

**2006 ASIAN REGIONAL FORUM ON AID EFFECTIVENESS:
IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND EVALUATION
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**What methods have proved most effective for establishing country leadership of
relief and reconstruction following natural disasters?**

Thematic study no. 4

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The opinions expressed in this case study are the authors' alone,
and do not necessarily represent the official views of the organisers
of the Asian Regional Forum on Aid Effectiveness

Executive summary

This thematic study considers the applicability of the Paris Declaration in improving the effectiveness of responses to major emergencies. It covers the range of aid-effectiveness principles, with a focus on country leadership. It is based on case studies of the responses to the December 2004 tsunami in Indonesia and the October 2005 earthquake in Pakistan.

International responses to disasters are becoming more strategic in nature, as governments and donors focus on 'building back better' and achieving long-term, sustainable outcomes. There is no longer a strict separation between relief, reconstruction and development. As disaster response has become more ambitious in scope, the relevance of the Paris Declaration principles and commitments has been increasingly recognised, in particular the importance of country leadership.

In both Pakistan and Indonesia, government established a strong lead in responding to the disasters. They created dedicated agencies to manage the response, with the authority to coordinate activities across government and the donor community. Strong country leadership and donor harmonisation proved to be mutually reinforcing. Joint needs assessments provided a solid basis for policy dialogue and coordination.

Two different mechanisms were used to facilitate coordination. Pakistan used a 'cluster approach' to facilitate division of labour among donors, appointing lead donors in particular sectors and thematic areas. This improved harmonisation among donors and created a structure for interacting with government counterparts. However, participation in the sectoral coordinating bodies by donors and international NGOs was inconsistent, and fell away after the emergency phase was complete.

In Indonesia, a group of 15 donors established a multi-donor trust fund, which proved an effective tool for advancing harmonisation and alignment. It achieved standardisation of procedures among the participating donors, facilitating quick disbursement of funds. The Steering Committee became the main forum for policy dialogue and coordination, with even non-financing donors participating in its meetings.

A key lesson emerging from the case studies is that disaster response is more effective when beneficiary communities are incorporated into all aspect of the process. This is one area where the experience of disaster response can inform the broader aid-effectiveness agenda. The case studies suggest that the involvement of communities, local government and civil society should be given higher priority in realising the Paris objectives.

Managing for results is traditionally weak in disaster situations, with monitoring limited to inputs and activities at project level. Donors need to work closely with government to develop common monitoring frameworks and procedures for the reconstruction effort as a whole.

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Acronyms and abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AJK	Azad Jammu and Kashmir
ALNAP	Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action
BAKORNAS	National Coordinating Board for Disaster Management
BAPENAS	Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional (National Development Planning Board)
BRR	Badan Rehabilitasi dan Rekonstruksi (Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Agency)
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CGI	Consultative Group on Indonesia
DFID	Department for International Development
DNA	Damage Needs Assessment
EAD	Economic Affairs Department
EC	European Commission
ECHO	European Commission Humanitarian Office
ERRA	Earthquake Relief and Rehabilitation Agency
FRC	Federal Relief Commission
GAM	Gerakan Aceh Merdeka (Free Aceh Movement)
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GoI	Government of Indonesia
GoP	Government of Pakistan
HIC	Humanitarian Information Centre
HRR	Humanitarian Response Review
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IFI	International Financial Institutions
INGO	International Non-Government Organisation
JBIC	Japan Bank for International Cooperation
JICA	Japanese International Cooperation Agency
MDB	Multi-lateral Development Bank
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MDF	Multi Donor Trust Fund for Aceh and Nias
MIC	Middle Income Country
NDMA	National Disaster Management Authority
NRB	National Reconstruction Bureau
NWFP	North West Frontier Province
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
PEF	Pakistan Earthquake Fund
RAP	Recovery Assistance Policy
SOG	Strategic Oversight Group
TEC	Tsunami Evaluation Coalition
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNORC	United Nations Office of the Recovery Coordinator
USAID	United States Agency for International Assistance
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organisation

1. Introduction

1. This thematic case study considers how the delivery of relief and reconstruction programmes following major natural disasters is being informed by the Paris Declaration principles, and what innovations have emerged for increasing aid effectiveness. It assesses the extent to which country leadership over reconstruction efforts contributes to improvements in the delivery of assistance, capacity building and the transition from relief to development. The relevance and application of other Paris Declaration objectives to disaster responses are reviewed, together with lessons for their implementation and their contribution to overall aid effectiveness.

2. The case study draws on recent experience in two countries, Indonesia and Pakistan, both of which suffered unprecedented earthquake-related disasters in late 2004 and late 2005 respectively. On 26 December 2004, the Sumatra-Andaman earthquake with its epicentre off the west coast of Sumatra triggered a series of devastating tsunamis that spread throughout the Indian Ocean, killing large numbers of people and inundating coastal communities across South and South East Asia, including parts of Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Thailand. It was the worst natural disaster in Indonesia's history and the Province of Aceh and north Sumatra suffered most. The impact was compounded by the Nias earthquake three months later. In Aceh, there were 167,000 dead or missing, with 127,000 houses destroyed and a similar number damaged; in Nias, 850 were killed and 83,900 houses destroyed or damaged.

