

Saving lives, preventing suffering and building resilience:

The UK Government's Humanitarian Policy



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Foreword

**By the Secretary of State for International Development,
the Rt Hon Andrew Mitchell MP.**

Humanitarian disasters turn lives upside down. During the last eighteen months we have seen extreme suffering in Haiti, Pakistan, the Ivory Coast and Somalia, as well as in richer countries such as New Zealand and Japan. We all know, however, that it is the poorest people that inevitably suffer the most. It is those people who desperately need our help. We are committed to ensuring that Britain will provide that vital support.

I think in particular of the drought in the Horn of Africa, where women and children are dying in their thousands. What I saw and heard when I visited the refugee camps in Dadaab and spent time with those working in Mogadishu to combat the dreadful effects of the famine earlier this summer made me even more convinced that Britain is right to be driving support for a more coordinated and powerful international response.

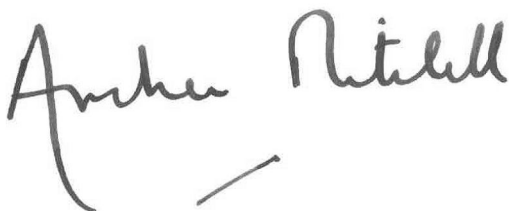
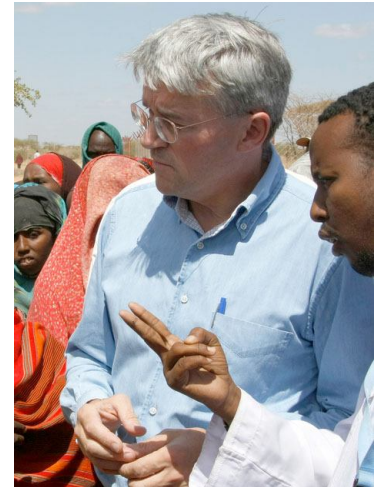
Britain has a proud reputation for helping those in need, but we cannot afford to be complacent. For the sake of those families in the Horn and elsewhere we have to keep pushing ourselves to do more and to do it better. That's why we commissioned Lord Ashdown to carry out the Humanitarian Emergency Response Review last year.

Lord Ashdown's report was clear: we will achieve far more in the long run if we pull together and collectively channel our efforts through a coordinated international system. Governments across the globe must share the burden of helping those in humanitarian need. We will work first and foremost through the UN, lending our full support to its Emergency Relief Coordinator, Baroness Amos, as she strives to help the UN-led humanitarian system to reach its full potential.

This coalition Government has the utmost respect for the neutrality, independence and impartiality of British and international humanitarian agencies. Humanitarian personnel work tirelessly in some of the most frightening and difficult of circumstances. It is their reputation and integrity that allows us to challenge those who would deny humanitarian access or put aid workers' lives at risk.

