local partners are already the weakest – their organizational capacity.

From the perspective of the local organizations, the preferred means of capacity building was through focal points in the international partner organizations. Focal points specialize in one domain, such as finance, monitoring and evaluation, gender or programme management. Their primary role within the international organization is continuously to support and mentor the local organization in these areas throughout the partnership and project cycle. This model, of course, is only successful for international organizations that have a commitment to and the resources dedicated to an intensive partnership model. ■

Donor government positions on remote management have not been well articulated, with some exceptions. In 2013, the EU Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection division (ECHO) circulated a staff instruction note which makes it clear that it "does not fund actions using remote management, other than in the most exceptional circumstances". This position is adopted not only because of the risks entailed by remote management but also because "ECHO is a field-based donor", which highly values its "direct exposure to operational realities" (European Commission, 2013). Partners seeking ECHO funding to operate in remote management must demonstrate, among other things, that the action will directly save lives and that there is clear evidence that the security risks faced by local staff and/or partners are "substantially lower than the risks… [faced by] expatriate staff" (i.e., "risk 'displacement' is not acceptable") (European Commission, 2013). In Somalia and Syria, ECHO has also introduced a contractual obligation for partners to report to them on the number and level (i.e., seniority) of supervisory visits they make on a quarterly basis (ECHO interview conducted for Haver and Carter, forthcoming).

Donors' emerging policy positions in the area of remote management are to some degree shaped by the extent to which they can fund national NGOs. ECHO, for example, is legally bound only to fund NGOs that have signed a framework partnership agreement and have demonstrated their operational and administrative capability, something which goes beyond the scope of most national NGOs (IRIN, 2014). Other major donors, including the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID) and the United States Agency for International Development, are reportedly making changes to or reviewing their funding options in this area (IRIN, 2014), including the possibility to fund and/or support the capacity of Syrian NGOs directly (interviews conducted for Haver and Carter, forthcoming). A related area that has not yet received much attention is the degree to which accountability standards are achievable in highly insecure environments (Schreter and Harmer, 2013; Steets and Sagmeister, forthcoming). An ECHO-funded study on access, for example, highlighted how managing projects remotely means reducing control and

oversight, which increases the risk of aid diversion and reduces project quality (Steets, Reichhold and Sagmeister, 2012). A number of agencies, including the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), have called for an adjustment of donor expectations of upward accountability:

> "With an increased reliance on national and local partners operating in areas where our own access is difficult or impossible, it may be difficult to maintain our current type and level of detail of audit and donor reporting. Donors will need to be convinced of the changes that would be needed in accountability processes" (UNHCR, 2009).

Very few donors have sought to review their own risk tolerance or to adapt their systems to high-risk environments. A small number, including DFID, have reviewed their approach to remote management in a particular context, for example in Somalia (Integrity Research & Consultancy, 2015). At certain times, donors have demonstrated a degree of flexibility regarding additional funding and a loosening of monitoring requirements when security conditions change, particularly during periods of intense humanitarian need, such as in Somalia during the famine (Darcy, Bonard and Dini, 2012). This swiftly changed, however, after the urgency of the response declined. As is highlighted in Box 5.3, greater attention to the long-term quality of programming is needed, rather than attention to short-term risk.

BOX 5.3 The role of donors in remote management in Somalia: eyes wide shut

The UN Envoy to Somalia remarked that the international community was involved in a perilous balance in Somalia between "believing that it is right that we should be there, and facing up to the risk of doing so" (Jakes, 2014). International actors are increasingly concerned that despite channelling aid to Somalia for many years, they have very little understanding about the actual risks involved in operating in a dynamic and insecure environment or the impact of their assistance. As a result, a 'buzz' is emerging within the donor government community about the need for remote monitoring, increased data collection and a focus on accountability.

Donor governments are increasingly piloting remote monitoring mechanisms, using digital technologies and third-party actors. Methods include GPS-tracking and photography, detailing construction progress via smartphone applications, SMS and telephone verification centres, online platforms to gauge public opinion, tablet surveys, covert monitoring, third-party spot checks and verifications, and situational analysis. A few donors and UN agencies reduced the number of international and local NGOs that they work with in difficult-to-reach areas, with the hope that building stronger direct partnerships over time will reduce risk. The emphasis of remote monitoring initiatives, however, has been slanted towards technical considerations, while less energy has been dedicated to understanding the politics and implications of these activities for local partners and partnerships.

The use of third-party monitors and digital monitoring tools can help donors and aid agencies to gain a better understanding of the on-the-ground reality, increase the level of accurate and available data and bolster accountability. In Somaliland, the information generated from third-party monitoring has facilitated the ability of implementing agencies to identify human rights abuses and contract disputes, and enabled them to understand the impact of projects implemented in areas where they may no longer be operating. Resultant conversations have also helped to identify areas where local partners need capacity building or want support in monitoring. Where positive outcomes have been achieved from remote monitoring pilots, the key has seemed to be regular and clear communication between the donor, the international and/or local partners and the third-party monitor on the process and results of the remote monitoring exercise, not only during but in advance of an activity.

External monitoring can also have negative impacts. Violence concerning contractual issues in Somalia is common and it is, therefore, important to consider local dynamics before beginning an external monitoring process, in which international actors ultimately transfer power to another group. In Puntland, conflict arose between local actors when an organization was hired to conduct third-party monitoring activities of other local aid agencies that they also compete with for funding. Understanding the local narratives and competing interests is difficult, however, even for aid agencies with long histories and established field offices in Somalia. For donors based in Nairobi, limited to infrequent field visits and restricted to the embassy compound or short community visits accompanied by armed security teams, the obstacles are even greater. Regardless, international actors need to ensure that the quest to increase accountability does not create new spaces of contestation at the local level, jeopardize partnerships or endanger local partners rather than strengthen their ability to provide assistance to communities.

An uncomfortable tension also exists between the expressed desire for more accountability and the fear of exposure and punitive measures. Local aid agencies (and their international partners) fear losing funding if they highlight poor practice or misuse of funds, while donor agency staff are concerned with political and professional backlash. This creates a schizophrenic discourse whereby both donors and aid agencies recognize that they have little understanding of the on-the-ground reality, but ponder whether they really want to know more, as increased knowledge should precipitate action. Policy guidance on appropriate action is, perhaps not surprisingly, scarce. The information generated can be a useful tool to develop stronger partnerships between international and local actors and improve practice to ensure communities are receiving the assistance they need and want. This objective, though, often takes a back seat to concerns about financial risk and institutional reputations. Ultimately, for local partners, the ambivalence of the emphasis on technical accountability to donors rather than quality or appropriateness in implementation of programmes forces a focus on reputation rather than effectiveness and keeps the incentive to discuss openly the obstacles they face at a low level.

The issue at the heart of the debate in Somalia is the paradox between knowledge informing practice or practice informing knowledge. The difficulties of access in remote operations should provide an incentive to strengthen local partnerships and the increased data and a focus on accountability should improve aid effectiveness. The primacy on mitigating institutional risk, however, implies a level of apathy among donors and a lack of confidence that better knowledge will improve practice, perhaps in part because of the complexity of the environment or a presumption that aid agencies and local partners are resistant to change.

At present, the emphasis is on rolling out mechanisms that potentially increase upward accountability, but may fail to acknowledge and address the power and politics and the humanitarian obligations that new knowledge brings or harness them as a tool to strengthen local partnerships and improve outcomes at the local level. ■

Principles and good practice in programming approaches

While policy and guidance remains under-developed, academic analysis and practitioner-oriented reviews and evaluations have slowly begun to establish an evidence base of both good and poor practice in remote management. This section highlights three main areas of good practice: preparedness; localizing the response; and programme adaptation.

First, the literature underscores the importance of preparedness and planning for remote management. Several evaluations have noted poor experiences when local partnerships or increased reliance on national staff happens without preparation, as aid agencies rush to find local partners or engage local staff members on a temporary basis (Schreter and Harmer, 2013). Assessing and supporting partner capacity is important, although it is not without its challenges. A recent DFID-commissioned evaluation of remote management practices in Somalia and northern Kenya concluded that "the prevailing criteria for the selection of local implementing partners is their ability to access locations, rather than their capacity or expertise". The study notes that while this is necessary to a certain extent in a context like Somalia where technical expertise is already low, the focus on access "further reduces the scope for engaging technically skilled partners to manage and deliver complex projects" (Integrity Research & Consultancy, 2015).

Second, the literature highlights that active acceptance-based approaches are more successful in providing assistance to people in need than approaches that rely on heavy protection (so-called 'bunkerization') and that these practices are most achievable where there is highly localized, static and experienced staffing or partners pursuing a relationship with local communities (Van Brabant, 2000; Duffield, 2010; Egeland, Harmer and Stoddard, 2011; Fast, 2014). Analysis of a Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) remotely managed medical programme in an Al-Shabaab-controlled area in Somalia between 2009 and 2013 found two factors among others that were significant in their ability to maintain access: their presence prior to the arrival of the armed group; and staff who were accustomed to working remotely and were able to negotiate based on the organization's ethos and principles. The latter played into the preferences of Al-Shabaab, who insisted on only communicating and negotiating with local Somalis. Though the project closed in 2013, when MSF withdrew from all parts of Somalia due to several security incidents involving its staff in other areas of the country, this particular

programme had not experienced any serious security incidents over that period of time (Belliveau, 2015).

Third, the nature of the programme is also a consideration, including the size, scale and sector of focus. In general, agencies find it makes sense to reconsider more complex programming under remote management, seeking instead simpler and smaller-scale options (Stoddard, Harmer and Renouf, 2010; Norman, 2012). Some sectors may also be better suited for remote programming than others, although evidence on this is not conclusive and is the subject of current research (Haver and Carter, forthcoming). While protection has been known to suffer under remote management, a recent study in Syria found that "in the absence of traditional protection actors many local/diaspora groups are fulfilling an important protective role" (Svoboda and Pantuliano, 2015). This study encouraged greater support for training in monitoring and analysis of how a common understanding of protection threats might come from collaboration with local and diaspora groups (Svoboda and Pantuliano, 2015). Belliveau's analysis (2015) of MSF's remotely managed medical programme in Somalia argues that a valued product – medical relief, being provided at a significant scale (50,000 consultations on an annual basis) – "seemed less misaligned" with Al-Shabaab's goals and values as compared to food, which they equated with dependency or with non-Islamic education. This was only possible, however, with highly skilled local teams, trained to maintain the quality standards of the organization (Belliveau, 2015).

The critical role of local partners: key considerations and challenges

A number of studies have examined the crucial role of local partner organizations in settings where remote management is being used (see, for example, Humanitarian Outcomes, 2011; Egeland, Harmer and Stoddard, 2011; Norman, 2012; Howe, Stites and Chudacoff, 2015). Research on the nature, capacity and range of local organizations has been limited, however, partly because of the difficulty of accessing the research subject and partly due to a wider neglect of the role of local organizations in humanitarian aid generally.

This section considers local partners' ability to negotiate access and their use of humanitarian principles; ethical questions related to the transfer of risk; and the coordination and monitoring of local partners' programmes.

Access, negotiation and humanitarian principles

At the heart of the shift to remote management through partners is an assumption that local organizations will be able to maintain – or perhaps even expand – their international partners' programmes. Little analysis is available on how often this

is the case. Instead, several reports note the challenges that local partners have faced in doing so. As Svoboda and Pantuliano (2015) argue, reaching people in need in Syria is "fraught with challenges", even for a group of actors that are often from the same local communities as the armed actors in control. Similarly, in their detailed analysis of remote management in Iraq and Syria, Howe, Stites and Chudacoff (2015) argue that while access is "highly relational", dependent on local networks and reputations, it is also "arbitrary" and wielded by armed groups as a form of power. The study documented a number of examples of how local partners make decisions in Syria, concluding that access is not a constant. It highlighted examples such as access being disrupted within a single convoy movement and affecting only part of a project, for example, allowing distribution but not monitoring. The study found the unpredictable and complex nature of access increased mistrust between the local organizations and their international partner(s), the latter lacking the ability or desire to "grasp the complexity of the difficulties of access" (Howe, Stites and Chudacoff, 2015).

During the response to the famine in south-central Somalia, many traditional international agencies suffered significant access constraints, and international Islamic and local Somali organizations were perceived to be filling some of the gaps (International Crisis Group, 2012). A recent study (Svoboda et al., 2015), however, found that despite the common perception that the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) was a determining factor in enabling aid access to Al-Shabaab-controlled areas, it did not directly overcome the constraints imposed by Al-Shabaab, but relied on individual agencies through negotiations with clan leaders and other networks. Very little has been documented on how these entities negotiated and maintained access (Jackson and Aynte, 2013; Svoboda et al., 2015). Given the limited documentation concerning the impact of Islamic, Turkish and Gulf state donors and agencies, "assessing what these characteristics mean" for humanitarian access in Somalia has been difficult (Maxwell and Majid, 2014).

A principled approach is important for any entity in negotiating and maintaining access. Again, the evidence base is not well developed on this subject, partly because of the difficulties in measurement and also because there are few documented perspectives of local partners on issues of principles. Some analysts have indicated that local conceptions of 'humanitarianism', their motives for supporting aid and the terms of their support reflect a humanitarian approach that differs from that of established organizations and donors, which can be more concerned with respecting the sovereignty of the state receiving the aid (Bernard, 2011). Conceptions of humanitarianisms undoubtedly vary across cultures and contexts, and the Western, 'established' model is increasingly challenged and contested as a universal model (Bernard, 2011). A 2011 study involving an extensive survey of national staff of international organizations found that a large

majority (more than 90 per cent) thought that an active promotion of the principles of impartiality, independence and neutrality enhanced the security of aid workers, challenging previous assumptions not only about the practical utility of the principles, but also their perceived role in keeping local aid workers safe in insecure conditions across different cultural settings (Egeland, Harmer and Stoddard, 2011).

In its work with National Societies, the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement stresses the need for capacity and support in upholding principles, recognizing that significant pressure can be placed upon those entities when they are auxiliaries of a state that is also a party to the conflict. More generally, local staff and partner organizations operating in contested areas are enmeshed in the civil conflict by virtue of their ethnic, religious and/or political backgrounds. Local staff or organizations in charge of delivering assistance may have a bias or perceived bias for or against a particular population group that may be hard to avoid. And they can come under extreme pressures that make it difficult to uphold humanitarian principles (Stoddard, Harmer and Haver, 2006; Stoddard, Harmer and DiDomenico, 2009). Agencies often present these pressures as one of their primary concerns when switching to remote management (Stoddard, Harmer and Renouf, 2010). This is a general difficulty, however – international agencies have also struggled to uphold principles in those same contexts. Research on Iraq and Syria found that the way in which a principled approach might be achieved had not been given much consideration when actually designing remote arrangements (Howe, Stites and Chudacoff, 2015). The recent study on MSF's experience in Somalia found positive examples where local staff pushed back some of Al-Shabaab's requirements and also, where possible, tactically shifted some of the difficult decision-making (on procurement, hiring, disciplining and firing local staff) back to the international staff operating remotely (Belliveau, 2015).

Risk transfer: differentiating practices and principles

There is also a degree of tension between the emphases placed on different types of risk in insecure environments. Donor governments focus more on systems and tools for reducing fiduciary risk, whereas agencies focus their attention on security risk management. Neither set of approaches to these aspects of risk management is designed with local partners in mind, however. Many international agencies admit that they are only just beginning to think about their own responsibilities in this area (Humanitarian Outcomes, 2011; Howe, Stites and Chudacoff, 2015; Brooks, 2015). In particular, while recognizing the varied nature of the threats to international and national staff, there is a growing awareness that local partners often face extreme risks, without the benefit of support or resources available to international actors, and that a shift to remote programming in itself can increase local staff's overall exposure (Humanitarian Outcomes, 2011). A desire on the part of some international organizations to continue their operations, due to funding or other pressures to

maintain their presence, may be part of the reason why there hasn't been more emphasis on good practice to support national and local responses.

Organizations are increasingly investing in the skills and tools to measure risk as a way to guide programme decision-making. Much of this effort, however, remains internal and considers the differing security risks of their own national and international staff, while at the same time investing in tailored security training and security-related resources to address those gaps. Equal attention is not paid to the differences and inequalities between international and local organizations. This is partly because the legal drivers (insurance and liability concerns) are not the same. It is also due to the faulty assumption that partners will inherently know how to better manage risks in local contexts or that they will be less exposed simply because they are from that context (Wille, 2010; Humanitarian Outcomes, 2011).

Partnering with (or 'programming through') local entities in insecure contexts raises troubling ethical issues, which many international organizations recognize, but with which they continue to grapple (Stoddard, Harmer and Renouf, 2010). In Afghanistan, research has found significant dilemmas for local partners, including that the economic opportunities afforded in international partnership may result in organizations taking on a major burden of risk, while at the same time partners are genuinely motivated to support their needy communities. As a result, these partners potentially do not present honest accounts of actual risks, "for fear of the project being closed down and losing their jobs" (Stoddard, Harmer and Renouf, 2010). This dynamic was also identified as a factor in Syria, highlighting that access in many ways correlates to a tolerance for risk (Howe, Stites and Chudacoff, 2015). As the authors argue, local organizations with the best access "are also the organizations that represent the greatest risk to their international partners", as access requires moving in extremely insecure areas and interacting with armed groups. The organizations interviewed in the study were both aware of the trade-offs and willing to accept the risks in order to provide assistance. The study found less evidence that the donors who funded the international organizations that fund these local partners shared a similarly high risk tolerance (Howe, Stites and Chudacoff, 2015).

Most agencies and donors lack well-defined risk thresholds and exit strategies to guide decision-making, or these are not referred to at the critical moments of decision-making. Risk levels are not well assessed or articulated, and they can differ widely between countries by virtue of prevailing operational culture and political influences. This in turn can add to the pressures local organizations face.

Coordinating and monitoring remote partners

Over the years, the humanitarian system has introduced improved coordination mechanisms, including the formalization of the cluster approach. These, however, have not been well adapted for remotely managed programmes and specifically for local partners. One of the critical challenges with cluster-led operations is that the lead entity (usually a UN agency) often has no presence in the field due to their own security restrictions. Their ability to coordinate a highly diverse set of local actors that are not inclined to report their movements or activities due to their own security considerations makes for difficult business. In addition, possible areas of support, such as undertaking a collective risk assessment for the sector or assessing the issue of risk transfer to partners, have not been considered a part of the cluster lead's responsibilities (Schreter and Harmer, 2013; Svoboda and Pantuliano, 2015).

In addition, local actors are highly diverse and their common origins in a country and culture may mean little for the possibilities of coordination, if the country is wracked by civil war. Ongoing work by the Secure Access in Volatile Environments study, as well as other research, has identified hundreds of local partners in the highly insecure settings of Afghanistan, south-central Somalia and Syria, with wide-ranging orientations and backgrounds (Stoddard, forthcoming; Svoboda and Pantuliano, 2015). In some cases, local actors also deliberately chose different coordination modalities. In Somalia, for example, the OIC Coalition, comprised of some 40 aid agencies and civil society organizations (Somali and/or based in OIC member countries), implemented a range of programmes in highly insecure parts of south-central Somalia. They did not seek, however, to be part of international humanitarian coordination efforts (Svoboda et al., 2015). Where local partners have sought to engage in traditional coordination mechanisms, the most basic of requirements such as conducting or translating meetings in the local language continues to stymie opportunities for information exchange (Svoboda and Pantuliano, 2015).

Finally, as with other issues regarding local partners and remote management, little research and guidance has been published on remote monitoring (Rivas, 2015). Accountability issues will continue to grow in importance, not least as long as corruption issues continue to be highlighted – thus far mainly by donors, but also increasingly by recipient communities themselves.

Monitoring is seen as the most challenging aspect of remotely managed projects, partly due to the difficulties of collecting the right level and quality of information to guide programming decisions, and because it involves overcoming the same physical access constraints that forced the shift to the remote modality. Yet the scale of level of adaptation in monitoring has progressed quickly in recent years (Stoddard, Harmer and Renouf, 2010; Steets and Sagmeister, forthcoming). For some projects, monitoring has narrowed to a limited focus on a set of measurable indicators, while in other

situations it has widened to involve programme-wide comprehensive approaches including the collection and analysis of feedback from affected populations, contractors, community leaders and the project team (Rivas, 2015). Much of this has been done through the use of new communications tools and technologies, such as call centres, GPS tracking of shipments, external (third-party) monitoring agencies or consultants, and community-based methods such as social media, broadcasts, complaint boxes, local community consultation and local authority monitors (Egeland, Harmer and Stoddard, 2011; Norman, 2012; Steets, Reichhold and Sagmeister, 2012). Despite the ever-widening range of options, none can fully address the difficulty of monitoring in contested and often rapidly changing conflict environments.

Howe, Stites and Chudacoff's recent study on Syrian local partnerships in remote management found that monitoring and evaluation takes on heightened and even disproportionate importance in remote management settings. This is partly because of an acknowledgement on the part of all involved that "the continuation of the partner relationship" depends heavily on the quality of reporting, rather than the quality of assistance being delivered – although one should reflect the other. In Syria, the study found that third-party monitoring was increasingly viewed as the gold standard for remote monitoring and evaluation, even while local partners were increasingly investing in their own monitoring and evaluation. The authors describe the growing "perceived asymmetry" in the emphasis of accountability to the donors versus accountability to the local populations, which adds a "strain" to what otherwise needs to be an exercise based on trust (Howe, Stites and Chudacoff, 2015).

Some positive examples do exist, however, including evidence that community feedback mechanisms in highly insecure environments increase the quality and accountability of assistance (see Box 5.4). Forthcoming analysis will review the extent to which devolving responsibility to local actors increases or improves monitoring and accountability to affected populations, and what challenges local partners face (Steets and Sagmeister, forthcoming).

BOX 5.4 Shifting the paradigm: when local actors become managers and drive innovative changes

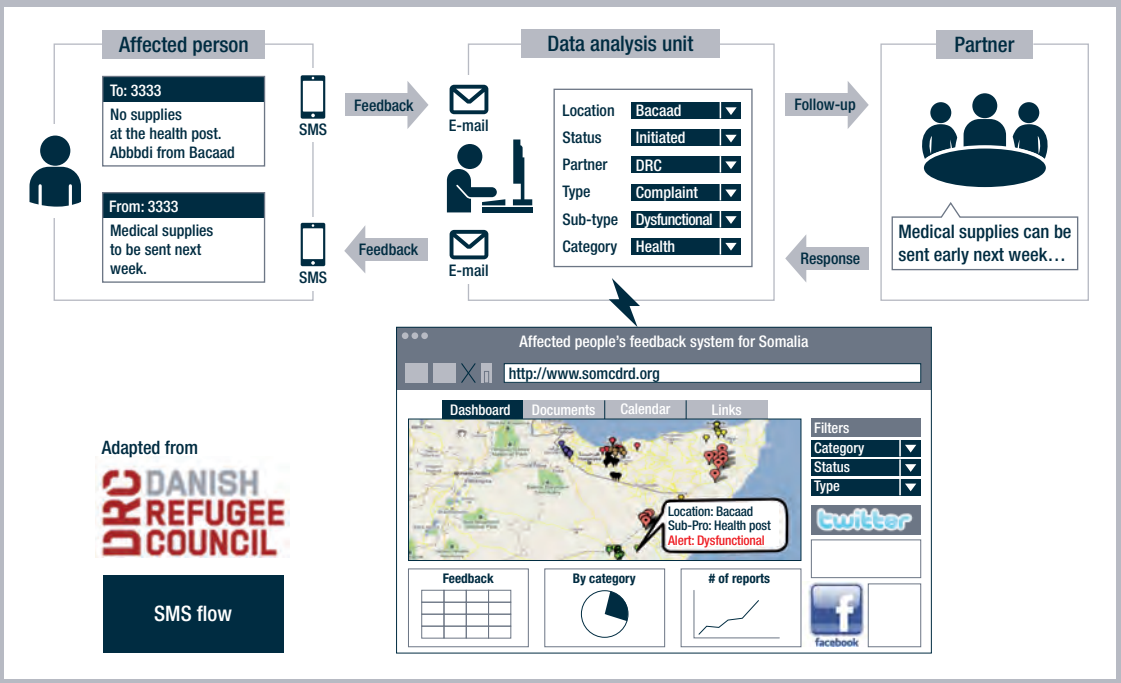
The Community Driven Recovery and Development (CDRD) project initiated two main transformational changes in the way humanitarian interventions address or approach recovery. The CDRD project was implemented by the Danish Refugee Council, with other international partners, and funded by various governments and international donors. The project started as a pilot in north Somalia in 2008 and pioneered remote monitoring technologies to empower communities in the implementation and reporting of community-managed small grants. These were employed for different types of interventions, including preparedness, rehabilitation and recovery actions.

The first significant factor in this project concerns the design. Communities are seen as planners and implementers rather than merely recipients. The CDRD recognizes that most of the recovery skills, inputs and driving factors are already in the communities. It acknowledges that the most cost-effective way for achieving results is to empower local institutions (formal and informal) that can become active actors and agents of change. The project design is a paradigm shift from the traditional project cycle management. The project's operation manual provides general guidance to the communities while communities do the actual activity planning. This participatory planning results in a pipeline of projects, prioritized according to perceived needs. It is important to emphasize that each community carries out the planning process, ensuring the participation of women and vulnerable groups (such as low-income households and elders). Following the planning phase, the CDRD project provides the necessary grants directly to the community management committees. These committees are, in parallel to the planning phase, trained in procurement, financial reporting and monitoring and evaluation.

