



NORWEGIAN MINISTRY
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Report No. 40 (2008–2009) to the Storting

Norway's Humanitarian Policy





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*Recommendation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of 29 May 2009,
approved by the Council of State on the same date.
(Stoltenberg II Government)*

1 Summary

As an actor in the field of humanitarian policy and a financial donor, Norway is facing a number of large and complex challenges. In cooperation with others, we will:

- ensure that people in need are given the necessary protection and assistance
- fund humanitarian efforts on the basis of the international principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence
- equip the international community to meet future global humanitarian challenges
- prevent and respond to humanitarian crises and initiate reconstruction in their wake.

Humanitarian aid, peace-building and human rights are defined as a main pillar of the Government's foreign policy and development policy.

In September 2008, the Government presented an overall humanitarian strategy for Norway ("Norway's humanitarian policy"). The strategy sets out a vision for Norway's role in the humanitarian arena and presents our main priorities for the five-year period leading up to 2013. The strategy forms the basis for this white paper.

The Government's goal is for Norway to be one of the leading political and financial partners in the field of international humanitarian assistance and to contribute to the international community being as well equipped as possible to meet future challenges. Our principal focus is on ensuring a rapid, flexible and effective response to

enable us to meet changing humanitarian needs in both acute and protracted crises.

New global challenges will have an impact on security and social development in many countries. We believe that these challenges will result in more, and more complex, humanitarian crises in the years ahead.

Norway's humanitarian policy will be influenced by these developments, as will Norway's foreign and development policy in general. While important reforms have resulted in certain necessary improvements, the international humanitarian system must be better equipped to meet these challenges.

The core of humanitarian efforts consists of saving individual lives, alleviating suffering and ensuring human dignity, regardless of ethnic background, gender, age, religion or political affiliation. Pursuing these goals is a key part of Norway's policy of engagement. It was the point of departure for the development of "the Norwegian model", i.e. close cooperation – but also a clear division of roles – between the Norwegian authorities and the non-governmental humanitarian organisations (NGOs). A large proportion of Norwegian humanitarian funds is channelled through these organisations. Their expertise and comparative advantages will be very important in further development of the Norwegian model.

As an actor in the field of humanitarian policy, we take the side of the victims, civilians and vul-

Box 1.1 Interconnections in foreign policy

The Government has presented several white papers about various aspects of Norway's foreign and development policy. The white paper *Interests, Responsibilities and Opportunities: The main features of Norwegian foreign policy* (Report No. 15 (2008-2009) to the Storting) and the white paper *Climate, Conflict and Capital* (Report No. 13 (2008-2009) to the Storting) are both of overriding importance in this context. Together with the white paper *Norwegian policy on the prevention of humanitarian crises* (Report No. 9 (2007-2008) to the Storting), the white paper *Corporate social responsibility in a global economy* (Report No. 10 (2008-2009) to the Storting) and the white paper *On Equal Terms: Women's Rights and Gender Equality in International Development Policy* (Report No. 11 (2008-2009) to the Storting), and the present white paper on Norway's humanitarian policy, they form an updated foreign policy programme for Norway.

The main goal of Norway's *foreign policy* is to look after Norwegian interests. Foreign policy should promote the welfare, security and fundamental political values of Norwegian society. The focus on interests forms a basis on which choices and prioritisations can be made between alternative foreign policy solutions and strategies. Administering the substantial Norwegian aid funds in a good manner is also in Norway's interests.

The main goal of Norway's *development policy* is to help to combat poverty and promote human rights. Our efforts are directed at both international and regional framework conditions and at the possibilities that lie in each country and local community.

Globalisation and geopolitical change have dramatically changed the conditions for achieving political goals. International conflicts and crises, climate change, new security challenges, the spread of infectious diseases and the failure of financial markets affect everyone. Norway's welfare and welfare in the rest of the world are more closely interlinked than before. This provides strong justification for active Norwegian engagement in the form of development policy, peace-building, humanitarian efforts and work to promote human rights and democracy. Expanded dialogue and cooperation with poor countries and emerging economies will become increasingly important to our own development and our future.