3. A little over nine months later, on 8 October 2005, another major earthquake struck Pakistan's Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP) and the Azad Jammu Kashmir (AJK) region in the remote Himalayas. The earthquake killed or seriously injured over 140,000 people and left 3.3 million homeless. Around 400,000 homes were destroyed and 200,000 damaged. Five hundred medical facilities, most government buildings, many roads, bridges, electricity supplies, water services, and sanitation facilities were wiped out. The disaster affected a greater territorial area than the Asian tsunami. There were more injuries, although fewer deaths. However, the overall impact was commensurable.

4. The response to the Pakistan earthquake incorporated and built on many of the approaches developed following the tsunami. In both situations, there was strong leadership by Government with specific agencies established to manage the process. Donor responses were harmonised, with joint needs assessments and coordinated support in both cases. Both relief efforts were aligned behind government leadership, as were the preparations for reconstruction. The transition from relief to reconstruction and development presented similar challenges, but they were dealt with in different ways. There were differences in the level of harmonisation of support for reconstruction and in the development of monitoring systems. The case study explores the similarities and differences in the two situations, and identifies lessons on the applicability of the Paris principles, in particular country leadership, to post-disaster contexts.

5. The material for these case studies was gathered from available literature and interviews with a range of government and donor officials and civil society representatives during week-long visits in August 2006. Separate drafts of each

country case were prepared for review by stakeholders, and then used as inputs for this thematic study. While government representatives and a selection of donors have commented on the drafts, the opinions expressed in this case study are the author's alone. The case studies are necessarily somewhat impressionistic in nature, and do not purport to make any overall judgment on the adequacy of response to the two disasters.

2. Framing the issues

6. Earthquakes, floods, drought, and other natural hazards cause tens of thousands of deaths and billions of dollars in economic losses each year. Natural disasters occur throughout the world, but their economic and social impacts are much greater in developing countries than in developed ones. Disasters are still frequently treated as isolated events by partner countries and the international donor community, rather than as risks inherent in the development process. Yet disasters can wipe out substantial development gains and years of development investment.

7. In recent years, the international community has taken a more strategic approach to disaster response. There has been greater focus on coordinated responses to mobilising resources under country leadership, and greater attention to reducing future disaster risk. The World Conference on Disaster Reduction in January 2005 adopted the Hyogo Framework for Action, and subsequently the International Recovery Platform (IRP) was formed. The UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Early Recovery Working Group are promoting more integrated support. The work of the Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action (ALNAP) and the Tsunami Evaluation Coalition (TEC) have provided some of the best contemporary lesson learning, together with the World Bank's evaluation of its disaster relief assistance.

Box 1: Hyogo Framework for Action

Expected Outcome

The substantial reduction of disaster losses, in lives and in the social, economic and environmental assets of communities and countries

Strategic Goals

- The integration of disaster risk reduction into sustainable development policies and planning
- Development and strengthening of institutions, mechanisms and capacities to build resilience to hazards
- The systematic incorporation of risk reduction approaches into the implementation of emergency preparedness, response and recovery

Priorities for Action

1. Ensure that disaster risk reduction is a national and a local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation.
2. Identify, assess and monitor disaster risks and enhance early warning.
3. Use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels.
4. Reduce the underlying risk factors.
5. Strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels.

World Conference on Disaster Reduction, 18-22 January 2005

8. Though disaster relief is not addressed directly under the Paris Declaration, donors and partner countries increasingly apply principles of ownership, alignment, harmonisation, managing for results and mutual accountability to the provision of assistance for relief and reconstruction, to increase effectiveness and sustainability. It is now widely recognised that relief, early recovery, reconstruction and development are not sequential stages in disaster response, but need to be planned and pursued in parallel. Reconstruction programmes now follow the principle of 'building back better', to increase the resilience of communities in the event of future disasters. Physical reconstruction and livelihood measures need to proceed in parallel. This requires increased consultation with, and participation of, the affected communities, together with strengthening and building capacity among national and local authorities.

9. Disaster response needs to be integrated in a wider development context. Disasters are often influenced by development failures that increase vulnerability, and in turn can disrupt and divert development efforts. The lessons learnt from improvements in disaster response can contribute to the wider aid-effectiveness debate.

3. Two earthquakes, two responses

10. Indonesia and Pakistan provide two contrasting contexts. The tsunami struck the compact, flat, coastal area of Aceh at the northern end of the island of Sumatra. The earthquake in Kashmir affected a much larger area of mountainous terrain in the remote north of Pakistan. There were more injuries in Pakistan but fewer deaths. Some 700,000 people were displaced in Aceh compared to 3.3 million homeless in Kashmir. In Indonesia, the damage though severe was confined to the coastal strip whereas in Pakistan the damage covered some 30,000 square kilometres.

11. Spread across a chain of islands between Asia and Australia, Indonesia has a diverse population of 225.3 million people and occupies 1.9 million square kilometres. Pakistan, in the North West of the Indian Subcontinent, covers less than half that area yet has a population of 161.1 million. Pakistan is a low-income country with a gross national income (GNI) per capita of \$690 and an economy still dominated by agriculture. Indonesia has a GNI of \$1,280 and is an established middle income country with a diverse natural resource base and a developing industrial economy.