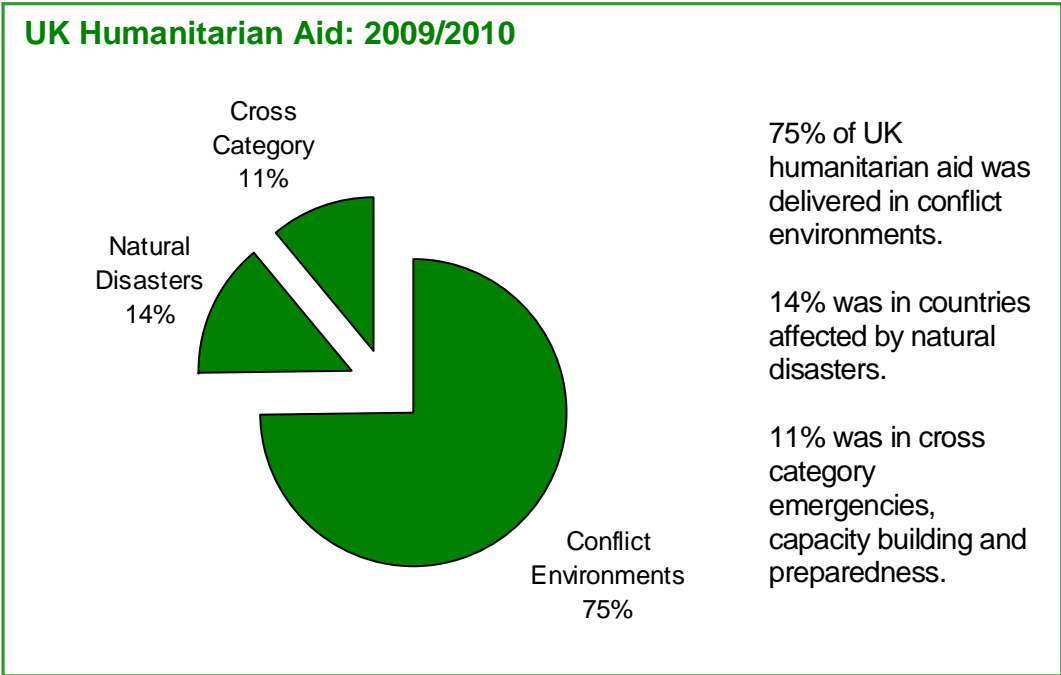
This policy document is the next stage in a process that began with Lord Ashdown's review. It will inform programmes in-country and will shape DFID's funding arrangements with international organisations. Its implementation will be monitored and the results it achieves will be published as part of DFID's business plan.

This document underlines that disaster situations are hugely complex and pose an enormous challenge to those of us committed to securing a better and safer world. We must rise to this challenge, working with others to ensure that humanitarian disasters, while a sad fact of life for many, do not have to be a fact of death.

Introduction: The challenges we face

- 1. This Humanitarian Policy outlines how the UK will help build resilience to crises and respond to humanitarian need resulting from conflict and natural disasters. It builds on the Government’s response to Lord Ashdown’s independent Humanitarian Emergency Response Review (HERR) but as well as covering rapid onset emergencies, also deals with the challenges of complex, chronic humanitarian situations. It also takes account of other UK strategies - Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, Building Stability Overseas and the Call to End Violence Against Women and Girls.
- 2. Humanitarian need is likely to continue to grow. Conflicts such as those in Somalia, Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo and the Middle East are long-standing and will not be quickly resolved. The dramatic increase in the frequency and intensity of natural disasters, with recent events in Haiti, Pakistan, Japan and the Horn of Africa making unprecedented demands on the humanitarian system, is predicted to continue.
- 3. Developing countries suffer a far greater impact from both conflict and natural disasters - under pressure from competition for limited resources, population growth, urbanisation, political and economic instability and the impacts of climate change. The inter-relationships between natural and man-made factors exacerbate humanitarian needs and provide the greatest challenge to the humanitarian system.
- 4. There has been an almost twofold increase in violent attacks on humanitarian workers between 1997 and 2008. And as shown below, 75% of our humanitarian assistance goes to conflict-affected areas. Thus there is a clear need for increased protection and security as part of the humanitarian response, particularly in fragile and conflict-affected states. The UK will promote respect for humanitarian principles to support greater acceptance of humanitarian actors and improved humanitarian access.



5. There is now compelling evidence that the impact of disasters can be significantly mitigated by building the resilience of nations and people, and addressing the root causes of vulnerability. The right combination of humanitarian, development and political action can reduce unnecessary loss of life and suffering, in the long-term reducing the need for humanitarian aid.
6. The UK Government recognises the many strengths and achievements of the international humanitarian system as well as the challenges it faces. Even with improvements in the efficiency and impact of the international system, it may not be able to meet the future challenges of short-term and protracted crises.
7. Based on the above analysis, this Policy sets out seven goals for improving the effectiveness of UK humanitarian support:
 - strengthen anticipation and early action in response to disasters and conflict;
 - build the resilience of individuals, communities and countries to withstand shocks and recover from them;
 - strengthen international leadership and partnerships;
 - protect civilians and humanitarian space;
 - support improvements in accountability, impact and professionalism of humanitarian action;
 - invest in research and find innovations; and
 - reinforce the British Government's own capacity to respond to humanitarian crises.
8. The following sections set out each of these policy goals in more detail and explain how they support the UK's role in strengthening humanitarian response. They will inform current and future country operations, as well as the UK's funding and policy relationships with international bodies.

