

Whose Aid is it Anyway?

Politicizing aid in conflicts and crises

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A US Army soldier hands a meal to a girl in Samarra, Iraq, March 31, 2009. Photo courtesy of US Army. Use of US military imagery does not imply or constitute endorsement.

The effectiveness of international aid, both in meeting urgent needs and in tackling entrenched poverty, is being undermined in some of the world's poorest places. While effective aid has helped save lives, protect rights and build livelihoods, some donors' military and security interests have skewed global aid spending; and amidst conflict, disasters and political instability have too often led to uncoordinated, unsustainable, expensive and even dangerous aid projects. Skewed aid policies and practices threaten to undermine a decade of government donors' international commitments to effective, needs-focussed international aid. This paper sets out how these commitments are being disregarded, and how this trend can be reversed.

Summary

Effective aid helps save lives, protect rights and build livelihoods. Yet in conflicts and politically unstable settings from Afghanistan to Yemen, lifesaving humanitarian assistance and longer-term efforts to reduce poverty are being damaged where aid is used primarily to pursue donors' own narrow political and security objectives. This is not only undermining humanitarian principles and donors' development commitments; it impacts on the lives of some of the most vulnerable people affected by conflicts and natural disasters.

- Some donors are increasingly concentrating both humanitarian and development aid on countries and regions seen to threaten their own immediate security interests, while neglecting other equally insecure, impoverished and conflict-afflicted places. Since 2002 one-third of all development aid to the 48 states labelled 'fragile' by the OECD has gone to just three countries: Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan.¹ During this period aid to Iraq and Afghanistan alone has accounted for over two-fifths of the entire \$178bn global increase in aid provided by wealthy countries.
- From Afghanistan to Kenya, poorly conceived aid projects aimed at winning 'hearts and minds' have proved ineffective, costly, and have sometimes turned beneficiary communities and aid workers into targets of attack. Such practices are growing: US aid funds allocated to front-line military commanders to win 'hearts and minds' in Iraq and Afghanistan are now almost as large as the worldwide Development Assistance budget of the US government's aid agency USAID.
- In Afghanistan, the Occupied Palestinian Territories, Somalia and elsewhere, donors and military forces have made aid conditional on the political and military cooperation of communities and aid organizations; and have used aid to buy information or compliance with military forces.
- While military assets and logistics have played vital roles in emergencies and natural disasters, aid inappropriately delivered using military forces themselves has sometimes led to wasteful and costly aid, while overlooking the real contribution that military and police forces can make to vulnerable communities' security needs. For instance, the Spanish army's high-profile vaccination programme and water distribution following the Haiti earthquake cost over 18 times that of comparable civilian efforts, which the Spanish military partly duplicated.

These problems are not new, but the impact of conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as more recent aid policy shifts, have increased the trend. Both in Europe and North America, aid policies and programmes skewed by donors' foreign policy and national security

interests are beginning to be formally embedded in international development strategies and humanitarian practices. Foreign policy biases have since 2001 been written formally into aid policies and funding decisions in the USA, Canada and France. Elsewhere, including in the UK, Australia and the European Union, such priorities are at risk of being formally embedded in new international development strategies.

Policy coordination across foreign, defence and development departments can help better address common obstacles to development: for example, tackling climate change and capital flight; protecting civilians in conflict; preventing irresponsible arms transfers. But recruiting aid and aid institutions for donors' own national security objectives risks undermining the effectiveness of aid in meeting humanitarian needs and maximizing poverty reduction. Not only does this damage impartial attempts to provide aid and tackle poverty, but it often fails to build long-term security for recipient communities, their governments and donors themselves.

An agenda for effective aid

Drawing on the experiences of Oxfam's programmes and partners from Yemen and Afghanistan to Kenya and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), this paper argues that security and stability are promoted – not undermined – by impartial, needs-based humanitarian aid, and by poverty-focussed development aid, owned by and responsive to its beneficiaries, and independent of donors' immediate military and security objectives.

Some donors and aid organisations *are* promoting such approaches. Aid allocation driven by transparent and impartial needs assessments, like the European Commission's humanitarian 'Global Needs Assessment' index, ensures that 'aid orphans' and forgotten crises, off the national security radar, are not neglected. In Afghanistan, the UK's 'stabilization' doctrine has since 2008 begun to abandon the use of short-term, high-profile aid interventions aimed at winning 'hearts and minds'. And in contrast to highly-visible schools and hospitals built by militarized aid units, health and education facilities funded by donor aid but owned and led by communities themselves are safely and cost-effectively expanding the provision of essential services amidst conflict: like the thousands of community-based schools established in more than a dozen Afghan provinces since 2001 using existing, low-profile community venues to start providing education rapidly, build community support and avoid armed opposition attacks.

With aid policies and practices at a crossroads, such approaches – putting good humanitarian and development practice at the heart of efforts to meet needs and build stability – need urgently to be amplified.

Recommendations

- To meet their existing commitments to development aid effectiveness and principled humanitarian action, donors should ensure that all aid – in conflicts, stable countries and within countries themselves – has as its principal purpose the reduction of either poverty or humanitarian needs.
- Donors should ensure that the development projects they fund or plan in conflicts and stable settings alike are responsive to the needs of communities, aligned where possible with the policies of local and national administrations, and sustainable after foreign development workers have left. Donors and aid agencies alike must ensure that aid does not contribute to violations of international human rights and humanitarian law.
- All armed forces should adhere to existing, internationally agreed civil-military guidelines, setting out the effective and appropriate roles of military and civilian actors responding to humanitarian needs in conflicts and disasters. Their doctrines and rules of engagement should prohibit the allocation or restriction of humanitarian assistance for military or counter-terrorism objectives.
- Aid organizations likewise need to ensure that their activities do not exacerbate or provide resources for conflict. They should implement standards and guidelines to ensure that humanitarian aid ‘does no harm’, and that development aid is sensitive to conflict. They should refuse any donor funding which is conditional on them cooperating with military forces or providing information to them, or which requires them to distribute aid or allocate development resources based on the political or military cooperation of recipients.

Introduction

This paper describes how the effectiveness of aid – both in meeting urgent needs and in tackling entrenched poverty – is being undermined by the pursuit of narrow military and national security interests in some of the world's poorest and most vulnerable places.

Global aid spending is increasingly skewed towards countries where threats to donors' national security are perceived to exist, or where donors are militarily engaged. Unstable countries and conflicts outside the foreign policy spotlight lose out, despite equally great humanitarian needs and development challenges. So too do stable countries, home to between two-thirds and three-quarters of the world's poor.² The impact of these skewed aid policies is explored in section 2.

Section 3 shows how, within regions central to donors' national security concerns, the delivery and programming of aid has itself become a battleground. The result, in many cases, has been uncoordinated, unsustainable, expensive and even dangerous aid projects. Schools built by NATO forces' reconstruction teams in Afghanistan, for example – intended to promote the authority of the Afghan government and win 'hearts and minds' for the acceptance of NATO forces themselves – are perceived by Afghans to be at higher risk of attack by anti-government forces.³ Funded largely by poorly monitored military funds,⁴ the 95 schools built by NATO teams between 2006 and 2008 were on average over 30 per cent more expensive than the 371 financed by the Afghan Ministry of Education itself.⁵

By contrast, even in remote and insecure areas where government structures are weak, donors have funded communities and NGOs in coordination with the Afghan Ministry of Education to establish several thousand community-based schools serving more than 100,000 children: in some cases using existing, low-profile community venues to start providing education rapidly, build community support, and avoid armed opposition attacks, particularly on female teachers and pupils.⁶ One parent interviewed by Oxfam in Samangan province in northern Afghanistan in October 2010 explained the value of such community ownership: 'You have to have community support and the mullahs must be supportive. ... The teachers here visit them and remind them of what the Koran says – that education is an obligation – and they can change their minds. If they [the mullahs] are involved in the schools and know the teachers, we have seen that they will not be able to oppose it.'⁷



Dasht e Freng village primary school, Shahr-i-Buzurg district of Badakhshan province, Afghanistan, constructed by Oxfam GB in 2002 (Photo: Yasin/Oxfam)

Security-led aid policies and practices have been driven in part by the primacy of security concerns across the gamut of the foreign activities of Western powers since the 11 September 2001 attacks and their wider consequences: 'going toe to toe with extremists in a ... battle of hearts and minds', as US Senator John Kerry described US humanitarian assistance in earthquake-hit Pakistan.⁸

But the consequent integration of aid with national security priorities, and of aid projects with donors' defence and security activities, has also been ostensibly justified by rising concerns about conflict and state 'fragility' as causes of poverty. A growing number of donors and development practitioners argue that efforts to tackle poverty should concentrate particularly on conflict-affected and 'fragile' states; and that development efforts in these settings should focus on 'stabilizing' such countries by boosting the capacity and legitimacy of the state itself, integrating tools drawn from defence, development and diplomacy.⁹

Beneath these sincere concerns about breaking the links between violence, political instability and poverty, however, this paper shows how in practice many donors have prioritized those conflicts and unstable states central to their foreign and security agendas: overlooking opportunities to tackle poverty and instability in other states, both 'fragile' and stable.