The CDRD programme has so far transferred grants of more than US$ 7 million directly to the communities. This resulted in 76 education-based projects, 118 actions that enhanced water supply and quality, 128 projects that built or improved existing infrastructure. Several of the infrastructure projects were planned following the identification of disaster preparedness and disaster risk reduction needs. For example, in Somalia, several rural communities engaged in the construction of *berkats*, a traditional way of storing rainwater in underground reservoirs. *Berkats* are a crucial livelihoods asset during the dry seasons, which, due to the impact of climate change, are becoming longer and more intense.

The second transformational change concerns how technologies were delivered and used by the communities where levels of illiteracy are high. In 2011 the CDRD project started to pilot an innovative solution for gathering feedback from crisis-affected communities in Somalia by supplying mobile text message (SMS) devices. The primary motivation of introducing this system was to encourage affected populations to express their demands and aspirations without gatekeepers and further engage them in the formulation of community-suited humanitarian interventions. The system is based on open-source technologies. Arrangements with local telecommunication providers are not necessary: the only requirements are an Android device (tablet or phone) and a local SIM card. The client side is based on *SMSsync*, an Android mobile app utility developed by Ushahidi, which allows the device to act as a local SMS gateway by sending incoming SMS messages to the web. The server side is also powered by Ushahidi's web-based platform, a crisis-mapping application for information collection and interactive mapping. The incoming SMS messages from the communities are forwarded in real time to the web-based platform and processed. Figure 1 summarizes the information flow of the system.

Figure 1 SMS flow diagram



Source: Adapted from Danish Refugee Council and Arab Salem, 2011.

The CDRD project team then validates the information and undertakes the appropriate follow-up actions. For full transparency and accountability purposes, the online interactive map, feedback received from the communities and corresponding responses are available on the project web site.

The CDRD project developed and implemented an innovative system with significant potential to improve humanitarian actions by enhancing accountability and remote management through the use of SMS, social media and geo-mapping. To date, the CDRD approach has been scaled up to a programme covering all of Somalia and replicated in Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Guinea, South Sudan, Sudan and Yemen.

In addition, the policy message from its implementation is clear and is now being considered by donors and implementing agencies alike: it is important to recognize that local institutions and communities have the capacity to manage the direct financial resources they are entrusted with when good design and enough support are integral to any programme. The CDRD project showed that kick-starting basic management capacities through a participatory approach could achieve recovery and development results while maintaining good accountability standards. ■

Conclusion

Remote management has tested and stretched the boundaries of local partnership in humanitarian action. International agencies and donors have struggled, with limited success, to create an enabling policy environment, to apply good practice in programming and to resolve thorny ethical issues concerning security and fiduciary risk transfer. While rhetorical emphasis on the need to build the capacity of local partners and reshape relations so that partnerships cease to be so asymmetric is growing, practice has been slow to follow. This is particularly urgent in conflict contexts such as Syria, where there are few alternative options to maintaining timely access to the affected population. Calls are growing for donors to provide direct funding (or more flexible means for the transfer of assets from international NGOs) to national NGOs and to offer greater support to their capacities (see, for example, the consultations for the World Humanitarian Summit). Greater inter-agency dialogue, decision-making and action are needed on how the international system can better support local partners, including the various types of interventions, partners and accountability requirements that are best suited for different types of high-risk environments, as well as greater independent analysis and review of remote partnering experiences.

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Local actors and their organizations are often both front-line implementers in the field and those that undertake the most exposed roles in crises. Here, the Syrian Arab Red Crescent runs a psychosocial programme for children affected by the conflict in their country.
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Chapter 6

Chapter 6

Guns not hurricanes: the role of local actors in protracted conflict

In June 2011, the 17-year ceasefire between the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) and militias allied to the government of Myanmar broke down. The conflict triggered a complex humanitarian situation, including the destruction of social infrastructure and the internal displacement of more than 60,000 people. While international humanitarian agencies struggled with reaching the internally displaced persons (IDPs), local civil society organizations (CSOs) worked to deliver aid to them and to negotiate protection for them with warring parties. Beyond organizing and mobilizing local relief responses, local CSOs also facilitated the access of international aid agencies to IDPs – acting as interlocutors with KIA to ensure international relief reached those most in need (Jaquet and O'Loughlin, 2012).

The story of Kachin illustrates some of the salient characteristics of humanitarian work in contemporary conflict-affected countries. In the context of complex socio-political divisions the provision of relief aid and the identity of its providers may play a role in the conflict (Bell et al., 2013). As the nature of armed conflict has changed from inter- to intra-state, so too has the nature of humanitarian operations and actors with the rising profile of local responses as provided by a diverse group of actors (Spearin, 2008).

Emerging trends such as the increasing role of local relief actors, the challenges facing international aid agencies to reach those in need and the attempt by some actors to align international humanitarian aid with political–military objectives ('coherence') have consequences for the delivery of protection and assistance in situations of armed conflict. The trends indicate questions of how to work, with whom and in what ways, relative to the principles of neutrality, independence and impartiality. These issues are also relevant to humanitarian activities in non-conflict contexts (e.g., disasters). They have, however, added significance, sometimes decisive, in shaping access to people or the effectiveness of civilian protection initiatives in contemporary conflicts.

This chapter explores how contemporary armed conflict shapes humanitarian and relief action, especially the composition, roles and identity of local relief actors; the factors shaping engagement between local and international relief actors; and the dilemmas, challenges and opportunities for local and international humanitarian actors inherent to such engagements.

Syrian children play in a refugee camp in Jordan. While many national and international organizations provide assistance to refugees and refugee-impacted communities in Jordan, local civil society organizations are actively engaged in the humanitarian response in Jordan and play a key role in promoting social cohesion and facilitating integration.
© Ibrahim Malla/IFRC

The chapter adopts the definition of conflict by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia as "whenever there is a resort to armed force between States or protracted armed violence between government authorities and organised armed groups or between such groups within a State" (cited in Bailes and Nord, 2010). Engagement is viewed as an interactive, two-way process involving local and international humanitarian actors. Traditional humanitarian actors are the networks of international and national organizations that deliver aid in accordance with core principles and are included in the formal humanitarian system. Local aid actors encompass charities, civil society groups, faith-based organizations, volunteer groups, private sector actors, communities and diaspora bodies involved in providing protection and assistance in ways that may not be explicitly aligned with core principles and/or outside of the formal humanitarian system.

Contemporary armed conflict as a game-changer

Over the last decade, a vast body of literature on contemporary armed conflicts has emerged, in which some have sought to differentiate and categorise conflicts by virtue of casualty thresholds, territorial scope, and network of actors (Cunningham, Gleditsch and Salehyan, 2013; Kaldor, 2012; Krause and Milliken, 2009). Beyond the analytical categories, contemporary conflicts are characterized by the rise of violent non-state actors and the prevalence of civil wars; deep socio-political and ethno-religious cleavages; constantly changing alliances and front lines; destruction of social infrastructure; protraction and long-term displacement and civilian suffering; and links to natural resources. These characteristics influence humanitarian activities compared with contexts of disasters, including preparedness, negotiating access and adapting methods of providing assistance (O'Callaghan and Leach, 2013). Some of these are explored below.

Diverse humanitarian actors

In most conflict contexts, relief aid is provided by a mixed group of government and non-state, local and international actors. This includes government ministries, military, armed groups, faith-based groups, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, national and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), diaspora groups, ethnic and community associations, business, etc. (Slim, 2012). In many conflict contexts, a majority of local actors are new to the provision of assistance and protection of IDPs. In Syria, humanitarian aid is largely provided by the Syrian Arab Red Crescent Society, United Nations (UN) agencies, ICRC, professional bodies, charities, networks of pro- and anti-government activists, diaspora bodies, fighting groups and faith-based groups (see Box 6.1). And most of the local actors were established at or after the start of the conflict. The number of local humanitarian NGOs has increased from 12 in 2011 to between

600 and 700 at present (Svoboda and Pantuliano, 2015). In Somalia, local businesses, diaspora groups and militias were directly involved in meeting the humanitarian needs of the affected population (HFP, 2012). In most cases, the providers of relief aid and its distribution are intertwined with the configuration of who is fighting whom, over what and for how long.

BOX 6.1 Local faith groups as humanitarian actors

The municipality of Irbid in northern Jordan currently hosts approximately 150,000 refugees from the Syrian conflict. Six UN organizations, 22 international NGOs and three Jordanian NGOs are formally listed within UN coordination mechanisms as providing humanitarian assistance to refugees and refugee-impacted communities across the municipality. However, there is also significant local civil society engagement in humanitarian response in the town (Ager and El Nakib, 2015).

The Islamic Charity Center, for example, distributes basic relief items and provides shelter to Syrian refugees. The Islamic identity of the centre attracts donations and financial support from the community and other private donors. Similarly, the Fayha' Mosque disburses zakat (a form of obligatory alms-giving and religious tax in Islam) and *sadaqa* ('voluntary charity') funds through its cash assistance programmes serving mainly newly arrived Syrian refugees. A World Council of Churches-affiliated alliance, the Near East Council of Churches Committee for Refugee Work, has set up a series of workshops to facilitate psychosocial support as part of their Syrian Refugees Relief Project. The council also regularly undertakes distributions of food parcels and donated clothes. The Irbid Baptist Church, which coordinates activities with a network of churches in the town, has also been active in the provision of basic services, mainly distributing food and non-food items to Syrian families.

Overall, more than 20 local groups or organizations are active within the municipality. Some of these organizations explicitly self-identify as faith-based organizations; others see their work simply as a natural consequence of their religious obligation. What they have in common – as with much of civil society in the global South – is religion serving as a key organizing force to foster humanitarian support. The resources mobilized by these groups are significant. In terms of human capital, they leverage the ethos of volunteerism rooted in religious traditions to mobilize volunteers with a diverse set of relevant skills. In terms of social capital, they are well positioned to promote social cohesion and facilitate the integration of refugees into the community. In Irbid, local faith groups have played a key role in addressing tensions between the Jordanian host and refugee communities. Additionally, the membership of local faith groups in faith networks and interfaith coalitions expands their scope and reach and, as a result, has facilitated coordination of local humanitarian response. The religious identity of local faith groups has also allowed them to access substantive material and financial capital. Their access to material resources is widely demonstrated though their use of religious buildings for shelter, protection and the distribution of humanitarian aid. Additionally, as they are able to draw on religious teachings that emphasize the moral responsibility of the religious community (locally and internationally) to give to the poor, many groups are able to mobilize funds swiftly and operate without depending on international donor funding. Viewed as a source of resources, these groups can also

be seen to provide a form of spiritual capital, mobilizing belief and religious practice to help affected people find meaning in crisis and cope in its aftermath.

A recent scoping report by the Joint Learning Initiative on Faith & Local Communities identified many similar examples of major local contributions by faith groups and organizations (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh and Ager, 2014). In the Philippines, Catholic-inspired 'community formation' work for populations impacted by typhoons emphasized the deployment of 'cultural and spiritual capital' to address local stewardship of resources. In Malawi, disaster risk reduction efforts among Protestant congregations that focused on drought-resilient agricultural techniques were found to bring a more than 20fold return on investment. On the Jaffna peninsula in Sri Lanka, places of worship provided sanctuary to those fleeing attacks during the civil war. Mosques were documented as serving as key stores of emergency supplies for response to humanitarian emergencies in many settings. In Somalia, the Muslim Charities Forum joined the Somali Humanitarian Operational Consortium to link religious groups with wider coordination mechanisms. The forum was able to negotiate issues of clan affiliation and allegiance, which was not possible for many other actors and precluded their engagement.

More effective engagement with local faith groups thus promises to harness important capacities for humanitarian response. However, there are many challenges in achieving this. Common concerns are that faith groups are unable to comply with professional standards and are ill-prepared to deliver services on a broad scale. International agencies also perceive faith groups as potentially undermining the humanitarian principles of neutrality and impartiality by virtue of their religious motivations, with fears that these may legitimize coercive proselytism or prompt exclusion of adherents of other faiths.

Local actors also have major concerns. The commitment of international organizations is seen as short-lived and their way of working non-consultative and disruptive of existing community relationships. (e.g., "We don't like to work with organizations in administering distributions and services where we are used as mere channels of delivery"; "When their funding is exhausted and the project ends, people will come to our organization and demand assistance which we can't give them. We stay in the community, but [these organizations] leave and take their funds with them"). Although international organizations frequently vaunt their neutrality, local actors in Irbid commonly saw their work as deeply aligned with a political agenda.

While some of these challenges can be addressed with more flexible planning and administrative procedures, to engage more effectively with local capacities clearly requires a greater commitment to the value of local knowledge and the way it shapes local response (Ager and Ager, 2015). Recommendations for international humanitarian actors flowing from the analysis in Irbid include:

- Commit to mapping the breadth and diversity of faith-based engagement in local humanitarian response.
- Model respect for such engagement through physical presence and partnership with diverse faith actors.
- Recognize the religious and spiritual concerns of these groups as integral to their identity.
- Treat local groups as partners with precious local knowledge rather than contractors to deliver a pre-determined intervention. ■

Chapter 6

Different humanitarian needs

In addition to traditional assistance needs (food, healthcare, shelter and education), affected populations in conflict zones also suffer from physical security threats (from violence) (ICRC, 2013). Still, the needs vary for different categories of people (women, children and the elderly) depending on their geographical location and ethno-religious identities. The scale and length of time for which humanitarian protection and assistance are required are often linked to the causes, the duration and the dynamic of a conflict. In the Central African Republic (CAR), for instance, in spite of a general need for protection and assistance, the scale is different for Muslims and Christians in different parts of the country (see Box 6.2).

BOX 6.2 Central African Republic: international actors and local perception and acceptance

Although global norms and legal frameworks to protect civilians in conflict have evolved over the years, they have not translated into better protection outcomes for conflict-affected people, thus creating a 'protection gap'. In the case of the conflict in the Central African Republic, part of this protection gap can be attributed to the delayed and inadequate international response (see Barbelet, 2015). It also stemmed from the way affected communities perceived the peacekeeping forces deployed to protect them (see also Giffen, 2013). In CAR, these perceptions were diverse and at times contradictory from one community to the other and from one location to another. However, it is with their complexity and multiplicity that local perceptions need to be understood. Local perceptions of threats, local expectations of which and how international actors could contribute to their protection, and actions undertaken by local communities to protection risks are diverse in CAR. But it is essential to understand these very localized and diverse perceptions of motives and the agendas of peacekeeping forces, for example, to be able to assist these populations adequately.

As part of a wider research project on the protection gap, the Humanitarian Policy Group (HPG) has conducted interviews with actors whose aim is to contribute to the protection of civilians and focus group discussions with Central African populations affected by the recent conflict.

Intercommunal violence and exactions from armed groups in CAR required the deployment of peacekeepers with a mandate to physically protect affected populations. Populations were displaced as they sought protection from violence, but many civilians found themselves trapped in insecure enclaves that required physical protection to prevent attacks and infiltration by armed groups. The African Union's force MISCA (International Support Mission to the Central African Republic) and the French support operation, Sangaris, were deployed in December 2013 to secure these enclaves within and outside the capital Bangui and to patrol neighbourhoods and areas at risk. The limited number of troops on the ground meant that MISCA and Sangaris were constrained in their ability to secure all enclaves and patrol all risky areas. Another difficulty, however, was the way the population perceived these peacekeeping forces. The perceived lack of impartiality and neutrality of the forces has unfortunately undermined the potential protection outcomes of their intervention.

In general, civilians did not feel that either MISCA or Sangaris had contributed greatly to their protection or responded adequately to direct attacks on civilians. For their part, peacekeepers found it difficult both to distinguish between civilians and combatants, and to intervene in densely populated urban areas.

Affected populations voiced concerns about the neutrality and impartiality of peacekeeping forces. The French were perceived by some as collaborating with one side in the conflict – the anti-Balaka Christian militia – in light of disarmament campaigns focusing on another – the Muslim Seleka. Some Muslims believed that the French had disarmed the Seleka to clear the ground for anti-Balaka attacks in Bangui in December 2013. Others felt that Sangaris had engaged with the Seleka to fight the anti-Balaka or believed that French troops were in CAR for political and economic reasons, rather than to protect the population.

Perceptions of MISCA differed according to the nationality of the military contingents that made up the peacekeeping force. Rightly or wrongly, Chadian troops were seen as being very closely involved with the Seleka. While other contingents were viewed as more neutral, people still felt that, like the Sangaris troops, they were in CAR for political reasons.

Because affected communities did not trust peacekeeping forces to protect them, they looked to other armed actors to provide them with the physical protection they needed. Muslim communities in Bangui turned to the Seleka for protection following anti-Balaka attacks, and community members, including women, were trained by the Seleka to use firearms and grenades. Initially Christian populations relied on the anti-Balaka for their protection as they were initially formed as a self-defence militia. However, the anti-Balaka turned violent against their own communities, engaging in theft and forced taxation. There has been anecdotal evidence that some communities are now creating new self-defence groups against the anti-Balaka, adding another layer of armed actors to the conflict. The reliance of communities on armed groups for their protection has further escalated the conflict with significant implications for the protection of civilians.

These issues are known and discussed among protection actors in CAR. However, peacekeeping forces did not address these negative perceptions. MISCA and Sangaris should have engaged more systematically with the population, used surveys to investigate these perception issues and address them. An essential element to address negative perception was through active communication with communities, most especially following incidents involving MISCA and Sangaris forces. These elements are not new to peacekeeping operations. The deployment of community liaison officers to engage and communicate systematically with communities constitutes one of the good practices of the UN Department of Peacekeeping (DPKO). DPKO was involved prior to the deployment of the UN peacekeeping mission, MINUSCA, in an advisory role working with the African Union. However, it appears that good practices such as these are still not systematically applied by regional and national forces and should be streamlined in regional peacekeeping as well as with national forces through the deployment of a UN ‘protection of civilians’ adviser within these missions. ■

Varied agenda and motivation

The underlying motivation and agenda of humanitarian aid can be questioned or perceived differently by those involved in the armed conflict. For a start, humanitarian initiatives in conflict contexts, as interpreted through the prism of warring parties and their interests, are elements of gaining and maintaining control, recognition and legitimacies (Aydinli, 2013). For instance, the variety of ethno-religious groups providing relief assistance to IDPs in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) following military operations in 2009 used their humanitarian activities as opportunities to gain influence and membership among vulnerable populations. Similarly, the Pakistani government was more favourably inclined to some NGOs and other relief actors seen as supportive of its political–military activities, relative to restrictions imposed on agencies adhering strictly to core humanitarian principles (HPG, 2009). Even external actors, including donor governments, align their humanitarian activities and funding to political and military objectives to gain 'coherence' (Dandoy and Perouse de Montclos, 2013). All this underlines the political character of humanitarian aid.

Access is different

The ability of humanitarian organizations to access certain areas in armed conflicts transcends issues of chronic insecurity and destroyed infrastructure, to include negotiation and acceptance by warring parties. History, culture and identity factors combine to shape perception, acceptance and access of local and international relief actors. Positive perception, often anchored in historical connections, shared religious and cultural beliefs and identities, perceived neutrality and past operational delivery and trust-building by humanitarian agencies, generally leads to acceptance and access for relief actors, and vice versa. This partly explains the capacity of diaspora groups to deliver assistance to populations affected by armed conflicts. As indicated in Box 6.2, peacekeepers in CAR were perceived to be in support of former Seleka-allied groups or anti-Balaka militia by different communities with implications for access and the delivery of protection.

Greater risks

The types and scale of risks for relief operations are greater in conflict zones. As noted in Chapter 5, relief actors face heightened physical risks in conflicts as highlighted by the 66 per cent increase in violence against aid operations in 2013 compared to 2012. Moreover, the majority of attacks and casualties are concentrated in Afghanistan, Pakistan, South Sudan, Sudan and Syria (Humanitarian Outcomes, 2014). Relief actors also face risks of reputational damage, financial flows and challenges to observing core principles in conflict contexts. For instance, dissonance in perspectives and approaches, based on religious and

cultural differences, could exist between local and international relief actors on the nature and implementation of protection and assistance programmes for women. Complex negotiations for access with armed groups, and between local and international relief actors, could lead to compromise and pragmatism in terms of the level of adherence to core principles. Humanitarian actors are also generally confronted with the risk of aid being diverted or hijacked by warring parties, with implications for their observance of core principles and their reputation. Humanitarian agencies also face additional (reputational and operational) risks where and when humanitarian aid is aligned to political goals, including stabilization agendas.

Different capacities

Humanitarian actors face different possibilities and constraints in conflict contexts that require different capacities and skills. The capacity to communicate effectively, negotiate, compromise, adapt and respond to rapidly changing situations assumes greater significance in conflict zones. The complexities of conflict situations require humanitarian actors to be able to build relationships and a network of contacts across political, military, government and non-state actors. This requires understanding and navigating a complex web of relationships and alliances among conflict actors; identifying potential entry points; and initiating and maintaining contacts with relevant stakeholders. It also demands that humanitarian agencies anticipate and analyse identities and perceptions of humanitarian workers and agencies in conflict environments. In Lebanon, the Lebanese Red Cross "emphasise how much of their time and attention is devoted to maintaining a strong network of local contact… with political, military and community leaders during peacetime or before new operations and then drawn upon during armed conflicts… to secure safe passage" (O'Callaghan and Leach, 2013).

Exploring engagement among humanitarian actors in zones of conflict

In spite of the growing capacities of local response and relief actors, and debates about their operational relationship with traditional humanitarian agencies over the last decade, documentation of engagement experiences is limited. Some of the experiences noted by international aid agencies are restricted to internal lessons learnt, particularly in armed conflict where the principle of confidentiality is critical to maintaining effective dialogue among stakeholders. This indicates a need for further research about the comparative advantages of local and international actors, and the role of intermediaries.

Recent experiences in places such as CAR, Somalia, South Sudan and Syria pinpoint some initial observations. First, engagement is not just between local and

international agencies, but also within and among local relief actors. In Lebanon, South Sudan and Syria, local relief actors were quick to form operational networks and cooperation mechanisms. Moreover, the term 'local relief actor' is variable – the composition of these actors is such that there are various degrees of formalization, professionalism, adherence to core principles and relationship with the international humanitarian system. Groups such as diaspora bodies occupy more intermediary roles.

Second, engagement is variable as it takes different forms at different levels, including subcontracting arrangements for humanitarian service delivery (e.g., distribution of aid in areas inaccessible to others) and direct commercial relationships with local businesses. Others include support of relief activities in cash or kind; the sharing of information, ideas and resources; and conducting training and capacity development. For instance, CAFOD supports local networks of the Catholic Church in Syria by providing medical aid and food parcels, and the Mennonite Central Committee in the United States supports local partners in Syria through cash allowances to families inside the country (Svoboda and Pantuliano, 2015).

In addition, significant assumptions often underpin engagements between local and international actors. For example, local groups are generally believed to have excellent knowledge of local issues and terrain, and to be embedded in communities, therefore better placed to negotiate access. Though some may be viewed as lacking in professionalism and having less developed management and accounting procedures, local actors could be seen as better placed to access populations and deliver assistance relative to international actors. On the other hand, international actors could be viewed as more professional, with superior financial oversight systems, technical capacity and better at using modern technologies and other tools to deliver aid. They could equally be seen as having limited understanding of local culture, language and conflict dynamic. Further research is still needed to test the degree of accuracy of these assumptions.

Finally, regardless of the terminologies used to describe the relationship between local and international actors, there remains a strong dynamic of power (Belloni, 2007). Whether it is described as engagement, partnership, cooperation or collaboration, the reality of unequal power relations exists between international and local relief actors – between insiders versus outsiders of the formal humanitarian system, and funders and grantors versus grantees, respectively.

BOX 6.3 International and local humanitarian response in Syria: diverging systems?

The formal humanitarian system needs to explore creative ways of responding to crises such as the one in Syria and to do so, not in isolation, but by involving new players, even unfamiliar ones. The urgency of the situation requires that the different organizations involved in providing humanitarian aid learn from and listen to each other and collaborate now if they are to improve the lives of Syrians.

The conflict in Syria has entered its fifth year and there is no end in sight. Widespread and systematic violations of international humanitarian law (IHL) and international human rights law (IHRL) are having a devastating effect on civilians. More than 191,000 people had been killed by mid-2014 (Price, Gohdes and Ball, 2014) and millions more have been displaced within Syria or have sought refuge in neighbouring countries. The scale of needs, the intensity of fighting and the complexity of the conflict make Syria a particularly challenging environment for humanitarian agencies.

Access for international aid agencies has been a contentious issue throughout the conflict, due to insecurity, political considerations, bureaucratic hurdles and deliberate obstruction. Despite some progress, especially since the passage of UN Security Council resolution 2165 in July 2014 (the third of four resolutions on Syria passed between September 2013 and December 2014), many areas remain inaccessible to agencies from the 'formal' humanitarian system (i.e., the UN, the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement and international NGOs). This gap has been inadvertently filled by local and diaspora groups whose local networks facilitate access to communities in need.