12. There are also some important similarities. Both countries have seen major political changes since 1998/99. Indonesia has been in transition from an autocratic, centralized state to a democratic, decentralized one. Following a military coup in 1999, Pakistan has been led by President Musharraf who has subsequently espoused a policy of political and economic reform. A key part of the agenda in both countries has been radical decentralisation and the devolution of responsibilities for service delivery.

13. In terms of aid, Indonesia and Pakistan have a similar level of official development assistance (ODA) *per capita*, amounting to approximately 2% of GDP in the case of Pakistan and 1% for Indonesia. They both receive support from a range of bilateral and multilateral sources, with the majority from a more limited group. Pakistan receives 60-70% of its aid from the ADB and the World Bank. Indonesia

also receives 75% of its ODA from just three donors – Japan, the ADB and the World Bank. Japan is Indonesia's single largest external donor and investor, holding 60% of its debt.

14. The affected areas also display some similarities. Both Aceh and Kashmir have longstanding political instabilities. Kashmir is an area over which India and Pakistan have been in dispute since 1947. Azad Jammu Kashmir (AJK), the Pakistan administered portion, was at the epicentre of the earthquake and suffered 60% of the damage. Remote and inaccessible, the dispersed population lives mainly from subsistence agriculture. Poverty is endemic and access to services poor. Aceh has been involved in a separatist conflict since 1976. Under-resourced and marginalised, it is one of the poorest regions in Indonesia, despite substantial natural resources. Local government was relatively weak in both areas, and extensively disrupted by the disasters. Offices, schools and health centres were destroyed and public servants amongst those directly affected. As a consequence, the human and institutional capacity available to support the recovery was initially very limited.

4. Aid effectiveness and responses to disasters

4.1 Ownership and leadership of policies and responses

15. Both governments responded quickly to the respective disasters. The Government of Pakistan (GoP) asked the UN to mobilise support on the first day, following visits to the affected areas by the President and Prime Minister. In the absence of a functioning National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), the President and Prime Minister established the Federal Relief Commission (FRC), led by senior military officers, within days to coordinate the relief phase, supported by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

16. The Government of Indonesia (GoI) also reacted quickly to the tsunami, appointing the National Coordinating Board for Disaster Management (BAKORNAS PBP) to implement an emergency response. The Minister for Community Welfare was appointed coordinator of the emergency response phase, and an office was established in Banda Aceh. Again, the UN provided support for the coordination of the extensive national and international relief effort. In Indonesia, the President declared the end of the emergency response phase on 26 March 2005. In Pakistan, the relief phase ended on 31st March 2006.

17. In both cases, planning for long-term reconstruction involved requests to the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the World Bank to coordinate joint Damage Needs Assessments (DNAs) with other donors. These were completed quickly, and used as the basis for reconstruction planning, as well as donor coordination and pledging.

18. In both cases, independent agencies were established to lead the reconstruction. In Pakistan, the Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (ERRA) had significant military involvement at senior levels. In Indonesia, the Agency for the Rehabilitation and Reconstruction for the Region and Community of Aceh and Nias (BRR) was led by a senior political chair appointed by the President, with authority to appoint his own senior management team. Both

were delegated the authority to coordinate the inputs of line Ministries and working directly with donors and local government.

19. There were also differences in how the response was organised in each case. BRR is a decentralised body, with its main offices in Banda Aceh and more recently with regional offices co-located with local government across the affected area. ERRA is housed within the Prime Minister's Secretariat in Central Islamabad. The military played a more sustained role in Pakistan after the relief phase, while in Indonesia it was more limited. In Pakistan, strategic continuity was reinforced by the continued role of the President and Prime Minister, whereas in Indonesia the development of the reconstruction strategy was delayed until BRR became fully functional and took delegated responsibility.

4.2 Alignment of support with national strategies

20. In both cases, policy alignment was instigated by the governments inviting the ADB and the World Bank to manage joint DNAs and coordinate financial support. In Pakistan, a Core Donor Group (CDG) comprising the ADB, DFID, the European Union, Japan, UN, USAID and the World Bank was formed to advance coordination, meeting initially on a weekly basis. In Indonesia, existing donor coordination processes were utilised. In both cases, the UN was initially closely involved in the coordination process, but this was reportedly not sustained after the end of the relief phase.

21. In both cases, a substantial share of assistance was provided via the national budget, using trust funds coordinated by the two development banks. This appears to have strengthened their coordinating role among the donor community. The two lead government agencies, ERRA and BRR, took also took on an important role in managing donor coordination and policy alignment.

22. The mechanisms were different in each case. In Indonesia, the pooling of support by 15 donors through the Multi Donor Trust Fund for Aceh and Nias (MDF) resulted in the MDF Steering Committee becoming the forum for policy discussions and sector-based financial support. In Pakistan, following the DNA, the donors reached agreement on nominating a lead donor for particular sectors (*e.g.*, World Bank – livelihoods and housing; ADB – health; DFID – monitoring). However, the initial coordination and policy dialogue was not sustained in Pakistan as well as in Indonesia.