These skewed aid policies and practices undermine international commitments made by governments over the last decade to effective,

needs-focussed international aid: agreed by major donor and recipient governments in meetings in Stockholm in 2003, Paris in 2005 and Accra in 2008.¹⁰ These commitments rightly differ between humanitarian aid, addressing the immediate needs of those affected by disasters and conflicts, and longer-term development aid to reduce poverty and inequality. Nonetheless they share a common core. Aid should be:

- needs-based: founded on impartial assessments of needs, and focussed on reducing suffering or poverty;¹¹
- sustainable: addressing needs sustainably where possible, rather than only in the short-term;¹²
- owned by and accountable to its beneficiaries: driven by and responsive to those whose needs and rights are being addressed.¹³

In contrast to these principles, where donors have prioritized narrow military and security objectives:

1. In place of needs-based aid: poverty and humanitarian needs in regions, communities and social groups whose well-being or cooperation is not deemed significant to donors' security interests – including poor women and other politically marginalized groups – are often overlooked, or even positively excluded.
2. In place of sustainable aid: short-term aid projects whose 'quick impact' is intended to boost the legitimacy of state authorities or military forces have too often been prioritized over projects that address needs sustainably.
3. In place of aid owned by and accountable to beneficiaries: focussing on threats to the security and legitimacy of military forces, donors and their allies, aid projects and programmes have often failed to consult local communities and authorities, or to draw on local resources.

Box 1: What is humanitarian and development aid?

The broadest definition of aid is a transfer of resources from donors to less well-off recipients.¹⁴ This includes financial and material resources provided to foreign governments; and directly to projects and communities themselves. This report is concerned with two types of aid:

Humanitarian aid, defined by the OECD as 'assistance designed to save lives, alleviate suffering and maintain and protect human dignity during and in the aftermath of emergencies',¹⁵ including the provision of shelter, food, water, sanitation, and emergency health services to those affected by armed conflicts and natural disasters. Governments and aid agencies have agreed that the provision of humanitarian aid should be consistent with the basic humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality and independence.¹⁶

Development aid, covering financial and material resources provided to promote the broader economic development and welfare of developing countries. For aid to count as 'overseas development assistance' according to the OECD, it must also be 'concessional in character' rather than a loan on purely commercial terms.¹⁷ Unlike humanitarian aid, development aid may have essentially political goals: engendering political transformations in

recipient countries aimed at reducing poverty and promoting economic and social development. But it should not primarily pursue the political objectives of its donors.

This report does not deal with **aid to military, police and other security institutions**. Although the OECD permits some forms of assistance to police and justice institutions to count as development aid where it promotes broader developmental goals, this cannot include military equipment or services, or aid for paramilitary functions or anti-terrorism.

This is not to argue that aid and development should disregard political context, or its own political and security impacts. Oxfam believes that development is inevitably politically transformative, and that all aid should be sensitive to local political realities.¹⁸ Nor should development aid be a blank cheque, ignoring or even resourcing human rights abuses and repression by governments or armed groups. And humanitarian assistance in emergencies and conflicts must understand beneficiaries' communal and political affiliations, to ensure that that assistance does not inadvertently exacerbate tensions between communities, or fuel the capacity of armies, warlords or militias to violate international law.¹⁹

Equally, tackling the causes of conflict is a vital part of tackling poverty. Although poverty is distributed globally across both 'fragile' and stable states,²⁰ the severity and intractability of poverty amidst conflict and the risk of conflict is clear. The OECD has calculated that more than half of the total global 'deficit' in all but one MDG is accounted for by the small sub-set of countries categorized as 'fragile'.²¹ And communities where Oxfam works commonly insist that security is essential to their immediate needs and longer-term livelihoods. In Mwenga in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), for example, caught between Congolese troops and Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda (FDLR) militias, villagers' crops either go uncultivated due to physical insecurity, or are looted by armed groups and unpaid soldiers. Insecurity causes immediate suffering, and materially deepens poverty.²² Conversely, those living in conflict widely perceive poverty and inequality to be among conflict's main drivers.

If people are employed, the fighting will end.

– Male Kandahar resident in 2009.

When in 2009 Oxfam interviewed 700 people across 14 districts of Afghanistan where we and our partners are working, 70 per cent named unemployment and poverty as major causes of the conflict, more than any other factor.²³ Their views mirror those of poor women and men with whom Oxfam works in Afghanistan, DRC, Sudan and elsewhere. Effective aid – needs-focussed, sustainable, driven by its beneficiaries and sensitive to the underlying causes of conflict – has a clear role to play in promoting long-term security and stability. This is in the common interests of donors, recipient governments and communities alike.

There are so many women like me. But what I do not understand is that the world just lets it happen, the rape, the violence. No one seems to care about us. No, no one has cared for the Congo and no one ever will.

– Eugenie, victim of sexual violence, DRC, interviewed in 2009

This section examines how major donors' aid policies have integrated national security and broader foreign policy priorities. Although this has happened in different ways and to different degrees, the overall global impact of these priorities is clear: a skewed vision of the world in which some people's poverty and suffering receives far more attention than others.

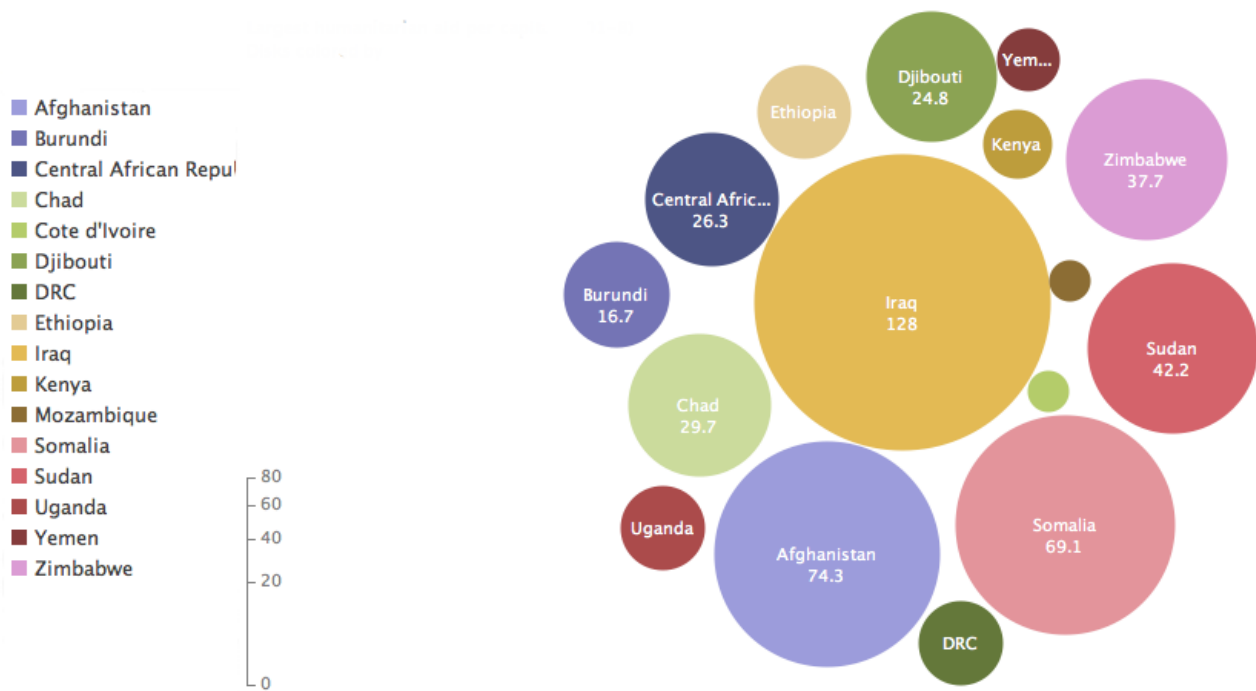
Aid orphans

Aid to conflicts and crises continues to be skewed towards those crises and conflicts highest on donors' security agendas. Despite being amongst the poorest countries in the world, many conflict-affected and unstable countries remain development 'aid orphans', with donors sometimes deterred from providing development aid that may be swallowed up by conflict or ineffective institutions. By one estimate, since 1992, these 'fragile states' have received over 40 per cent less aid than their relative poverty levels merited.²⁴ Yet since 2001 the share of global aid to just two 'fragile states' of obvious geopolitical importance – Iraq and Afghanistan – has risen steadily.²⁵ Over two-fifths of the total \$178bn increase in OECD donors' development aid since 2001 has been to just these two countries, with the remaining increase in global aid budgets shared out between around 150 other developing countries.²⁶ Tellingly, governments with troop commitments in Iraq and Afghanistan have as a group devoted significantly larger (and growing) proportions of their aid budgets to these two countries compared with donors not fighting there.²⁷ Moreover, Iraq has seen a sharp dip in aid flows since 2008, as foreign troops have withdrawn.²⁸ While needs are undeniably great in these and other countries, such as Yemen and Pakistan, where donors' security interests are currently focussed, equally poor and conflict-afflicted countries from the Democratic Republic of Congo to the Central African Republic have received far smaller shares of aid relative to their needs, and far less attention either to their citizens' impoverishment or their insecurity.