What is commonly called the 'local response' is diverse. The category can denote professional bodies that existed before the outbreak of the war, such as medical associations now providing emergency relief, charities, networks of anti-government and community activists, diaspora organizations, coordination networks and armed groups engaged in aid delivery. Many of the diaspora organizations, for example, were born out of a sense among Syrians living abroad that something needed to be done to help those back home. Medical professionals travelled to Syria to provide their services in clinics and hospitals often in their spare time while also keeping a full-time job. At the start of the conflict, the Syrian British Medical Society provided medicine and support to Syrian doctors eventually joining other medical organizations in the United States, Canada and France to form the *Union des Organisations Syriennes de Secours Médicaux* (Union of Syrian medical assistance organizations) (Nielsen and Grey, 2013). Initially operations by diaspora organizations were improvised given the lack of prior experience with humanitarian work, but with time organizational set-ups became more sophisticated and professional. One such organization, for example, was created through an ad-hoc initiative of family networks, but today counts 900 staff members.

With a keen local understanding of the conflict, the people and the area, diaspora and local aid organizations are potentially qualified to judge what is most needed, where and how to gain access. However, reaching communities in need is by no means without danger and the assumption that local aid workers are safer than their international counterparts does not hold true. The majority of those targeted among aid workers are local staff (Kravitz and O'Molloy, 2014). And while most international aid agencies have sophisticated security measures and protocols to mitigate the risks, such measures do not necessarily protect local staff and local organizations may not have any measures in place at all.

Despite fulfilling an important role in areas where international agencies cannot operate, local and diaspora groups have not had the recognition or support they require. Partnerships with international organizations are rarely on an equal footing and local or diaspora organizations are often seen merely as service providers. Research has shown that, over recent years, there has been a shift within the humanitarian sector towards greater inclusion of local partners (Howe, Stites and Chudacoff, 2015). The need for partnerships is clearly recognized, yet the term is poorly defined and often limited to a contractual relationship rather than one based on shared responsibilities, decision-making and trust.

The reluctance of the formal humanitarian system to deal with organizations that are new and untested stems partly from the difficulty in ascertaining their humanitarian motivations (Svoboda and Pantuliano, 2015). Most Syrian diaspora groups and NGOs were formed at the start of the conflict and therefore have a short track record of operations. International aid agencies and donors are understandably wary about providing funds to organizations where the usual checks and balances might not be available. It is difficult to apply standard criteria, such as proof of audits, to determine an organization's eligibility for funding. While donors and international aid agencies have recognized that applying standards cannot be done in a rigid way and certain standards have been relaxed, much valuable time was lost during which partnerships could have been established had these hurdles not existed.

Recognizing and strengthening local actors is vital. It is also crucial to see these local actors as genuine partners in their own right, rather than as subcontractors. This recognition should in no way be seen as negating the role of the formal humanitarian system. Both groups, the formal system and local and diaspora organizations, have a part to play: the question is not deciding which one is better, but identifying the areas where they can work together, while acknowledging that there might be areas where they will operate separately. Perhaps the conflict in Syria, where access for international organizations has been particularly challenging, has given the role local actors play the necessary prominence to be not only noticed, but also taken seriously. It is hoped that declarations by international agencies to provide these 'newcomers' with the necessary capacity building will lead to serious and systematic strategies of support and long-term investment. ■

Factors shaping humanitarian engagement in conflict zones

Recent experiences highlight at least four factors that shape engagement between local and international relief agencies.

Perception whether correct or incorrect, is the reality that influences the ability or desire to associate with others. Perceptions are non-static and always evolving. As indicated above, culture, religion, history, words, actions and identities shape perception, which in turn influences acceptance and access. The (mis)perception of peacekeepers in CAR shapes both who they are able to engage with and those seeking to engage with them in meeting the needs of affected populations. In general, the underlying assumptions about local and international relief agencies influence perception. How local and international actors perceive each other, however, is shaped by different considerations. Local actors' perception of

international agencies may often be linked to risks to their acceptance and access, operational approach, scale of funding and conditionality, degree of flexibility and compromise, and complementarity. Conversely, international actors' perception of local actors may be influenced largely by their degree of acceptance and access, operational capacity and outreach, and risks to reputation.

Operational strategies where divergence shapes the prospect of engagement. Variations in operational strategies are induced by different organizational models, mandates, funding mechanisms, skills and specialization. These factors also influence organizational definition, nature and scope of safety risks and operational challenges. All this may translate into varied interpretations of how to meet the assistance needs of affected populations; for example, between using cash or goods, or how to use cash transfers to best effect. Views on these are underpinned by assumptions and perceptions of the quality or cultural appropriateness of goods and services provided (Harvey and Bailey, 2011). In Syria, international agencies preferred to send goods to remote areas because it was easier to track such aid than to monitor cash transfers, which would have included time-consuming measures such as ensuring compliance with anti-terror and anti-money laundering regulations and fulfilling set accountability standards. Conversely, local actors preferred to transfer money due to security and logistical difficulties associated with moving goods. Moreover, in certain cases, cash assistance may be more appropriate if some goods (or their local equivalents) can be locally sourced thus further supporting the economy of the area (Svoboda and Pantuliano, 2015).

BOX 6.4 Operational partnerships between the ICRC and National Societies

For the ICRC, increased recognition of the importance of working together with local Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies led to a shift in 2007 from asking *when* to partner to *how* to partner most effectively. This shift recognized not only the benefits of partnership but also the growing operational interdependence between the ICRC and National Societies in conflict environments.

As highlighted in the *Guidelines for effective National Society and ICRC partnerships*, partnerships are defined as "a cooperation relationship in which both partners agree to work together by combining their respective resources to achieve a common humanitarian objective based on shared commitment and mutual trust that benefit all involved" (ICRC, 2012).

Partnership between ICRC and National Societies is a shared endeavour, which is needs-based following a mutually agreed assessment; is established on the basis of a relationship of mutual respect and trust; ensures mutual added value, incorporating aspirations and expectations of each partner; and has defined strategy to achieve the objectives outlined.

Key findings from the 2013 ICRC–National Society operational partnership study

Benefits

- A study by the Global Public Policy Institute (Steets, Sagmeister and Norz, 2013) found that the benefits of ICRC and National Society operational partnerships were directly related to complementarity, be it in terms of mandate, financial or human resources, access, network, technical capacity or area of expertise. In addition, they require high-quality communication and the right choice of cooperation modalities. When working in partnership, the grass-roots 'volunteer power' of National Societies can help reach more affected populations.
- National Societies are rooted in their respective local contexts and communities, and typically have an extended local network and presence. In Nepal, both the ICRC and the Nepal Red Cross Society agree that the degree of coverage in attending to the families of people who have been reported missing during a disaster would not have been possible without their partnership. The National Society's extensive volunteer network covers all 75 districts of the country which made it possible, with modest ICRC financial incentives, for volunteers living close to the families of the missing to visit them once a year.
- Well-managed partnerships often improve the reputation, acceptance and security of both partners. In Somalia, the joint distribution of relief goods on a large scale was an accepted modality in the early 1990s but is no longer appropriate in the current environment. The ICRC and Somali Red Crescent Society, therefore, have adapted their partnership model to continue working together while better ensuring the security and acceptance of both. "In Somalia, we recognized that in some locations it would be in the best interests of reaching the [affected people] if the ICRC and the Somali Red Crescent took some distance from each other, as not all of the fighting parties viewed the two organizations in the same way. We saw that at times it would be better to distinguish ourselves from each other in order to be more accepted by certain groups. But we still worked closely together, coordinating our actions and supporting each other," said a Somali Red Crescent staff member (ICRC, 2013).
- Operational partnerships between the ICRC and the National Society frequently make services more relevant. In Nepal, National Society volunteers often knew the families of missing people personally and were, therefore, often better trusted by the community than members of international organizations. They were able to provide important insights into the families' needs as they were already well aware of the effects of the conflict on particular communities. Similarly, in the West Bank (occupied Palestinian territory), volunteers suggested small but highly successful initiatives sensitive to the local culture, such as Eid celebrations or soccer tournaments for the communities affected by the occupation, which were relevant to the inhabitants and also contributed towards the increased acceptance of both the ICRC and the Palestine Red Crescent Society.
- At times, the ICRC has had to adjust its expectations and standards largely due to the systemic turnover of volunteers affecting many National Societies. This limits the possibility of strengthening technical capacity through training or learning on the job.

- Operational partnerships enhance the capacities of National Societies (although there is still room for improved techniques related to sustainable operational capacity building). Key to this is the need for both actors to have complementary capacities in place – and be willing to develop them further. Despite extremely challenging circumstances, the Somali Red Crescent, with support from the ICRC, managed to expand its network of clinics in south-central Somalia in recent years. It describes ICRC support as 'life-saving'. With the support of the ICRC, the Nepal Red Cross was able to build and sustain a considerable training capacity on its own, for example, in advanced first-aid and dead body management. This capacity has since contributed to the recent earthquake response efforts.

Concerns

- Cooperation takes time and can delay processes and/or delivery. There was a consensus that establishing operational partnerships between the ICRC and National Societies requires a lot of time and effort (agreements and coordination mechanisms) and that working in partnership can slow down decision-making and communication. In successful partnerships, however, this initial investment pays off as clear structures and processes are created, making implementation more efficient and reducing overall coordination cost and time.
- Integrity concerns are valid, though partnerships can help strengthen accountability. Concerns exist in contexts where corruption is endemic in society at large and where National Societies are under strong pressure to comply with the demands of influential stakeholders. Putting this into perspective, however, the study found that the integrity and accountability issues had at times improved with the partnership.
- Partnerships can impact security, though the effect is often positive (in terms of increased acceptance for both partners). Different understandings of and approaches to security management can jeopardize the security of both partners and be a source of tension between the National Societies and the ICRC. Breaches of security rules and the Safer Access principles (ICRC, 2013) can increase risks for both sides. Well-managed partnerships, however, often improve the reputation and acceptance of both the ICRC and the National Society, thus positively impacting security.

In conclusion

How the ICRC and National Societies cooperate and what the specific benefits and risks of the engagement are differs greatly from country to country. Overall, operational partnerships are seen to have positive effects by both partners, especially in terms of enabling humanitarian assistance to reach more affected people based on the premise of complementarity. They were found to strengthen the partners' access and acceptance, make assistance more relevant and enhance the capacity of both the National Societies and the ICRC. At the same time, the resources required for cooperation and the potential for operational delays, as well as integrity and security management concerns, must be carefully managed. ■

Conflict dynamic: Aid delivery is influenced by the configuration of conflict actors, underlying identity issues and calculations of fighting gains and losses, all of which have implications for humanitarian actors. Local relief actors are prone to be seen, rightly or wrongly, as being connected to one side or the other of a conflict by virtue of their political affiliation, ethnic origin, interests, values and operational location. This impacts on the level of acceptance they might receive from various stakeholders. For instance, NGOs of Sunni or Shia origin may be restricted to operating in, respectively, Sunni- or Shia-dominated areas, in many Islamic countries (Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, Pakistan, etc.). Moreover, changes in the control of territories sometimes alter relief actors' access and acceptance with resulting implications for engagement. These, in turn, influence the types of local actors that international agencies may seek to or have to engage with. The pattern of aid distribution could also become part of the conflict, especially when aid is seen as conveying recognition and/or legitimacy. It is not unusual that governments and armed groups align their security measures, including restrictions and access to humanitarian actors, in line with calculations about popular support (Humanitarian Outcomes, 2012).

State policies and dispositions in host and donor countries also shape the prospect and nature of engagement between local and international aid agencies. Where and when host country governments are involved directly or through proxies (allied militias) in the conflict, their capacity or willingness to provide protection or even tacitly to sanction harassment, political impunity and humanitarian denial is constrained (Duffield, 2012). The geo-political interests and policies of governments, relative to particular conflicts, shape the opportunities and constraints of international aid agencies. The Syrian conflict shows this clearly. The open declaration of support and covert assistance for 'moderate' opposition groups and participation in air strikes against the Islamic State by many donor governments is partly to blame for the limited access of international aid agencies in areas controlled by the Assad regime and the Islamic State. This is in addition to the well-documented impact of counterterrorism regulations on eligibility for funding on groups viewed as sympathetic to so-called terrorist groups.

Challenges and opportunities in humanitarian engagement in conflict contexts

Apart from issues of access and acceptance, local and international relief actors are also confronted with challenges of forging partnerships, alliances and even service delivery arrangement. How much could local and international actors engage with each other in the name of humanitarian imperative while compromising on impartiality, neutrality and independence? What is the primary

concern between meeting humanitarian needs or the ways and manner of meeting it? Opportunities are the values, attributes and structures that could promote or support collaboration between local and international humanitarian aid agencies.

Challenges

- *Operational dilemmas:* Humanitarian agencies face dilemmas over what, when and to what degree to compromise on operational standards, the application of humanitarian principles, corruption, human rights standards and links to terrorism. For example, international aid agencies faced dilemmas on the prospect of engaging local businesses operating in Al-Shabaab-controlled areas in Somalia over fears that these actors would sustain Al-Shabaab's control by paying Islamic zakat taxes (HFP, 2012). The conventional assumption is that international humanitarian actors are often the ones faced with this dilemma. The reality, however, is that it applies to local actors as well. Engagement with international actors, especially where negative perceptions exist about international aid agencies, poses ethical and physical dangers for local relief actors. For instance, there are implicit reservations among some Islamic charities (e.g., in Afghanistan, in Pakistan's FATA region and among Sunni and Shia relief actors in Syria) on engaging with international humanitarian aid agencies over the latter's source of funding and perceived politicization of aid by Western countries. Collaboration with international (Western) aid agencies could have negative implications for the safe access and delivery of aid by local groups in areas controlled by the Islamic State and the Assad regime in Syria. Similarly, local relief agencies affiliated to the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in Somalia had to revert to the use of the Red Crescent emblem only due to perception challenges (emblem perceived as religious) (British Red Cross, 2013). Moreover, certain religious precepts, e.g., on women and approaches to meeting their protection and assistance needs, could represent constraints for some local relief actors in relation to the demands of international aid agencies.

- *Legal constraints linked to the policies and national interests of states constitute many obstacles to engagement between local and international humanitarian actors in conflict contexts:* The oft-cited example is the counterterrorism laws of major Western countries that restrict the ability of humanitarian agencies to operate in certain high-risk conflict environments, specifically where groups listed as terrorists exercise territorial control. The legislations ban direct material and financial support or services to listed terrorist groups and individuals, and impose stringent funding and partnership eligibility criteria on local relief actors. These restrictions in turn act as a disincentive for engagement. For instance, the United States Agency for International Development's Partner Vetting System (PVS), which requires aid agencies to submit details of local partners in selected countries for

United States government vetting through classified intelligence databases, impacts the neutrality and independence of humanitarian agencies (Burniske, Modirzadeh and Lewis, 2014). Similarly, legislations also affect the choice and mode of assistance programmes implemented. For example, heightened concerns about terrorism have led to severe restrictions on cash transfer programmes from diaspora remittances (e.g., *Dahabshill* and *Hawala* remittance systems in Somalia) or from international aid agencies in most conflict zones (HFP, 2012). National-level legislation in a number of low- and middle-income countries also imposes restrictions on the activities of humanitarian NGOs and international NGOs broadly in terms of registration, scale of operations, funding, alliances and partnerships.

- *Coherence dilemmas among international humanitarian agencies:* Beyond the outward ethical dilemmas that international aid actors face, there are also risks concerning the integration of humanitarian aid into broader stabilization efforts and long-term transformation of the structural causes of conflict. The protection of civilians requires political and sometimes military force (Collinson and Elhawary, 2012). Decisions about how much humanitarian aid is aligned with coherence strategies has implications for where and whom to engage, types and scale of engagement and the durability (scaling up) of the engagement. For example, in Somalia, elements of engagement of local relief actors by international agencies are sometimes dictated by 'coherence' with peacekeeping objectives.

- *Stereotypes and raised expectations on the respective advantages and complementarities of local and international aid agencies:* Some of the failures of local–international engagement in conflict settings are linked to presumptions and 'myths' about the (in)capacities, values, advantages and limitations of local and international relief actors (see Chapters 4 and 5). International aid agencies' professionalism, inability to compromise on core principles and efficiency can and have all been challenged. Similarly, it is not in all cases and situations that local and regional aid actors have better and safer access, more acceptance, familiarity with culture and tradition, and a superior network of contacts. Equally, as indicated in Chapter 5, local relief actors are not necessarily exposed to lower risk of violent attacks relative to international agencies. The stereotypes could obstruct the need for proper contextual and risk analysis and consideration of pragmatic operational decisions about entities best placed to deliver assistance and ways of working between local and international relief actors.

- *Rapidly changing events and situations in conflict zones:* The prospects of engagement are sometimes dictated by changes in patterns of fighting, alliances, interests and relationships among warring parties. The frequent changes in conflict environments mean huge variations in conditions between the time

needs assessments are conducted and when protection and assistance are provided. Moreover, changes in control of territory shape the identity and acceptance of local actors, with implications for engagement with international aid agencies. In Somalia, the recent expulsion of Al-Shabaab from cities such as Hudur and Rabdhure changes the range of local agencies with access to the areas. For example, international humanitarian agencies are able to engage local NGOs rather than having to rely, as was the case, on local business actors.

- *Divergent systems and operational differences:* The prospect of engagement is often dependent on variations in how local and international relief actors are set up, including staffing, accountability requirements and risk management approaches. Operational standards act as a limitation for both local and international actors. Operational standards are generally dictated by international aid agencies and their donors because of their control of funds, long history of working in conflict settings and access to new technologies and management techniques. This does not preclude the existence of local relief actors with similar good operational systems. Nonetheless, the reality of exponential increases in the number of local aid actors, especially new ones, in conflict zones implies that only a few would normally meet minimum institutional and operational standards required by international aid agencies. At the start of the conflict in Syria, many local NGOs could not meet standard criteria for funding eligibility, such as three years' prior existence, set number of financial audits and programmatic evaluations. From the perspective of local actors, standards as defined by international aid agencies create constraints when interpreted and applied without being contextualized and adapted. Local aid groups in Syria highlighted language barriers, numerous technical jargon, concepts and onerous procedures as impediments to engagement with international aid agencies. For example, the Syria Integrated Needs Assessment template favoured by international aid agencies was deemed minimally useful and too academic by local NGOs (Svoboda and Pantuliano, 2015).

Opportunities

- *Cultural and religious resources:* As noted in the *World Disasters Report 2014*, the significance of 'culture' must be understood and incorporated into any attempt to deal with humanitarian activities in general because of its centrality to the perception of risks and choices made by vulnerable populations (IFRC, 2014). It is not always the case that the operational standards, terminologies and values of international humanitarian agencies are alien, superior or completely at variance with most local humanitarian entities. The desire to meet the humanitarian needs of affected populations is common across most cultures. The ability of international humanitarian actors to gain awareness and knowledge of local culture and to adapt their operational models accordingly without undermining their core values is central

to forging partnerships with local humanitarian actors. For example, careful assessments and deeper understanding of local cultures for customary codes of war and humanitarian practices that could be adapted or aligned to the operational procedures of international humanitarian agencies could be important in forging engagements. In Somalia, for instance, customary codes of behaviour during conflicts exist, expressed in the form of poems, proverbs and injunctions in accordance with Islamic teachings (British Red Cross, 2013). Basing or aligning humanitarian activities around this potentially overcomes some of the impediments to engagement, and improves the overall capacity to meet the protection and assistance needs of vulnerable populations. The ICRC's ongoing exploration of the linkages between IHL and Islamic law is apt in this regard (ICRC, 2014).

- *Intermediaries:* Certain organizations, groups, agencies and professions are uniquely positioned to facilitate engagement and access to vulnerable populations. This is on account of their official mandate, good reputation and high levels of trust built over time. Examples of common intermediaries include veterinary practitioners (to reach pastoralists), government departments (e.g., Ministry of Health), diaspora groups and National Red Cross or Red Crescent Societies. In Somalia, the Somali Red Crescent Society and local businesses have a good reputation and their access is useful to broader engagement between local and international humanitarian agencies. The same applies to the network of health NGOs that accounted for 80 per cent of healthcare services before the outbreak of conflict in December 2013 in South Sudan (CARE International, 2014).

- *Peace processes:* Ceasefires, mediation and peace accords provide windows for local and international humanitarian agencies to gain better access and delivery of protection and assistance. Peace processes present the opportunity to actualize the complementarity of local–international humanitarian engagement, including building or consolidating humanitarian coordination mechanisms, training and capacity building, joint context analysis and exchange of knowledge and resources. Ceasefires and peace accords often include humanitarian clauses that commit warring parties to respect humanitarian obligations and give access to humanitarian agencies. However, the prospect of improved access neither diminishes the value of local actors nor reduces the need for local–international humanitarian partnership. Access and acceptance are never automatic or linear; they have to be negotiated in diverse ways and at different levels, locations and times. Moreover, peace accords might reduce the risks faced by humanitarian actors, but do not eliminate them, and ceasefires barely remove the complex socio-political divisions and tensions and other underlying issues in armed conflicts. The immediate post-accord phases are often characterized by suspicion and precarious

commitments to humanitarian issues among warring parties. All this requires robust understanding and navigation of local cultural and political sensitivities, and communication with all stakeholders.

- *Humanitarian activities' contributions to peacebuilding:* Reaching and meeting the protection and assistance needs of vulnerable groups transcends partnership and engagement with local humanitarian actors to include local and international peacebuilding organizations. In spite of peacebuilding being a political process and its implications for the core principles, humanitarian activities have the potential to enhance the prospect of peacebuilding. In some cases, local humanitarian actors also engage directly in peacebuilding activities or their activities have impacts on reconciliation and peacebuilding. Local and international humanitarian agencies could leverage the networks, contacts and access of peacebuilding organizations to reach vulnerable communities and populations more effectively. Humanitarian actors' advocacy and encouragement of parties to a conflict to respect their legal obligations and limit abuses might ease reconciliation processes. Awareness of the peacebuilding impacts of humanitarian activities could improve the prospect of engagement between local and humanitarian actors. Through this, humanitarian agencies could benefit from more conflict-sensitive programming that contributes to reconciliation and reuniting of communities over the long term.

Looking to the future

The issues raised in this chapter pinpoint the difference contemporary conflict situations make to humanitarian activities. Conflict contexts are complex because of intense political–military interests and calculations of warring parties. The resulting increased operational insecurity poses risks towards all humanitarian organizations, complicates the network of alliances and shifts loyalties of communities. The nature of contemporary conflicts and humanitarian activities make it inevitable that local and international aid agencies should work together. Yet the engagement is not without its challenges and potential opportunities for local and international humanitarian actors.

BOX 6.5 Strengthening local humanitarian action: the case for a political economy approach

While humanitarian action must remain strictly neutral and impartial, it is needed in times and places where political and economic contestation is at its most acute. Increasing interconnectedness and access to social media have brought humanitarian crises ever closer to the centre of the political fold. Transformations in the global distribution of power, approaches to sovereignty and the economics of crisis response (i.e., more disasters and prolonged conflict and displacement strain the limits of the international humanitarian system) have led to a renewed emphasis on local humanitarian action.

Political economy analysis involves the examination of political and economic interactions that determine the distribution of power and wealth in society, and the processes that create, sustain and transform these relationships over time (Collinson et al., 2002). The importance of politically informed humanitarian programming in situations of conflict has long been acknowledged (Collinson et al., 2002). But resource constraints and increasing challenges to proximity, dialogue and access have stymied its operational application. The political economy determinants of effective disaster risk management (DRM) have also garnered some, although arguably insufficient, attention (Wilkinson, 2012). While in recent mega disasters, such as the 2010 Haiti earthquake, attention to political and institutional dynamics from governance to land has been found wanting (Levine et al., 2012). However, with a renewed focus on localizing response in the run-up to the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016, there is an opportunity to make the case for a political economy approach to strengthening local humanitarian action.

What has been called 'problem-driven political economy analysis' involves looking at areas where poor outcomes have persisted; identifying the structure and agency barriers to improved outcomes or reforms; and identifying practical actions to facilitate change processes (Harris, 2013). The resulting information provides great scope for the comparative assessment of different strategies and investment options for international actors seeking to strengthen national and local response and risk management capabilities. The potential value of political economy analysis in this regard is explored below using the cases of Myanmar, Nepal and Syria.

In Myanmar, Cyclone Nargis in 2008 came as a wake-up call as to the inadequacy of the country's disaster prevention and preparedness measures (Few et al., 2015). In its wake, efforts were directed at building up domestic DRM structures and capabilities, with a government standing order issued in 2009, followed by a disaster management law and action plan (Few et al., 2015). Some international actors also had the foresight to see the overwhelmingly locally led nature of the disaster response as an opportunity for reform, and not just as a barrier to international action. For example, a local resource centre was established with a mandate to better link local organizations to donor funds, technical expertise and international standards (Fan, 2013).

Yet it has been argued that international actors did not fully capitalize on the opportunity the disaster presented to bring local action to the centre of the national coordination system. As the country director of Save the Children put it, the humanitarian community "largely missed an opportunity to do something really innovative on a large scale because the system as a whole was not able to adapt to support new ways of working that really put local actors in the driver's seat" (Fan, 2013). However, Fan (2013) points out that long-standing mistrust between the government and international donors was unlikely to be so easy to ameliorate and, therefore, with continuing sanctions, small gains in increased engagement with local actors may have been all that was possible.

In Nepal, efforts to enhance national and local DRM capacity are coordinated by the Nepal Risk Reduction Consortium (NRRC), working in support of the government of Nepal. To strengthen capabilities, initiatives like the NRRC need to foster integration across actors and scales. Political economy analysis has great potential to support such efforts to reform policies and to operationalize DRM. It can help in identifying 'gatekeepers', the incentives for (in)action and the most appropriate entry points for facilitating change. Indeed, informal analysis by the NRRC led to a greater focus on engagement with the local private sector in its efforts to strengthen preparedness capabilities.