23. Effective monitoring was a key priority from the outset in Pakistan, and has continued to be a focus for donor attention. In Indonesia, however, despite strong donor interest a coordinated approach to monitoring has yet to develop.

4.3 Harmonisation, common arrangements and simplified procedures

24. Collaboration on the DNAs also set the pattern for donor harmonisation. Having begun to work together under ADB/World Bank coordination, the donor community in each case continued to operate in a harmonised way. In Indonesia, the World Bank took the initiative in forming the MDF as a response to GoI's request for a single source of donor financing. Fifteen donors are participating, with an initial commitment of \$547 million. The World Bank is acting as trustee, manager

and secretariat of the MDF, using procedures for project development acceptable to the World Bank. Appraisal and supervision has been opened up to the World Bank, ADB and UN agencies. BRR is responsible for coordinating implementation, with projects supported through the GoI budget wherever possible. Recently, BRR has also decided to co-finance with the MDF, which reinforces GoI ownership.

25. In Pakistan, joint work on the DNA led to a coordinated approach to policy alignment and harmonisation by the CDG, with the two development banks alternately chairing weekly meetings. The donors agreed on sector leadership, but not to pooled financing. There was thus a common approach, but no common procedures. The ADB did establish a trust fund, which was used as a funding conduit by less active donors, but other CDG members worked independently.

26. In Indonesia, with the channelling of donor finance through the MDF, World Bank systems became the norm among donors, simplifying procedures and facilitating rapid disbursement. In Pakistan and Indonesia, pressure from government to provide finance through the budget led to increased attention to Public Finance Management (PFM) systems. There was a more flexible approach to procurement during the relief phase. In an emergency, sole sourcing and speed of delivery take higher priority than International Competitive Tendering (ICT). Once the relief phase was over, practice reverted to established models and the simplified systems were discontinued.

27. Some donors only channelled a nominal amount through the MDF to ensure ‘a seat at the table’, while providing other funds on a bilateral basis. Japan and Australia both chose to provide all their support bilaterally. However, all the donors attended Steering Committee meetings either as full members or as observers, in order to participate in the policy dialogue. This resulted in more effective harmonisation in Indonesia, which in turn reinforced policy alignment. In Pakistan, the CDG was more exclusive. Though initially very active with a strong policy role, there has been less continuity and it currently meets less frequently. ERRA convened a regular meeting of donors during the initial period, but this too has become frequent. Thus, while there is said to be ‘90% harmonisation’ between ADB and the World Bank, the increased collaboration immediately following the earthquake has declined and donor relations have reverted to former patterns of behaviour.

28. The UN also played a very important coordinating role, particularly during the emergency phase. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in Geneva is the hub of an effective international response network. In both Indonesia and Pakistan, its response was rapid and efficient. At the field level, the UN system proved able to respond in a supportive, partnership role with both governments, including the military in Pakistan. It also played the lead role in coordinating the efforts of hundreds of international NGOs.

29. In Pakistan, the independent role of the UN Resident Coordinator made a new and important contribution to harmonisation. The Resident Coordinator supported the Federal Relief Commissioner in leading the Strategic Oversight Group (SOG). UN and Government representatives worked together to analyse, plan and respond to the changing circumstances, maintaining an effective overview of the process. As the transition from relief through to reconstruction unfolded and responsibility

passed from to UNDP, the Resident Coordinator continued to play an important oversight role, engaging with government at the highest level. However, as the emergency phase came to an end, lack of coordination among the UN agencies also became apparent.

4.4 Results orientation

30. Government leadership in Pakistan and Indonesia has been characterised by transparency and accountability. With the eyes of the world focused on their response, both governments have demonstrated their commitment to achieving results and meeting the needs of the individuals and communities affected. Some of the international inputs have been less accountable. Given the scale of donations and the weaker links to constituencies thousands of miles away, there has not always been effective monitoring or reporting. There has been evidence of poor implementation, mismanagement and the diversion of resources in some cases. In the absence of a coordinated approach to monitoring and impact assessment, results orientation has been undermined.

31. Impact assessment for reconstruction and development is more complicated than during the relief phase. There is a clear consensus during the relief phase of the desired impact – people rescued, shelters constructed and occupied, injuries addressed, disease minimised, casualties reduced – and in general terms both governments were able to report with confidence on the impact of relief efforts. Reconstruction and development has a more complex set of objectives. ‘Building back better’ applies to communities, livelihoods and social capital, as well as houses, roads, schools and health facilities. Desired outcomes and success criteria are more difficult to define, and monitoring correspondingly more complex.

32. To date, monitoring has been project based, with a focus on disbursements, activities and inputs. In Indonesia, the MDF has identified monitoring the portfolio as a whole as one of its key challenges. It is very difficult to create a framework that satisfies the varying needs and expectations of donors, and at the same time is country-owned and capable of being managed effectively by government agencies.

33. In Pakistan, with the support of DFID as lead donor on monitoring, more progress has been achieved. The CDG and GoP have agreed on an umbrella Earthquake Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (EMEF). ERRA will be responsible for management the evaluation process, but will contract out individual activities. The intention is that EMEF will link in due course to the monitoring of the PRSP and the overall development process.