Needs unmet

Disparities in the provision of humanitarian aid likewise show how little the international community's responses to the last decade's conflicts and crises have been determined by the basic humanitarian imperative to respond according to need.²⁹

Figure 1: Highest annual level of humanitarian aid per capita (population) from OECD-DAC donors to crises similarly scored ('level 3') in ECHO's Global Needs Assessment, 2001-2008 (US\$, constant 2008 prices)³⁰



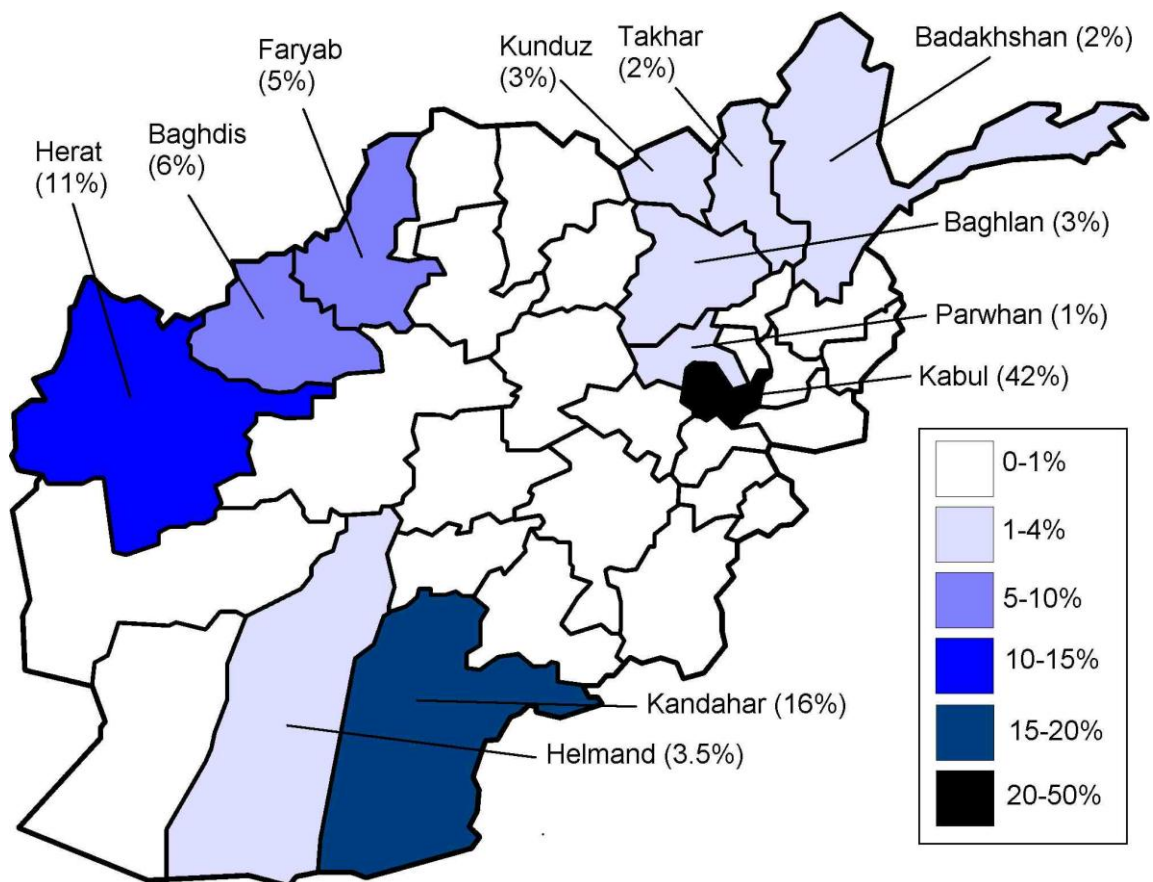
Of course, many factors affect the value of humanitarian aid to different crises, from media attention to the greater costs of responding to crises in more inaccessible places like Somalia, compared with countries with better infrastructure and access like neighbouring Ethiopia.³¹ And population is a comparatively insensitive measure of the scale of humanitarian need. Nonetheless the disproportionate value of humanitarian aid to places where donors are also combatants is particularly striking. Despite being assessed as comparably serious chronic humanitarian crises during this period, since 2001 the Democratic Republic of Congo's population has received at best US\$10 per head per year in international humanitarian assistance, while people in Iraq, itself a much wealthier country, have in some years received over twelve times that amount.³²

Certainly foreign military forces like those in Iraq and Afghanistan have moral and legal obligations to facilitate provision for the humanitarian needs of populations under their control. But responding to humanitarian suffering in those conflicts should not mean paying less attention to equally great or greater needs generated by crises and conflicts elsewhere, particularly as humanitarian aid budgets are rising as a whole.³³

Similar factors are evident in skewed aid within countries too. In Afghanistan, although data is very incomplete, since 2004 over 70 per cent of OECD-DAC aid identifiable by location has been spent either in

the capital, Kabul, or in three (of 34) provinces central to major NATO and Afghan troops' counter-insurgency operations: Kandahar, Herat and Helmand.³⁴ Central and northern Afghanistan, poor but more peaceful, appear to have been neglected in comparison: a difference reflected in aid data and Afghan perceptions alike. As Shamisullah, a teacher in Daikundi in central Afghanistan, told Oxfam: 'Not even 5 per cent of our schools have buildings and many are far away from their homes. In Kandahar, they build many schools but what good does it do? It is too dangerous for girls to even go. In Daikundi, they would be full ... But the international community does not care about us, they only care about Al Qaeda.'³⁵

Figure 2: Per cent of geographically identifiable OECD-DAC aid projects in each Afghan province, 2004-8



N.B. Some aid projects designated as being spent in 'Kabul' may be country-wide aid projects.³⁶

The problem is not limited to international donors. Domestic aid providers who are also protagonists in a conflict have similarly overlooked crises marginal to their own military operations. During the Pakistan army's 2009 offensive in the Swat valley in northern Pakistan, assistance criteria established by the government allowed people to register for assistance only if they had been displaced by fighting from 'notified areas' designated as locations for counter-insurgency operations. This excluded large numbers of people displaced by separate but equally dangerous inter-tribal fighting in neighbouring parts of northern Pakistan, or by Taliban violence and abuse outside 'notified areas'. As a result, up to

one-third of all internally displaced people in the region may not have been registered for assistance.³⁷ This was in stark contrast to the 2005 South Asian earthquake, where the Pakistani army's response was not skewed by an immediate conflict, and Oxfam and others worked alongside the military's emergency airlift to reach inaccessible parts of the region without bias.³⁸

Aid policies on the turn

But why be concerned about these skewed aid patterns now? After all, international aid has long been shaped in part by the lenses of governments' military and national security agendas. Aid was widely bartered for allegiance on both sides of the Cold War, often ignoring the relative needs, governance, corruption and human rights records of its recipients.³⁹ There is even some evidence that international responses to natural disasters have been strategically conditioned. A recent World Bank study of nearly 500 natural disasters since 1992 found that major donors were between 24 and 46 percentage points more likely to provide humanitarian aid to natural disasters in oil-exporting countries than to similarly disaster-afflicted countries lacking oil exports.⁴⁰

In part we should be concerned precisely because aid skewed by military and security interests threatens to undermine the progress made by some donors in breaking with geopolitically skewed aid in the last decade. Government humanitarian agencies in Canada, Spain and the European Commission, for example, have developed principled policies that allocate humanitarian aid according to transparent indices of global needs, to ensure that different crises and countries are not overlooked or over-funded.⁴¹

Box 2: Meeting needs and spotting forgotten crises

The European Commission's humanitarian aid agency, ECHO, produces one of the few globally comparable indices of humanitarian need: the Global Needs Assessment (GNA). The GNA assesses different countries' vulnerability to humanitarian crisis, and the levels of crisis themselves (from population displacement to under-nourishment and mortality rates). Canada and Spain have developed similar indices.⁴² ECHO goes a step further, seeking to identify 'forgotten crises' at risk of being overlooked by other donors. In 2010, about 17 per cent of ECHO's \$2bn humanitarian aid budget was dedicated to 12 such 'forgotten crises' outside the media and political spotlight: from the three million people displaced by violence in Colombia to Sahrawi refugees in Algeria.⁴³ While effective aid must of course be context-driven,⁴⁴ such indices nonetheless provide a vital baseline to help donors coordinate their efforts and taxpayers and beneficiaries to assess aid spending.