In Nepal's Kathmandu Valley, community disaster management committees involve a diverse set of stakeholders, including party officials, line ministries, local businesses, community-based organizations and women's groups. Here, understanding the political and economic dynamics between these stakeholders and with other local and national actors, as well as their incentive for action, is essential to the efficacy of efforts to enhance risk awareness and increase participation in emergency preparedness activities (Grünewald and Carpenter, 2013).

In the Syrian conflict, the operational environment for humanitarian agencies and donors is highly complex. The development of a common context analysis, like that prepared by Slim and Trombetta (2014) for Inter-Agency Standing Committee agencies, is therefore potentially of great value in providing a robust and common grounding to inform decisions for support to local partners. This is particularly the case where historical understanding may be weaker than usual, with many agencies not present before the crisis, or where contextual understanding is undermined by high staff turnover. Slim and Trombetta set out a detailed analysis of Syrian civil society, looking at the Ba'ath party government's long reluctance to expose local actors to international agencies and its efforts to exert political control over the expansion of Syrian civil society through the Syria Trust in the 2000s.

In an environment with a complex and shifting constellation of armed groups and local aid providers, political economy analysis can prove vital in ensuring that engagement with local actors is in line with humanitarian principles, is sensitive to the risk of unintended harms and contributes to a response that, where appropriate, puts local actors at the fore. In Syria, prevailing insecurity and restrictions on the movement of aid workers means that local actors, from the Syrian Arab Red Crescent to small and informal charitable, religious or diaspora groups, are often the only ones with access to affected populations. Political economy analysis is, therefore, essential to effective response and understanding potential unintended consequences.

With humanitarian needs likely to outstrip growth in international financing in the coming years, increasing the effectiveness of investments in local humanitarian capacities is critical. Political economy analysis is one important approach to delivering on this agenda. However, it does not have to mean costly processes beyond the resources of all but the largest agencies. It must be feasible within the constraints of access, time and resources that all actors face. Examples of practical activities include anything from a strong culture of informal situational analysis mainstreamed within an organization to independent, consultant-led context analysis (with, if necessary, costs and outputs shared between agencies) to detailed problem-driven political economy analysis led by a dedicated team.

Far from promoting a duplicitous relationship between international and local actors, political economy analysis can support a partnership approach that seeks to strengthen the position of local actors within the wider system. Indeed, it can also be used by local actors themselves to enhance their understanding of their environment, helping to secure safe access (see, for example, ICRC, 2015) and increasing their chances of delivering reform in DRM policies and institutions. ■

Chapter 6

There are no easy solutions to the complexities and challenges of humanitarian activities in conflict contexts. This chapter highlights three things. First, the need for local and international aid agencies to gain better and continuous understanding of power dynamics in conflict environments, especially historical dynamics, power relations, socio-political alliances and cultural systems, and their impacts on opportunities for engagement. As indicated in Box 6.5, continuous context and risk analysis is most useful when targeted at uncovering the political economy of armed conflict and its implications for safer humanitarian access and delivery of protection and assistance. Joint, continuous political economy analysis by local and international aid agencies could be a basis for engagement and shared understanding. In short, humanitarian agencies are better served by undertaking continuous context analysis that includes who is fighting whom, about what, where and why, how humanitarian agencies are perceived and how their activities figure in the calculations of parties to the conflict. This in turn should lead to more effective aid delivery and a better understanding of the dynamics in communities.

Second, doing context analysis is not enough. Local and international humanitarian agencies could improve their engagement and capacity to meet the protection and assistance needs of vulnerable populations in the safest ways possible through joint adaptation and reflections on operational frameworks such as the ICRC's Safer Access Framework, the Principles in Action case studies and Conflict Sensitivity. The frameworks offer practical guidance and techniques for achieving safer access and delivery of impartial humanitarian aid.

In situations of conflict, international agencies may struggle to reach vulnerable people. Local civil society organizations can bridge the gap, delivering aid and acting as interlocutors with warring parties. Here in Myanmar, a Red Cross volunteer talks with mine workers about health education, proper hygiene and HIV prevention.
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Finally, the need for further research and documentation of experiences of engagement, lessons learnt, comparative advantages of different models of interaction between local and international humanitarian actors in conflict zones cannot be overemphasized. Further inquiry is needed on how different contexts and types of violence shape humanitarian needs, the prospect of engagement among humanitarian actors and impacts on planning and delivery of protection and assistance in the safest and most effective ways.

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Chapter 7

Chapter 7

Can you hear me now? Digital empowerment of local actors

Technology is a vast term encompassing everything from satellites to water purification systems. And there are many ways in which communities are creating and adopting innovations from solar power to seed modification. However, the most significant technological shift of recent years has been the enormous increase in digital communications technology (mobile phones, internet and associated tools). Mobile phones in particular have seen explosive growth in low- and middle-income countries: in Africa and South Asia alone, the number of people owning a phone is growing 20 per cent every year. More people in low- and middle-income countries now have access to a mobile phone than to basic sanitation or reliable electricity. And the number continues to accelerate: an additional 130 million people in low- and middle-income nations will become mobile service users every single year until at least 2017. The impact of communications technology, and its capacity to enhance existing networks while facilitating the creation of new ones, is being felt across the world.

This chapter will look at how communities are using technology in crisis situations and what ramifications these new approaches and networks have for international responders.

The chapter will explore in particular the emerging trends in technology use among vulnerable communities and how they are affecting the ability of affected populations to prepare for, survive and recover from crises. It will argue that most true innovation is coming not from aid agencies but from affected populations, who are using communications technology to meet everyday needs, join global networks, transfer money and transform their daily lives. And in doing so, they are creating entirely new models of disaster response and bringing in major new actors, particularly the private sector and diaspora networks.

This field has been much discussed in recent years and this chapter also aims to bring some nuance to current discussions, which tend to polarize between those who see technology as a transformative force for good and those who see it as a dangerous red herring. Cases in which technology has been used to repress, exploit and promote violence are explored, as is technological marginalization. The ways in which technology use by communities is leading to new approaches to overall disaster response management will also be examined, especially the emergence of many-to-many models.

People affected by disaster and crisis are often innovative as regards communications technology, using it to meet everyday needs, join global networks, transfer money and transform their daily lives. And they are creating new models of disaster response, bringing in local actors, particularly the private sector and diaspora networks.

Technology, communities and disaster response: the view from the ground

The enormous popularity of communications technology has been one of the most marked changes in low- and middle-income countries in recent years. But why? Partly because – as Lars Ericsson, founder of the communications company Ericsson, noted in 1897 – communication is a basic human need. But primarily because mobile phones make life easier and safer, and are incredibly versatile. Populations in low- and middle-income nations have been quick to grasp that a mobile phone is not just a communications device. It is also a camera, a radio, a bank, a first-aid kit and a source of income. Phones provide access to money: 78 per cent of poor Kenyans send and receive money via mobile phones (the national average is 50 per cent) (Crandall and Grosskurth, 2012). Phones improve livelihoods in many ways: by ensuring a worker can be easily contacted for a short-term job, by creating demand for ancillary services such as phone charging and by providing access to data such as market prices. Most interestingly from a humanitarian perspective, across Asia the most important benefit of a mobile phone cited by respondents was the increased ability to act or contact others in an emergency. Such findings are borne out by patterns of use around demand in disasters. A study of call patterns around the 7.2-magnitude Oaxaca earthquake in Mexico in 2012, which caused serious shaking in four cities, found not just that there was a large spike in use immediately after the earthquake, but that the spike was more pronounced the closer the area was to the quake. The more affected people were, therefore, the more they wanted to communicate (Frias-Martinez, Frias-Martinez and Moumni, 2013).

Far from being a luxury, some of the latest data suggest that the poorer people get, the more they prioritize phones. In Kenya, one in five of the poorest of the poor regularly goes without food or a bus journey in order to afford phone credit (Crandall and Grosskurth, 2012). A study across six countries in Asia found that "the poorer the individual, the greater the share of income devoted to mobile services" (Aguero, de Silva and Kang, 2011). Overall, the study found, the poorest households spent 20 per cent of their total income on mobile phones. This trend is reflected in other aspects of the mobile industry: more than 50 per cent of mobile money services, for example, are in sub-Saharan Africa, not in the West (Katakam and Pénicaud, 2013), and the region experiencing fastest growth is Latin America. In a crisis, phone and internet service providers are all now accustomed to seeing a huge spike in use. In Iraq in August 2014, for example, when the United Nations (UN) Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) set up two hotlines for Yazidis displaced on Mount Sinjar to call and report their needs, the most commonly requested items were food, water and mobile phone chargers (OCHA, 2014).

As this illustrates, the way poor people see and use digital technology in low- and middle-income countries is often profoundly different to the patterns found in the West. This is an important point because often, those in high-income countries think they know what these technologies are and how they are used, and assume that everyone else uses them in the same way. Facebook, for example, frequently seen as a trivial diversion in much of the West, is increasingly used by civil society groups and government departments, who set up groups on the Facebook site rather than establishing their own web site. During the Ebola crisis in 2014–2015, the Department of Health in Sierra Leone routinely shared caseload data on their Facebook page first, hours before any formal written circulation. In the Philippines, the Facebook page of the government department in charge of weather information is followed by more than 1 million people and Twitter is central to the official early warning system for cyclones.

This point is particularly stressed by Anahi Ayala Iacucci, an innovation adviser and country director for South Sudan at the media non-governmental organization (NGO) Internews. As she noted in personal communication with the author, "Communities often use the same technology as an aid agency, but in a completely different way. In many countries, phone credit is also used as currency: people will pay for items by transferring it [credit] directly from phone to phone." In countries which do not yet have mobile money or among populations who can't or won't use official mobile banking services, this does not mean that digital cash transfer does not exist.

The same thing is also happening with the hardware. Roadside mobile repair shops have become a familiar sight in low- and middle-income nations, but the local technicians who run them are also able to recycle old handsets, building new hybrid phones from the parts. A basic Nokia phone, for example, can be rebuilt with parts from a smartphone with capabilities that are precisely tailored to the requirements of the user, creating a device unlike those sold on the global market.

Communities are also using familiar technology to develop unfamiliar mechanisms of response. The use of Facebook to connect Haitian diaspora groups across the world as they struggled to track down relatives after the 2010 earthquake (Bell, 2010) is one example, as is the use of the micro messaging platform Weibo in China to channel millions of dollars of donations to local responders after the earthquake in Sichuan Province in April 2013 (Levin, 2013).

BOX 7.1 Kathmandu Living Labs: locally led digital mapping in the Nepal response

On 25 April 2015, Nepal was hit by a 7.8 magnitude earthquake which destroyed 300,000 houses and left more than 8 million people in need of assistance.

Kathmandu Living Labs (KLL) is a Nepali technology and mapping collective founded in 2013 by local technology expert Nama Raj Budhathoki. In 2010, Budhathoki was studying for his doctorate at the University of Illinois in the United States when the Haiti earthquake happened. He subsequently studied the use of mapping technology in that response and concluded that his country could learn from this example. "In Haiti they made [the map] afterwards. I wanted to make the map before the earthquake," he told the BBC (Asher, 2015).

Before the 2015 quake, KLL's mapping team consisted of between 70 and 100 local volunteers who were slowly mapping Kathmandu using satellite imagery and information collected by local community networks.

Within 24 hours of the earthquake, and despite the fact that all of the core team were now living in tents, KLL had established an emergency situation room and appealed for global support. Within a few days Budhathoki and his team were coordinating a global network of 2,400 online mappers sorting through satellite imagery, social media updates and direct reports of damage, with all information verified and shared on the online platform quakemap.org.

KLL's primary tool is OpenStreetMap, a global project that works like Wikipedia, allowing people to contribute to maps of their neighbourhoods. Before the earthquake, they had already mapped much of Kathmandu. Post-quake, the key challenge was sourcing data from the rural areas that were worst hit.

The lack of connectivity in remote areas made sourcing information directly from communities a challenge. Satellite data capture was hampered by bad weather, particularly rain, which affects the quality of the imagery. So the team had to be creative. "Someone would come down from a village to a town and write a post on Facebook about what the situation in their village was, and we would take that data. We had a whole team of volunteers searching social media and verifying what they found," said KLL fellow Prabhas Pokharel. A few days after the earthquake they set up a hotline so people could call in with information and also began training staff going to the field from organizations including the International Labour Office in mobile data collection, so they could report back on issues like blocked roads.

Working this way, KLL mapped previously unrecorded footpaths into remote villages and identified potential helicopter landing spots as well as clusters of displacement. They mapped 21,242 kilometres (13,199 miles) of road and 100,681 buildings, quadrupling the road mileage covered and adding 30 per cent more buildings. The maps also included critical information about road networks, hiking trails, relief camps, footpaths and river crossings to governments and aid organizations.

Within a week, they had mapped 70 to 80 of the earthquake-affected zones.

Initially, the primary users of their data were the Nepali army and the Nepal Red Cross Society. Although KLL had little contact with the UN system – they did not have the time or the manpower to attend all the cluster meetings – their data also began to be credited in maps from MapAction and the World Food Programme. To support direct use of the platform by responders, KLL began working with the Nepali government's Health Emergency Operations Centre to train aid workers going to the field in using their smartphones to download and use the maps offline.

Other partnerships have also developed. On 3 May, the National Engineers Association requested KLL's support in mapping and organizing damage assessment to housing in Kathmandu. KLL trained 600 volunteers in logging data as they went from door to door. In collaboration with the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), volunteers were trained to reconnoitre and map damage to cultural landmarks.

From the start, the quakemap.org platform also began receiving reports of injured, missing or trapped people and both individual and community needs. Unable to respond directly to these requests, KLL began sorting and verifying them and posting them publicly on quakemap.org, using an Ushahidi platform. Local organizations, such as the Yellow House relief hub, based in a small hotel in Kathmandu, began responding to requests posted on the quakemap.org web site and using the site as a key information source in identifying areas of need. "Quite early on we realized the information gap was huge and so we started sending our data to quakemap.org three or four times a day," said Nayantara of the Yellow House response. "There were a lot of needs being posted. It wasn't real time, but I'd look at the site every evening when planning the next day's missions."

At the time of writing, KLL were planning the next phase of their operation: to produce accurate maps over the monsoon season, when flooding and landslides will change topography and access options daily. KLL is now receiving support from partners including a local phone company who are providing free SMS for alerts to those subscribed to the KLL alert system (which sends a message each time a new update relevant to the subscriber is posted). They have also been supported by the NGO Humanity Road. They struggled, however, to secure funding from international organizations, and in May 2015 launched a crowdfunding appeal on the indiegogo platform for US$ 50,000.

Essential to repeating their success elsewhere, said Pokharel, is investment before a disaster. "We were able to respond so fast because we were already working on this. We were already crowdsourcing geolocations of schools. We had done data collection using open-kit systems. So we were ready. That was key." ■

What lies ahead?

There is no question that the future is mobile. In the coming years, millions of people will have their first experience of the internet on a phone rather than a laptop or computer. Their first bank account will be digital. Their social media platforms (also exponentially popular in low- and middle-income countries) will be on mobiles. Experts predict increased development of highly localized tools, especially apps. For example, numerous Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies have already launched local preparedness apps and the British Red Cross's first-aid app has been adapted for local use by more than 60 National Societies.

In low- and middle-income countries, technological innovation in disaster preparedness and response will increasingly be delivered by local entrepreneurs and volunteer tech groups rather than major international companies or aid agencies. There are already more than 50 tech hubs in Africa and the bar camp (a tech gathering for the purposes of solving social and development problems) movement, which hosts user-generated conferences geared towards solving local problems with technology, has held events in more than 350 cities (the largest annual event is in Yangon, Myanmar). Local volunteer tech communities will continue to grow. Much of this will be supported by the private sector, especially mobile phone companies, and the role of governments and regulatory environments will also be crucial.

As ownership and technological knowledge increase, so communities will become increasingly more adept at using technology to prepare for and respond to disasters themselves, building tools (such as apps) to meet highly localized needs and using technology to enhance and expand existing social networks and ways of working.

From the perspective of the mobile industry, the most important communications technology trend in low- and middle-income nations is now the growth of mobile internet. The mobile industry is working hard on this trend: mobile data revenues are expected to overtake those generated by voice by 2018.

The digital divide

A central issue when looking at technology is, of course, that of access, as those left out are often already very vulnerable. But the concept of the digital divide – the inequalities created by technology – is changing. Historically, the digital divide has referred primarily to the reasons why one given group of people has access to technology and another has not. The main reasons for lack of access are usually assumed to be poverty and location.

Of course, the digital divide is very real. According to the management consulting firm McKinsey & Company, 48 per cent of the global population will still have no access to the internet by 2018 (McKinsey, 2014). The offline population already has clear characteristics: 64 per cent of them are rural, the majority are women and they also tend to be those who are older and less educated. Literacy remains a major barrier.

But the dynamics driving exclusion are changing. The new but significant concept of digital illiteracy is one. Studies by both Google and McKinsey have found that not knowing how to use the internet is a more significant barrier to internet use than either network coverage or cost (Schumann and Kende, 2013). A second critically important barrier is the lack of locally relevant content in appropriate languages (55 per cent of the internet is in English). Gender is another: 74 per cent of married women who did not own phones told researchers with the GSMA (the global trade

body of the mobile phone industry) in 2012 that the reason was that their husbands wouldn't let them. That this finding derives from surveys of 2,500 women in a wide range of low- and middle-income countries suggests it is not a cultural phenomenon, but rather a new manifestation of long-standing power differentials between men and women.

How is this changing the nature of community-level disaster response?

The ways in which communities are adopting technology are not just improving how those hit by disaster plan for and respond to emergencies. They are changing them. People in disaster-prone countries are using technology to access new resources and to take advantage of pre-existing social networks in faster and more innovative ways.

From tools with which disaster survivors can reach out, to support on the other side of the globe in seconds (from a simple SMS to a money transfer platform) and the vastly enhanced capacity of communities to self-organize and source assistance, communications technology is empowering disaster survivors the world over. This section looks at some of the most important technically driven changes in disaster response.

Diaspora

Technology has been described "as the most significant driver of the growing ability of diaspora populations to play an increasing role in humanitarian response activities" (Grullon and King, 2013). Social media, mobile phones, platforms such as Skype and e-transfers have vastly increased the capacity of diasporas to engage with home countries before, during and after disasters, facilitating everything from information exchange to psychosocial support, often in ways that international responders cannot deliver (for example, joint prayer meetings held between London and Freetown, Sierra Leone, via Skype during the Ebola crisis). In environments such as Syria where international actors cannot operate for security reasons – an increasingly serious constraint – diaspora groups are proving that they can bring relief. Such roles are increasing the depth and significance of diasporas as humanitarian actors and as affected populations in their own right.

Demand for tech services in crises

Technology and digital access are also becoming key humanitarian services, demanded by those affected. From the increasing number of people whose livelihood depends on phones to the SMS-based disease surveillance systems, such as

the SPEED system used in the Philippines, the tools used by local people and organizations to manage disasters are increasingly technologically dependent.

One major consequence of this is that private sector companies, particularly mobile network operators (MNOs), are becoming disaster responders in their own right. The overwhelming demand for mobile phone services among affected populations is leading MNOs to think seriously about providing these services in a crisis. According to the GSMA, best practice is emerging that includes pre-disaster planning (reinforcing tower infrastructure, pre-positioning fuel supplies, etc.) to response (providing free phone credit and charging facilities) and recovery (speedy restoration of damaged services). For MNOs, such issues are a matter of both meeting customer demands and acting on the humanitarian imperative. In 2015, the GSMA launched a Humanitarian Connectivity Charter for mobile phone companies.

Tech companies as humanitarian actors

The rapid take-up of technology by affected populations is also bringing major tech companies such as Google and Facebook into the humanitarian space. In April 2015, following the Nepal earthquake, Facebook activated its 'I'm Safe' feature for the first time, a tool enabling those in affected areas to send automatic messages to all their contacts. Companies such as Google have also led in the development of digital tools and services designed for use by affected communities, such as Google PersonFinder, which helps people with friends and relatives in a disaster zone find out if they are alive. Many of the most significant incubators of local digital talent, such as the numerous iHubs across Africa, have also been funded initially by organizations such as the Omidyar Network (a philanthropic network established by the founder of eBay). In doing so, private sector companies are also adopting – largely unchallenged – the language of humanitarianism. Engagement with the communications technology private sector needs to include a constructively critical look at their work and the validity of their claims as well as the benefits of their services.

Community voices

Aid agencies have long taken the role of speaking on behalf of people affected by disasters. Increasingly, however, disaster survivors can and do speak for themselves. The first images of the Haitian earthquake in 2010 came from a local journalist, Carel Pedre, who took photos with his BlackBerry and uploaded them to his Twitter account. When Al Jazeera asked Somalis to SMS them with their stories of life in the midst of the ongoing conflict, thousands responded (Rezwan, 2012). During the conflict in Gaza in July 2014, bloggers like Awni Farhat and Mona El-Farra used their web sites, Tumblr, Twitter and podcasts to show the world the story of what was unfolding around them (Barrows-Friedman, 2014). Increasingly, the media turns to such people and the material they provide, known as user generated content (UGC): the BBC has

an entire team in their main newsroom dedicated to sourcing, verifying and using UGC in their news reporting.

Accountability

This enabling of instantaneous communication between ordinary people and those in power has led to a further development: the use of technology to hold people in power to account. In 2010, Salim Segaf Al-Jufrie, Indonesia's social services minister, was photographed driving his car in a dedicated bus lane in Jakarta by a sharp-eyed local who uploaded the snap to Twitter. Within hours it had been shared by 10,000 people and the minister was forced to make a public apology (also via Twitter) – and, the next day, to file a traffic violation report on himself (Samboh, 2010).

Already, crowdsourcing platforms to monitor elections have been in place for a number of years in countries including Kenya and Nigeria. Increasingly, however, such initiatives come directly from disaster-affected communities. When an uncontrolled gold rush in the remote community of Bagega in Nigeria led to mass lead poisoning of local children, local activists began recording the impact through interviews, photos and surveys. They used the information to lobby the government, founding the #savebagega campaign on Twitter, reaching 600,000 people in 24 hours through social media and generating high-profile international attention. When the government eventually allocated funding to the clean-up effort, the same team founded Follow The Money and used their web site to track where the money went and what it was spent on (Moscoso, 2014).

Affected communities also can – and do – now reach out directly to aid agencies: tweeting their leaders and posting on their Facebook pages. These examples illustrate not only that aid agencies must be ready to handle direct inquiries from affected communities, but also that communities themselves have ideas about what accountability means.

The network model of disaster response

A closer look at the use of technology of this nature at grass-roots level leads to a further observation: the ways in which communities use technology is based on fundamentally different ways of organizing and managing a response. The models that are emerging indicate that affected people are becoming extremely adept at using social media platforms in particular to engage in networked systems of response. This means they are able to post about specific needs and solicit individual responses to those needs, and that people offering specific help can also do so (i.e., someone driving to a remote hospital can offer to transport supplies). Technology allows a digital expression of the neighbour-to-neighbour model of

providing help and also enables this to scale up enormously. When Mount Merapi, an active volcano in central Java, erupted in 2006, the lack of information provided by the authorities led three local radio stations to found the Jalin Merapi project, a multi-platform, community-based reporting and early response system for people living near the volcano. When the volcano erupted in 2010 displacing more than 400,000 people, the managers of the platform were surprised to find it being used by locals to organize and make offers of relief. They recruited 700 volunteers and opened a dedicated centre.

Jalin Merapi used technology to answer a classic question of disaster response: how to connect individuals providing support to individuals who need it. Thousands of people began using the platform either as a means to ask for help or to offer it. The information provided was also visible to the authorities and aid agencies, which could then analyse data and use them to inform gap analysis (Saputro, 2014).

The Jalin Merapi project represents one of the most important and under-recognized ways in which community use of technology in disasters is profoundly different to that of aid agencies and is facilitating the development of new systemic approaches. Like Jalin Merapi, diaspora initiatives and the volunteer tech communities (particularly local networks) all have their roots in a networked rather than a command-and-control approach to crisis preparedness and management. The Kenya Red Cross Society has also adopted a similar approach in their use of social media. Not only do they tweet real-time information about emergencies, they use a network of online i-volunteers to relay accurate information to followers via social media. Individuals involved in accidents now routinely report the incident via social media (typically Twitter), often with photos, to the Kenya Red Cross rather than to the police. The Kenya Red Cross then aggregates the information they receive and pass it on to the relevant authorities. In doing so, ordinary Kenyans and the Kenya Red Cross have built a national emergency reporting network where none previously existed (Hamilton, 2013).

BOX 7.2 PetaJakarta and real-time flood management in Jakarta, Indonesia

Jakarta is one of the fastest-growing urban environments in the world and also one of the most prone to regular flooding. In 2013 alone, more than 1 million people were affected by flooding and 80,000 were displaced. Floods often happen very fast, trapping and killing people and often catching communities unawares. The Jakarta Disaster Management Agency (BPBD) in turn struggles to keep up with both flooding patterns that can change by the hour and a consequently constantly fluctuating response.

PetaJakarta is a first-of-its-kind initiative launched in 2014, which maps real-time information about floods generated by communities and organizes this information online to help both communities and the municipal disaster response authorities plan and respond to urban flooding.

In part, the idea of PetaJakarta came from the fact that Jakarta is the 'Twitter capital' of the world, with residents tweeting frequently and in detail about flooding. The objective of the project, which is a model partnership between an academic institution (University of Wollongong in Australia), a private company (Twitter Inc.) and a government department (BPBD), is to collect and organize these data in a way that helps the municipal authorities to track and respond to floods and citizens to plan for and avoid flooding.