4.5 Mutual accountability

34. Strong country ownership of the two disaster responses creates new opportunities for strengthening mutual accountability between the donors and the partner country. Mutual accountability is a new concept in both countries, and building the relationship that it implies will be a lengthy process. There is no common understanding of the goals or mechanisms of mutual accountability, and country partners and donors need to develop the understanding and confidence to work together. Governments in particular need the capacity and authority to challenge donors individually and collectively to be more accountable.

35. Senior managers in BRR identified that practices and behaviour have already evolved. “We are better prepared and appreciate the consequences. Before, donors would ‘sell’ and Government would ‘buy’; now we own the process and are more confident in our role.” Communication appears to be more honest and open.

36. Mutual accountability depends on a level of maturity in donor/donor and donor/country partner relationships. This is advanced by greater structure in the relationship. The authority given to both ERRA and BRR enabled them to renegotiate the rules of engagement with the donors, creating a measure of accountability. The test will be whether the ‘new rules’ can be transferred to the long-term development relationships once the disaster response is over.

5. Comparing mechanisms for coordination and alignment

5.1 The MDF experience

37. The MDF in Indonesia has been subject to three independent studies, conducted by the “Eye on Aceh” NGO, the UN Development Group and a consortium of Norway, Canada and the World Bank. This shows the wide interest in this innovative mechanism. In May 2006, the MDF also conducted its own lesson-learning exercise. The lessons from all the studies are closely congruent, identifying where the trust fund has played a significant role in enhancing aid effectiveness and where the challenges lie for further application of the Paris principles.

Box 2: Challenges remaining for MDF

Ensuring a quality and relevant portfolio by:

- assisting BRR in collating accurate and timely information;
- ensuring quality projects;
- replenishing MDF funds; and
- developing a longer-term exit strategy.
- Impact-oriented monitoring and evaluation with more aggregated and cross-cutting information to improve management of the portfolio, and results from monitoring integrated into decision-making processes;
- clarify roles of all actors in M&E;
- systems and log-frames to ensure results oriented information; and
- coordination of donor evaluation missions into a single exercise.

A more effective and inclusive policy dialogue forum

- mechanisms to identify and solve policy issues more effectively so that projects on the ground are implemented quickly and efficiently;
- prioritizing issues for discussion, creating links to other forums to coordinate efforts through a close cooperation with the BRR;
- improving dialogue with Government at central and decentralized levels;
- increase the involvement of CSOs and beneficiaries;
- address concerns on cross-cutting issues like gender and the environment;
- increase interaction with donors to promote policy dialogue with the government;
- providing a unified voice to encourage necessary policy change.

MDF Lesson Learning Outcomes Report, May 2006

38. Across the reviews, the lessons on aid effectiveness fall into three broad categories.

- ***Enhancing portfolio quality:*** Now that the MDF is established and the recovery programme progressing, the major need is to improve quality of support without diminishing the efficiency and effectiveness that has become a hallmark.
- ***Monitoring and evaluation:*** It would be useful to establish common output indicators and harmonised targets, together with more programmatic monitoring coordinated by BRR and MDF to enhance results orientation.
- ***Strengthening policy dialogue:*** Confidence and commitment have been built but the policy dialogue needs deepening if the Steering Committee is to develop this function.

39. Even where leadership, ownership, policy alignment and harmonisation of donor processes are present, it is in these three areas that further work remains to be done. However well coordinated and aligned the approach, sustained impact can only occur through quality initiatives. Monitoring and evaluation and management for results are the weakest of the Paris principles in both case studies. The policy discourse between donors and country partners needs to go further than simply donor alignment with country partner policies. A robust and open dialogue about policy options and policy direction is required to achieve effective, policy-led programming.

5.2 The cluster approach

Box 3: Humanitarian Response Review (HRR)

Through the summer of 2005, a wide-ranging consultation process involving all key actors was conducted to formulate a series of recommendations. It was recommended that humanitarian response be divided into nine sectors or ‘clusters’ and for a global ‘cluster lead’ to be made responsible and accountable for coordinating each cluster. The nine clusters proposed were:

1. Health
2. Food and nutrition
3. Water and Sanitation
4. Logistics
5. Camp Management
6. Emergency Shelter
7. Emergency Telecommunications
8. Protection of vulnerable groups
9. Early Recovery

A cluster for education was considered but rejected.

The HRR recommendations were finalised in September and due to be put to the IASC in December. In between the September recommendation and the December meeting, the October earthquake in Pakistan took place.

40. Following the tsunami and what was initially seen as a poorly coordinated relief effort by many observers, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) (which includes both UN and other agencies and donors) asked OCHA to conduct a review of strategy for the humanitarian response. The review proposed a cluster approach to improve coordination. The details are set out in Box 3.

41. A decision was taken early in the Pakistan earthquake response to implement the cluster model recommendations of the HRR, with lead donors appointed for particular sectors. This institutional framework applied both to the relief phase and to the preparation for rehabilitation, beginning with the DNA. Trialling a new approach in an emergency situation was ambitious, and entailed some role confusion. However, the cluster approach was able to provide a structure for coordination and decision making on the international side.