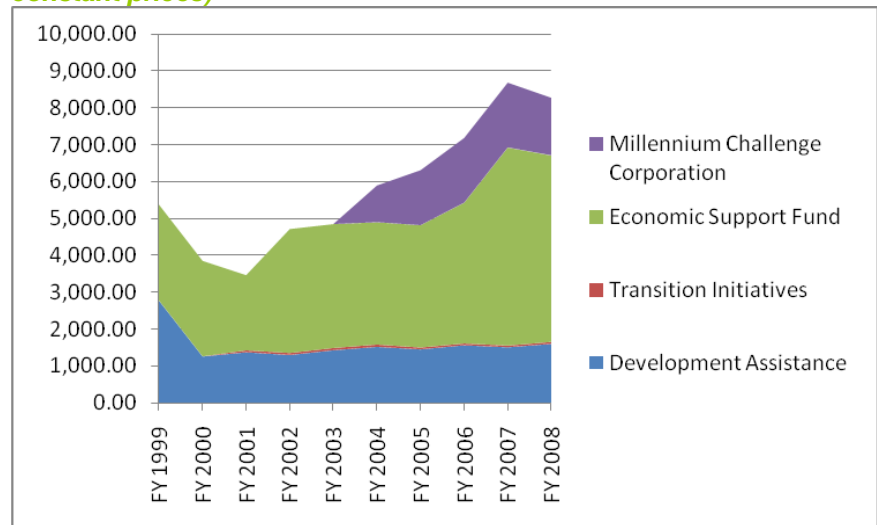
Sahrawi refugee camp in Algeria, where Oxfam helps provide basic foodstuffs for several thousand refugees displaced from Western Sahara, funded by ECHO. ©Eric de Mildt / Oxfam

Undermining such progress, however, long-standing political and security biases have since 2001 being written formally into some donors' aid policies and practices, as in the USA and France. Other donors, including Australia, the UK and the European Union, may be on the cusp of bringing aid budgets newly under the sway of such priorities.

Counter-terrorism and security interests in US aid policy

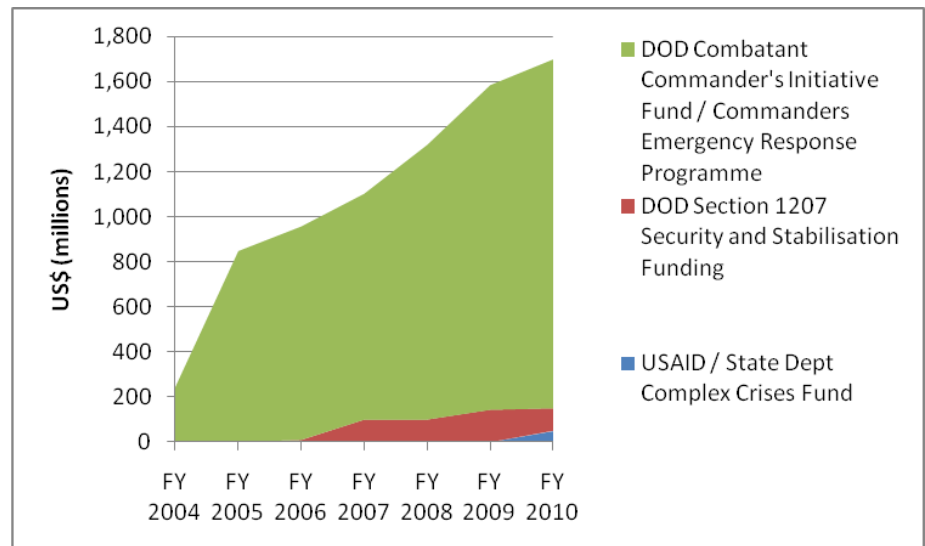
Although geopolitical goals have influenced US aid since its Cold War inception, their weight has increased over the last decade.⁴⁵ The 'Economic Support Fund' (ESF), explicitly dedicated to 'support[ing] specific US foreign policy goals', particularly with 'strategically significant friends and allies', has nearly doubled since 2000, while 'Development Assistance' funds, dedicated solely to combating poverty, have increased by only 14 per cent in comparison.⁴⁶ ESF aid is not necessarily ineffective. But the growing dominance of development aid funds dedicated to geopolitical and national security goals, given the USA's position as the world's largest aid donor, has cemented the geographical skew of global development aid allocation discussed above.

Figure 3: US development aid funds, FY2004–2010 (\$US millions, 2008 constant prices)⁴⁷



Since 2004, the US has also established new aid funds aimed at responding specifically to crises and state instability. These have been dominated, however, by poorly monitored funds disbursed by front-line military commanders to win ‘hearts and minds’ in Iraq and Afghanistan. These militarized funds (\$1.5bn in 2010 alone to the US Commanders Emergency Response Program), largely uncoordinated with national governments and local authorities, are now almost as large as USAID’s worldwide ‘Development Assistance’ budget.⁴⁸

Figure 4: New US aid funds for response to crises and instability created since FY2004⁴⁹



N.B. this graph excludes funds spent on government staff costs, such as State Department / USAID Civilian Stabilization Initiative funds; and funds spent entirely on military and security assistance. It includes DOD Section 1207 funding, which is used partly for security assistance. A small proportion of CERP funding has been spent in the Philippines, but the vast majority is spent in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Box 3: US aid allocation for counter-terrorist goals in Yemen

Poverty in Yemen is unevenly distributed: nearly half of all those living in poverty are concentrated in five of Yemen's 21 governorates, with one-third concentrated in the rural areas of three populous western governorates (Hajja, Taiz and Al-Hodeida).⁵⁰

Since late 2009, in the wake of an attempted terrorist attack on a US airline reportedly linked to Yemeni militants, the US has dramatically increased aid to Yemen. Yet the geography of this new \$121m package of 'stabilization through development' is dramatically different from the geography of Yemen's poverty.⁵¹ US aid will be concentrated in eight areas, mostly sparsely populated southern regions where US and Yemeni military strikes against Islamist armed groups have taken place. Equally poor southern governorates like Al Bayda (Yemen's third poorest governorate) have been excluded, along with three of the five western governorates where most poverty is concentrated.⁵²

By focussing on a single kind of insecurity, US aid plans overlook wider sources of potential future instability, such as massive rural food insecurity and unemployment in densely populated areas – home to Yemen's most impoverished, but not currently to Al Qaeda.

Playing catch-up: France and Canada

Other donors are making long-standing foreign policy and national security biases more explicit in their aid policies. Since 2009 Canada has pledged to spend 80 per cent of its bilateral aid on twenty 'countries of focus', designated partly on the basis of 'their alignment with Canadian foreign policy priorities.' The list includes Afghanistan, where Canadian troops are fighting, and middle-income Colombia, with whom Canada had just signed a free trade agreement, while seven low-income countries in sub-Saharan Africa were dropped.⁵³ Because of foreign policy biases, Canada's attempt to improve aid effectiveness by focussing resources geographically has shifted aid spending toward middle-income countries and Afghanistan, while aid for previous low-income 'development partner' countries has stagnated.⁵⁴

Likewise France's new June 2009 aid allocation policy spelled out the role of national interests, which had previously been largely undeclared.⁵⁵ While French aid has long been weighted towards Francophone African countries, based upon a mix of strategic interest and historical ties, French aid recipients are now to be explicitly selected according to five 'criteria of interest', including their importance to French national defence and counter-terrorism, and their proportion of immigrants to France;⁵⁶ as well as five 'criteria of need.'⁵⁷

New priorities? UK, Australia and the European Union

Elsewhere, donors are in the process of recasting the weight of national security objectives in their aid policies. The UK has brought development aid in priority countries under the scrutiny of a new National Security Council (NSC) since mid-2010; and while aid spending in most countries remains independent of the NSC, decision-makers comparing country-by-country aid plans are required to ensure that the UK aid budget overall makes the 'maximum possible contribution to national security'.⁵⁸ It remains to be seen whether this integration will replace efforts to tackle 'fragility' and conflict – a UK aid priority since 2009 – with a narrower focus on spending aid in those conflicts and 'fragile states' central to UK national security.⁵⁹

Australia is likewise seeking to integrate development, diplomacy and defence efforts to promote stability both on Australia's own Pacific doorstep and in Afghanistan, where Australian troops are engaged. The effectiveness of this integrated approach remains to be shown. For example, Afghanistan is the fourth largest recipient of Australian development aid; but over half of that aid since 2007 has been channelled through the Department of Defence, which is not required to report or evaluate the impact of its aid projects.⁶⁰

In the EU, a fundamental shake-up of the European Union's foreign policy architecture during 2010 is bringing development aid programming within the remit of foreign and security policy-makers. This is not a complete departure: eligibility for some EU development funds has previously been conditioned on a range of foreign policy goals, including counter-terrorism cooperation and strengthened border controls.⁶¹ But the *uses* of EU development funds have been determined by poverty reduction objectives: a focus enshrined in EU treaty law.⁶² From now on, however, the top-level allocation and programming of EU aid – one of the largest aid budgets in the world⁶³ – is to be drawn up by the EU's new diplomatic corps, the External Action Service, guided by the EC Development Commissioner but ultimately answerable to the Union's foreign and security policy chief.⁶⁴ Only lower-level decisions will remain with the European Commission's development agency DEVCO. As in the UK, it remains to be seen how this new 'integrated' aid architecture will affect the allocation and effectiveness of EU aid.