It is not national interests that underlie Norway's humanitarian policy, but extensive humanitarian needs in the most vulnerable countries. The long-term crises – climate change, weakening of people's means of livelihood and widespread poverty – are the greatest challenges facing the international community. Extensive national and international efforts in these areas are a precondition for preventing humanitarian disasters. But we must also succeed, through concerted efforts, in dealing with crises of a more temporary nature, such as the financial crisis and the food crisis, and, not least, in seizing the opportunities such crises provide for making lasting improvements.

Current global developments point in the wrong direction in terms of reducing the risk of humanitarian disasters and growing humanitarian needs. We are witnessing an increase in the global risk level, even if we take an optimistic climate scenario as our starting point. Any further increase in the risk of climate change will serve to reinforce the already very uneven distribution of risk, vulnerability and poverty.

While the white paper *Norwegian policy on the prevention of humanitarian crises* focused on measures aimed at preventing humanitarian disasters, this white paper emphasises humanitarian diplomacy and humanitarian assistance in addition to the need to strengthen the administration of humanitarian funds. The preventive aspect is discussed, however, primarily with a view to updating the Storting on Norway's efforts in relation to adaptation to climate change. Otherwise, see the white paper *Norwegian policy on the prevention of humanitarian crises* for more detailed information about our preventive efforts.

The major global challenges, acute or long-term, cannot be solved by individual countries alone. They require greater international cooperation and better global organisation, and, not least, they require more donors. Norway wishes to contribute to an international policy that strengthens the global public goods, that builds a global framework of institutions and that safeguards the global rule of law – in our own best interests and in the interest of far more vulnerable countries. The Government wishes to pursue this goal through good coordination between various policy instruments within the overall framework of Norwegian foreign policy.

nerable fellow human beings. The principle of neutrality that underlies humanitarian aid does not mean that we will remain silent about maltreatment or abuses of power. Defending and promoting human rights is paramount in humanitarian crises. Whether humanitarian diplomacy should be conducted out of the public eye or in full public view will be decided by what is the most effective means of helping the victims in each case.

Our engagement is not limited to safeguarding humanitarian rights and responding to humanitarian needs. Together with our partners, we wish to change the operating parameters for humanitarian efforts. Norway will contribute to far greater investments being made in prevention, climate change adaptation and humanitarian emergency preparedness than is currently the case. In these efforts, we will focus on those who are affected by humanitarian disasters – on their rights, their emergency preparedness and their response capacity.

Humanitarian crises require political solutions. Our peace and reconciliation efforts, our political dialogue with affected countries, our contribution to international peace operations, our development cooperation, the climate and forest initiative, our focus on humanitarian disarmament and work on strengthening human rights are all important contributions to preventing humanitarian suffering.

Rights, principles and values form the main basis for Norway's humanitarian activities, but they should also be based on knowledge, expertise and robust administration. The administration of humanitarian funds should result in desired and quantifiable outcomes. In Document No. 3:2 (2008-2009), the Office of the Auditor General presented a performance audit of the effectiveness of Norwegian humanitarian assistance. While the audit gives considerable recognition to Norway's efforts in the field, it also contains several critical remarks, for example on the administration of the assistance. The document was considered by the Storting on 23 March this year. The white paper discusses concrete measures intended to improve the effectiveness of Norwegian humanitarian assistance in accordance with the remarks made by the Office of the Auditor General and the Storting.

Norway's humanitarian engagement is part of an overall foreign and development policy programme for peace and sustainable development as formulated in the white paper *Climate, Conflict and Capital* and the white paper *Interests, Responsibilities and Opportunities*. This white paper expands on Norway's policy of humanitarian engagement, including our activities in conflict areas and in relation to the effects of global climate and environmental change.

2 Introduction

2.1 Humanitarian challenges

Developments in Georgia, Gaza, Pakistan and Sri Lanka in 2008 and 2009 demonstrate that unresolved conflicts can flare up at any time and give rise to new humanitarian suffering. Complex and protracted conflicts, such as in Afghanistan, Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, require extensive, coordinated international efforts to help the victims, end the conflicts and prevent new suffering.