"What we are trying to understand and achieve is how to blend data sources to enable those various communities – responders and the urban poor – to have transparency and access to the information that they are both using," says project co-director Etienne Turpin.

The project seeks both to source data from Twitter in the form of tweets about floods and to actively solicit reports about flooding in real time from Jakarta's residents. The project scrapes tweets being sent about flooding, and also invites people who get caught up in a flood to report the experience to @petajkt. The data are then mapped in real time, creating a visualization, which can – in the first instance – be used by responders to plan provision of assistance and guide a citywide response. The resulting online map can also be downloaded easily to a phone so as to be readily accessible to ordinary people, who can use it to avoid areas that are flooded.

The project focuses not just on data collection, but on developing information management tools that work with and for the institutional cultures of the disaster response authorities and that are also accessible for affected communities.

In its first flood season, which ended in February 2015, the project saw some startling results. The platform received a total of 5,209 reports on floods throughout January and numbers continued to grow in February, with 771 reports received on 1 February alone. The highest record of web-site views on a single day was more than 100,000. People started sending pictures of floods as well as text reports. Turpin says the project publicly responds to every good-quality report. For the urban poor, used to having their views ignored, this recognition has been extremely important, as demonstrated in the pride tweeters show in retweets and the increasing number of reports.

On the government side, the project took off fast. "Our plan for this year was to map the social media data alongside the official data streams, in parallel, so we could compare them," says Turpin. "What happened was that it worked so well that BPBD started integrating the two streams, using our data to confirm things they thought were happening or seeing something on our data and calling up the community leadership in that neighbourhood to check it. They ended up using the platform to create a hybrid data organization system – we didn't expect that to happen. We are now planning a dashboard that integrates all the data streams." The PetaJakarta project is also working with OCHA and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

Affected people in Jakarta have also engaged with increasing enthusiasm. "It's becoming so busy when it floods," says Fitria Afrianty, who manages the PetaJakarta Twitter feed. "On 9 February there was a tweet that said, 'Please wake up admin, it's flooding.' It was 3 in the morning. I was sleeping." Afrianty says that she also often gets tweets relaying information from other community members not on the platform. There are also an increasing number of instances when people tweet PetaJakarta for help – for example, in sourcing an emergency pump – and others online respond directly, providing offers of assistance.

The project takes an ethnographic rather than a technical approach to working with both institutions and communities. "I have seen so many people design technical products by having an initial conversation, then coming back six months later with the product and of course it's off", Turpin says. "Organizations will always tell you the ideal way they should operate, not the way they actually do." Instead, he and his team have worked on a daily basis alongside BPBD. "We study BPBD to develop tools with them to ensure that they can use them." On the community side, Turpin and his team have also worked closely with the local Urban Poor Consortium and anthropologists with specialist knowledge of poor urban communities in Jakarta.

In doing so, they work to develop a tool that responds to the way disasters actually unfold and the way people really react, rather than predicted or idealized projections of behaviour. "We said, 'Let's build the protocol to the reality rather than the other way around. Let's go evacuate people from where they say they are waiting, not tell them to go somewhere else or ride around in a boat wondering where they are'. The government is always going to be the one with the resources but the knowledge of how to do it well comes from the people affected. Technology is allowing us new ways to mesh these two realities," says Turpin. ■

Technology: the dark side

Finally, it is clear that the changes brought by technology are far from being exclusively positive. Both individuals who aim to do good and those who seek to cause harm are served by this enhanced capacity to source information, overcome collective-action challenges and coordinate activities. A 2013 study of several African countries by two academics found that the availability of mobile phone coverage "substantially and significantly" increases the probability of violent conflict (Hollenbach and Pierskalla, 2013). The use of technology as a battlefield in the Syrian conflict is as complex as it is disturbing. Hackers on both sides have shared fake videos and documentation of attacks, stolen details of humanitarian operations including affected population distribution lists and used social media platforms to spread false information (Railton, Regalado and Villeneuve, 2015). The phenomenon of social and informational echo chambers, through which individuals hear and read only what reinforces their existing worldviews, is taking on a dangerous role in conflict environments. In the Central African Republic, young people video violent attacks including massacres and share them with friends, thus feeding polarized views of the conflict and ensuring that those on each side never hear the views or experiences of the other. In her essay on this phenomenon, written after she spent many months in the capital

Bangui, Internews' innovation adviser and South Sudan country director Anahi Ayala Iacucci wrote: "The use of mobile phones to spread information that is not only unverified, but can also be manipulated ad hoc (for example, showing an old video of a destroyed village and stating that it was just destroyed the day before, therefore increasing the fear and feeling of a continuous attack being perpetrated against one group or another) can further increase the use of non-vetted and non-verified information to make important decisions, like fleeing from a certain area or looking for weapons to prepare for a potential attack" (Ayala Iacucci, 2014).

Technology has also facilitated new forms of abuse that are already having an impact on people affected by humanitarian crises. In Myanmar, among the displaced Rohingya populations, videoconferencing technology has been used by people traffickers to develop new forms of exploitation. Traffickers take vulnerable people overseas, effectively kidnapping them and then make online contact with families in the city of Sittwe to demand ransom (Marshall, 2015). Online child abuse is the leading cyber-related crime in the Philippines: digital platforms mean children can be abused from thousands of miles away, and that desperate parents can earn money from selling their children without them ever leaving home. A police investigation into a child sex ring centred in the coastal community of Ibabao in Cebu found that cyber abuse of children was more lucrative for the very poor villagers than fishing. Villagers told journalists that an online session with a child could earn a family US$ 100, in an area where the average daily wage is just US$ 7 (Gutierrez, 2015), with payments made via international money transfer. The implications of such trends for important protection work such as combating exploitation and abuse in disaster situations are clear (for example, if children can be abused at home, how does this impact sex trafficking?).

What roles for aid agencies are emerging in this changing environment?

Technology use by local communities does not eliminate the role of international aid responders. On the contrary, multiple new opportunities and roles for aid agencies are being created – most of which are not currently being taken up or are being filled by actors from academia and the private sector. This section looks at some of the key needs and opportunities being generated by community uptake of technology.

Work locally

The challenge for aid agencies is in learning to support and work alongside such community-based models and not to seek to co-opt or instrumentalize them or to think that value is defined by replicability elsewhere. This also means rethinking

the priority placed by international aid agencies on scalability and transferability: if tools and platforms are rooted in local mores and constraints, then they should not be expected to transfer elsewhere. Jalin Merapi might not work at all in Kathmandu or in Freetown. It would be surprising if it did: it was developed for central Java by people living there, and is exactly right for that area. On the other hand, some platforms, like Facebook, are sufficiently flexible to be useful in many contexts.

BOX 7.3 'Leave-behind' technology

International response to disasters often brings a wealth of technology to local actors and communities. The technology has the potential to significantly change the way local actors respond to future crisis. Technology can change communities, create jobs and save lives. It can bring information and knowledge to remote areas and restore family links. The sky is the limit. But before considering donations, there are some hurdles that both sides should consider.

Many humanitarian organizations decide to leave behind the technology they have used to support their operations, with the intention of building local capacity to be better prepared for future crises.

While it has the potential to empower local actors, 'leave-behind' technology too often places a significant burden on organizations and communities, which find it difficult or impossible to assimilate, maintain and thus sustain its functionality. For some organizations, it may end up threatening their ability to perform their core activities.

Disaster response tech and business needs

It is important to recognize the difference in modus operandi when implementing technology in a disaster context compared with its implementation to support a well-defined business or capacity need.

In a disaster context, the aim is always to support an immediate need to respond to a situation. Local organizations and communities are likely to be overwhelmed by the response itself, and thus cannot be expected to engage in the strategic planning of the adaptation of new technology tools when the international humanitarian organizations leave.

These differences do not mean that disaster technology cannot converge with a defined business or capacity-building need of local actors, but the transition from a disaster response tool to an organizational tool must be carefully planned and executed as a separate project.

Experience shows that organizations and communities are more likely to be successful in assimilating leave-behind technology, when the technology is known and when it directly supports an existing activity. The size of the project is also a factor. Larger technology projects have a significantly bigger risk of failing. The biggest risk of failure to implement technology in organizations is the lack of planning and poor project management.

A study of 5,400 large-scale technology projects (projects with initial budgets greater than US$ 15 million) in commercial companies finds that persisting problems are usually in project management. Among the key findings quoted from the report (Bloch, Blumberg and Laartz, 2012):

- 17 per cent of large technology projects go so badly that they can threaten the very existence of the company.
- On average, large technology projects run 45 per cent over budget and 7 per cent over time, while delivering 56 per cent less value than predicted.

There is no evidence to show that this should be different in humanitarian organizations or local communities. Records of the success rate of leave-behind technology projects are lacking, but it is likely to be the same or lower than that found in the commercial sector.

One example of leave-behind technology in a disaster situation was the response to Typhoon Haiyan which struck the Philippines in 2013. In the aftermath of the typhoon, a Red Cross Red Crescent information technology (IT) and telecom emergency response unit (ERU) set up a VHF radio network in the Philippine Red Cross's Cebu branch, to support the operations of the Red Cross Red Crescent international response. The local branch had a number of handheld VHF radios before the disaster, mainly for use in first-aid activities, and was familiar with the technology. From the very first day, local staff and volunteers were involved in the project and volunteers were trained as radio-room operators. When the international response ended, the VHF network was handed over to the local branch as a major extension of the 'first-aid radios' and as a vital tool for future disaster response activities for local branch volunteers. Surplus equipment was transferred to Philippine Red Cross national headquarters, to be stockpiled for future disaster responses elsewhere in the country.

The project was a success because the technology supported an ongoing activity and the volunteers were familiar with the technology (albeit in a simpler version). The organization took ownership of the VHF radio network, because a larger group of staff and volunteers was involved early on and the new radio network improved their ability to perform income-generating activities.

A second example concerns Haiti. When the country was devastated by a major earthquake in 2010, a Red Cross Red Crescent IT and telecom ERU set up a cloud-based e-mail environment to support the activities of the Haiti Red Cross Society's headquarters. The National Society had not previously had a dedicated e-mail domain, but had relied on free e-mail services like Yahoo mail and Gmail. The ERU technicians helped the Haiti Red Cross to set up the new domain and e-mail services, and ensured that funding was available for the first three years. They also trained two local staff members to maintain the system and ensured that proper documentation was produced.

When the three-year period ended, the Haiti Red Cross could not sustain the financial burden. But the organization had become dependent on their new e-mail system. What started out as a well-meaning and sensible idea, which had significantly improved the National Society's ability to communicate with the outside world, now threatened the organization's ability to carry out their core activities.

Even though the project supported core Haiti Red Cross activities, it failed because the technology introduced was unfamiliar to the organization, because too few staff and volunteers were trained and because they were trained to an insufficient level. Since their early involvement was very limited, neither senior management nor staff and volunteers felt any sense of ownership.

A simple leave-behind technology checklist

- *Relevance:* When seen from the local actor's perspective, is the technology clearly relevant to their work and will it support an existing activity or an upcoming new activity? Will the technology in fact just add layers of maintenance and operational costs without adding operational value? Engage in dialogue before considering technology projects. Technology should not decide organizational priorities, but organizational priorities should always decide technology choices.
- *Maturity level of actors or organizations:* Is the local actor ready to adopt the technology? Even the most advanced organization will have trouble adopting technology ahead of its time. Does the organization have the necessary skills and resources to support and maintain the technology and to replace broken-down equipment?
- *Project management:* Are project managers available? Technology projects are by definition development projects and should be treated as such – even when the technology is donated. Ownership at all levels of the organization is crucial for the project to become a success.
- *Exit strategy:* How will the organization evolve from the donated technology platform to an upgraded platform in a few years? Is it plausible? Is funding available to sustain the technology and, if not, what happens when the funding disappears?
- *Electronic waste:* Will the technology in time pose an environmental problem for the organization or community that received it? ■

Learning from the private sector and academia

At present, most locally led innovation work with technology is being supported not by aid agencies, but by the private sector and academia. Google provides support to local volunteer tech community groups: in 2013, for example, they supported the work of Bangladeshi crisis-mappers in creating an online searchable map of storm shelters. The PetaJakarta project in Indonesia, which takes real-time data on flooding in Jakarta and turns it into a tool for informing flood response, is being led by Australian academics (see Box 7.2). Almost all work in big data at present is also led by the private sector or academia.

Some agencies are already deeply involved in fostering technological innovation at field level. Hivos, a specialist private Dutch organization, provides support to tech hubs across Africa. UNICEF, the UN's Children's Fund, has supported the development of platforms such as U-Report in Uganda by also funding tech hubs. But aid agencies have much to learn from the private sector and academia, which are leading the way in the tech space. Respecting existing technological expertise and starting from a position of regarding local populations as experts on their needs and tech

use are crucial for any project, as is a thorough understanding of the operational environment.

Addressing the digital divide

As previously discussed, the digital divide is a serious and complex issue. From basic difficulties like lack of electricity to the deliberate exclusion of specific social groups by other community members, addressing technological inequality requires a nuanced approach. Again, working with the private sector will be crucial. For those whose primary issue is last-mile connectivity, the private sector is the only solution. Only mobile phone companies and organizations like Google, Microsoft and Facebook have the global reach, the technical know-how and the financial capacity to bring connectivity to the most remote areas. But the private sector is also addressing issues such as connectivity for deaf and blind people and platforms for those who are illiterate. That they see commercial gain in this work does not diminish their capacity or importance in addressing such issues.

Important work also needs to be done in addressing the tech poverty of isolated social groups. To do this requires a nuanced understanding of the inequalities technology generates and how tools are perceived and valued by a community, rooted in the knowledge that technology use is built on and expresses existing social relationships including those that create inequalities of power. There is no point just giving mobile phones to women, for example, if the real problem is that their husbands will not let them use them.

Preparedness

More needs to be done to support communities before emergencies. While a great deal of very successful work has gone into using technology for effective prediction and early warning particularly using SMS, working directly with communities on planning how to manage a major catastrophe has been much less of a focus. Paradoxically in some cases, these efforts may include supporting communities in lessening their dependence on technology, which will almost certainly fail or be overloaded in a crisis situation (such as mobile phones) and to put in place lower-tech alternatives.

Delivering emergency connectivity

From New Yorkers who walked 50 blocks in the days after Hurricane Sandy to find a mobile signal to Filipinos in Tacloban charging phones from car batteries following Typhoon Haiyan, it is clear that populations now regard connectivity as a fundamental humanitarian service. Restoring phone networks, providing emergency charging services and internet connectivity will increasingly become

humanitarian essentials. In some cases – as in an earthquake, in which those trapped use phones to alert neighbours to their predicament – it can be literally life-saving, as people trapped in damaged buildings usually survive only for 72 hours.

Meeting this need requires a major shift in thinking. The humanitarian system has long been used to thinking of its own connectivity needs and serving them accordingly. The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster is currently changing its mandate to encompass provision of connectivity for all, but this shift has yet to be recognized by many aid agencies. Leadership on the integration of communications infrastructure into basic service provision is coming mainly from the private sector and governments, not from aid agencies. Again, delivery on connectivity involves working closely with the private sector: no aid agency should or will ever be able to restore an entire nationwide telecoms network.

Delivering infrastructure

If communities increasingly need connectivity services, aid agencies need to think about mainstreaming these services in the models of assistance already provided. This ranges from delivering mobile phone chargers (usually solar operated) to building mobile signal provision into camp design and construction, as the Turkish government and Turkcell have done for Syrian refugee camps (using mobile network base stations).

BOX 7.4 Reverse innovation: what can international actors learn from local actors' ingenuity?

Reverse innovation is a relatively new phenomenon, popularized by Professors Vijay Govindarajan and Chris Trimble in 2009. Based on their work with Jeff Immelt, chief executive officer of General Electric (GE), they published an article that defined reverse innovation as bringing "low-end products created specifically for emerging markets into wealthy markets" (Immelt, Govindarajan and Trimble, 2009). The example they cite is a laptop-based portable ultrasound device created in China for rural clinics that could not afford Western technology. This was then adopted for portable units needed for emergency response in the West. This was a reversal in product development that previously depended on trying to make Western products affordable in low- and middle-income countries.

What lessons does this suggest to organizations in the business of disaster response? One of the findings in the *World Disasters Report 2013* was that 95 per cent of first responders are local citizens (IFRC, 2013). They are the individuals who are most in need of the technology that brings rapid information and communications. Are there some emerging local innovations that may help?

There are a number of good examples of apps that are created centrally or regionally and then distributed. However, what is more interesting are the local discoveries of solutions developed in a low- or middle-income country, which have potential for humanitarian organizations and from which they can learn. The 'missed call' feature popular in India is one example (Rai, 2015), as is the

laptop-based portable ultrasound device developed in China. Ushahidi is yet another example. These three cases may illustrate the point.

Missed calls

A missed call is a mobile phone call that is ended after one ring. It shows on the receiver's mobile, usually with the number of the caller. In many countries it is a free call. People use the missed call to signal a prearranged action, for example, "When I send you a missed call, meet me in front of the market." On a given day in Bangladesh, missed calls can account for the majority of all mobile calls (Rai, 2015).

An entire economy has grown up around missed calls, mostly in India and surrounding countries, but it is spreading. For example, a user can send a missed call to a store to be included in future text messages containing discount coupons to shop there. The value of this economy was most recently illustrated by Twitter's purchase of ZipDial, an India-based missed-call start-up, in January 2015 for US$ 30 million (Rai, 2015).

Can missed calls be used in disaster response? A key reason the SMS-based TERA system succeeded in Haiti was that the SMS or text messages were free, as were the calls to the Integrated Voice Response (IVF) line. One reason to send a missed call is to register support for a social cause (Bhise, 2013). ZNI Wireless, a company based in India, offers software that allows a supporter to call a number with a missed call and then receive a confirmation text message. In a campaign against corruption, more than 2 million missed calls were received. This had two results: broad press coverage of the volume of supporters and engagement with a broad group of citizens. Text messages about disaster preparedness could, for example, be sent to the same group.

Laptop-based portable ultrasound device

One of the things the GE team noted in their article on reverse innovation was that "with far smaller per capita incomes, [low- and middle-income] countries are more than happy with high-tech solutions that deliver decent performance at an ultralow cost—a 50% solution at a 15% price" (Immelt, Govindarajan and Trimble, 2009). This questioned basic assumptions about taking Western products and adapting them to low- and middle-income countries. The drivers were different. For example, in healthcare products in the West, performance and features counted most, but in China, price and portability were most important.

Scaling down a Western product was not an option without losing most of its features. It needed a revolution, a reversal. Developing a low-cost ultrasound unit in China, based on powerful software and a laptop, met the need. In 2007, this unit sold for nearly ten times less than its Western counterpart.

Where reverse innovation becomes interesting is when Western markets needed a compact, portable unit that could be used at accident sites. The China team's solution fit the bill. This became a business worth almost US$ 300 million for GE.

What is the humanitarian opportunity? People are used to taking laptops to emergency response locations. Being able to take diagnostic medical equipment that plugs in is an obvious application.

Ushahidi and crisis-mapping

Ushahidi began in 2008, mapping reports of post-election violence in Kenya (*ushahidi* means 'testimony' in Swahili). Kenyan 'citizen journalists' were the reporters, using their mobile phones and the web to post information. A team of volunteer technology workers created mapping software to visually summarize the areas of violence. The web site soon had 45,000 users and interest in using the platform in other countries grew.

When Hurricane Sandy hit the north-east of the United States in October 2012, tech volunteers using the Ushahidi platform sprang into action and began aggregating tweets and text messages on their mapping platform. In addition to posting information about stranded people, downed trees and closed roads, they also mapped where shelters and places to get help were. This information was valuable input for relief workers.

It is interesting that this software and methodology were developed in Kenya and exported to the United States – another reversal of innovation. Almost all relief organizations now use mapping software to report data.

Reversal, discovery and harvesting

The 'discover-and-harvest' approach is based on the work of Jerry Sternin, who was country manager in Viet Nam for Save the Children in 1991 (Happ, 2013). What Sternin uncovered was the value of discovering the positive exception, what he called "positive deviance" (Dorsey, 2000). He discovered and amplified what mothers did differently in a society where malnourished children were the norm.

Discover and harvest is the opposite of the traditional way humanitarian organizations meet needs. They usually take an 'assess and build' approach: assess the situation, gather requirements, specify the project, build it, test it and deliver it. The discover-and-harvest approach reverses this methodology, as shown in the above cases. It is about finding the applications and uses of technology in the far reaches of an organization that are already working and 'harvesting' them for wider application. This approach has a number of benefits:

- It is already working somewhere; it leapfrogs over getting a new system to work. The pilot has already been run.
- A group has already adopted it; it doesn't need to be sold.
- It has been field-tested; especially for international NGOs working in difficult rural settings, it works where technology is rare.

For discover and harvest to work, however, requires believing in two things: headquarters humility, i.e., that innovations can come from a far country, and good enough technology, i.e., that 80 per cent solutions get the job done.

This requires a change in our worldview. ■

Rethinking innovation – learning from communities

The picture painted in this chapter is one in which poor and vulnerable people have been much quicker to understand and invest in the importance of technology to their lives than international aid agencies. In doing so, they have often found ways – and technologies – to deliver the results they need that are very localized (indeed, which work precisely for that reason) and which derive their strength from the social networks onto which they map. These are often alien to aid agencies. For example, ignorance of the twitmobil platform, used by many Haitians to receive Twitter feeds on their mobile phone as SMS, was widespread among international staff working on the earthquake response in 2010. As Kyla Reid of the GSMA points out, communications technology networks serve primarily to amplify and extend pre-existing social networks (Reid, personal communication, 2015).

It is also essential to see communities as experts in their own technology use and to foster their innovative capacity. This does not just mean technological skills. People use technology as a social tool and its use is rooted in cultural and social mores. An anthropological approach is, therefore, crucial to understanding technology use patterns and preferences, and also misuse and structural inequalities.

If community and personal technology builds on existing social networks, it should not be a surprise that the resulting models are so frequently network-based and involve simultaneous many-to-many transactions, whether of information, images, money or other services. In particular the use of technology to organize responses on a many-to-many basis, through which ordinary people with small and specific assistance to offer can be matched with those who need that assistance in real time, represents a profoundly different overall approach.

Learning to work with and support such systems, so fundamentally at odds with the command-and-control approach of many humanitarian agencies, is critical. Identifying vulnerable groups that they may leave out, and identifying new ways of ensuring the safeguarding and delivery of aid according to humanitarian principles when such new operating structures are applied, will also be key.

In a personal correspondence with the author (2015), Kyla Reid of the GSMA asserts that: "Ultimately, mobile has just allowed communities to do what they have always done in response: plan, respond, communicate, organize collectively. It's just a medium that adds to the efficiency and effectiveness of their ability to do that. The more profound changes are for aid agencies and private sector and government, because communities already know what to do with technology themselves. They are already figuring that out. It's not like they don't know what to do, it's more what does that mean institutionally and operationally for those who are there to help them."

Chapter 7 and Boxes 7.1 and 7.2 were written by Imogen Wall, a communications consultant who focuses on policy, advocacy and use of communications technology in disaster response. Box 7.3 was written by Claus Olsen, IFRC Senior Adviser, Disaster Response Technology and Innovation. Box 7.4 was written by Edward Happ, IFRC Global Chief Information Officer.

A monk uses a digital camera in Sri Lanka. The way people in low- and middle-income countries see and use digital technology is often profoundly different to the patterns found in the West.
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Chapter 7

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ANNEX

Disclaimer

The data and opinions expressed in this annex do not necessarily represent the official policy of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies nor of individual National Red Cross or Red Crescent Societies. For further information regarding the figures, data and analysis provided, please contact the Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters (CRED).

The Philippines is one of most disaster-prone countries in the world. Local villagers replant mangroves around their islands with the support of the Philippine Red Cross and Swiss Red Cross. Mangroves protect the coastline from the effects of tidal waves, a significant cause of injury and death.
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Disaster data

According to the Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters (CRED), 315 disasters related to natural hazards and 203 related to technological hazards (typified hereafter as "natural disasters" and "technological disasters") were reported worldwide in 2014.

The number of natural disasters was the lowest of the decade, 17 per cent below its decade's average (381), and the number of technological disasters the third lowest of the decade, 19 per cent below its decade's average (250).

Floods remain the most frequent natural disasters, but in 2014 their number (132) was 24 per cent below their decade's average (175). With 99 disasters, storms were at the second place and this number was equal to the decade's average.

Floods are often the most frequently occurring disaster and, in 2014, affected 37 million people. In the Sahel, climate change is making the rains erratic, leading to either too much rain – and local flooding – or too little precipitation – and drought. © Finnish Red Cross

The number of deaths caused by natural disasters (7,963) is almost ninety per-cent below its decade's average (76,420), very far ahead from the peaks of 2008 (235,272 deaths) and 2010 (297,728 deaths).

The two deadliest natural disasters of 2014 were an earthquake which hit China in August, killing 731 people, and a cold wave which caused the death of 505 people in Peru between April and September. The death toll of these two disasters is very far from the number of deaths caused by the earthquake of January 2010 in Haiti (222,570 deaths) or the cyclone Nargis in Myanmar in 2008 (138,366 deaths). In 2014, a total of fifteen natural disasters made at least 100 deaths each. The total deaths from these disasters (6,119) accounted for 75 per cent of all deaths from natural disasters. Floods accounted for 42 per cent of deaths caused by natural disasters; storms for 17 per cent; landslides of hydrological origin for 16 per cent and extreme temperatures for 15 per cent. Deaths from earthquakes (772) were, in 2014, 98 per cent below their decade's average.