Outside the club: emerging donors

Donors outside the 'traditional' OECD-DAC group provide a small but rising proportion of global aid flows. Kuwait's contributions, for instance, are double those of smaller DAC donors like Luxembourg and New Zealand.⁶⁵ Non-DAC donors also provided around \$1.1bn of the \$12.8bn of reported humanitarian assistance in 2009, up from just \$200m in 2002.⁶⁶ With opaque aid policies and often unreported spending, however, some emerging donors are equally prone to skewing aid away from needs and towards national security objectives.

For example, donors to Yemen critically need to focus aid on nationwide efforts to tackle poverty and protect the most vulnerable – including the 7 million Yemenis struggling to feed themselves – not just on politically significant communities.⁶⁷ Yet while the World Bank reported in mid-2010 that Saudi Arabia and other Gulf Cooperation Council members had delivered only a fraction of the \$2.5bn pledged in 2006 to assist the Yemeni government in reducing poverty,⁶⁸ millions of dollars from Saudi Arabia are reportedly disbursed directly to Yemeni tribes in areas seen to threaten regional security.⁶⁹

3

Aid under fire

On the ground, too, aid projects and activities that prioritize the pursuit of donors' national security interests, and armed forces' short-term security objectives, are leading to costly and wasteful aid. In some places it is also putting communities themselves at risk.

Afghans interviewed by Oxfam, discussing US and other NATO aid projects in Afghanistan, bluntly describe the effects of aid oriented towards short-term security goals. High-profile, 'quick impact' projects to 'stabilize' violent districts have failed to provide sustainable solutions to humanitarian needs or poverty, as a tribal leader in Paktia explained: 'we really do not need somebody to distribute biscuits to us and do not need construction projects that fall down after a year'.⁷⁰ In some areas, while development projects are welcome, their delivery by military forces, or under their auspices, may threaten communities' own security: 'we are very poor and need development projects but we know that wherever the international forces go, the Taliban follow them.'⁷¹

Using aid for military or security objectives has been increasingly justified by development approaches that seek to integrate humanitarian action and poverty reduction with efforts to stop violent conflict and political instability: combining activities ranging from counter-insurgency to conflict resolution, military training to community development and food aid to reconstructing agricultural markets.⁷² Such approaches appear to promise a virtuous circle between four objectives: security, state-building, satisfying humanitarian needs and combating poverty. Yet in practice these goals are not always compatible within the same project. As the UK Government's evaluation of DFID's work in Afghanistan's Helmand province prior to 2007 observes: 'Pursuing multiple objectives...was initially problematic because approaches towards counter-insurgency, stabilization, counter-narcotics, peace and development were not necessarily mutually reinforcing.'⁷³ In practice:

- Aid projects intended to boost the acceptance of military forces may draw attacks that make both communities and armed forces less safe.
- Aid made conditional on military or political cooperation threatens to overlook the humanitarian needs and poverty of politically marginal groups.
- High-profile aid projects intended to show rapid results as a 'political down-payment' have often proved unsustainable, failing to be owned by communities or driven by their needs.
- Aid inappropriately delivered by military forces has proved expensive and ineffective.

Given these contradictions, donors and armed forces engaged in 'stabilization' have in many places tended to prioritize their own short-term military and security objectives. Some donors and military forces

have more recently begun to recognize the pitfalls of using aid projects in this way. UK stabilization doctrine, for example, is beginning to abandon direct, rapid aid interventions like 'Quick Impact Projects' in southern Afghanistan, in favour of support for improving governance and government service provision.⁷⁴ Nonetheless like the shifting international aid policies described in Section 2, other stabilization doctrines are inscribing the use of humanitarian and development aid for short-term military and security objectives into official doctrine.⁷⁵

Aid for military and political cooperation



Dari-language leaflet distributed by NATO troops in Kandahar, Afghanistan, December 2001: 'The Partnership of Nations has secured the Kandahar Airport to ensure that humanitarian aid will reach the people of this area. For your own safety please stay away'.

In both Afghanistan and Iraq, military forces engaged in counter-insurgency have used high-visibility aid to win acceptance by communities, and in some cases have made humanitarian and development assistance conditional on cooperation by its recipients, or on providing troops with information.⁷⁶ Leaflets distributed by US-led forces in southern Afghanistan in 2004, for example, told communities that '[i]n order to continue the humanitarian aid, pass on any information related to the Taliban, Al Qaeda and Gulbaddin.'⁷⁷ As well as contravening the fundamental rights of all conflict-affected

populations to receive humanitarian assistance, such practices can put communities themselves under suspicion of collusion with warring parties, and at risk of violence. Many Afghans perceive aid projects carried out by NATO forces' reconstruction teams to be at higher risk of attack by anti-government forces.⁷⁸ Direct attacks on aid workers also continue to increase – 225 were killed, kidnapped and injured in violent attacks in 2010, compared with 85 in 2002 – in part reflecting the greater number of workers operating in violent places, but also the result of an increase in apparently politically motivated attacks, rising from 29 per cent of the total number of attacks where motives could be determined in 2003, to 49 per cent in 2008.⁷⁹

All attacks on civilians are unacceptable. But maintaining physical and political distinctions between aid projects and conflict protagonists is one of the few tools that both communities and aid workers have to protect themselves amidst violent conflict. This distinction is likewise eroded by NGO aid workers agreeing to collaborate with military forces as a condition of funding. For example, USAID contract documents require some USAID-funded community development projects in Yemen to 'collaborate closely with DOD where feasible', specifying that those Department of Defense [DOD] units have explicitly counter-terrorist goals, 'counter[ing] violent extremist organizations ... particularly Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula.'⁸⁰ Contracted aid organisations, both not-for-profit and commercial, that agree to such conditions put other aid providers at risk.

Blurring humanitarian, political and counter-insurgency goals by using humanitarian aid for political compliance, or even conditioning aid on such compliance, is neither new nor confined to the military. In 1992, the then UN Special Representative of the Secretary General in Somalia publicly asserted that he had told the World Food Programme not to offload ten thousand metric tons of food to feed almost 250,000 displaced people '[i]n order to teach their leaders [the warlords] a lesson'.⁸¹ Nor are communities or aid workers themselves immune to perceived political biases and sympathies. As one community leader told an aid evaluator during the 2009 Swat offensive in northern Pakistan: 'The Army blew up [his] house because his son is a Taliban commander. What sort of message is the Government sending out if it lets some NGO rebuild it?'⁸²

Nonetheless the risk of such abuses increases as counter-insurgency practices and counter-terrorism laws normalize links between humanitarian action, development aid, and military or political objectives. For instance, NATO 'information ops' training for Afghan troops reportedly continues to advocate trading humanitarian aid for information, despite the fact that NATO forces in Afghanistan have officially renounced such practices themselves since 2004, and agreed on operational rules that prohibit them.⁸³

Assistance denied

Significant obstacles to delivering aid to vulnerable populations are also presented by a growing number of over-wide national and international legal bans on the provision of material or financial assistance to groups and governments designated as terrorists. Some of these bans have been drawn so widely that they effectively criminalize not only assistance to groups themselves, but both humanitarian and development aid provided to areas and authorities under the control of such groups.⁸⁴ More directly, such over-wide bans have in places prevented the provision of food, water and support for longer-term livelihoods to people caught up innocently in conflicts and crises.⁸⁵ In Somalia, US humanitarian assistance for the country's desperate population, previously the single largest source of aid for Somalia, dropped eight-fold between 2008 and 2010 after the US government listed armed groups in control of most of central/southern Somalia as terrorists under US law, and ended funding for aid organizations delivering humanitarian assistance there since that could not guarantee that no aid would reach the armed groups in control of the territory.⁸⁶ While 60 per cent of the 2008 UN humanitarian appeal for Somalia was funded by September 2008, just 30 per cent of the (smaller) 2010 humanitarian appeal had received new funds by September 2010,⁸⁷ despite at least 2.1 million people still in need of lifesaving assistance.⁸⁸ Meanwhile, squeezed on both sides, 18 aid agencies have been expelled from Somalia by armed groups since 2009.