In addition to conflicts, natural disasters have a decisive influence on people's lives and living conditions in many parts of the world. Climate

and environmental change is now a key cause of three out of four humanitarian disasters. These challenges require better coordination between humanitarian efforts, on the one hand, and development policy, on the other, in relation to preventive measures before and after a disaster.

The ongoing financial crisis threatens the humanitarian effort by increasing vulnerability and reducing contributions to the UN agencies and other humanitarian organisations. We must be prepared for such events to put the international humanitarian system under pressure also in future. How the international community should deal with these challenges and how Norway can



Figure 2.1 Gaza after the hostilities in January 2009.

Photo: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Box 2.1 The financial crisis, food crisis and humanitarian efforts

The world economy is currently experiencing its biggest downturn since the Great Depression in the 1930s. The crisis has major consequences for the price of goods, private remittances, capital flows and aid budgets. The populations of many countries will be more vulnerable to humanitarian disasters, while countries at risk will have fewer economic resources at their disposal in a crisis situation.

The most immediate and dramatic consequence for many poor people in developing countries is the discontinuation of remittances from relatives who work abroad. Foreign workers are often the first to go when there is a downturn in the employment market. In many countries, contributions from the diaspora amount to more than aid and foreign investment combined, according to the white paper *Climate, Conflict and Capital*.

African countries are among those hardest hit by the crisis. The World Bank, for example, expects that Angola's GDP will be reduced by 23 per cent – a reduction that can be compared with that experienced by the US in the 1930s. Countries such as Ghana and Tanzania – which were well on their way to achieving Millennium Development Goal 1 – will now probably not succeed in halving the proportion of the population who live in poverty by 2015. The number of poor people will probably also rise in regions such as Central and Eastern Europe.

The financial crisis followed immediately in the wake of a global food crisis. Tens of millions of people were thrust into a situation of hunger and malnutrition. Poor people spend as much as

75 per cent of their income on food. Families who already live on a subsistence minimum have had to forgo education and health services for their children and use their scarce resources on food instead.

The food crisis has been overshadowed by the financial crisis, but it is not over and it is being exacerbated by the difficult economic situation. Countries that are already struggling to counteract the negative consequences of high food prices are poorly equipped to deal with the effects of a global economic downturn.

The financial crisis is also putting the multilateral system to the test. We are already seeing disturbing signs that both government and voluntary contributions to humanitarian organisations may decline. This could have negative consequences for the work of humanitarian organisations. Norway must contribute to counteracting such a development. The Government will maintain Norway's already extensive humanitarian contributions. We will urge other donors to fulfil their commitments.

In the long term, however, the multilateral system may emerge stronger from the crisis. The need for strong international organisations and cooperation has become clearer, particularly in relation to the economy. When the private loan market grinds to a halt, the international financial institutions are the only bodies that can lend money to developing countries or countries in economic crisis. Another direct consequence of the crisis is the important discussion about reform of the multilateral system, which we are now witnessing the beginnings of.

best contribute are therefore questions with many part-answers that will influence our overall foreign and development policy.

Seen from a humanitarian perspective, conflicts, climate and environmental change and poverty all have one common denominator: vulnerable people. Humanitarian assistance is about helping people in need irrespective of political or other factors. Respect for human rights is the basis for humanitarian activities. Everyone in need is entitled to the necessary protection and assistance. We therefore have to improve our understanding of how crises affect individuals. We must adapt

policy instruments to better suit the challenges individuals face in their everyday lives, thus putting them in a better position to look after themselves and deal with future crises.

While the Storting allocated around NOK 1 billion to humanitarian aid in 1992, the humanitarian budgets for 2009 amount to around NOK 3 billion. The requirements concerning the quality and results of humanitarian activities are increasingly stringent. Humanitarian aid is often allocated under pressure of time, in unstable situations and to countries and regions with weak or absent institutions. There are therefore many risk

factors in relation to humanitarian aid. The growth in the numbers and breadth of partners and projects is a challenge for our administration.