Being a responsible donor

9. **The UK adheres to the internationally accepted principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence in its humanitarian action.**
10. The UK will also adhere to international laws regarding humanitarian action, in particular International Humanitarian Law and the Convention on the Status of Refugees and Refugee Convention. The UK supports the European Consensus on humanitarian aid and UN General Assembly resolution 46/182 on the coordination of humanitarian assistance. Our humanitarian work will be guided by these principles and international commitments.
11. **Our humanitarian action will be based on need, and need alone, and will be autonomous from political, military, security or economic objectives.**
12. In June 2003, seventeen donor governments defined the principles of Good Humanitarian Donorship. These have been endorsed by the Development Assistance Committee of the OECD as the standard for its members' humanitarian work.

UK humanitarian action will be based on need, and need alone

Internationally Accepted Humanitarian Principles

The four core humanitarian principles.

Humanity - To save lives and alleviate human suffering wherever it is found and respecting the dignity of those affected.

Impartiality - Action is based solely on need, giving priority to the most urgent cases of distress, and without discrimination.

Neutrality - Humanitarian action must not favour any side in an armed conflict or engage in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

Independence - Humanitarian action must be autonomous from political, economic, military or other objectives.

Good Humanitarian Donorship

In line with the Good Humanitarian Donorship principles, the UK's humanitarian work will:

- be guided by the principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence;
- promote adherence to international humanitarian, refugee and human rights law;
- ensure flexible, timely and predictable funding and reduce earmarking;
- allocate funding in proportion to needs;
- involve beneficiaries in the design and evaluation of humanitarian response;
- strengthen local capacity to prevent, prepare for and mitigate crises;
- support the UN, the Red Cross and NGOs, and affirm the primary position of civilian organisations in humanitarian crises;
- support learning and accountability initiatives and encourage regular evaluation.

How we will work

13. The UK is firmly committed to a multilateral and UN-led and coordinated international humanitarian system. To this end, the UK will attach priority to working with others to support the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator to lead the system and the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs to fulfil its demanding mandate.
14. The UK will make disaster resilience a core part of its operations in all country programmes, and show international leadership on this important area of work. This will require a significant change in the way we work.
15. The UK approach to humanitarian assistance has four elements:
 - **Multilateral** – The multilateral system has the mandate and experience to be the first line of response to humanitarian emergencies when international assistance is required. The UK has committed to significantly increase its core contributions to those multilateral agencies that have demonstrated they can deliver swiftly and appropriately to emergencies.
 - **Country-specific** – When emergencies are beyond the resource capacity of the multilateral system to respond, we will provide additional support to multilateral partners and where appropriate governments, local civil society and international NGOs.
 - **Directly** – Where needs are overwhelming and the UK can add value, we will directly deploy expertise, goods and assets; and
 - **Diplomatically** – We will share information and advocate to secure humanitarian access and to protect civilians.
16. The UK will allocate more resources to building resilience at national, institutional and community levels, and to delivering humanitarian results. We will also expand our range of financing mechanisms to improve the predictability and timeliness of our support to the Red Cross, NGOs and the private sector.
17. A small number of donors currently fund most of the international response to humanitarian crises. As more countries become prosperous, the number of donors providing humanitarian support needs to increase. The UK will channel its diplomatic efforts to encourage a broader range of countries to provide responsible humanitarian financing and more equitable burden sharing amongst donors. We will build alliances and coalitions for change with national governments, regional organisations, the UN, NGOs, the Red Cross and diaspora communities. We will encourage the use of private sector resources and expertise.
18. We will continue to champion accountability and transparency in aid, including to beneficiaries. Our focus on identifying results, evaluation and lesson-learning will ensure that UK humanitarian aid provides value for money and delivers high quality, rapid support.
19. We need to strike a balance between ensuring accountability to taxpayers and beneficiaries and respecting the independence of implementing

The UK will honour its commitment to transparency and accountability to beneficiaries, and to the UK taxpayer

partners. We will support our partners to strengthen their monitoring, evaluation and accountability systems and will seek to avoid imposing additional bureaucracy on them.