The number of people killed by technological disasters (5,884) is twenty-two per-cent below its decade's average (7,514). The event which resulted in the highest number of deaths (304) was the shipwreck of the Sewol ferry, in Southern Korea. Nine other technological disasters made more than 100 deaths each, for a total of 1,537. Seventy-four percent of deaths from technological disasters were related to transport accidents.

In 2014, the number of people reported affected by natural disasters was the second lowest of the decade while, inversely, the number of people reported affected by technological disasters was the highest of the decade.

The number of people reported affected by natural disasters (107 million) was far below the peaks of 2010 (344 million) and 2011 (264 million). In 2014, 37 per cent of people reported affected were victims of droughts; 34 per cent suffered from floods and 24 per cent from storms. The two most severe disasters were a drought which affected 27.5 million people in China between August and October and a flood, also in China, in June with 5 million affected. Five storms affected 1 to 10 million people for a total of 22 million; seven others floods affected 1 to 3.6 million people for a total of 14 million; 1 to 4 million people were affected by five others droughts for a total of 11 million; one earthquake affected 1.1 million people and one cold wave 1 million. All these disasters accounted for 85 per cent of the total number of people affected by natural disasters.

Compared to natural disasters, technological disasters affect, proportionally, very few people. In 2014, the numbers of people affected by transport and miscellaneous accidents were, both, the third lowest of the decade affecting, each, less than 10,000 people. On the other hand, the number of people affected by industrial accidents was the highest of the decade (284,000). It was caused by two disasters:

a fire in a water treatment plant which has cut off drinking water to the capital of Maldives, affecting a total of 203,000 people, and a chemical spill in Panama which affected 70,743 people. The only comparable industrial accident in the decade was the health crisis caused by a toxic waste dump in Ivory Coast in 2006.

In 2014, natural disaster cost US$ 99.1 billion, the fourth lowest of the decade.

A riverine flood in India, cost almost US$ 16 billion and the cyclone Hudhud, also in India, US$ 7 billion. Twenty-one other natural disasters (8 floods, 7 storms, 4 droughts, 1 earthquakes and 1 extreme temperature episode) made damages between US$ 1 to US$ 6 billion for a total of US$ 53.5 billion. All these disasters accounted for 77 per cent of the total reported damages.

Cost of technological disasters were not available in 2014.

EM-DAT: a specialized disaster database

Tables 1–13 on natural and technological disasters and their human impact over the last decade were drawn and documented from CRED's EM-DAT: International Disasters Database (www.emdat.be). Established in 1973 as a non-profit institution, CRED is based at the School of Public Health of Catholic University of Louvain in Belgium and became a World Health Organization (WHO) collaborating centre in 1980. Although CRED's main focus is on public health, it also studies the socio-economic and long-term effects of large-scale disasters.

Since 1988, CRED has maintained EM-DAT, a worldwide database on disasters. It contains essential core data on the occurrence and effects of more than 21,000 natural and technological disasters in the world from 1900 to the present. In 1999, a collaboration between the United States Agency for International Development's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA) and CRED was initiated.

The database is compiled from various sources, including United Nations (UN) agencies, non-governmental organizations, insurance companies, research institutes and press agencies. Priority is given to data from UN agencies, followed by OFDA, governments and IFRC. This prioritization is not a reflection of the quality or value of the data but the recognition that most reporting sources do not cover all disasters or may have political limitations that could affect the figures. The entries are constantly reviewed for redundancies, inconsistencies and the completion of missing data. CRED consolidates and updates data on a daily basis. A further check is made at monthly intervals. Revisions are made annually at the end of the calendar year.

The database's main objectives are to assist humanitarian action at both national and international levels, to rationalize decision-making for disaster preparedness and to provide an objective basis for vulnerability assessment and priority setting.

Data definitions and methodology

CRED defines a disaster as "a situation or event, which overwhelms local capacity, necessitating a request to national or international level for external assistance (definition considered in EM-DAT); an unforeseen and often sudden event that causes great damage, destruction and human suffering".

For a disaster to be entered into the database, at least one of the following criteria must be fulfilled:

- Ten or more people reported killed
- 100 people or more reported affected
- Declaration of a state of emergency
- Call for international assistance.

The total number of deaths includes people confirmed as dead and people missing and presumed dead. People affected are those requiring immediate assistance during a period of emergency (i.e., requiring basic survival needs such as food, water, shelter, sanitation and immediate medical assistance). People reported injured or homeless are aggregated with those reported affected to produce a 'total number of people affected'.

The economic impact of a disaster usually consists of direct consequences on the local economy (e.g., damage to infrastructure, crops, housing) and indirect consequences (e.g., loss of revenues, unemployment, market destabilization). In EM-DAT, the registered figure corresponds to the damage value at the moment of the event and usually only to the direct damage, expressed in US dollars.

The natural disasters classification initiated by CRED and Munich Re in 2007 has been improved. CRED is part of the Integrated Research on Disaster Risk (IRDR) DATA Project Working Group, which has promoted the idea and concept of a peril classification for operational use in disaster loss databases. This new classification (see IRDR's *Peril Classification and Hazard Glossary* at www.irdrinternational.org/2014/03/28/irdr-data-project-publishes-peril-classification-and-hazard-glossary/) is based on the preliminary scheme proposed by CRED and Munich Re and the current one used in EM-DAT has been adapted according its specificities.

It distinguishes two generic categories for disasters (natural and technological). Natural disasters are divided into six sub-groups, which in turn cover 17 disaster types:

- **Biological disasters**: Animal accidents, epidemics and insect infestations (the first two categories are not included in the *World Disasters Report*)
- **Geophysical disasters**: Earthquakes, volcanic activity and dry mass movements (avalanches, landslides, rockfalls and subsidence of geophysical origin)
- **Climatological disasters**: Droughts (with associated food insecurities), glacial lake outbursts and wildfires
- **Hydrological disasters**: Floods, landslides and wave actions
- **Meteorological disasters**: Storms, extreme temperature and fog
- **Extra-terrestrial disasters**: Impacts and space weather (not included as yet in the *World Disasters Report*).

Technological disasters remained unchanged and comprise three groups:

- **Industrial accidents**: Chemical spills, collapses of industrial infrastructure, explosions, fires, gas leaks, poisoning and radiation
- **Transport accidents**: Transportation by air, rail, road or water
- **Miscellaneous accidents**: Collapse of domestic or non-industrial structures, explosions and fires.

In Tables 1–13, 'disasters' refer to disasters with a natural and technological trigger only, and do not include wars, conflict-related famines, diseases or epidemics.

The classification of countries as 'very high', 'high', 'medium' or 'low' human development is based on the UN Development Programme's 2014 Human Development Index (HDI). It should be noted that compared to its previous version, HDI rankings changed for several countries in 2014. For a small number of countries, which do not appear in the HDI, the World Bank's classification of economies by the countries' level of income is used as reference ('high', 'upper middle', 'lower middle' and 'low').

In both EM-DAT and the tables in this annex, data are considered at country level for many reasons, including the fact that it is at this level that they are reported most of the time and also due to issues regarding possible aggregation and disaggregation of data. For droughts or food insecurities, which are often multi-years events, their impact over time is taken into account.

Bearing in mind that data on deaths and economic damage from droughts are infrequently reported, CRED has adopted the following rules as regards data for droughts:

- The total number of deaths reported for a drought is divided by the number of years for which the drought persists. The resulting number is registered for each year of the drought's duration.
- The same calculation is done for the reported economic damages.
- For the total number of people reported to be affected, CRED considers that the same number is affected each year that the disaster persists.

Some disasters begin at the end of a year and may last some weeks or months into the following year. In such cases, CRED has adopted the following rules:

- With regard to the numbers of people reported affected, the total number is recorded for both the start year and the end year.
- For the numbers of people reported killed, CRED distinguishes between sudden-onset disasters (earthquakes, flash floods, landslides, etc.) and slow-onset disasters (wildfires, some floods, extreme temperatures, etc.) as follows:
  - Sudden-onset disasters: All those killed are registered according to the year the disaster started.
  - Slow-onset disasters: The total of all those killed is divided by two and a half is attributed to each year of persistence.
- Reported economic damages are always attributed to the end year of the disaster. This is because damage is related to both the strength of a disaster and its duration.

By using these rules, some data bias correction is attempted. However, they are far from perfect and CRED will try to improve them, as well as the database as a whole, in the future.

Caveats

Key problems with disaster data include the lack of standardized collection methodologies and definitions. The original information, collected from a variety of public sources, is not specifically gathered for statistical purposes. So, even when the compilation applies strict definitions for disaster events and parameters, the original suppliers of information may not. Moreover, data are not always complete for each disaster. The quality of completion may vary according to the type

of disaster (for example, the number of people affected by transport accidents is rarely reported) or its country of occurrence.

Data on deaths are usually available because they are an immediate proxy for the severity of the disaster. However, the numbers put forward immediately after a disaster may sometimes be seriously revised, occasionally several months later.

Data on the numbers of people affected by a disaster can provide some of the most potentially useful figures, for planning both disaster preparedness and response, but they are sometimes poorly reported. Moreover, the definition of people affected remains open to interpretation, political or otherwise. Even in the absence of manipulation, data may be extrapolated from old census information, with assumptions being made about percentages of an area's population affected.

Data can also be skewed because of the rationale behind data gathering. Reinsurance companies, for instance, systematically gather data on disaster occurrence in order to assess insurance risk, but with a priority in areas of the world where disaster insurance is widespread. Their data may therefore miss out poor, disaster-affected regions where insurance is unaffordable or unavailable.

For natural disasters over the last decade, data on deaths are missing or undocumented for 30 per cent of reported disasters, data on people affected are missing for 22 per cent of disasters and data on economic damages are missing for 68 per cent of disasters. The figures should therefore be regarded as indicative. Relative changes and trends are more useful to look at than absolute, isolated figures.

Dates can be a source of ambiguity. For example, a declared date for a famine is both necessary and meaningless – a famine does not occur on a single day. In such cases, the date the appropriate body declares an official emergency has been used. Changes in national boundaries cause ambiguities in the data and may make long-term trend analysis more complicated.

However, in some cases, available data may differ greatly according to sources, be more or less documented estimations and/or subject to controversies. In these cases, CRED always compiles all available data or analysis to try to make its own documented estimation, which can be revised when more accurate data are provided.

Information systems have improved vastly in the last 35 years and statistical data are now more easily available, intensified by an increasing sensitivity to disaster occurrence and consequences. Nevertheless there are still discrepancies. An analysis of quality and accuracy of disaster data, performed by CRED in 2002, showed that occasionally, for the same disaster, differences of more than 20 per cent may exist between the quantitative data reported by the three major databases – EM-DAT (CRED), NatCat (Munich Re) and Sigma (Swiss Re).

Despite efforts to verify and review data, the quality of disaster databases can only be as good as the reporting system. This, combined with the different aims of the major disaster databases (risk and economic risk analysis for reinsurance companies, development agenda for CRED) may explain differences between data provided for some disasters. However, in spite of these differences, the overall trends indicated by the three databases remain similar.

The lack of systematization and standardization of data collection is a major weakness when it comes to long-term planning. Fortunately, due to increased pressures for accountability from various sources, many donors and development agencies have started paying attention to data collection and its methodologies.

Part of the solution to this data problem lies in retrospective analysis. Data are most often publicly quoted and reported during a disaster event, but it is only long after the event, once the relief operation is over, that estimates of damage and death can be verified. Some data gatherers, like CRED, revisit the data; this accounts for retrospective annual disaster figures changing one, two and sometimes even three years after the event.

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TABLE 1 Total number of reported disasters,[1] by continent, level of human development[2] and year (2005–2014)

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Total[3]
Africa	170	202	184	173	156	135	165	124	115	98	1,522
Americas	139	105	133	144	115	146	131	114	106	108	1,241
Asia	360	308	262	240	233	254	235	210	229	224	2,555
Europe	126	98	104	58	75	99	49	91	69	77	846
Oceania	16	18	11	13	19	18	15	14	12	11	147
Very high human development	*144*	*126*	*121*	*109*	*98*	*111*	*93*	*119*	*123*	*107*	*1,151*
High human development	*270*	*201*	*221*	*189*	*181*	*215*	*160*	*164*	*155*	*186*	*1,942*
Medium human development	*198*	*199*	*164*	*174*	*159*	*165*	*169*	*129*	*133*	*122*	*1,612*
Low human development	*199*	*205*	*188*	*156*	*160*	*161*	*173*	*141*	*120*	*103*	*1,606*
Total	**811**	**731**	**694**	**628**	**598**	**652**	**595**	**553**	**531**	**518**	**6,311**

Source: EM-DAT, CRED, University of Louvain, Belgium

[1] In Tables 1–13, 'disasters' refer to those with a natural and/or technological trigger only, and do not include wars, conflict-related famines, diseases or epidemics.

[2] See note on UNDP's Human Development Index country status in the disaster definitions section in the introduction to this annex.

[3] Since slow-onset disasters can affect the same country a number of years, it is best to use figures on total numbers to calculate annual averages over a decade rather than as absolute totals (see the methodology chapter of this annex).

With 518 disasters reported, 2014 is the year with the decade's lowest number of disasters, very far below the peak of 2005. Among continents, the number of disasters was the lowest of the decade in Africa, the second lowest in the Americas, Asia and Oceania but only the fifth lowest in Europe.

In 2014, the number of disasters was at their lowest level in countries with medium and low human development and at their third lowest in very high human development countries. In countries with high human development, the number of disasters in 2014 was the fifth lowest in the decade.

Over the decade, Asia remains the continent most frequently affected with 40.5 per cent of all disasters. Africa comes second with 24.1 per cent of all disasters.

TABLE 2 Total number of people reported killed, by continent, level of human development[1] and year (2005–2014)

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Total
Africa	3,192	5,780	3,821	3,027	3,180	13,052	13,552	3,028	2,663	2,585	53,880
Americas	5,434	1,563	2,921	2,737	2,222	226,555	3,372	2,052	1,760	1,549	250,165
Asia	90,841	20,648	15,827	235,621	10,051	17,780	29,139	8,361	22,263	8,523	459,054
Europe	1,026	5,837	1,665	807	1,363	57,073	1,667	1,704	1,833	989	73,964
Oceania	42	24	273	25	888	140	221	433	32	201	2,279
Very high human development	*3,336*	*5,019*	*1,770*	*1,086*	*2,677*	*2,156*	*21,910*	*1,530*	*2,529*	*1,534*	*43,547*
High human development	*6,128*	*6,547*	*5,475*	*91,379*	*4,161*	*67,442*	*5,917*	*3,797*	*3,778*	*4,995*	*199,619*
Medium human development	*12,367*	*16,568*	*11,051*	*6,640*	*7,581*	*6,441*	*5,689*	*5,661*	*18,427*	*3,134*	*93,559*
Low human development	*78,704*	*5,718*	*6,211*	*143,112*	*3,285*	*238,561*	*14,435*	*4,590*	*3,817*	*4,184*	*502,617*
Total	**100,535**	**33,852**	**24,507**	**242,217**	**17,704**	**314,600**	**47,951**	**15,578**	**28,551**	**13,847**	**839,342**

Source: EM-DAT, CRED, University of Louvain, Belgium

[1] See note on UNDP's Human Development Index country status in the disaster definitions section in the introduction to this annex.

Note: Some totals in this table may not correspond due to rounding.

In 2014 the number of people reported killed was the lowest of the decade, much lower than the 2005, 2008 and 2010 peaks and than the average for the decade. It was the lowest of the decade in Africa and the Americas and the second lowest in Asia and Europe. Inversely, it was the fifth highest in Oceania, but still lower than the average for the decade.

The number of people reported killed was the lowest of the decade in countries with medium human development and the third lowest in countries with very high and low human development. They were at their fourth lowest level of the decade in high human development countries.

In 2014, 61.5 per cent of people killed by disasters lived in Asia, a percentage higher than the decade's average of 55 per cent. The proportion of people killed in Africa (18.4 per cent) is also higher than the continent's average for the decade (6.4 per cent). These proportions were 11 per cent in the Americas and 7 per cent in Europe, both percentages below these continents' average for the decade. Inversely, the proportion of people reported killed in Oceania was five times higher than its average for the decade.

TABLE 3 Total number of people reported affected, by continent, level of human development[1] and year (2005–2014), in thousands

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Total[2]
Africa	22,856	26,665	12,530	22,653	42,636	36,557	33,725	45,720	10,259	6,762	260,363
Americas	8,308	1,455	10,180	20,276	7,022	12,969	11,880	5,797	2,648	4,546	85,080
Asia	129,717	119,101	190,885	182,754	176,156	293,078	217,989	89,729	87,043	92,730	1,579,181
Europe	534	260	1,651	268	141	834	79	581	1,750	2,866	8,964
Oceania	28	38	172	105	77	549	516	263	78	170	1,996
Very high human development	*3,809*	*286*	*1,547*	*14,249*	*2,565*	*3,882*	*1,431*	*474*	*4,210*	*840*	*33,293*
High human development	*89,334*	*93,966*	*130,239*	*154,611*	*137,072*	*262,809*	*188,581*	*59,350*	*32,464*	*70,391*	*1,218,816*
Medium human development	*33,845*	*23,935*	*69,440*	*30,972*	*44,200*	*16,186*	*33,783*	*26,549*	*52,443*	*26,210*	*357,564*
Low human development	*34,455*	*29,332*	*14,190*	*26,224*	*42,196*	*61,110*	*40,394*	*55,717*	*12,660*	*9,633*	*325,912*
Total	**161,444**	**147,519**	**215,417**	**226,056**	**226,033**	**343,986**	**264,189**	**142,090**	**101,776**	**107,074**	**1,935,585**

Source: EM-DAT, CRED, University of Louvain, Belgium

[1] See note on UNDP's Human Development Index country status in the disaster definitions section in the introduction to this annex.

[2] Since slow-onset disasters can affect the same country a number of years, it is best to use figures on total numbers to calculate annual averages over a decade rather than as absolute totals (see the methodology chapter of this annex).

Note: Some totals in this table may not correspond due to rounding.

In 2014, more than 100 million people were affected by disasters, the second lowest total of the decade, far below the high levels of years from 2007 to 2011 and almost half the decade's average.

In Africa, the number of people reported affected by disasters in 2014 was the lowest of the decade. It was the third lowest in both the Americas and Asia. In Oceania, the number reported affected by disasters was the fifth highest of the decade but remained below its decennial average. On the other hand, in Europe, the number of people affected by disasters in 2014 was the highest of the decade, at 3.2 times greater than the average for the decade.

In 2014, the number of people affected by disasters living in countries of low human development was the lowest of the decade. It was the third lowest in medium, high and very high human development countries.

In 2014, Asia accounted for 86 per cent of people reported affected, above its 82 per cent decade's average, and the proportion reported for Europe was 3.2 times higher than its decennial average.

TABLE 4 Total amount of disaster estimated damage, by continent, level of human development[1] and year (2005–2014), in millions of US dollars (2014 prices)

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Total
Africa	43	277	884	1,265	481	66	1,102	986	245	640	5,989
Americas	214,906	8,633	18,608	73,227	16,858	86,845	73,633	109,222	35,477	25,059	662,468
Asia	34,513	28,438	40,644	134,067	20,102	42,643	297,487	28,814	59,398	64,365	750,469
Europe	19,628	2,938	25,918	5,280	13,758	21,368	3,184	25,704	22,790	7,973	148,542
Oceania	274	1,556	1,691	2,849	1,961	10,489	30,449	908	3,312	1,080	54,568
Very high human development	*221,314*	*14,038*	*54,402*	*77,658*	*30,870*	*94,165*	*329,516*	*131,695*	*52,970*	*28,914*	*1,035,544*
High human development	*28,936*	*17,381*	*22,811*	*130,055*	*11,572*	*41,921*	*68,221*	*27,887*	*45,914*	*41,692*	*436,389*
Medium human development	*12,503*	*10,420*	*7,052*	*3,481*	*10,163*	*5,547*	*5,241*	*2,308*	*20,541*	*26,448*	*103,705*
Low human development	*6,611*	*4*	*3,480*	*5,494*	*554*	*19,777*	*2,875*	*3,743*	*1,797*	*2,062*	*46,397*
Total	**269,364**	**41,843**	**87,745**	**216,688**	**53,159**	**161,411**	**405,854**	**165,633**	**121,222**	**99,116**	**1,622,036**

Source: EM-DAT, CRED, University of Louvain, Belgium

[1] See note on UNDP's Human Development Index country status in the disaster definitions section in the introduction to this annex.

Note: Some totals in this table may not correspond due to rounding.

As mentioned in the introduction, damage assessment is frequently unreliable. Even for the existing data, the methodologies are not standardized and the financial coverage can vary significantly. Depending on where the disaster occurred occurs and who reports it, estimations may vary from zero to billions of US dollars.

The total amount of damage reported in 2014 was the fourth lowest of the decade. It was also the third lowest in the Americas and Oceania, and the fourth lowest in Europe. On the other hand, it was the fifth highest in Africa and the fourth highest in Asia. However, in Asia, the amount of damages remained below the average for the decade.

The amounts of damages were the second lowest in very high human development countries and the fourth lowest in low human development countries. Inversely it was the highest in medium human development countries.

In 2014, the contribution of Asia to the total amount of damages climbed to 65 per cent, far higher than their 46 per cent for the decade. In the Americas, on the other hand, the contribution (25 per cent) was largely below the continent's average for the decade (41 per cent).

In 2014, the highest contribution to total damages (42 per cent) came from high human development countries, far above their 27 per cent average for the decade, but the contribution to total damages of medium human development countries (27 per cent) is more than four times its decennial average (6.4 per cent). On the other hand, the proportion of disaster damages in very high human development countries (29 per cent) was much lower than their 64 per cent decadal average.

TABLE 5 Total number of reported disasters, by type of phenomenon and year (2005–2014)

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Total[1]
Droughts[2]	28	20	13	21	31	27	24	31	13	15	223
Dry mass movements[3]	n.d.r.	1	n.d.r.	3	1	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	1	1	n.d.r.	7
Earthquakes[4]	25	24	21	23	22	25	30	29	28	26	253
Extreme temperatures	29	32	25	11	26	34	19	52	17	17	262
Floods[5]	193	232	219	175	160	190	160	141	149	132	1,751
Insect infestations	n.d.r.	1	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	1	1	1	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	4
Landslides	12	20	10	12	28	32	17	13	11	15	170
Storms	132	77	105	111	87	95	86	90	106	99	988
Volcanic activities	8	12	6	7	3	6	6	1	4	8	61
Wildfires	13	10	18	5	9	7	8	7	10	3	90
Subtotal climato-, hydro- and meteorological disasters	*407*	*392*	*390*	*335*	*342*	*386*	*315*	*334*	*306*	*281*	*3,488*
Subtotal geophysical disasters	*33*	*37*	*27*	*33*	*26*	*31*	*36*	*31*	*33*	*34*	*321*
Total natural disasters	**440**	**429**	**417**	**368**	**368**	**417**	**351**	**365**	**339**	**315**	**3,809**
Industrial accidents	76	64	53	38	43	36	32	25	25	27	419
Miscellaneous accidents	66	33	43	30	27	47	34	26	31	32	369
Transport accidents	229	205	181	192	160	152	178	137	136	144	1,714
Total technological disasters	**371**	**302**	**277**	**260**	**230**	**235**	**244**	**188**	**192**	**203**	**2,502**
Total	**811**	**731**	**694**	**628**	**598**	**652**	**595**	**553**	**531**	**518**	**6,311**

Source: EM-DAT, CRED, University of Louvain, Belgium

[1] Since slow-onset disasters can affect the same country a number of years, it is best to use figures on total numbers to calculate annual averages over a decade rather than as absolute totals (see the methodology chapter of this annex).

[2] Includes food insecurities.

[3] Landslides, rockfalls, subsidence, etc. of geophysical origin.

[4] Includes tsunamis.

[5] Includes waves and surges.

Notes: Some totals in this table may not correspond due to rounding. In this table, n.d.r. signifies 'no disaster reported'. For more information, see section on caveats in the introduction to this annex.

In 2014, the number of natural disasters was the lowest of the decade and the number of technological disasters the third lowest. Among natural disasters, floods and storms were the most frequent but the number of floods was below its average for the decade, while the number of storms equalled the decadal average. The number of disasters caused by wildfires and by floods was at their lowest level for the decade; those caused by droughts and by extreme temperatures were at their third lowest. Inversely, disasters from volcanic activities were at their third highest level for the decade and those from earthquakes at their fourth highest.

All technological disasters were at their third lowest of the decade. Transport accidents remain largely the most frequent and accounted for 71 per cent of all technological disasters.