Moreover, humanitarian efforts influence political processes in the countries concerned. Humanitarian measures can generate political dialogue and have a conflict-reducing effect. The situation in Aceh after the tsunami in 2004 and the experiences from the relief efforts in Burma following cyclone Nargis in 2008 are examples of how international humanitarian efforts are perceived, for better or worse, as an instrument of governments' foreign policy, including relief work in connection with the growing number of natural disasters.

When many aid organisations and a lot of emergency aid are brought into complex and vulnerable areas, there is always a risk that international aid may have an unintentional negative effect on a violent conflict. Humanitarian actors must ensure that they do not contribute to an escalation or prolongation of a conflict through their efforts. They must be conflict-sensitive (cf. the precautionary principle of "Do No Harm"). As an active actor in the humanitarian field, Norway is obliged to take these dilemmas and considerations seriously. Increased investment in Norwegian and international research on humanitarian questions will be important in this context.

Norway's humanitarian engagement is part of an overall foreign and development policy focus on peace and sustainable development as formulated in Report No. 13 (2008-2009) and Report No. 15 (2008-2009) to the Storting. This white paper expands on Norway's policy of engagement in the humanitarian arena.

2.2 Robust administration of humanitarian aid

In autumn 2008, the Office of the Auditor General presented a performance audit of the effectiveness of Norwegian humanitarian assistance.¹ The results of the audit were considered by the Storting on 23 March 2009.² The objective was to assess the extent to which the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' administration of humanitarian funds is satisfactory and the extent to which the goal of

swift and effective assistance of good quality is achieved.

The performance audit points to the extensive international humanitarian challenges in situations in which Norway's humanitarian policy and assistance form part of a combined effort. The Office of the Auditor General concludes that positive results and outcomes are achieved for a large number of people as a result of Norway's humanitarian contribution. Norwegian humanitarian assistance largely achieves its goal, namely to save lives, alleviate suffering and maintain human dignity during and in the wake of humanitarian crises. At the same time, however, the Office of the Auditor General found weaknesses in the administration of humanitarian funds.

The audit provides a good basis for the further development of Norwegian humanitarian assistance, for example as regards administrative capacity, the follow-up of grant recipients and challenges relating to the reporting of results. Work has already started on following up the performance audit. In September 2008, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs presented a five-year strategy for the Government's humanitarian policy, which forms the basis for this white paper. The strategy addresses many of the challenges pointed to in the performance audit, and they are expanded on in this white paper.

The Government emphasises that the administration of humanitarian assistance must ensure flexibility and the ability to act quickly in order to meet changing humanitarian needs. Humanitarian assistance differs from long-term development assistance in this respect in particular. We cannot, therefore, bind up too large a proportion of humanitarian assistance in long-term commitments. All funding does not have to be equally flexible, however. In 2009, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has initiated pilot projects for multi-year cooperation agreements with selected humanitarian organisations concerning priority countries and themes. Efforts are also being made to improve coordination between different forms of assistance (humanitarian aid, transitional aid and long-term development assistance), on both Norway's part and internationally, in order to ensure as seamless transitions as possible.

In order to follow-up of the strategy and the performance audit, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' administrative capacity will be increased, among other things through the establishment of a separate administrative section in the department that administers humanitarian aid. A newly

¹ Document No. 3:2 (2008-2009), the Office of the Auditor General's investigation into the effectiveness of Norwegian humanitarian assistance.

² Recommendation No. 150 (2008-2009) to the Storting.

established central control unit in the department will, for example, be tasked with preventing and responding to financial irregularities and strengthening the administration of the department's budgets. New tools have been introduced in connection with the administration of grants that will help to make this work more efficient. Norwegian foreign missions have been assigned clearer responsibility for following up humanitarian aid. The Ministry cooperates closely with the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad).

The Government wishes stronger focus on the achievement of goals, quality assurance and efficiency, among other things through the systematic use of evaluations and reviews. Recipients of

Norwegian humanitarian aid grants will be increasingly required to budget and report on the basis of results. Norad and international organisations and learning networks have a key role to play in this context. More knowledge, research, learning and evaluation are required, and we are strengthening our efforts in these fields.