- 20. DFID will coordinate the UK Government's humanitarian responses. Standard Operating Procedures will be developed in line with internationally agreed frameworks such as the Oslo Guidelines on Use of Foreign Military and Civil Defence Assets in Disaster Relief, and Guidelines on the Use of Military and Civil Defence Assets to Support UN Humanitarian Activities in Complex Emergencies.

Value for money in DFID programmes means maximising the impact of each pound spent to improve poor people's lives

We will:

- 1. Provide aid according to need and need alone, in line with the humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence.
- 2. Follow Good Humanitarian Donorship principles and best practice, and encourage others to do likewise.
- 3. Work multilaterally and with other partners to expand the donor base for humanitarian action and greater burden sharing.
- 4. Strengthen our commitments to be transparent and accountable to beneficiaries, and encourage our partners to do likewise.

The Humanitarian Emergency Response Review

The Humanitarian Emergency Response Review (HERR) was chaired by Lord Paddy Ashdown and presented its independent report in March 2011.

The HERR recommended how the UK could better deliver a response fit to deal with the challenges of the 21st century, based around seven key themes:

- Anticipation** - the need to better anticipate crises using a combination of science and on the ground experience;
- Resilience** - the need to work with nations to make them more resilient to disaster and conflict, in part through better linkages with the UK's development programme;
- Leadership** - the need for better, more consistent international leadership when nations are not able to cope alone;
- Innovation** - the need to bring new techniques and technologies to bear on humanitarian challenges;
- Accountability** - the need for aid providers to be accountable to those they serve, and those whose funds they use;
- Partnership** - the need to build networks and alliances to find solutions to humanitarian challenges; and
- Humanitarian space** - the need to preserve the fragile space that allows agencies to work in contested areas, helping those most in need regardless of who they are.

The full report is available on-line: www.dfid.gov.uk/Documents/publications1/HERR.pdf

Policy Goal 1: Strengthen anticipation and early action

21. All too often humanitarian action is reactive. We need to do more to improve our understanding of when and where conflicts and natural disaster might strike so that we can take preventative action and respond in a timely way to support affected populations when they do occur.
22. The UK will work with the scientific community and use science, research, conflict analysis and country knowledge in order to strengthen early warning systems and facilitate early action.
23. Immediate family, neighbours and members of the local community are the first to help those around them when disaster strikes. The UK will help strengthen these local actors' ability to respond. We will also strengthen the capacity of national governments and regional organisations to anticipate disasters and respond accordingly.
24. The loss of life and suffering that result make it both wasteful to respond only after a crisis has taken hold. Increasingly, the evidence suggests that early action to help people before the effects of drought are fully felt can help avert famine. Every £1 invested in disaster risk reduction saves at least £4 in relief at a later stage. For the poor, this means reduced loss of life and suffering, increased security, and greater ability to hold on to their assets.
25. Conflicts are characterised by high levels of violence and displacement of the civilian population. Both information and humanitarian access are often severely limited. To support a more effective response we will draw on the UK's Conflict Early Warning System and Watch list of fragile countries, established as part of the Building Stability Overseas Strategy. A senior-level steering group will regularly review early warnings and consider our response, including diplomatic interventions to protect civilians and humanitarian space.

We will:

5. Improve our use of science in both predicting and preparing for disasters, drawing on the Chief Scientific Advisers' network across government. Ensure scientific data on disaster risks is used to inform and prioritise country and regional level work on resilience.
6. Work with others to find new ways of acting quickly in 'slow onset' disasters to stop them becoming major emergencies.