Box 4: Evaluation of the Cluster Approach in the Pakistan Earthquake

- Overall, the Cluster Approach (CA) was generally successful in Pakistan.
- It provided a ‘single and recognizable framework for coordination, collaboration, decision making and practical solutions in a chaotic operational environment.’
- There were some challenges arising from a lack of clarity surrounding CA.
- Participation by organisations in the CA was *ad hoc* and inconsistent. Greater effort was needed to include NGOs, IFIs, other Government Offices and donors to ‘broaden the CA beyond merely a UN exercise.’
- GoP played a vital role in the implementation of the CA and adapted its relief structure to the framework. Pakistan’s military was commended for successfully adopting the CA.
- Clusters with a technical framework worked compared well to past emergency responses. Clusters covering cross-cutting themes need to be developed further.
- There was a need for a results-based planning and monitoring system to identify gaps in implementation.
- Many respondents supported the expansion of the UN County Team to an IASC County Team as a mechanism to improve stakeholder participation and operational coherence and humanitarian response.
- Donor engagement and participation was not consistent in Cluster meetings.
- The interface between the clusters and Pakistan Government structures functioned well despite some criticisms.
- CA offers the ‘possibility of greater coherence in planning and cost estimation leading to reliable funding appeals.’
- Some respondents thought that Clusters would continue in some form in the post-emergency phase; this initiative is just beginning to develop under GoP leadership.
- In order for CA to develop and succeed, the County Team would have to develop an “enabling environment” with greater guidance and support by the IASC and HQ of its member agencies.’

Inter-Agency Standing Committee: Real Time Evaluation Cluster Approach – Pakistan Earthquake’ 10-20 Feb, 2006

42. The use of the cluster approach has been the subject of a separate ‘real time’ evaluation, the conclusions of which are summarised in Box 4. From a disaster-response perspective, the cluster model was successful in organising and harmonising

activity in the field. From an aid-effectiveness perspective, there are also wider lessons. The way in which the clusters related to GoP systems could be a model for donor/GoP sector-based dialogue. The focus on technical delivery detracted somewhat from high-level coordination, especially for NGOs.

6. Costs, benefits and impact

43. In the discussions in Pakistan and Indonesia, the view of stakeholders was that the benefits of investing in strong institutional arrangements to enhance country leadership far outweighed any costs. The MDF in Indonesia has dispersed more quickly than most other funds, with savings in transaction costs as compared to many other tsunami-affected countries. Efficiency was also a major achievement in Pakistan, where the onset of winter could have caused a major increase in casualties had the response been delayed.

44. The time taken to establish both BRR and ERRA as effective agencies may have caused some loss of momentum, but this was more than compensated for when the agencies began to function. The cost to donors of a stronger coordinating framework was limited. Joint work on the DNAs was productive and laid the basis for a well-planned reconstruction and development phase. The costs of coordination and harmonisation were thus worth the investment, and the practical benefits in terms of programming were considerable. Without a detailed audit, it is not possible to give an estimate of the actual costs and benefits involved. However all the evidence supports the stakeholders' views that costs were limited and compensated for by the benefits.

45. While the Tsunami Evaluation Coalition (TEC) study relates to all tsunami-affected countries, the conclusions are also highly pertinent for Aceh. Box 5 summarises the TEC findings.

Box 5: TEC study findings

- The majority of funds pledged by donor governments had already been disbursed by the time this Initial Findings report was prepared. This was a significant improvement on earlier efforts.
- While 'Good Humanitarian Donorship' initiatives provide a guide to good donor behaviour, there needs to more comprehensive guidance on how to deal with apparent conflicts between various principles.
- Stronger mechanisms are needed to track the flow of funds.
- Almost the entire aid community is aware of the need for and importance of government and local community ownership of the response and recovery strategy.
- However, there have been frustrations and delays in implementing ownership, and tradeoffs between speed and quality of response.

Telford and Cosgrave (2006) TEC Synthesis Report

46. Donor support has been effectively disbursed, and the MDF has been in the forefront. Efforts towards harmonisation and alignment have resulted in good practice in terms of 'humanitarian donorship'. MDF has effective systems in place to track its funds. Government ownership and the establishment of BRR as lead

agency have been key factors, and BRR has targeted local government as a key partner and the focus for long term development.

47. In Pakistan, lessons from the tsunami were effectively learnt. The relief phase was generally seen as a major success, with communities re-established, shelters in place and the immediate needs of victims addressed. It is too early to make an assessment of the impact of the early stages of reconstruction, but reports are generally positive.

6.1 Country leadership and policy alignment

48. The importance of country leadership, and the willingness of donors to follow that leadership, has improved relations among donors and between donors and government, and has had direct impact on the quality of the response. Both BRR and ERRA spoke positively about improvements in relations with donor. They identified that their own leadership capacity had increased, at the same time as donor harmonisation had improved. In Indonesia, relationships within the donor community have improved since the tsunami. There is more donor/donor engagement and joint working. There is evidence of improvements in areas other than the disaster response (e.g. donor coordination around decentralisation).