TABLE 6 Total number of people reported killed, by type of phenomenon and year (2005–2014)

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Total
Droughts[1]	88	208	n.a.	6	2	10,000	10,000	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	20,304
Dry mass movements[2]	n.d.r.	11	n.d.r.	120	36	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	16	46	n.d.r.	229
Earthquakes[3]	76,241	6,692	780	87,918	1,888	226,735	20,946	711	1,120	772	423,803
Extreme temperatures	814	5,104	1,044	1,608	1,212	57,064	806	1,598	1,982	1,189	72,421
Floods[4]	5,754	5,845	8,565	4,028	3,581	8,579	6,148	3,574	9,819	3,199	59,092
Insect infestations	n.d.r.	n.a.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.a.
Landslides	646	1,638	271	504	642	3,424	309	504	235	1,303	9,476
Storms	5,294	4,329	6,035	140,985	3,287	1,564	3,103	3,102	8,603	1,383	177,685
Volcanic activities	3	5	11	16	n.a.	323	3	n.a.	n.a.	101	462
Wildfires	43	16	148	86	190	166	10	22	35	16	732
Subtotal climato-, hydro- and meteorological disasters	*12,639*	*17,140*	*16,063*	*147,217*	*8,914*	*80,797*	*20,376*	*8,800*	*20,674*	*7,090*	*339,710*
Subtotal geophysical disasters	*76,244*	*6,708*	*791*	*88,054*	*1,924*	*227,058*	*20,949*	*727*	*1,166*	*873*	*424,494*
Total natural disasters	**88,883**	**23,848**	**16,854**	**235,271**	**10,838**	**307,855**	**41,325**	**9,527**	**21,840**	**7,963**	**764,204**
Industrial accidents	2,281	1,857	1,669	776	934	1,061	727	787	1,907	878	12,877
Miscellaneous accidents	2,669	1,126	909	895	911	1,507	755	1,112	1,003	646	11,533
Transport accidents	6,702	7,021	5,075	5,275	5,021	4,177	5,144	4,152	3,801	4,360	50,728
Total technological disasters	**11,652**	**10,004**	**7,653**	**6,946**	**6,866**	**6,745**	**6,626**	**6,051**	**6,711**	**5,884**	**75,138**
Total	**100,535**	**33,852**	**24,507**	**242,217**	**17,704**	**314,600**	**47,951**	**15,578**	**28,551**	**13,847**	**839,342**

Source: EM-DAT, CRED, University of Louvain, Belgium

[1] Includes food insecurities.

[2] Landslides, rockfalls, subsidence, etc. of geophysical origin.

[3] Includes tsunamis.

[4] Includes waves and surges.

Notes: Some totals in this table may not correspond due to rounding. In this table, n.a. signifies 'no data available'; n.d.r. signifies 'no disaster reported'. For more information, see section on caveats in the introduction to this annex.

In 2014, the number of deaths caused by natural disasters was very small; it was the lowest of the decade, amounting to one-tenth of the average for the decade. Deaths from technological disasters were also at their lowest level but were only 21 per cent below their decadal average.

Among natural disasters, the number of deaths from floods and storms was the lowest of the decade, far below their decennial average. Deaths from earthquakes were at their second lowest of the decade, very far below their decadal average and deaths from wildfires at their third lowest. Inversely, deaths from volcanic activities were at their second highest level for the decade and those from landslides at their third highest.

The two deadliest natural disasters in 2014 were an earthquake in China (731 deaths) and a cold wave in Peru (505 deaths). These numbers cannot be compared to those reported for the Haiti earthquake in 2010 (222,570 deaths), Cyclone Nargis in Myanmar in 2008 (138,375 deaths), the Sichuan earthquake in China in 2008 (87,476 deaths), the 2005 Kashmir earthquake (74,648 deaths) and a heatwave in Russia in 2010 (55,736 deaths).

Among technological disasters, the number of deaths from miscellaneous accidents was the lowest of the decade, while deaths from transport accidents were at their third lowest and those from industrial accidents at their fourth lowest. The two deadliest technological disasters were the Sewol shipwreck in the Republic of Korea (304 deaths) and an explosion in the Soma mine in Turkey (301 deaths).

TABLE 7 Total number of people reported affected, by type of phenomenon and year (2005–2014), in thousands

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Total[1]
Droughts[2]	30,643	44,371	8,278	37,481	109,666	132,525	75,604	43,882	13,124	39,724	535,299
Dry mass movements[3]	n.d.r.	< 0.5	n.d.r.	1	3	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.a.	< 0.5	n.d.r.	4
Earthquakes[4]	6,187	3,859	1,382	47,580	3,221	6,937	1,748	2,860	7,031	3,182	83,988
Extreme temperatures	2	63	988	79,171	856	892	4,427	636	270	1,113	88,419
Floods[5]	75,027	31,124	178,901	46,028	61,059	189,703	141,400	74,489	32,064	36,621	866,417
Insect infestations	n.d.r.	n.a.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	500	2,300	2,300	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	5,100
Landslides	10	432	9	5	44	2,460	7	4	1	202	3,173
Storms	49,126	67,112	23,974	15,652	50,583	8,931	38,585	20,178	49,150	25,714	349,004
Volcanic activities	341	379	51	40	57	171	49	10	106	210	1,413
Wildfires	7	3	1,785	59	12	30	15	6	9	12	1,938
Subtotal climato-, hydro- and meteorological disasters	*154,815*	*143,106*	*213,936*	*178,396*	*222,719*	*336,842*	*262,337*	*139,195*	*94,617*	*103,386*	*1,849,350*
Subtotal geophysical disasters	*6,528*	*4,237*	*1,433*	*47,621*	*3,281*	*7,108*	*1,796*	*2,870*	*7,137*	*3,392*	*85,405*
Total natural disasters	**161,344**	**147,343**	**215,369**	**226,017**	**226,000**	**343,949**	**264,134**	**142,065**	**101,755**	**106,778**	**1,934,754**
Industrial accidents	16	137	3	14	6	27	1	4	8	284	500
Miscellaneous accidents	77	35	41	21	23	7	48	17	7	9	286
Transport accidents	6	4	4	4	5	3	6	3	6	3	44
Total technological disasters	**100**	**175**	**48**	**39**	**33**	**37**	**55**	**24**	**22**	**296**	**830**
Total	**161,444**	**147,519**	**215,417**	**226,056**	**226,033**	**343,986**	**264,189**	**142,090**	**101,776**	**107,074**	**1,935,585**

Source: EM-DAT, CRED, University of Louvain, Belgium

[1] See note on UNDP's Human Development Index country status in the disaster definitions section in the introduction to this annex. VHHD stands for very high human development, HHD for high human development, MHD for medium human development and LHD for low human development.

[2] Includes food insecurities.

[3] Landslides, rockfalls, subsidence, etc. of geophysical origin.

[4] Includes tsunamis.

[5] Includes waves and surges.

Notes: Some totals in this table may not correspond due to rounding. In this table, n.a. signifies 'no data available'; n.d.r. signifies 'no disaster reported'. For more information, see section on caveats in the introduction to this annex.

In 2014, the number of people reported affected by natural disasters was the second lowest of the decade. Inversely, the number of people reported affected by technological disasters was by far the highest of the decade.

Among natural disasters, droughts affected the most people in 2014 (almost 40 million) but, this number remains below its decade average. The numbers of people reported affected by floods (almost 37 million) was the third lowest of the decade, far below its 87 million decadal average. Storms affected almost 26 million people, a number which is also below the average for the decade.

The numbers of people reported affected by extreme temperatures, landslides and volcanic activities were, all three, the third highest of the decade, but, if the numbers of people affected by the first two disaster types were below their average for the decade, the number of those affected by volcanic activities was above its decennial average. In 2014, the two disasters that affected the most people both occurred in China: a drought affected 27.5 million people and a flood, 15 million.

The numbers of people affected by transport and miscellaneous accidents were both the third lowest of the decade. On the other hand, the number of those affected by industrial accidents was, by far, the highest of the decade, but was essentially due to a fire in a water treatment plant which cut off drinking water to the capital of the Maldives.

TABLE 8 Total amount of disaster estimated damage, by type of phenomenon and year (2005–2014), in millions of US dollars (2014 prices)

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Total
Droughts[1]	2,444	3,794	595	529	2,607	3,708	11,477	26,253	1,880	11,005	64,292
Dry mass movements[2]	n.d.r.	n.a.	n.d.r.	n.a.	n.a.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.a.	8	n.d.r.	8
Earthquakes[3]	8,376	4,152	17,614	97,192	6,884	52,896	249,661	19,687	9,222	7,174	472,857
Extreme temperatures	500	1,210	n.a.	24,854	1,250	517	847	162	1,016	2,518	32,874
Floods[4]	21,982	9,859	28,331	22,628	9,094	46,336	85,421	27,199	54,147	37,838	342,836
Insect infestations	n.d.r.	n.a.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.a.
Landslides	69	49	n.a.	n.a.	175	1,428	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	258	1,978
Storms	230,789	21,460	34,774	68,732	29,694	31,451	55,149	91,024	53,272	39,978	656,323
Volcanic activities	n.a.	181	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	113	n.a.	n.a.	186	480
Wildfires	4,680	1,136	5,409	2,753	1,721	2,315	3,184	1,275	1,090	159	23,721
Subtotal climato-, hydro- and meteorological disasters	*260,464*	*37,508*	*69,109*	*119,496*	*44,541*	*85,755*	*156,077*	*145,913*	*111,405*	*91,756*	*1,122,024*
Subtotal geophysical disasters	*8,376*	*4,334*	*17,614*	*97,192*	*6,884*	*52,896*	*249,774*	*19,687*	*9,230*	*7,360*	*473,345*
Total natural disasters	**268,839**	**41,841**	**86,723**	**216,688**	**51,425**	**138,650**	**405,851**	**165,600**	**120,635**	**99,116**	**1,595,370**
Industrial accidents	512	n.a.	1,022	n.a.	1,734	22,481	n.a.	32	203	n.a.	25,985
Miscellaneous accidents	13	1	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	280	1	1	5	n.a.	300
Transport accidents	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	2	n.a.	379	n.a.	381
Total technological disasters	**525**	**1**	**1,022**	**n.a.**	**1,734**	**22,761**	**3**	**33**	**587**	**n.a.**	**26,666**
Total	**269,364**	**41,843**	**87,745**	**216,688**	**53,159**	**161,411**	**405,854**	**165,633**	**121,222**	**99,116**	**1,622,036**

Source: EM-DAT, CRED, University of Louvain, Belgium

[1] Includes food insecurities.

[2] Landslides, rockfalls, subsidence, etc. of geophysical origin.

[3] Includes tsunamis.

[4] Includes waves and surges.

Notes: Some totals in this table may not correspond due to rounding. In this table, n.a. signifies 'no data available'; n.d.r. signifies 'no disaster reported'. For more information, see section on caveats in the introduction to this annex. Estimates of disaster damage must be treated with caution, as the financial value attached to infrastructures in very high and high human development countries is much higher than in low and medium human development countries. While reporting is better for large disasters, the low reporting rates of direct damage make analysis difficult.

In 2014, damages from natural disasters were the fourth lowest of the decade. Damages from wildfires were at their lowest level for the decade and those from earthquakes at their third lowest, far below their decadal average The highest amounts of damages resulted from floods and storms, but damages from floods were above their average for the decade while those from storms were below the average. Damages from volcanic activities were, in 2014, at their highest level for the decade and those from landslides and extreme temperatures at their second highest. The costliest natural disaster in 2014 was a flood in India which in September caused damages estimated at US$16 billion.

Amounts of damages from technological disasters were unavailable in 2014.

TABLE 9 Total number of reported disasters, by type of phenomenon, continent and level of human development[1] (2005–2014)

	Africa	Americas	Asia	Europe	Oceania	VHHD	HHD	MHD	LHD	Total
Droughts[2]	119	50	42	8	4	13	47	41	122	223
Dry mass movements[3]	1	2	3	n.d.r.	1	n.d.r.	3	3	1	7
Earthquakes[4]	13	42	163	24	11	40	121	64	28	253
Extreme temperatures	2	39	66	153	2	121	78	50	13	262
Floods[5]	438	343	700	224	46	249	513	473	516	1,751
Insect infestations	4	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	4	4
Landslides	13	33	112	8	4	9	58	54	49	170
Storms	83	316	406	138	45	385	247	255	101	988
Volcanic activities	6	22	23	1	9	6	14	31	10	61
Wildfires	9	39	8	25	9	59	19	7	5	90
Subtotal climato-, hydro- and meteorological disasters	*668*	*820*	*1,334*	*556*	*110*	*836*	*962*	*880*	*810*	*3,488*
Subtotal geophysical disasters	*20*	*66*	*189*	*25*	*21*	*46*	*138*	*98*	*39*	*321*
Total natural disasters	**688**	**886**	**1,523**	**581**	**131**	**882**	**1,100**	**978**	**849**	**3,809**
Industrial accidents	53	34	292	38	2	25	286	61	47	419
Miscellaneous accidents	89	45	185	49	1	53	105	121	90	369
Transport accidents	692	276	555	178	13	191	451	452	620	1,714
Total technological disasters	**834**	**355**	**1,032**	**265**	**16**	**269**	**842**	**634**	**757**	**2,502**
Total	**1,522**	**1,241**	**2,555**	**846**	**147**	**1,151**	**1,942**	**1,612**	**1,606**	**6,311**

Source: EM-DAT, CRED, University of Louvain, Belgium

[1] See note on UNDP's Human Development Index country status in the disaster definitions section in the introduction to this annex. VHHD stands for very high human development, HHD for high human development, MHD for medium human development and LHD for low human development.

[2] Includes food insecurities.

[3] Landslides, rockfalls, subsidence, etc. of geophysical origin.

[4] Includes tsunamis.

[5] Includes waves and surges.

Notes: Some totals in this table may not correspond due to rounding. In this table, n.d.r. signifies 'no disaster reported'. For more information, see section on caveats in the introduction to this annex.

During the decade, Asia accounted for 40 per cent of the total number of disasters but for 70 per cent of industrial accidents, 66 per cent of landslides, 64 per cent of earthquakes, 50 per cent of miscellaneous accidents, 40 per cent of floods and 41 per cent of storms.

Africa accounted for 24 per cent of the total number of disasters but for 100 per cent of insect infestations, 53 per cent of droughts and 40 per cent of transport accidents.

The Americas accounted for 20 per cent of the total number of disasters but for 43 per cent of wildfires, 36 per cent of volcanic activities and 32 per cent of storms.

Europe accounted for 13 per cent of the total number of disasters but for 58 per cent of extreme temperatures and 28 per cent of wildfires.

Oceania accounted for 2.3 per cent of the total number of disasters but for 15 per cent of volcanic activities and 10 per cent of wildfires.

During the decade, high human development countries accounted for 31 per cent of the total number of disasters but for 68 per cent of industrial accidents and 48 per cent of earthquakes.

Medium human development countries accounted for 25.5 per cent of the total number of disasters but for 51 per cent of volcanic activities, 33 per cent of miscellaneous accidents and 32 per cent of landslides.

Low human development countries accounted for 25.5 per cent of the total number of disasters but for 100 per cent of insect infestations, 55 per cent of droughts and 36 per cent of transport accidents.

Very high human development countries accounted for 18 per cent of the total number of disasters but for 66 per cent of wildfires, 46 per cent of extreme temperatures and 39 per cent of storms.

TABLE 10 Total number of people reported killed, by type of phenomenon, continent and level of human development[1] (2005–2014)

	Africa	Americas	Asia	Europe	Oceania	VHHD	HHD	MHD	LHD	Total
Droughts[2]	20,166	4	134	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	146	4	20,154	20,304
Dry mass movements[3]	98	48	73	n.d.r.	10	n.d.r.	69	150	10	229
Earthquakes[4]	78	223,886	198,357	1,051	431	21,000	94,236	11,659	296,908	423,806
Extreme temperatures	22	2,145	5,810	63,958	486	7,895	59,490	3,105	1,931	72,421
Floods[5]	7,299	6,372	44,081	1,161	179	1,456	15,293	25,677	16,666	59,092
Insect infestations	n.a.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.a.	n.a.
Landslides	600	998	7,718	66	94	263	3,862	2,995	2,356	9,476
Storms	1,158	8,155	167,768	367	237	5,931	4,083	26,135	141,536	177,685
Volcanic activities	6	23	433	n.a.	n.a.	62	21	367	12	462
Wildfires	128	123	67	213	201	468	138	68	58	732
Subtotal climato-, hydro- and meteorological disasters	*29,373*	*17,797*	*225,578*	*65,765*	*1,197*	*16,013*	*83,012*	*57,984*	*182,701*	*339,710*
Subtotal geophysical disasters	*182*	*223,957*	*198,863*	*1,051*	*441*	*21,062*	*94,326*	*12,176*	*296,930*	*424,494*
Total natural disasters	**29,555**	**241,754**	**424,441**	**66,816**	**1,638**	**37,075**	**177,338**	**70,160**	**479,631**	**764,204**
Industrial accidents	2,063	723	8,897	1,165	29	337	7,475	2,875	2,190	12,877
Miscellaneous accidents	2,166	1,459	6,723	1,175	10	1,353	2,643	5,374	2,163	11,533
Transport accidents	20,096	6,229	18,993	4,808	602	4,782	12,163	15,150	18,633	50,728
Total technological disasters	**24,325**	**8,411**	**34,613**	**7,148**	**641**	**6,472**	**22,281**	**23,399**	**22,986**	**75,138**
Total	**53,880**	**250,165**	**459,054**	**73,964**	**2,279**	**43,547**	**199,619**	**93,559**	**502,617**	**839,342**

Source: EM-DAT, CRED, University of Louvain, Belgium

[1] See note on UNDP's Human Development Index country status in the disaster definitions section in the introduction to this annex. VHHD stands for very high human development, HHD for high human development, MHD for medium human development and LHD for low human development.

[2] Includes food insecurities.

[3] Landslides, rockfalls, subsidence, etc. of geophysical origin.

[4] Includes tsunamis.

[5] Includes waves and surges.

Notes: Some totals in this table may not correspond due to rounding. In this table, n.a. signifies 'no data available'; n.d.r. signifies 'no disaster reported'. For more information, see section on caveats in the introduction to this annex.

During the decade, Asia accounted for 55 per cent of the total number of people killed by disasters but for 94 per cent of deaths from storms and from volcanic activities, 81 per cent from landslides, 74 per cent from floods and 69 per cent from industrial accidents.

The Americas accounted for 30 per cent of all deaths from disasters but for 53 per cent of deaths from earthquakes.

Europe accounted for 9 per cent of the total deaths from disasters but for 88 per cent of deaths from extreme temperatures and 29 per cent from wildfires.

Africa accounted for 6.4 per cent of the total number of deaths but for 99 per cent of deaths from droughts, 40 per cent from transport accidents, 19 per cent from miscellaneous accidents and 16 per cent from industrial accidents.

Oceania accounted for 0.3 per cent of the total number of deaths from disasters but for 27 per cent of deaths from wildfires.

During the decade, 71 per cent of people killed by disasters lived in medium and low human development countries. Low human development countries accounted for 60 per cent of the total number of deaths from disasters but for 99 per cent of those killed by droughts, 80 per cent from storms and 70 per cent from earthquakes.

Medium human development countries accounted for 11 per cent of people killed by disasters, but for 79 per cent of deaths from volcanic activities, 47 per cent caused by miscellaneous accidents, 43 per cent from floods, 32 per cent from landslides, 30 per cent from transport accidents and 22 per cent from industrial accidents.

High human development countries accounted for 24 per cent of all deaths from disasters, but for 82 per cent of deaths from extreme temperatures, 58 per cent from industrial accidents and 41 per cent from landslides.

Very high human development countries accounted for only 5 per cent of deaths from disasters but for 64 per cent of deaths caused by wildfires, 13 per cent from volcanic activities, 12 per cent from miscellaneous accidents and 11 per cent from extreme temperatures.

TABLE 11 Total number of people reported affected, by type of phenomenon, continent and level of human development[1] (2005 to 2014), in thousands

	Africa	Americas	Asia	Europe	Oceania	VHHD	HHD	MHD	LHD	Total
Droughts[2]	221,734	11,324	302,018	216	6	n.a.	288,881	17,754	228,663	535,299
Dry mass movements[3]	1	3	< 0.5	n.d.r.	n.a.	n.d.r.	< 0.5	4	n.a.	4
Earthquakes[4]	60	9,353	73,657	287	631	4,539	57,280	12,800	9,368	83,988
Extreme temperatures	8	1,360	86,428	622	2	148	83,962	4,038	271	88,419
Floods[5]	30,287	45,515	784,205	5,528	881	14,972	583,472	194,605	73,367	866,417
Insect infestations	5,100	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	5,100	5,100
Landslides	36	97	3,030	< 0.5	10	23	2,168	194	789	3,173
Storms	2,551	15,995	328,778	1,270	410	12,773	201,546	126,913	7,771	349,004
Volcanic activities	298	442	631	n.a.	43	15	350	733	315	1,413
Wildfires	14	874	22	1,015	12	783	1,013	130	11	1,938
Subtotal climato-, hydro- and meteorological disasters	*259,729*	*75,166*	*1,504,482*	*8,652*	*1,321*	*28,700*	*1,161,043*	*343,635*	*315,972*	*1,849,350*
Subtotal geophysical disasters	*358*	*9,798*	*74,288*	*287*	*674*	*4,554*	*57,631*	*13,537*	*9,683*	*85,405*
Total natural disasters	**260,087**	**84,964**	**1,578,769**	**8,938**	**1,996**	**33,254**	**1,218,673**	**357,172**	**325,655**	**1,934,754**
Industrial accidents	118	99	274	9	< 0.5	24	111	247	118	500
Miscellaneous accidents	143	7	123	13	n.a.	3	23	131	129	286
Transport accidents	15	10	15	4	< 0.5	11	9	14	10	44
Total technological disasters	**276**	**116**	**412**	**26**	**< 0.5**	**38**	**143**	**392**	**257**	**830**
Total	**260,363**	**85,080**	**1,579,181**	**8,964**	**1,996**	**33,293**	**1,218,816**	**357,564**	**325,912**	**1,935,585**

Source: EM-DAT, CRED, University of Louvain, Belgium

[1] See note on UNDP's Human Development Index country status in the disaster definitions section in the introduction to this annex. VHHD stands for very high human development, HHD for high human development, MHD for medium human development and LHD for low human development.

[2] Includes food insecurities.

[3] Landslides, rockfalls, subsidence, etc. of geophysical origin.

[4] Includes tsunamis.

[5] Includes waves and surges.

Notes: Some totals in this table may not correspond due to rounding. In this table, n.a. signifies 'no data available'; n.d.r. signifies 'no disaster reported'. For more information, see section on caveats in the introduction to this annex.

During the decade, the highest proportion of people affected by disasters was in Asia (82 per cent) but the continent accounted for 97 per cent of people affected by extreme temperatures, 95 per cent of those affected by landslides, 94 per cent of people affected by storms and 91 per cent of those affected by floods.

Africa accounted for 13 per cent of people affected by disasters but for 50 per cent of those affected by miscellaneous accidents, 41 per cent of those affected by droughts, 24 per cent of those affected by industrial accidents and 21 per cent of those affected by volcanic activities.

Americas accounted for 4.4 per cent of people affected by disasters but for 45 per cent of those affected by wildfires, 31 per cent of those affected by volcanic activities and 23 per cent of those affected by transport accidents.

Europe accounted for 0.5 per cent of people affected by disasters but for 52 per cent of those affected by wildfires and 3 per cent of those affected by technological disasters.

Oceania accounted for 0.1 per cent of people affected by disasters but for 3 per cent of those affected by volcanic activities, 0.7 per cent of those affected by earthquakes and 0.6 per cent of those affected by wildfires.

High human development countries accounted for 63 per cent of the total number of people reported affected by disasters but for 95 per cent of those affected by extreme temperature, 68 per cent of those affected by earthquakes and landslides, and 67 per cent of those affected by floods.

Medium human development countries accounted for 19 per cent of the total number of people reported affected by disasters but for 52 per cent of those affected by volcanic activities, 49 per cent of those affected by industrial accidents, 46 per cent of those affected by miscellaneous accidents, 36 per cent of those affected by storms and 31 per cent of those affected by transport accidents.

Low human development countries accounted for 17 per cent of the total number of people reported affected by disasters but for 45 per cent of those affected by miscellaneous accidents and 43 per cent of those affected by droughts.

Very high human development countries accounted for less than 2 per cent of the total number of people reported affected by disasters but for 40 per cent of those affected by wildfires and 25 per cent of those affected by transport accidents.

TABLE 12 Total amount of disaster estimated damage, by type of phenomenon, continent and level of human development[1] (2005 to 2014), in millions of US dollars (2014 prices)

	Africa	Americas	Asia	Europe	Oceania	VHHD	HHD	MHD	LHD	Total
Droughts[2]	632	40,471	14,931	7,422	836	35,668	27,049	854	721	64,292
Dry mass movements[3]	n.a.	n.a.	8	n.d.r.	n.a.	n.d.r.	8	n.a.	n.a.	8
Earthquakes[4]	33	46,682	375,991	23,136	27,014	327,187	120,618	9,484	15,568	472,857
Extreme temperatures	n.a.	5,308	25,268	2,298	n.a.	5,407	26,428	1,021	18	32,874
Floods[5]	3,748	52,465	214,039	59,228	13,355	100,415	166,408	53,389	22,623	342,836
Insect infestations	n.a.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.a.	n.a.
Landslides	n.a.	796	1,182	n.a.	n.a.	75	1,007	877	20	1,978
Storms	1,089	482,160	117,766	44,046	11,262	522,140	90,129	36,609	7,446	656,323
Volcanic activities	n.a.	294	186	n.a.	n.a.	113	181	186	n.a.	480
Wildfires	487	11,179	319	9,637	2,100	21,166	2,016	539	n.a.	23,721
Subtotal climato-, hydro- and meteorological disasters	*5,956*	*592,379*	*373,505*	*122,631*	*27,554*	*684,870*	*313,037*	*93,289*	*30,828*	*1,122,024*
Subtotal geophysical disasters	*33*	*46,977*	*376,186*	*23,136*	*27,014*	*327,299*	*120,808*	*9,670*	*15,568*	*473,345*
Total natural disasters	**5,989**	**639,356**	**749,690**	**145,767**	**54,568**	**1,012,170**	**433,845**	**102,959**	**46,396**	**1,595,370**
Industrial accidents	n.a.	22,576	774	2,635	n.a.	22,716	2,527	742	n.a.	25,985
Miscellaneous accidents	n.a.	297	3	n.a.	n.a.	280	18	2	1	300
Transport accidents	n.a.	239	2	140	n.a.	379	n.a.	2	n.a.	381
Total technological disasters	**n.a.**	**23,112**	**779**	**2,775**	**n.a.**	**23,375**	**2,545**	**746**	**1**	**26,666**
Total	**5,989**	**662,468**	**750,469**	**148,542**	**54,568**	**1,035,544**	**436,389**	**103,705**	**46,397**	**1,622,036**

Source: EM-DAT, CRED, University of Louvain, Belgium

[1] See note on UNDP's Human Development Index country status in the disaster definitions section in the introduction to this annex. VHHD stands for very high human development, HHD for high human development, MHD for medium human development and LHD for low human development.