Policy Goal 2: Build resilience to disasters and conflict

26. Building disaster resilience means working with nations and communities to maintain or transform living standards in the face of shocks and stresses. The more resilient a nation, the less lasting damage disasters will cause, and the quicker it can recover. Building resilience is central to achieving the Millennium Development Goals.
27. Disaster resilience requires improvements to social, economic, environmental, political and physical planning and to preparedness for potential natural and man-made disasters. In the humanitarian sector, this means:
 - investment in infrastructure - such as building houses and hospitals that can withstand earthquakes or schools that can be used as cyclone shelters;
 - investment in human capacity - such as developing skills to diversify sources of income and skills to manage emergency responses;
 - consideration of pre-existing vulnerabilities at a community level, such as malaria and other health issues;
 - support for community and government capacity through strengthening appropriate institutions and structures; and
 - better anticipation of where natural and man-made disasters occur, and early action – for example by giving people support before a drought forces them to sell all their possessions.
28. Humanitarian assistance should be delivered in a way that does not undermine existing coping mechanisms and helps a community build its own resilience for the future. National governments in at-risk countries can ensure that disaster risk management policies and strategies are linked to community-level action. Where governments are already building resilience in at-risk countries, the UK will support them through its development programmes.
29. In conflict settings, resilience will be developed through strengthening political structures at the community level. Resilience to conflict requires analysis of specific governance issues, imbalances of power, and the political economy of violence and inequality. We will include such analysis in the new cross-government strategic conflict assessments, to improve the conflict sensitivity of our bilateral programmes.
30. Disasters affect people differently. The poor are disproportionately impacted upon. Women, children, older and disabled people, and politically marginalised and oppressed groups are often more exposed to risks, and usually have less capacity to defend themselves from the impact of a disaster. Understanding these varying dynamics will enable us to take the specific needs of such groups into account when planning and implementing resilience work.
31. Disaster resilience will enable people to recover from disasters better. This area of recovery – often called 'transition' or early recovery – has remained under-resourced, often falling between different coordination mechanisms and funding sources. The UK will find innovative ways to bridge this gap.

We will:

7. Make building resilience a core part of DFID's approach in all the countries where we work, and where possible lead in driving better coordination of all partners including governments, UN, NGOs and others in building resilience.
8. Integrate resilience and disaster risk reduction into our work on climate change and conflict prevention.
9. Improve the coherence of and links between our development and humanitarian work, including in fragile and conflict-affected situations.
10. Ensure that our humanitarian responses 'do no harm', support long-term resilience and development work and deliver the right results for affected people along with value for money for the UK taxpayer.

Policy Goal 3: Strengthen international leadership and partnership

32. Governments that are overwhelmed by disasters or conflict need a strong international system to assist them. This needs to be appropriately led and coordinated to avoid duplication of effort, ensure cost effectiveness and timeliness, and meet agreed standards. In recent years progress has been made, but more is required to ensure the system is properly able to meet the humanitarian needs of the future.
33. The UN is the only legitimate authority that can lead the humanitarian system, but is often over-stretched and can struggle to lead effectively. The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) is the primary forum for dialogue and coordination at both global and country levels, with the IASC Principals playing a central role in strengthening the international system. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs has a key role both as Chair of the IASC and in providing leadership at field level through the Humanitarian Coordinators
34. The HERR found that the quality of UN leadership is not consistently good enough to meet current and anticipated challenges. This calls for more investment in leadership training for humanitarian coordinators and professionals, backed by better support from headquarters and regional centres. There have also been delays in deploying the right people to emergencies. To address this, we will continue to deploy humanitarian experts into the multilateral system as 'surge capacity,' expanding this through partners to help mobilise clusters.
35. In the biggest emergencies, the cluster coordination system should be the strategic decision-making body that fully integrates the views of national and local groups. Lines of authority, accountability, and roles and responsibilities need to be clear. The UK will advocate for reform with the UN Secretary General, the Emergency Relief Coordinator, the United Nations Development Programme Administrator and other heads of humanitarian agencies in order to support the performance of Humanitarian Coordinators and Cluster Leads.
36. Many of the agencies that work within the humanitarian system are engaged in reforms intended to strengthen partnerships and improve co-working at both a strategic and operational level. The UK will support these efforts, under the direction of the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator and the Principals of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee.
37. The UK will take on a 'championing' role to support humanitarian partners deliver reforms. Specifically, we will support the European Commission Humanitarian Office in its role as the primary vehicle for EU humanitarian Assistance. We will work more closely with the EU, the United States and others through the Good Humanitarian Donorship initiative to promote an effective multilateral system. We will initiate bilateral discussions with donors that have not traditionally provided humanitarian aid through the international system to broaden political commitment to a principled, effective humanitarian approach.