A separate plan has been drawn up to follow up of the Office of the Auditor General's investigation. Through these changes, the Government wishes to further develop and improve the Norwegian humanitarian model, which is based on humanitarian law and on internationally accepted principles for humanitarian assistance, an active multilateral engagement and close cooperation with the Red Cross movement and NGOs.

3 Policy for humanitarian engagement

3.1 Norway's humanitarian role

The Government's goal is for Norway to be a leading political and financial partner in international humanitarian efforts and to help ensure that the international community is as well equipped as possible to meet future challenges.

Norway must be a good humanitarian donor.¹ Our principal focus is on ensuring a rapid, flexible and effective response in order to enable us to meet changing humanitarian needs in both acute and protracted crises.

The core of humanitarian assistance consists of saving individual lives, alleviating suffering and ensuring human dignity, regardless of ethnic background, gender, age, religion or political affiliation. Follow-up of this humanitarian imperative is a key part of Norway's policy of engagement.

As a political actor, Norway does not wish to be neutral, but we will respect the humanitarian organisations' need to preserve their independence and integrity. The key to good cooperation between the Norwegian authorities and the humanitarian organisations lies at this intersection between political and humanitarian principles.

Every state is responsible for protecting and helping its own citizens when they are hit by a humanitarian crisis. This is not a matter of choice but a legal obligation under a number of international conventions. In humanitarian crises, however, the state's ability or willingness to fulfil its obligations is often impaired. In such situations, the international community has a clear co-responsibility for providing the necessary protection or life-saving relief.

Humanitarian issues have gained an increasingly important place in international politics in recent years. Humanitarian crises are more frequently addressed by the UN Security Council. Serious abuses and violations of rights have

resulted in increased focus on the protection of civilians and displaced persons, for example in Darfur, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Afghanistan and Pakistan. The enormous human suffering caused by frequent natural disasters is immediately broadcast through the media.

Our engagement is not limited to safeguarding humanitarian rights and responding to humanitarian needs. Together with our partners, we wish to change the operating parameters for humanitarian efforts. The experience from both natural disasters and conflicts has shown that humanitarian efforts must be seen in a broader political context. Humanitarian crises require political solutions. However, a more broadly-based international engagement does not mean that humanitarian considerations should be subordinated to other political considerations. On the contrary, humanitarian values must always be safeguarded.

However, humanitarian aid must never be an alternative to lasting political, economic and security solutions to the problems currently facing millions of vulnerable people.

The Darfur conflict is an example of how the increasingly efficient machinery of emergency aid risks acting as a stop-gap solution to problems that require more comprehensive solutions. Norway will therefore endeavour to promote lasting solutions through diplomatic and foreign policy initiatives and not accept that humanitarian activities become an alibi disguising the powerlessness of the international community.

Our peace and reconciliation efforts, our political dialogue with affected countries, our contribution to international peace operations, our aid, efforts relating to climate change, focus on humanitarian disarmament and work to strengthen human rights are all important contributions to preventing humanitarian suffering.

The authorities, local communities and organisations in the countries most often affected by humanitarian crises are responsible for a large part of the assistance provided. It is often national and local efforts that save most lives and contribute to protection. These efforts must not be

¹ In 2003, Norway endorsed the principles for Good Humanitarian Donorship, which, among other things, form the basis for the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD/DAC) reviews of Norwegian humanitarian assistance.

Box 3.1 Humanitarian principles

Based on humanitarian law and extensive experience of humanitarian efforts in the field, the Red Cross movement, UN agencies, humanitarian donors such as Norway and non-governmental organisations have jointly developed a set of general principles for humanitarian efforts. These principles – humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence – form the basis for operational humanitarian assistance, in connection with both conflicts and natural disasters. The principles are not legally binding, and actors in the international system may vary in how they emphasise and interpret the different principles. It is a clear prerequisite, however, that they should be interpreted and implemented in accordance with the human rights conventions and humanitarian law.