49. However, in both cases there is scope for greater policy alignment and stronger dialogue. As the MDF Steering Committee acts as the policy forum in Indonesia, policy dialogue is still largely limited to the areas where the MDF itself is active. Wider discussion of policy related to the disaster and more generally to the re-integration of Aceh and its long-term development should ideally take place within another, government-led forum. Here, the limitations of BRR as an agency concerned with the reconstruction and development of a single region are also a factor. The Ministry of Planning or the Ministry of Economic Affairs may be more appropriate leads in widening the policy dialogue and integrating it into a wider discourse around aid effectiveness.

6.2 Strengthening country systems

50. In both countries, government established a dedicated agency to manage reconstruction and development. Lessons from past disasters showed that new disaster-management institutions need to have the authority to coordinate reconstruction efforts by line ministries, local government and other agencies. ERRA and BRR were given this authority, either in their initial mandate or subsequently. Their impact has consequently been substantial, and they have played a leading role in the reconstruction. In Pakistan, this may have detracted from the role of provincial and local governments, and the transition from ERRA to NWFP and AJK administrative and political bodies will become more difficult as time passes. BRR has had a different experience. Being located in Aceh, its links with the provincial government and local administrations have been stronger. Co-locating BRR's local offices with local government and the UN is a deliberate move intended to link relief, reconstruction and development and address the need for local capacity building.

51. While the decision to establish specially empowered agencies to manage coordination has paid off, there have been costs in terms of capacity building of

other government bodies. Line ministries have had to work through ERRA and BRR, and have not been directly accountable for their own service areas. Similarly, provincial and local government was not involved from the outset. The process of strengthening capacity and transferring responsibility has been slow to develop. The net effect has been that overall impact on government systems has been less than in other cases where separate agencies were not established.

6.3 Donor harmonisation

52. In both cases, mechanisms for harmonising donor responses have been reasonably effective, but the wider impact on donor harmonisation has been limited.

53. In Pakistan, the joint leadership role played by the ADB and World Bank strengthened working relationships between the two banks. The CDG also helped to broaden harmonisation and facilitate the emergence of a more coordinated approach around sectoral and cross-sectoral (e.g. monitoring) issues. On the whole, however, these wider benefits have been limited, and the aid-effectiveness agenda in Pakistan remains at an early stage.

54. The MDF in Indonesia has had some impact in streamlining and simplifying the provision of financial support, and there have been benefits in efficiency and effectiveness including marked reductions in transaction costs. These gains have extended to BRR, which has used the process to scale up support with co-financing. However, there does not appear to have been the same impact on wider harmonisation.

6.4 Results orientation and monitoring

55. Results orientation has been relatively weak in both cases. Obviously, the first goal of any disaster response is to respond to the immediate needs of those most affected. Monitoring at this level was reasonably effective. Beyond this objective, however, monitoring of wider impact remains shortcoming in both Indonesia and Pakistan, as in most disaster responses. Monitoring is mainly limited to project level, and does not generate effective information on the reconstruction process as a whole. There is limited evidence of effective harmonisation among donors in the monitoring arena. There is a possible exception in Pakistan, where efforts are being made to establish common monitoring systems.

6.5 Mutual accountability

56. Mutual accountability requires partners to be open with each other about their own performance and their expectations of each other. BRR and ERRA have both gained the confidence to communicate their expectations clearly to donors. This is a consequence of the authority and capacity that the two agencies have achieved. Paradoxically, it is the donors who normally have a more assertive position who are still uncertain of their role in this new environment.

57. The development partnership in both Pakistan and Indonesia has changed as a result of the experience with disaster response. The key government agencies, if not the two governments themselves, have gained a new appreciation of the nature of the development compact, and are pushing the boundaries of the relationship. The

impact on the future development relationship is still unclear, but the indications are that both will benefit from the learning that has emerged.

7. Lessons learned

58. **International responses to disasters are becoming more strategic in nature.** In the past, donors have tended to respond to disasters in a tactical and reactive way, rather than taking a strategic approach to achieving long-term, sustainable outcomes. In recent years, there has been a recognition that disaster response needs to be much more strategic, based on the principle of ‘building back better’. There is no longer a strict separation between relief, reconstruction and development.

59. **As disaster response has become more ambitious, the relevance of the Paris Declaration principles and commitments has been recognised.** Donors have recognised that, in order to anchor reconstruction in a sustainable development vision, country leadership is essential. In these two cases, donors made significant efforts to facilitate government leadership of the process from the outset. They recognised the important of aligning their support to national reconstruction strategies. They also recognised the important of greater strategic coordination and harmonisation among themselves.

60. **Strong country leadership and donor harmonisation are mutually reinforcing.** The two case studies indicate that it is easier for government to establish effective leadership of reconstruction efforts where donors make the effort to improve their strategic coordination and procedural harmonisation. At the same time, the willingness of government to communicate its expectations and preferred approaches helps to discipline the donor community, facilitating harmonisation. Signs of a virtuous circle of increased leadership and harmonisation were apparent in both case studies.