[2] Includes food insecurities.

[3] Landslides, rockfalls, subsidence, etc. of geophysical origin.

[4] Includes tsunamis.

[5] Includes waves and surges.

Notes: Some totals in this table may not correspond due to rounding. In this table, n.a. signifies 'no data available'; n.d.r. signifies 'no disaster reported'. For more information, see section on caveats in the introduction to this annex. Estimates of disaster damage must be treated with caution, as the financial value attached to infrastructures in very high and high human development countries is much higher than in low and medium human development countries. While reporting is better for large disasters, the low reporting rates of direct damage make analysis difficult.

During the decade, Asia accounted for 46 per cent of the reported damages but for 79 per cent of costs related to earthquakes, 62 per cent of costs from floods and 60 per cent of those caused by landslides.

The Americas accounted for 41 per cent of total reported damages, but for 99 per cent of those from miscellaneous accidents, 87 per cent of those from industrial accidents, 73 per cent of those from storms, 63 per cent of those from droughts and transport accidents.

Europe accounted for 9 per cent of reported damages but for 41 per cent of those from wildfires, 37 per cent of those caused by transport accidents and 17 per cent of those caused by floods.

Oceania accounted for 3 per cent of all damages but for 9 per cent of those from wildfires and 6 per cent of those caused by earthquakes.

Africa accounted for only 0.4 per cent of all reported damages but for 2 per cent of those from wildfires and 1 per cent of those caused by floods and droughts.

Very high human development countries accounted for 64 per cent of disaster damages and high human development countries, 27 per cent.

TABLE 13 Total number of people reported killed and affected by disasters by country and territory (1995–2004; 2005–2014; and 2014)

	Total number of people reported killed (1995–2004)	Total number of people reported affected (1995–2004)	Total number of people reported killed (2005–2014)	Total number of people reported affected (2005–2014)	Total number of people reported killed (2014)	Total number of people reported affected (2014)
AFRICA	**44,619**	**279,903,362**	**53,880**	**260,363,183**	**2,585**	**6,762,399**
Algeria	3,903	305,775	646	126,712	113	478
Angola	1,222	663,800	539	2,508,880	26	n.a.
Benin	265	800,305	258	1,220,809	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Botswana	23	149,236	12	9,266	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Burkina Faso	95	185,810	402	10,169,043	n.a.	4,000,000
Burundi	222	2,015,025	377	6,904,378	96	12,682
Cameroon	770	6,378	717	96,867	n.a.	3,500
Cape Verde	18	46,306	60	2,651	n.a.	2,500
Central African Republic	218	93,414	284	153,584	69	90
Chad	161	1,586,992	145	8,958,748	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Comoros	256	300	521	371,296	n.a.	19,511
Congo, Democratic Republic of	2,508	264,939	3,281	211,128	364	4,081
Congo, Republic of	100	168,163	431	56,872	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Côte d'Ivoire	416	203	292	114,034	64	n.a.
Djibouti	52	301,125	145	1,423,339	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Egypt	2,043	9,544	2,555	7,834	214	84
Equatorial Guinea	2	3,650	103	1,650	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Eritrea	105	11,507,038	56	1,700,030	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Ethiopia	1,036	36,594,747	1,315	42,233,226	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Gabon	50	11	88	83,940	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Gambia	68	51,406	58	487,890	n.d.r.	n.d.r.

TABLE 13 Total number of people reported killed and affected by disasters by country and territory (1995–2004; 2005–2014; and 2014)

	Total number of people reported killed (1995–2004)	Total number of people reported affected (1995–2004)	Total number of people reported killed (2005–2014)	Total number of people reported affected (2005–2014)	Total number of people reported killed (2014)	Total number of people reported affected (2014)
Ghana	597	1,171,000	628	686,639	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Guinea	399	220,922	512	145,640	83	70
Guinea Bissau	220	102,500	187	89,971	21	15
Kenya	1,392	99,889,889	1,769	26,129,701	n.a.	1,600,000
Lesotho	1	1,002,251	66	2,413,190	n.a.	2,600
Liberia	70	7,000	25	536,926	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Libya	201	79	1,050	2,269	389	173
Madagascar	999	5,604,210	694	9,211,158	17	21,736
Malawi	728	11,192,746	205	15,388,124	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Mali	176	44,786	465	9,838,581	116	n.a.
Mauritania	98	3,118,880	192	3,173,631	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Mauritius	6	2,050	24	82	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Mayotte (FR)	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	54	12	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Morocco	2,332	963,370	847	233,749	72	117,055
Mozambique	1,445	7,285,444	698	6,307,810	22	95,576
Namibia	21	1,108,409	295	1,388,450	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Niger	135	7,285,957	267	29,167,149	36	165,578
Nigeria	8,513	589,220	5,001	8,889,483	213	10,033
Reunion (FR)	2	3,700	3	355	1	265
Rwanda	338	1,984,990	180	3,039,206	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Saint Helena (GB)	n.a.	300	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.

TABLE 13 Total number of people reported killed and affected by disasters by country and territory (1995–2004; 2005–2014; and 2014)

	Total number of people reported killed (1995–2004)	Total number of people reported affected (1995–2004)	Total number of people reported killed (2005–2014)	Total number of people reported affected (2005–2014)	Total number of people reported killed (2014)	Total number of people reported affected (2014)
Sao Tome and Principe	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	33	34	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Senegal	1,609	868,711	332	2,371,096	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Seychelles	8	12,867	n.a.	7,435	n.a.	4,435
Sierra Leone	899	200,025	564	23,551	11	9
Somalia	3,016	4,327,599	20,656	18,834,439	n.a.	371,000
South Africa	1,933	15,520,019	1,302	440,351	43	9,194
South Sudan, Republic of[1]			146	738,000	n.a.	n.a.
Sudan	1,397	8,788,514	1,428	14,114,065	138	260,236
Swaziland	52	4,402,059	14	422,085	11	400
Tanzania	2,214	19,100,319	1,220	5,975,897	31	40,000
Togo	3	280,405	244	299,840	76	55
Tunisia	383	27,134	324	7,117	11	n.a.
Uganda	1,142	3,263,417	1,257	4,995,817	308	41
Zambia	327	3,410,793	414	3,447,713	26	20,000
Zimbabwe	430	23,369,630	499	15,201,440	14	1,002
AMERICAS	**82,168**	**68,935,829**	**250,165**	**85,080,453**	**1,549**	**4,545,588**
Anguilla (GB)	n.a.	150	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Antigua and Barbuda	6	11,684	n.a.	30,800	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Argentina	621	894,271	498	660,852	56	7,553
Aruba (NL)	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Bahamas	13	9,000	111	22,582	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Barbados	1	2,880	n.a.	2,501	n.d.r.	n.d.r.

TABLE 13 Total number of people reported killed and affected by disasters by country and territory (1995–2004; 2005–2014; and 2014)

	Total number of people reported killed (1995–2004)	Total number of people reported affected (1995–2004)	Total number of people reported killed (2005–2014)	Total number of people reported affected (2005–2014)	Total number of people reported killed (2014)	Total number of people reported affected (2014)
Belize	75	145,170	11	68,000	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Bermuda	22	n.a.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Bolivia	972	746,485	873	3,276,538	130	363,157
Brazil	2,487	22,510,824	3,395	7,515,174	73	503,313
Canada	419	82,934	155	146,210	32	7,504
Cayman Islands (GB)	2	300	n.a.	n.a.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Chile	180	607,360	921	3,597,773	18	537,279
Colombia	2,731	2,594,985	2,598	13,292,802	181	54,292
Costa Rica	134	873,853	121	426,774	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Cuba	262	8,145,683	257	3,455,633	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Dominica	16	5,991	2	7,770	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Dominican Republic	1,515	1,108,075	441	356,621	1	300
Ecuador	815	449,948	455	989,882	56	45
El Salvador	1,930	2,086,253	520	565,155	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Falkland Islands (GB)	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
French Guiana (FR)	n.a.	70,000	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Greenland (DK)	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Grenada	39	60,210	1	1,650	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Guadeloupe (FR)	25	1,052	n.a.	n.a.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Guatemala	1,107	348,229	2,286	7,139,690	6	1,351,966
Guyana	10	1,252,600	34	409,774	n.d.r.	n.d.r.

TABLE 13 Total number of people reported killed and affected by disasters by country and territory (1995–2004; 2005–2014; and 2014)

	Total number of people reported killed (1995–2004)	Total number of people reported affected (1995–2004)	Total number of people reported killed (2005–2014)	Total number of people reported affected (2005–2014)	Total number of people reported killed (2014)	Total number of people reported affected (2014)
Haiti	6,767	643,232	224,194	4,668,536	87	30,100
Honduras	14,939	3,807,923	757	1,821,589	18	954,597
Jamaica	30	377,626	41	362,485	n.a.	91,545
Martinique (FR)	n.a.	600	3	106	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Mexico	3,690	2,766,318	1,728	11,542,352	19	96,516
Montserrat (GB)	32	13,000	n.a.	200	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Netherlands Antilles (NL)	17	40,004	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Nicaragua	3,525	1,573,243	405	640,805	2	72,639
Panama	50	65,333	128	171,481	9	80,859
Paraguay	558	525,654	29	2,374,085	n.a.	233,360
Peru	3,436	6,369,026	4,115	5,127,462	643	94,627
Puerto Rico (US)	161	170,904	3	3,771	1	n.a.
Saint Kitts and Nevis	5	12,980	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Saint Lucia	n.a.	375	21	202,984	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Saint Pierre et Miquelon (FR)	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	4	1,104	12	24,327	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Suriname	10	n.a.	25	31,548	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Trinidad and Tobago	3	2,377	n.a.	n.a.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Turks and Caicos Islands (GB)	43	200	107	1,650	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
United States	4,982	9,814,448	5,272	15,859,653	217	65,936
Uruguay	99	27,547	37	124,020	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Venezuela	30,425	705,995	609	157,218	n.d.r.	n.d.r.

TABLE 13 Total number of people reported killed and affected by disasters by country and territory (1995–2004; 2005–2014; and 2014)

	Total number of people reported killed (1995–2004)	Total number of people reported affected (1995–2004)	Total number of people reported killed (2005–2014)	Total number of people reported affected (2005–2014)	Total number of people reported killed (2014)	Total number of people reported affected (2014)
Virgin Islands (GB)	n.a.	3	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Virgin Islands (US)	10	10,000	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
ASIA	**1,050,076**	**2,521,489,901**	**459,054**	**1,579,180,917**	**8,523**	**92,729,876**
Afghanistan	10,035	8,341,993	4,897	4,856,965	575	150,135
Armenia	16	319,156	n.a.	88,000	n.a.	12,000
Azerbaijan	564	2,478,111	56	97,499	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Bahrain	143	n.a.	92	60	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Bangladesh	12,091	86,347,127	10,433	42,307,931	190	2,805,849
Bhutan	200	1,000	24	20,028	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Brunei Darussalam	n.a.	n.a.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Cambodia	611	20,417,614	976	4,577,465	45	530,450
China, People's Republic of[2,3]	33,111	1,351,183,737	112,904	1,093,934,138	1,902	59,707,210
Georgia	158	1,412,964	12	156,942	n.a.	12,000
Hong Kong (CN)[2]	186	4,892	75	15,713	n.a.	n.a.
India	84,449	718,693,662	28,777	144,142,963	1,432	5,658,539
Indonesia	173,814	6,010,244	16,071	10,287,927	538	572,070
Iran, Islamic Republic of	33,076	113,208,880	2,721	1,016,459	77	452,589
Iraq	171	8,007	1,492	66,746	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Israel	106	1,897	81	2,023,250	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Japan	6,038	2,249,729	21,663	1,178,394	273	41,229
Jordan	116	330,274	48	80	n.d.r.	n.d.r.

TABLE 13 Total number of people reported killed and affected by disasters by country and territory (1995–2004; 2005–2014; and 2014)

	Total number of people reported killed (1995–2004)	Total number of people reported affected (1995–2004)	Total number of people reported killed (2005–2014)	Total number of people reported affected (2005–2014)	Total number of people reported killed (2014)	Total number of people reported affected (2014)
Kazakhstan	231	651,002	252	105,488	5	2,709
Korea, Democratic People's Republic of	610,634	74,673,920	1,507	5,419,906	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Korea, Republic of	2,653	720,725	846	103,437	390	420
Kuwait	2	200	44	76	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Kyrgyzstan	212	11,486	162	2,047,642	n.a.	n.a.
Lao Democratic People's Republic	185	3,084,405	152	1,375,080	n.a.	750
Lebanon	48	17,555	135	54	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Macau (CN)[3]	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.a.	133	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Malaysia	685	182,269	500	2,883,750	287	2,430,000
Maldives	143	27,314	n.a.	204,649	n.a.	203,000
Mongolia	203	3,936,711	98	1,553,234	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Myanmar	616	323,007	139,260	3,320,199	n.a.	40,000
Nepal	3,514	1,454,701	2,683	2,197,638	670	187,469
Oman	104	104	118	20,211	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Pakistan	6,209	18,521,926	82,802	49,784,339	924	2,472,882
Palestine (West Bank and Gaza)[4]	14	20	11	65,336	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Philippines	8,520	32,883,519	19,793	103,332,628	332	13,233,096
Qatar	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	61	31	12	31
Saudi Arabia	1,185	15,814	936	12,055	15	130
Singapore	n.a.	1,200	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Sri Lanka	36,110	6,293,674	832	9,842,558	336	3,004,759

TABLE 13 Total number of people reported killed and affected by disasters by country and territory (1995–2004; 2005–2014; and 2014)

	Total number of people reported killed (1995–2004)	Total number of people reported affected (1995–2004)	Total number of people reported killed (2005–2014)	Total number of people reported affected (2005–2014)	Total number of people reported killed (2014)	Total number of people reported affected (2014)
Syrian Arab Republic	304	668,588	183	3,900,199	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Taiwan (CN)	3,527	1,174,712	945	2,353,228	80	331
Tajikistan	193	6,655,894	281	2,917,943	20	13,223
Thailand	10,098	28,854,545	2,335	63,623,733	178	1,150,881
Timor-Leste[5]	4	4,008	1	9,677	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Turkmenistan	51	n.a.	15	n.a.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
United Arab Emirates	183	41	59	44	15	14
Uzbekistan	168	1,223,988	36	5,116	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Viet Nam	8,262	28,832,125	3,168	17,813,649	54	48,080
Yemen	1,133	267,161	1,337	1,518,324	173	30
EUROPE	**107,292**	**26,452,107**	**73,964**	**8,963,913**	**989**	**2,866,111**
Albania	29	208,009	75	668,407	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Austria	628	70,494	37	1,621	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Azores (PT)	74	1,215	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Belarus	92	23,499	11	44,775	2	31,500
Belgium	1,262	4,530	1,000	1,165	n.a.	n.a.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	62	351,079	50	1,062,087	25	1,000,000
Bulgaria	20	1,940	178	60,692	36	8,547
Canary Islands (ES)	100	852	68	428	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Croatia	875	4,000	43	12,032	3	9,116
Cyprus	59	3,097	48	70	n.d.r.	n.d.r.

TABLE 13 Total number of people reported killed and affected by disasters by country and territory (1995–2004; 2005–2014; and 2014)

	Total number of people reported killed (1995–2004)	Total number of people reported affected (1995–2004)	Total number of people reported killed (2005–2014)	Total number of people reported affected (2005–2014)	Total number of people reported killed (2014)	Total number of people reported affected (2014)
Czech Republic	511	302,206	124	1,320,280	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Denmark	9	2,072	6	n.a.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Estonia	22	30	14	100	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Finland	35	48	n.a.	400	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
France	20,227	3,594,464	1,655	517,103	22	4,000
Germany	9,738	466,606	242	9,089	17	69
Gibraltar (GB)	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Greece	610	158,782	444	91,822	86	77,025
Hungary	200	147,575	656	112,937	n.a.	6,500
Iceland	34	282	n.a.	n.a.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Ireland	13	1,200	3	600	1	n.a.
Isle of Man (GB)	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Italy	21,004	111,809	1,513	102,251	103	10,115
Latvia	42	n.a.	104	29	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Lithuania	64	n.a.	64	n.a.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Luxembourg	190	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Macedonia, Former Yugoslav Republic of	42	107,906	19	1,022,554	n.a.	8,800
Malta	299	4	123	27	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Moldova	12	2,604,457	38	246,098	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Montenegro[6]	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	14	13,668	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Netherlands	1,106	255,294	1,033	133	n.d.r.	n.d.r.

TABLE 13 Total number of people reported killed and affected by disasters by country and territory (1995–2004; 2005–2014; and 2014)

	Total number of people reported killed (1995–2004)	Total number of people reported affected (1995–2004)	Total number of people reported killed (2005–2014)	Total number of people reported affected (2005–2014)	Total number of people reported killed (2014)	Total number of people reported affected (2014)
Norway	252	6,142	4	600	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Poland	949	241,313	1,299	106,769	28	1
Portugal	2,856	153,638	142	5,180	1	54
Romania	509	274,223	632	122,951	17	525
Russian Federation	6,643	3,187,053	58,797	537,580	144	24,674
Serbia[6]	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	89	1,752,244	55	1,613,000
Serbia-Montenegro[6]	140	80,061	51	48,974	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Slovakia	88	58,593	188	1,059	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Slovenia	290	1,305	22	65,600	3	52,550
Spain	15,721	6,056,966	532	23,709	17	28
Sweden	67	162	14	n.a.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Switzerland	1,171	1,810	61	5,688	2	n.a.
Turkey	20,098	5,588,392	2,041	155,680	410	462
Ukraine	608	2,089,518	1,664	436,658	12	5
United Kingdom	541	291,481	866	412,853	5	19,140
OCEANIA	**3,359**	**10,331,420**	**2,279**	**1,996,041**	**201**	**170,033**
American Samoa (US)	6	23,063	34	2,500	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Australia	320	8,621,596	962	523,829	141	52,707
Cook Islands (NZ)	19	1,644	n.a.	2,810	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Fiji	92	304,327	51	82,808	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
French Polynesia (FR)	13	511	21	3,411	n.d.r.	n.d.r.

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	Total number of people reported killed (1995–2004)	Total number of people reported affected (1995–2004)	Total number of people reported killed (2005–2014)	Total number of people reported affected (2005–2014)	Total number of people reported killed (2014)	Total number of people reported affected (2014)
Guam (US)	230	21,864	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Kiribati	n.a.	84,000	n.a.	305	n.a.	220
Marshall Islands	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.a.	7,344	n.a.	360
Micronesia, Federated States of	48	37,431	n.a.	n.a.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Nauru	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
New Caledonia (FR)	2	1,100	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
New Zealand	28	8,610	247	618,166	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Niue (NZ)	1	702	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Northern Mariana Islands	3	500	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Palau	1	12,004	n.a.	n.a.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Papua New Guinea	2,429	1,109,270	571	556,862	n.a.	40,726
Samoa	1	n.a.	164	18,288	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Solomon Islands	n.a.	1,915	132	97,509	47	52,000
Tokelau (NZ)	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.a.	26	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Tonga	n.a.	23,071	85	4,575	1	4,014
Tuvalu	18	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
Vanuatu	148	79,812	12	76,356	12	20,006
Wallis and Futuna (FR)	n.d.r.	n.d.r.	n.a.	1,252	n.d.r.	n.d.r.
World	**1,287,514**	**2,907,112,619**	**839,342**	**1,935,584,786**	**13,847**	**107,074,007**

Source: EM-DAT, CRED, University of Louvain, Belgium

[1] The Republic of South Sudan became an independent state on 9 July 2011.

[2] Since July 1997, Hong Kong has been included in China as Special Administrative Region (SAR).

[3] Since December 1999, Macau has been included in China as Special Administrative Region (SAR).

[4] Since September 1993 and the Israel–PLO Declaration of Principles, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank have a Palestinian self-government. Direct negotiations to determine the permanent status of these territories began in September 1999 but are far from a permanent agreement.

[5] Since May 2002, Timor-Leste has been an independent country.

[6] From 1992 to 2003 Serbia and Montenegro were considered one country (Yugoslavia); in 2003, Yugoslavia became the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro and, in 2006, two separate countries: Serbia and Montenegro.

Notes: In this table, n.a. signifies 'no data available'; n.d.r. signifies 'no disaster reported'. For more information, see section on caveats in the introduction to this annex.

Over the last decade, the highest numbers of deaths per continent were reported in Somalia (Africa), Haiti (the Americas), Myanmar (Asia), Russian Federation (Europe) and Australia (Oceania).

The maximum highest numbers of disaster-affected per continent were reported in Ethiopia (Africa), the United States of America (the Americas), China (Asia), Serbia (Europe) and New Zealand (Oceania).

Compared to 1995–2004, the past decade has seen the numbers of disaster deaths and of people reported affected reduced by one-third. However the figure is somewhat different between continents. The number of deaths increased by 21 per cent in Africa and was multiplied by a factor 3 in the Americas meanwhile it fell by one third in Europe and Oceania, and by 56 per cent in Asia. The number of people reported affected fell by 80 per cent in Oceania, by 66 per cent in Europe, by 37 per cent in Asia and by 7 per cent in Africa. On the other hand, it increased by 23 per cent in the Americas.

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STRATEGY 2020

Saving lives, changing minds.

Strategic aim 1

Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disasters and crises

Strategic aim 2

Enable healthy and safe living

Strategic aim 3

Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace

Enabling action 1	Build strong National Red Cross Red Crescent Societies
Enabling action 2	Pursue humanitarian diplomacy to prevent and reduce vulnerability in a globalized world
Enabling action 3	Function effectively as the International Federation

The Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

Humanity The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, born of a desire to bring assistance without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield, endeavours, in its international and national capacity, to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. Its purpose is to protect life and health and to ensure respect for the human being. It promotes mutual understanding, friendship, cooperation and lasting peace among all peoples.

Impartiality It makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavours to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.

Neutrality In order to continue to enjoy the confidence of all, the Movement may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

Independence The Movement is independent. The National Societies, while auxiliaries in the humanitarian services of their governments and subject to the laws of their respective countries, must always maintain their autonomy so that they may be able at all times to act in accordance with the principles of the Movement.

Voluntary service It is a voluntary relief movement not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.

Unity There can be only one Red Cross or Red Crescent Society in any one country. It must be open to all. It must carry on its humanitarian work throughout its territory.

Universality The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, in which all societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other, is worldwide.

World Disasters Report 2015

Focus on local actors, the key to humanitarian effectiveness

This year's *World Disasters Report* focuses on local actors and their role at the centre of effective humanitarian action. The report aims at addressing some problematic questions and exploring current experience and future trends in the roles of local actors in humanitarian work. It tracks humanitarian financing and why local organizations receive so little. It examines the challenges of partnerships with local actors and delivering aid in insecure and inaccessible environments. The report also looks at gaps in the laws and norms concerning humanitarian relief and disaster risk management, and the fact that the current approach to humanitarian response rarely considers a crisis's specific nature and context or the capacity of national actors.

The *World Disasters Report 2015* features:
– Local actors, the present and the future of humanitarian action
– Capacity development for better disaster risk management
– Law, governance and the role of local actors
– Are funding patterns keeping pace with trends and evidence?
– Aid delivery in insecure environments
– The role of local actors in protracted conflict
– Digital empowerment of local actors
– Disaster data

> *"Local organizations are on the front line of providing life-saving humanitarian assistance and protection. In disasters and conflicts around the world, local organizations are first responders, key operational partners, and stay behind long after the tide of international assistance has receded. They are also consistently at highest risk of attack and insecurity. In the consultations leading up to the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit, we have heard repeatedly that the only lasting solutions are ones that build on the capacity of local actors, including women and youth, and empower them to take leadership roles. This year's World Disasters Report makes a timely contribution to the discussion by unpacking the role of local actors across a range of contexts. It calls for us to re-examine the often oversimplified assumptions that underpin relationships between domestic and external humanitarian actors, setting the stage for an era of new partnerships that put people at the centre of humanitarian preparedness and response."*
>
> Dr Jemilah Mahmood, Chief of the World Humanitarian Summit secretariat

Published annually since 1993, the *World Disasters Report* brings together the latest trends, facts and analysis of contemporary crises and disasters.

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