Box 4: Aid restrictions in the Occupied Palestinian Territories

Since the Hamas victory in Palestinian legislative elections in January 2006, legal and donor-imposed restrictions on contact with and assistance to Hamas-controlled authorities, coupled with the subsequent imposition of the ongoing blockade of Gaza, have undermined the effectiveness of aid programmes, and their ability to respond to people's needs in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.⁸⁹ In 2007, a year after key donors suspended aid to the Palestinian Authority government, the number of Palestinian people living in poverty had jumped by 30 per cent, according to the United Nations Office of the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Process (UNSCO).⁹⁰

This was not due to a decline in aid quantity – humanitarian aid through sources such as the United Nations Relief and Work Agency (UNRWA) actually increased in 2006 – but to the types and channels of permissible aid, depriving the government of the necessary funds to pay its health workers, teachers and welfare recipients, or to run essential services effectively.⁹¹

While aid restrictions for the West Bank have since been eased, EU, UK, Canadian and US restrictions on aid for Gaza remain in place, as does the blockade. The impact of these restrictions is tangible. The physical blockade of items such as construction materials has combined with restrictions on aid agencies' contact and funding of line ministries and municipalities providing basic services. Far more aid is instead provided as humanitarian assistance: inevitably a 'sticking plaster' that cannot rebuild homes and lives of Gazans following Israeli military operation 'Cast Lead'. Even humanitarian aid has in many cases been restricted to the worst aid stereotypes of unsustainable handouts that are not coordinated with the relevant line

ministries in Gaza. One agency described US legal limitations to their child health programme in Gaza in 2009:

'We were allowed to hand out ... tongue depressors, thermometers, measuring tools to gauge a child's weight gain. ... We were not allowed however, to coordinate with the public health organization or the public school systems in order to implement programs, which is where they needed to be. ... [W]e ended basically working out of the back of a truck or the back of a car saying here, come we'll give you some materials'.

Adequate provision of other basic humanitarian needs is likewise impeded. In July 2010, Beit Hanoun municipal authority in Gaza had insufficient fuel to run pumps which provided water and sanitation. As a result, 25,000 people were left for a period without drinking water and sewage flooded the streets.⁹² A swift response from Oxfam to this serious public health threat was impeded by restrictions on aid delivery and contact with Gazan municipal authorities, slowing negotiations with a number of different service providers and donor agencies required to find a solution.

Aid as a political down-payment

As well as conditioning aid directly on military or political cooperation, some donors have prioritized short-term aid projects intended to boost the acceptance of state authorities or military forces. Constituting fast, small-scale interventions such as building a road or distributing agricultural inputs, 'quick impact projects' (QIPs) aim to deliver rapid, highly visible results to win 'hearts and minds' for military forces and political legitimacy for allied governments. As the UK has described them, QIPs 'serve as down payments on promises of political and economic progress buying time for, and confidence in, a government.'⁹³ Although some donors, including the UK, are now moving away from QIPs, they remain in other donors' and armed forces' toolkits, including UN peacekeeping doctrine.⁹⁴

Prioritizing quick impact projects for short-term security or political gain impacts negatively on aid effectiveness in four ways. First, such projects are rarely as effective or cost-effective as aid planned and delivered through communities or government structures. Their 'quick impact' is often achieved with capital-heavy, highly-visible 'hardware' like school buildings or refurbished markets, without supporting the 'software' – like teachers for schools – that makes long-term development possible.

Box 5: Losing schools

School building is a popular 'hearts and minds' activity for the US military's civil affairs teams, including in non-conflict settings where they duplicate the efforts of civilian counterparts and government authorities.

In Yemen, the US Department of Defence, acting for US Special Forces units in Yemen, have spent three years building a single boys' school in Ma'rib Governorate, perceived to be a centre of Al Qaeda activity. Begun in 2007, by 2010 the school remained unfinished. A USAID document describes the 'current structure in its current location' as 'completely

inadequate due to the unsuitable terrain and the extreme structural flaws of the unfinished building'. This building has therefore been abandoned, and planning started for 'the construction of a brand new school in a more suitable location.'⁹⁵

In the Horn of Africa, the US army's 'Combined Joint Task Force' (CJTF-HOA), costing \$80m a year and originally formed to build regional capacity to combat terrorism, has focussed 60 per cent of its activities on short-term civil affairs projects like school-building and veterinary assistance.⁹⁶

A US Government review earlier this year found that the activities were tied to no specific objectives, and that no 'long-term follow up [is conducted] on activities to determine whether they are having their intended effects'. For example, CJTF-HOA staff recently discovered 'a dilapidated school in Kenya with a placard stating, "donated by CJTF-HOA"'. They had forgotten that the school existed.⁹⁷

Second, resources dedicated to QIPs to win 'hearts and minds' often fail to build longer-term state capacity. In Afghanistan, the ballooning CERP fund, to be spent by US military commanders largely on small-scale QIPs, is explicitly prohibited from being spent through central or local government, or to fund follow-up or maintenance activities; it is now larger than the Afghan government's combined annual budgets for education, health and agriculture.⁹⁸

Third, aid projects focussed on buying short-term security and political support may explicitly prioritize the needs of 'politically significant communities', in the words of the UK's QIPs doctrine.⁹⁹ This may marginalize the needs of less powerful parts of the community, including women and children. Although some QIP doctrines note the need to attend to women's particular needs, consultation by NATO military forces and PRT project implementers in Afghanistan is typically with existing power-holders, usually men.¹⁰⁰ Indeed, the overwhelming aim of using aid to consolidate existing political power may contribute to a gender bias in whose needs are prioritized. The US' 2010 'Afghanistan and Pakistan Regional Stabilization Strategy', for example, contained few references to women or girls, despite being released just a few weeks after the US 'Women's Action Plan for Afghanistan' and legislation requiring progress for women's rights to be integrated into the overall US strategy on Afghanistan and all key programmes.¹⁰¹ US auditors have found that US State Department reporting on its efforts to promote women's rights and welfare in Afghanistan fails to show 'how US-funded activities support these [women's rights] goals', and are uncoordinated with the Afghan National Plan for Women.¹⁰²

Finally, there is little systematic evidence that QIPs are in fact successful in winning 'hearts and minds' or increasing the security of governments and military forces. Research in Afghanistan, Pakistan and 'extremism-prone' regions of Kenya indicates that perceptions of Western aid donors in areas of strategic aid remain overwhelmingly negative, not least because beneficiaries recognize the strategic motivations of highly visible, unsustainable aid projects.¹⁰³ As a religious leader said in Garissa, north-east Kenya, where a US marines'

civil affairs project had recently renovated schools and latrines: 'Why does the most powerful country in the world come all the way here to repair – not even build – a public latrine? Do they think we are stupid?' School children had an equally canny if more succinct response in graffiti: scrawling 'Al Qaeda' on the latrine wall.¹⁰⁴

More widely, such short-term, high-visibility efforts fail to tackle the ways in which poverty and inequality exacerbate conflicts and political instability. The complex question of how aid may contribute to tackling both poverty and insecurity in violent and unstable settings merits its own detailed treatment, beyond the scope and space of this paper. Nonetheless Oxfam's own experiences suggest that poverty-focused aid used preventively – supporting essential services, education and livelihoods, delivered in ways that decrease inequalities between groups, reduce resource competition and provide alternative livelihoods for potential combatants – may promote peace and security in a way that short-term aid intended to buy political cooperation cannot.¹⁰⁵

Box 6: Community-led stabilization?

Scarce land, cattle and water often form the basis for violent conflict between pastoralist and settled communities throughout the Horn of Africa: drivers of instability untouched by the school buildings and latrines built by CJTF-HOA forces.

In northern Kenya, Oxfam and our partners help pastoralist communities to obtain sustainable access to scarce resources. This is, in effect, community-led 'stabilization', combining advocacy, peace building and the long-term development of sustainable livelihoods to reduce poverty, but also helping prevent conflict.

Planned over a 15-year timescale, Oxfam's integrated programme has provided livelihoods by helping to manage water sources and promoting small businesses. It has also sought solutions to the longer-term roots of pastoralist poverty – the marginalization of these remote communities from the national economy and national policy making. It has founded and supported Pastoralist Associations that represent communities' needs to local and national administrations, and advocated for better economic opportunities and public goods, like boreholes. Pastoralist Associations have also resolved resource disputes through direct mediation, and by cooperating over the management of pasture and water sources, preventing wider violent escalation in several cases.¹⁰⁶

Inappropriate military humanitarianism

As well as sponsoring and directing aid projects and programmes, foreign military forces have in recent years become increasingly involved in delivering humanitarian aid themselves, including in settings outside conflict.¹⁰⁷ In part this expansion has been due to overtly strategic objectives. Humanitarian assistance provided by US

military forces around the world, including in response to ‘peacetime’ disasters, is legally required to advance regional and US security.¹⁰⁸ Beyond immediate strategic interests, increasing the humanitarian role of the military has also been seen as a source of reputation and resources for armed forces facing domestic fiscal pressures, and waning public approval for foreign interventions.