38. We will also work to strengthen collaboration between humanitarian and development partners to ensure that short-term humanitarian interventions support longer-term development goals, and between humanitarian and private sector partners.

We will:

11. Continue to maintain a strong multilateral approach, encourage others to do likewise and expand the humanitarian donor base.
12. Work with other donors to support the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and the Emergency Relief Coordinator in their efforts to improve humanitarian leadership at the strategic and operational level.
13. Work with partners to improve skills and professionalism across the humanitarian sector.
14. Increase the predictability and timeliness of UK funding, for example by making early pledges to appeals, agreeing multi-year funding, supporting global and country-level pooled funds, fast track funding and pre-qualifying NGOs and private sector partners.
15. Focus on ensuring a smooth transition from short-term humanitarian financing to development financing in a way that protects and builds resilience.

Policy Goal 4: Invest in research and innovation

39. Our understanding of how best to save lives in an emergency can be further improved by gathering evidence on what works through research, evaluations and reviews. The humanitarian sector has demonstrated its ability to innovate and change, for example through new approaches to livelihoods and livestock interventions, and to the challenges of population movements and urbanisation. However, the sector has been slow to change in other areas. Using cash transfers instead of giving household items or food has taken years to gain acceptance and is still not implemented on a large scale, despite growing evidence that it can be a more effective intervention.
40. Investing in more systematic research, evidence gathering and innovation has the potential to accelerate this change; this would lead to a more effective and efficient international humanitarian system with greater capacity to respond to the needs of the future. With this in mind, the UK will increase its support for humanitarian research, evidence-gathering and the application of lessons learnt. In some cases research is needed into new organisational processes, techniques and products; in others, investment is needed to improve existing practice or take it to scale. Where appropriate, we will look to establish a proper process of product evaluation so we can be at the leading edge of technology and practicality in priority sectors.
41. Evidence on the cost-effectiveness of resilience-building activities is also still lacking in many areas. Economic appraisals have been carried out for some aspects of resilience in recent times, such as community-based disaster risk reduction activities, but not in others. We will fund further research in this area to inform investment decisions.
42. The private sector has a valuable role to play in pushing for new solutions. We will engage with the private sector through our research, for example to investigate how the insurance sector could support humanitarian efforts, Communications and information technology, too, has huge potential to improve the efficiency and reach of humanitarian assistance. The availability of mobile phones, social media and satellite imagery offers a massive opportunity to improve information on needs and delivery of assistance, and to monitor outcomes.
43. The UK will establish a 'virtual' humanitarian research and innovations team, under the direction of DFID's Chief Scientific Adviser. The team will regularly review existing approaches and identify gaps in the humanitarian and resilience knowledge-base. In consultation with other donors and UK partners, the team will commission new research and support innovations to strengthen the UK's resilience and humanitarian response.

We will:

- 16.** Make humanitarian research and innovation a core part of DFID's research and evidence work and appoint a humanitarian research fellow to oversee this work.
- 17.** Use innovative techniques and technologies more routinely in humanitarian needs assessments, planning, response, monitoring and evaluations.
- 18.** Systematically apply lessons learnt and encourage our partners to do likewise.