61. **Effective country leadership depends upon an appropriately empowered and resourced agency at central level.** Both governments moved quickly to establish a single agency with the authority to coordinate the work of line ministries and sub-national governments, and to liaise between government and donors. The existence of a strong coordinating body able to plan, coordinate and monitor the overall response was identified as essential to country leadership in both cases. One respect in which disaster response may differ from other development contexts is in the need for greater centralisation of functions and authority – including, where necessary, the involvement of the military.

62. **However, there are costs to greater centralisation which need to be mitigated.** The existence of a strong, central agency may have had the effect of marginalising other ministries and agencies, including regional and local government. It blurred the lines of accountability, and may have limited the volume of capacity-building support into other agencies. In Indonesia, a more decentralised structure for the BRR, including co-location with local governments across the affected area, helped to mitigate these costs.

63. **Stronger policy alignment requires robust policy dialogue.** Disaster response entails enormous challenges in terms of rapid policy making and planning,

and the ability to adapt quickly to emerging challenges. Government and donors need to establish a robust policy dialogue early on, to support mutual learning. The willingness of donors to align behind country leadership, and the willingness of government to be open to policy inputs from donors, must go hand in hand.

64. Joint needs assessments provided the basis for subsequent coordination.

The collaboration established during Damage Needs Assessments, coordinated jointly by the ADB and the World Bank, provided the foundation for harmonisation of the relief and reconstruction effort. Joint assessments and analytical work are a good investment in improved aid effectiveness.

65. Pooled funding through the multi-donor trust fund proved an effective tool for harmonisation and alignment.

The MDF in Indonesia contributed to more effective assistance in a number of ways. It achieved harmonisation of procedures among the participating donors. This in turn facilitated more rapid disbursement of funds than is typical in disaster response. The MDF Steering Committee became the main forum for policy dialogue between donors and government. It also provided a focus for coordination and harmonisation among donors, with even non-financing donors participating in its meetings. However, the scope of the alignment and harmonisation achieved through the MDF was necessarily limited to the MDF's areas of activity. The case study indicates that there is also a need for wider policy dialogue with government at the central level on the long-term reconstruction and reintegration of the Aceh region.

66. Improved division of labour among donors through the appointment of lead agencies was a key objective, but difficult to sustain.

Pakistan adopted the cluster approach recommended by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) in 2005 as the basis for coordination of relief and reconstruction effort among donors. Lead donors were appointed to particular sectors and thematic areas, and given a mandate to coordinate across the agencies active in the area. Trialling a new structure during an emergency response was ambitious, and there some role confusion was evident. The approach was reasonably successful during the early phase, particularly among sectors which were clearly defined in scope. It helped to structure interaction between donors and government agencies, including the military. However, participation in the sectoral coordinating bodies by donors and international NGOs was inconsistent. The cluster approach proved less effective in thematic areas like gender and the environment. Coordination is reported to have declined over time after the emergency phase had passed.

67. In disaster response, harmonisation and alignment must extend to a larger number and wider range of actors, particularly international NGOs.

A key feature of the response to massive disasters is the number and range of actors involved – in particular, the large numbers of international NGOs. This complicates the task of coordination for government. NGOs often lack the resources to participate effectively in coordinating structures. There is a need to develop new methods of ensuring their contribution is coordinated with donors and supports government leadership.

68. Disaster response is more likely to achieve sustainable results if beneficiaries are incorporated into all aspect of the process.

A key lesson from both case studies is that involvement of the communities affected by the disaster in

the planning, implementation and monitoring of relief and reconstruction efforts is essential. This is one area where the experience of disaster relief may have a lot to contribute to the broader aid-effectiveness agenda. Effective reconstruction assistance entails taking the time to ensure that local communities are given the opportunity to express their needs and preferences, and to be incorporated as active agents in the reconstruction process.

69. Capacity building of local authorities is key to effective community participation. If it is to be sustainable, local participation should not be organised purely through *ad hoc* structures, but should be part of a process of reinvigorating local government. To ‘build back better’ and ensure sustainable results from reconstruction, communities must be empowered through local representative structures to act as agents of their own development. This means that early investments in building the capacity and representative character of local government should be an important part of the reconstruction process.

70. Managing for results across a complex disaster response requires a strong commitment from donors to coordinated monitoring. In the urgency of disaster response, monitoring is often overlooked, or limited to the tracking of inputs and activities at project level. This is not adequate to the needs of managing a complex response. Donors need to work closely with government to develop common monitoring frameworks and procedures for the reconstruction effort as a whole. This can be difficult to achieve, given the differing requirements of donors, and requires strong commitment. DFID is helping to develop such a system in Pakistan. It also important that the monitoring system be capable of effective management by government, and that it involve the participation of affected communities or local governments. In Pakistan, the ERRA will be responsible for the management of monitoring, but will contract out particular monitoring activities.

71. In the context of disaster relief, mutual accountability is advanced by well-structured relationships, in which government agencies set the rules of engagement. Governments need to articulate clear expectations of donors, in terms of coordination, harmonisation and alignment, and clear preferences on approaches and methods. Governments need to empower their lead agency to set the rules of engagement, and donors need to make it clear that they are willing to follow the rules. In the two case studies, there is evidence of the two lead agencies gaining the confidence over time to play this role.

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