Military assets and logistics – both national and international – have played vital emergency roles in many emergencies and natural disasters. But UN-agreed guidelines are clear about the humanitarian gap that foreign military forces should fill: acting as a last resort where there is no civilian alternative, and limited where possible to providing a secure environment for civilian actors rather than directly delivering assistance.¹⁰⁹ Adhering to these international guidelines is not only principled, but practical and cost-effective: the best use of the respective expertise and capabilities of civilians and soldiers. Evaluations ranging from the international response to Rwandan refugees in 1994 to the 2005 Indian Ocean tsunami suggest that the cost of logistics and basic services provided by the military can be up to eight times higher than civilian alternatives.¹¹⁰

Foreign armed forces can often best promote both humanitarian needs and sustainable livelihoods through providing safety, not material aid. In the eastern DRC, the UN stabilization force MONUSCO has, since 2008, sought to integrate peacekeeping with aid and reconstruction projects. Forty-six per cent of those surveyed by Oxfam in eastern DRC during 2010, however, called for more present and active physical protection from MONUSCO in high-risk areas. Villagers in Rutushuru described to Oxfam how physical protection by UN peacekeeping escorts had itself played a major role in enhancing their livelihoods, helping them tend their fields in safety.¹¹¹

Box 7: Military humanitarianism in Haiti

In the days and weeks following the massive 2010 earthquake in Haiti, earthmoving equipment from US, Canadian, Spanish and other militaries proved critical to rescuing people and clearing roads to enable humanitarian access, while military air-traffic controllers enabled the relief airlift to continue.¹¹² Civilian aid agencies were arguably slow to coordinate with these much-needed military contributions, and both donors and civilian aid agencies have not adequately followed up on this work: one year on, for example, less than 5 per cent of the rubble has been cleared from Haiti’s streets.¹¹³

But where foreign militaries duplicated civilian relief efforts, rather than focussing on providing unique logistical capacity or security, the result has been expensive and sometimes ineffective aid which also failed to contribute to Haitians’ urgent security needs. Spain channelled nearly one-third of its budget for the Haiti emergency through its armed forces, 97 per cent of which financed Operation Hispaniola, a highly publicized contingent of 450 soldiers dispatched on amphibious vessel Castilla. Arriving over three weeks after the earthquake, they started work unilaterally in Petit-Goâve, a coastal city accessible to their ship, but where NGOs were already providing water and sanitation. Moving away from their core competencies, Spanish troops

undertook a major vaccination programme without sharing records of who had been vaccinated with health NGOs, and distributed water without informing the population about the need to bring clean containers, potentially undermining public health efforts when many people appeared with dirty containers.¹¹⁴ Meanwhile Operation Hispaniola provided just 23 civil police to reinforce MINUSTAH, the UN policing operation that had lost capacity and lives in the earthquake.¹¹⁵

Civilian aid agencies have themselves coordinated their efforts in Haiti inadequately, and often failed to adequately consult the Haitian people and government.¹¹⁶ Nonetheless military duplication of civilian humanitarian aid appears to come at significant cost. At €18.2m, Operation Hispaniola

provided healthcare to 7,568 Haitians, vaccinated 21,274 people, cleared 8,000 cubic meters of debris and distributed 600,000 litres of drinking water.¹¹⁷ With €1m, Intermón Oxfam (Spain) provided assistance to 20,810 beneficiaries, constructed 5,800 latrines for 7,050 people, distributed hygiene kits to nearly 9,000 people and basic shelter material to 3,632 people, and is now rehabilitating water sanitation systems and promoting public health. Yet the Spanish government provided just €750,000 through civilian NGOs in the Haiti emergency – 24 times less than the cost of sending the Castilla.¹¹⁸

Conclusion

Aid policies and practices stand at a crossroads. Donors can promote effective, independent aid that promotes the well-being and wider security of people caught up in conflict and crises; or they can increase and institutionalize the use of aid to pursue their own narrow security and military objectives, to the detriment of aid's effectiveness and cost-effectiveness.

The evidence presented here – from Afghanistan and Yemen to Kenya and the DRC – suggests that the increasing, and increasingly explicit, use of both humanitarian and development aid for such objectives means that the needs of countries, regions and communities outside the national security spotlight are being overlooked. Even where poor and vulnerable countries and communities are military or security priorities for donors, from Afghanistan and Pakistan to Yemen and Somalia, such objectives are leading to costly, wasteful and sometimes dangerous aid projects. In short: neither humanitarian need; nor poverty; nor, crucially, violent conflict and insecurity itself; are effectively reduced by:

- aid whose allocation is directed by donors' security and military priorities;
- aid projects designed to provide short-term boosts for the political acceptance of donors, governments and military forces;
- aid conditioned on political or military cooperation;
- or by aid inappropriately delivered by military forces themselves.

Donors, armed forces and aid organizations all have roles to play in returning humanitarian principles and good development practice to the heart of aid policy and programming in conflicts and stable countries alike: ensuring the effectiveness of 21st century aid.

Recommendations

For donors

To meet their existing commitments to development aid effectiveness and Good Humanitarian Donorship, donors should ensure that all aid has as its principal purpose the reduction of poverty or humanitarian needs.

Decisions on aid allocation – in conflicts, stable countries, and within countries themselves - should aim to maximize the reduction of poverty or humanitarian need, not donors' military or national security objectives.

Aid must not contribute to or resource violations of international human rights and humanitarian law.

Aid allocation and development policy should remain as far as possible with government aid agencies independent of foreign and defence ministries. They should be permitted to allocate and spend their own budgets on tackling long-term poverty and providing direct, rapid, effective assistance to those in urgent need.

Donors should ensure that the development projects they fund or plan in conflicts and stable settings alike are responsive to the needs of communities, aligned with the policies of local and national administrations where possible, and sustainable after foreign development workers have left.

Laws prohibiting the provision of assistance to groups or individuals designated as terrorists, or to other non-state actors, should not criminalize the provision of humanitarian assistance, aid for reconstruction after conflicts and disasters, and the dissemination of human rights and humanitarian law.

For armed forces deployed outside their own territories

All armed forces, including peacekeeping forces, should operationalize existing, internationally-agreed civil-military guidelines, that set out the effective and appropriate roles of military and civilian actors responding to humanitarian needs in conflicts and disasters: acting as a last resort where there is no civilian alternative, and limited where possible to providing a secure environment for civilian actors rather than directly delivering assistance.¹¹⁹

Military doctrines and rules of engagement should prohibit the allocation or restriction of humanitarian assistance for military or counter-terrorism objectives.

For aid organizations and aid workers

Both humanitarian and development aid organizations should ensure that their activities do not exacerbate or provide direct resources for parties to conflicts, by implementing standards and guidelines to ensure that humanitarian aid 'does no harm', and that development aid is sensitive to conflict. They should refuse any funders' conditions requiring them to cooperate or provide information to military forces, or to distribute aid or allocate development resources based on the political or military cooperation of recipients.

Notes

- 1 Oxfam GB calculations from OECD-DAC 'ODA 2a' dataset. The 48 countries are those listed in OECD, Ensuring Fragile States are not left behind: Summary Report (March 2009). The proportions of ODA they have received, according to the OECD-DAC's 'ODA 2a' dataset of ODA disbursements by all donors differ somewhat from the figures given in this 2009 OECD report. This may be because data in the OECD database has been updated since the 2009 report was written.
- 2 Andy Sumner, Global Poverty and the New Bottom Billion: what if three-quarters of the world's poor live in middle income countries? (Institute of Development Studies: Sussex, September 2010).
- 3 Marit Glad, Knowledge on Fire: Attacks on Education in Afghanistan, Risks and Measures for Successful Mitigation (CARE/Ministry of Education/World Bank, November 2009).
- 4 Secretary Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), Quarterly Report to US Congress, (30 October 2009), p. 23. See also financial regulations covering this fund, the Commander's Emergency Response Programme (CERP): US DOD Financial Management Regulation, Vol. 12, Chapter 27 (January 2009), <http://comptroller.defense.gov/fmr/12/index.html> (last accessed 2 December 2010).
- 5 World Bank/DFID, Working Paper 5 for Afghanistan Public Expenditure Review 2010: Education Sector (April 2010), p.20. Figures taken from average cost per classroom, to take different-sized schools into account. Comprehensive comparisons are admittedly difficult, since PRTs sometimes do not report project costs and ongoing costs.
- 6 Oxfam International, Quick Impact, Quick Collapse (January 2010); Dana Burde and Leigh L. Linden, The Effectiveness of Proximity in School Enrolment: Evidence from a randomized control trial in Afghanistan (May 2009), http://www.cgdev.org/doc/events/10.21.09/Proximity_and_Enrollment_2009-05-02.pdf; UNICEF school statistics quoted in Farida Ayari, 'Unique education programmes brighten the future for Afghanistan's young women' (10 August 2010), http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/afghanistan_55495.html; Marit Glad, Knowledge on Fire: Attacks on Education in Afghanistan, Risks and Measures for Successful Mitigation (CARE/Ministry of Education/World Bank, November 2009). For attacks on Afghan schools, see UN Security Council's annual 'Report of the Secretary General on children and armed conflict in Afghanistan'
- 7 Mother, Samangan, Afghanistan, interviewed by Oxfam in October 2010.
- 8 Floor statement by Senator John Kerry, introducing Kerry-Lugar bill, US Senate, 4 May 2009.
- 9 World Bank, World Development Report 2011: Concept Note: Conflict, Security and Development (7 January 2010), http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTWDR2011/Resources/6406082-1256239015781/WDR_2011_Concept_Note_0207.pdf (accessed 3 December 2010).
- 10 The Principles and Practices of Good Humanitarian Donorship (GHD), agreed 16-17 June 2003 in Stockholm, set out 23 donor principles for impartial, needs-focussed and effective humanitarian aid. The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, endorsed 2 March 2005, and the follow-up Accra Agenda for Action, drawn up in 2008, commit both donor and recipient governments to a range of principles and practices to ensure sustainable, poverty-focussed and coordinated development aid.
- 11 GHD principles 1 and 6; Paris Declaration paras. 3, 34, 35; Accra Agenda para. 17.
- 12 GHD principle 9; Paris Declaration paras. 4, 17; Accra Agenda paras. 21, 26.
- 13 GHD principles 7 and 8; Paris Declaration paras. 3, 13-21, 47-50; Accra Agenda paras. 12-16, 24.
- 14 Oxfam International, 21st Century Aid: Recognizing Success and Tackling Failure (May 2010).
- 15 OECD statistical directives, http://www.oecd.org/document/19/0,3746,en_21571361_39494699_39503763_1_1_1_1,00.html#H (accessed 22 January 2011).
- 16 International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Code of Conduct for International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief (1992).
- 17 OECD statistical directives, http://www.oecd.org/document/19/0,3746,en_21571361_39494699_39503763_1_1_1_1,00.html#H (accessed 22 January 2011).
- 18 Duncan Green. From Poverty to Power (Oxfam: July 2008).
- 19 The Sphere Project, Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (2004), *passim*.
- 20 Andy Sumner, Global Poverty and the New Bottom Billion: what if three-quarters of the world's poor live in middle income countries? (Institute of Development Studies: Sussex, September 2010).
- 21 OECD, Conflict, Fragility and Armed Violence are major factors preventing the achievement of the MDGs (Background Note to side-event at MDG Summit, 17 September 2010), <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/20/50/46006119.pdf> The concentration of poverty in fragile and conflict-affected states is contested. While the OECD and the World Bank assert that 'fragile states' constitute a fifth of the world's population but a third of the world's poor, calculations by the Institute of Development Studies suggest that, in 2007/8, the 43 states which appear on at least one of the three most widely used fragile state indices (the two bottom quartiles of the World Bank's Country Policy and Institutional Assessment (CPIA) index, the Brookings' Index of State Weakness in the Developing World 2009, and the Carleton University