Policy Goal 5: Improve accountability, impact and professionalism

- 44. We seek to improve the wellbeing of those in greatest need by ensuring that our funding is effective. To this end, DFID has conducted Bilateral and Multilateral Aid Reviews that assessed results, value for money and performance of partners. The findings have guided funding allocations and will continue to do so.
- 45. People in need of humanitarian assistance should be consulted on what support is provided and how it is delivered. Needs assessments at the onset of emergencies have improved in quality, and agencies have become better at working together. However, needs assessments could still be faster, more accurate and disaggregated by gender and age. We will ensure that the specific needs of women and girls are addressed both through direct UK projects and those implemented by the agencies we fund. Impact assessments should also identify the benefits of different interventions. The UK will support agencies in working jointly on needs and impact assessments, and will support more independent evaluations that include the views of those affected.
- 46. We need to ensure that we ‘do no harm’ through our humanitarian efforts. We should improve our understanding of the affected contexts, underlying causal factors and the long-term impact that aid has on communities, societies and economies. This is particularly important in fragile and conflict-affected states. Quality humanitarian programming often needs to be integrated and multi-sectoral, and the UK will support and encourage its partners to take such an approach.
- 47. Humanitarian agencies need to be more accountable to donors, whether governments or the public. Taxpayers have a right to know how – and how well – their money is spent. Humanitarian agencies need to demonstrate that they are achieving value for money and bringing about positive change with the funds. The UK will demand that those it funds implement systems for conducting impact assessments and securing accountability and value for money.

We will:

- 19. Make beneficiary accountability a core element of DFID’s humanitarian work.
- 20. Invest more in measuring the UK Government’s impact and the impact of our partners.

Policy Goal 6: Protect civilians and humanitarian space

48. The UK is committed to the protection of civilians and internally displaced people, and in particular to preventing and responding specifically to violence against women and girls. The UK's 'Strategy on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict' sets out how we will improve protection of civilians through political engagement, building state capacity, peace support operations and humanitarian action.
49. We support the International Committee of the Red Cross, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, the UNICEF Emergency Fund and OCHA, all of whom are mandated to protect civilians. The UK advocates for protection through its diplomatic dialogue, its position as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, as a provider of international military forces, a supporter of international peace operations and as a contributor to building capable security and justice institutions in fragile states.
50. The UK recognises the importance of humanitarian principles and preserving the civilian nature of humanitarian assistance. It is only through maintaining such an approach that authorities will grant humanitarian actors access to those in need, and allow individuals to receive aid, in a safe environment. It is this fragile context which is often referred to as "humanitarian space". Maintaining humanitarian space is particularly important when military and civil defence assets are deployed in support of humanitarian assistance efforts. Access may be compromised when humanitarian aid is perceived to be linked to political or military goals; this risk needs to be avoided.
51. The UK's Strategy on the Protection of Civilians commits us to "lobby strongly for humanitarian access, and hold countries to their commitments and obligations under International Humanitarian Law".

We will:

21. Implement the appropriate political, security, humanitarian and development actions necessary to uphold respect for international law, protect civilians and to secure humanitarian access.
22. Ensure that UK humanitarian action contributes to preventing and responding to violence against women and girls.
23. Allocate proportionate funds in the most volatile situations to security management costs and ensure those we fund undertake quality risk assessments and put in place security risk mitigation measures.

Policy Goal 7: Reinforce our capacity to respond to humanitarian crises

- 52. The UK has a strong reputation for its humanitarian work in rapid-onset disasters, fragile and conflict-affected states, and for its support to global efforts to enhance international preparedness for slow-onset disasters, such as pandemic influenza.
- 53. The UK has applied effective and influential leverage by pressing for better international humanitarian policies and response mechanisms. We have also provided substantial but carefully targeted funding and supported field operations through the swift deployment of humanitarian experts. Nevertheless, we need to increase our capacity, expertise and improve our ways of working across government, to meet the resilience and humanitarian challenges of the future.
- 54. The UK will continue to strengthen cross-government coordination and ensure that humanitarian issues, where relevant, are joined-up with development work and covered in the country operational plans.

We will:

- 24. Expand the number of humanitarian professionals within the UK Government, and designate a Director General to provide senior leadership to the government’s humanitarian work.
- 25. Continue to help strengthen UN agencies in their roles as leaders of the international humanitarian system, and support the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement and the NGO community.
- 26. Commission an independent evaluation of the UK’s progress towards the implementation of this policy in 2013.