- Country Indicators for Foreign Policy (CIFP) 2008 index) account for 23 per cent of the world's poor (those subsisting on less than \$1.25 a day), distributed almost equally between low-income and middle-income 'fragile states'. See Andy Sumner, *Global Poverty and the New Bottom Billion: What if Three-Quarters of the World's Poor Live in Middle-Income Countries?* (IDS: September 2010). Nonetheless, the concentration of the MDG 'deficit' in these countries suggests that, while most of the world's poor do not live in 'fragile states', their poverty may be on average deeper and more intractable than elsewhere.
- 22 Oxfam International, *Women and children first: on the frontline of war in the Kivus* (Protection briefing, July 2010).
 - 23 Oxfam International, *The Cost of War: Afghan Experiences of Conflict 1978-2009* (November 2009).
 - 24 V. Levin and D. Dollar, 'The Forgotten States: Aid Volumes and Volatility in Difficult Partnership Countries', paper prepared for DAC learning and advisory process on difficult partnerships' (OECD 2005), cited in OECD, *Annual Report: Resource Flows to Fragile and Conflict-Affected States 2010*, p. 50.
 - 25 The spike of development aid to Iraq in 2005 in the following figures, distorting the nonetheless upward overall trend, is largely explained by the substantial debt relief granted to Iraq by OECD-DAC countries in that year and counted as Overseas Development Aid. However, humanitarian aid from OECD-DAC donors to Iraq (which has no debt relief component) also 'spiked' in 2005.
 - 26 Oxfam calculations from OECD DAC2b dataset. Taking 2001 as a baseline, total additional DAC ODA to developing countries (current prices) 2002-2008 is \$178445m (constant 2008 prices) Total additional DAC ODA to Afghanistan is \$12977m; to Iraq is \$59705m. The OECD list of developing countries varies from year to year, but remains around 152-3 during this period.
 - 27 Oxfam calculations from OECD DAC2b dataset. In 2001, OECD-DAC members contributing significant numbers of troops in Iraq (1000 troops or more), and non-troop-contributing OECD-DAC members, were both contributing around 0.3% of their national ODA to Iraq; by 2008 major troop contributors were spending an average of 13.1% of their ODA on Iraq, compared to 7.6% for non-troop-contributing OECD-DAC members. Similarly, in 2001, OECD-DAC members which are major ISAF troop contributors (1000 troops or more), compared to OECD-DAC countries not contributing troops, were both contributing around 1.5% of their ODA to Afghanistan; by 2008 major ISAF troop contributors were spending 4.2% of their ODA in Afghanistan, compared to 2.3% for countries not contributing troops.
 - 28 Oxfam calculations from OECD DAC 2b dataset. ODA disbursements from all donors in 2008 was \$9.88bn. In 2009, it was just \$2.79bn.
 - 29 These 18 countries are those which have received the highest ranking (3) in both the 'vulnerability' and 'crisis' components of ECHO's Global Needs Assessment since 2001, a measure of the most serious humanitarian crises in this period.
 - 30 Oxfam calculations from OECD-DAC and OCHA FTS data.
 - 31 Oxfam International, *Beyond the headlines: an agenda for action to protect civilians in neglected conflicts* (November 2003).
 - 32 The countries shown are rated as level '3' crises in ECHO's 2009-10 Global Needs Assessment (GNA).
 - 33 Government contributions to humanitarian aid have risen steadily from around \$4.6bn in 2000 to around \$12.8bn in 2008 (Development Initiatives, *Global Humanitarian Assistance report 2010*, p.7).
 - 34 Oxfam GB calculations from OECD-DAC CRS data. Obviously the proportion of total reported aid that is geographically identifiable is a minority of all reported aid (and much aid is not geographically allocable in any case), so these figures are not reliable guides to the actual amount of aid spent in each province. They do, however, provide a general impression of the proportions of aid allocated to each province.
 - 35 Interviewed by Oxfam, October 2010.
 - 36 Oxfam calculations from OECD-DAC activity-level descriptions of aid projects
 - 37 A. Haller et al, *Food Security and Market Assessment in crisis areas of NWFP and FATA, Pakistan* (World Food Programme: Islamabad 2010), p.9, cited in J. Cosgrave et al, *Inter-Agency Real Time Evaluation (IA RTE) of the Humanitarian Response to Pakistan's 2009 Displacement Crisis* (August 2010).
 - 38 See also Andrew Wilder, *Humanitarian Agenda 2015: Pakistan Case Study* (Feinstein International Centre, February 2008).
 - 39 From a large literature, see Anne Boschini & Anders Olofsgård, 'Foreign aid: An instrument for fighting communism?' *Journal of Development Studies* Vol. 43(4), 2007, pp. 622-648.
 - 40 Guenther Fink & Silvia Redaelli, 'Determinants of international emergency aid - humanitarian need only?', *Policy Research Working Paper Series 4839* (World Bank: 2009). According to Fink & Redaelli's multiple regression analysis, an increase of 1 standard deviation (3000 people) in the number of people killed in a natural disaster increased the likelihood of humanitarian aid provision by 25 percentage points; an increase in the number of people affected by 1 standard deviation (23m people) increased the likelihood of aid provision by 10-13 percentage points; and the US, UK and Norway were respectively 24, 46 and 39 percentage points more likely to provide humanitarian aid to oil exporters than non-oil exporters.
 - 41 In Canada this system has not yet been adopted as official policy.
 - 42 Interview with Spanish Humanitarian Office, 2 November 2010; CIDA presentation to PAGER forum, Montreal, June 2009.

- 43 European Commission Staff Working Document: Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid - ECHO Operational Strategy 2010.
- 44 The UK's Resource Allocation Model for allocating development aid, for example, is adjusted according to a range of considerations, including the existence of conflict, aid flows from other donors, and the availability of domestic revenues and other sources of financing.
- 45 <http://www.usaid.gov/policy/budget/cbj2007/an/esf.html> accessed 23 December 2010.
- 46 The Economic Support Fund (ESF) has grown by 95 per cent, from \$2.6bn in 1999 to over \$5bn in 2008. The combined sums disbursed by the Millennium Challenge Account and USAID Development Assistance have increased by just 14 per cent in the same period, from \$2.78bn to \$3.16bn. USAID Development Assistance on its own has shrunk nearly 40 per cent from \$2.78bn to \$1.60bn. Data from US Overseas Loans and Grants, Greenbook. <http://gbk.eads.usaidallnet.gov/> historical dollar data.
- 47 Oxfam calculations from: US Overseas Loans and Grants, Greenbook; <http://gbk.eads.usaidallnet.gov/> historical dollar data; MCC, 2009 Agency Financial Report; <http://www.mcc.gov/documents/reports/report-fy2009-afr.pdf>
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