Annex 1: Summary of Commitments

How we will work:

We will:

1. Provide aid according to need and need alone, in line with the humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence.
2. Follow Good Humanitarian Donorship principles and best practice, and encourage others to do likewise.
3. Work multilaterally and with other partners to expand the donor base for humanitarian action and greater burden sharing.
4. Strengthen our commitments to be transparent and accountable to beneficiaries, and encourage our partners to do likewise.

Policy Goal 1: Strengthen anticipation and early action

We will:

5. Improve our use of science in both predicting and preparing for disasters, drawing on the Chief Scientific Advisers' network across government. Ensure scientific data on disaster risks is used to inform and prioritise country and regional level work on resilience.
6. Work with others to find new ways of acting quickly in 'slow onset' disasters to stop them becoming major emergencies.

Policy Goal 2: Building resilience to disasters and conflict

We will:

7. Make building resilience a core part of DFID's approach in all the countries where we work, and where possible lead in driving better coordination of all partners including governments, UN, NGOs and others in building resilience.
8. Integrate resilience and disaster risk reduction into our work on climate change and conflict prevention
9. Improve the coherence of and links between our development and humanitarian work, including in fragile and conflict-affected situations.
10. Ensure that our humanitarian responses 'do no harm', support long-term resilience and development work and deliver the right results for affected people along with value for money for the UK taxpayer.

Policy Goal 3: International leadership and partnership

We will:

11. Continue to maintain a strong multilateral approach, encourage others to do likewise and expand the humanitarian donor base.
12. Work with other donors to support the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and the Emergency Relief Coordinator in their efforts to improve humanitarian leadership at the strategic and operational level.
13. Work with partners to improve skills and professionalism across the humanitarian sector.
14. Increase the predictability and timeliness of UK funding, for example by making early pledges to appeals, agreeing multi-year funding, supporting global and country-level pooled funds, fast track funding and pre-qualifying NGOs and private sector partners.
15. Focus on ensuring a smooth transition from short-term humanitarian financing to development financing in a way that protects and builds resilience.

Policy Goal 4: Invest in research and innovation

We will:

16. Make humanitarian research and innovation a core part of DFID's research and evidence work and appoint a humanitarian research fellow to oversee this work.
17. Use innovative techniques and technologies more routinely in humanitarian needs assessments, planning, response, monitoring and evaluations.
18. Systematically apply lessons learnt and encourage our partners to do likewise.

Policy Goal 5: Accountability, impact and professionalism

We will:

19. Make beneficiary accountability a core element of DFID's humanitarian work.
20. Invest more in measuring the UK Government's impact and the impact of our partners.

Policy Goal 6: Protecting civilians and humanitarian space

We will:

21. Implement the appropriate political, security, humanitarian and development actions necessary to uphold respect for international law, protect civilians and to secure humanitarian access.
22. Ensure that UK humanitarian action contributes to preventing and responding to violence against women and girls.
23. Allocate proportionate funds in the most volatile situations to security management costs and ensure those we fund undertake quality risk assessments and put in place security risk mitigation measures.

Policy Goal 7: Reinforce our capacity to respond

We will:

24. Expand the number of humanitarian professionals within the UK Government, and designate a Director General to provide senior leadership to the government's humanitarian work.
25. Continue to help strengthen UN agencies in their roles as leaders of the international humanitarian system, and support the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement and the NGO community.
26. Commission an independent evaluation of the UK's progress towards the implementation of this policy in 2013.

The Department for International Development: leading the UK Government's fight against world poverty.

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Photos: Cover - Collecting clean drinking water - Dolo Ado refugee camp, near the Ethiopia-Somalia border. Cate Turton / DFID; Foreword (page 3) - Secretary of State for International Development Andrew Mitchell talks to newly arrived refugees - Dadaab refugee camp, near the Kenya-Somalia border. Pete Lewis / DFID.