The four main principles:

Humanity

The principle of humanity means that human life, health and dignity must be protected in accordance with fundamental human rights and needs.

Neutrality

The principle of neutrality means that humanitarian assistance must be provided without taking sides in conflicts or disputes of a political, ethnic, religious or ideological nature.

Impartiality

The principle of impartiality means that humanitarian assistance must be provided without discriminating on the basis of nationality, gender, ethnic affiliation, religion or political beliefs.

Independence

The principle of independence means that humanitarian actors must draw up and implement their own guidelines independently of the policies and actions of the authorities.

These four main principles are those most frequently cited. Other principles are also applied, such as flexible and needs-based funding, local ownership and sustainability, participation, accountability and the adaptation of efforts to gender and age-based needs. Different formulations of the humanitarian principles are available here:

The Red Cross movement and NGOs' Code of Conduct:

<http://www.icrc.org/web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/htmlall/code-of-conduct-290296>

The International Committee of the Red Cross's (ICRC) special mandate:

http://www.icrc.org/Web/Eng/siteeng0.nsf/htmlall/section_mandate?OpenDocument

The Stockholm principles for good humanitarian donorship:

<http://www.goodhumanitariandonorship.org/>

The UN:

<http://ochaonline.un.org/humanitariannegotiations/Chapter3-2.htm>

Wikipedia:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Humanitarian_principles

underestimated or forgotten. However, it is still Northern and Western organisations and countries that define the parameters for the international humanitarian system. It is a major international challenge to make this system more representative and better adapted to local conditions and cultures, while at the same time ensuring that the universal humanitarian principles are respected.

3.2 Humanitarian principles and Norwegian traditions

Civilians and those wounded in wars and conflicts have a right to protection, respect and help, regardless of which side they are on. The Geneva Conventions are the fundamental pillars of international humanitarian law, which requires countries to protect civilians, wounded and sick sol-



Figure 3.1 Demining operations in Afghanistan

Photo: UNAMA

diers and prisoners against the consequences of war. These conventions have been virtually universally endorsed, and the principles also apply as international customary law, i.e. they are binding on all parties irrespective of whether they have formally endorsed them. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has been given a special mandate by the international community to protect and help people in wars and armed conflicts on the basis of humanitarian law.

The 60th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions will be marked in 2009. This is a good opportunity to turn the spotlight on humanitarian law and strengthen respect for and compliance with humanitarian principles (see Box 3.1).

The UN agencies and NGOs largely base their efforts on the humanitarian principles, although the different organisations vary greatly in terms of their mandates and approaches. They also form the basis for Norway's humanitarian policy.

There is widespread support among Norwegians for the humanitarian principles and for Norway, as a nation with the necessary political and financial capacity, making a substantial contribution to humanitarian assistance. We have a long tradition and broad popular commitment to solidarity with repressed and impoverished people, and with refugees and internally displaced persons.

Norway has played an important role in developing humanitarian law and the protection it affords to civilians in armed conflicts, as most recently demonstrated in the Oslo process that led to the signing of the Convention on Cluster Munitions in 2008 (see Box 3.2). The Convention is a good example of the prevention of humanitarian disasters because it prevents the proliferation of cluster munitions to new countries and areas. It

Box 3.2 Box Further development of humanitarian law: The Convention on Cluster Munitions

In 2006, Norway took the initiative for an international process aimed at banning cluster munitions with unacceptable humanitarian consequences. The process resulted in the Convention on Cluster Munitions, which, as of 11 May 2009, has been signed by 96 states and ratified by seven. The Convention has yet to enter into force.

The Convention bans the use, production, stockpiling and transfer of cluster munitions. It applies to all cluster munitions known to have been used and that have created humanitarian problems. The Convention is deemed to have set a new standard in humanitarian law, containing, as it does, clear and strict provisions on and commitments in relation to the clearance of affected areas, the destruction of stockpiles and help for the victims and local communities.

contains strong provisions on support for, and participation by, survivors and victims of cluster munitions that are rights-based and build on similar provisions of the Mine Ban Convention (1997) and the increased understanding that has developed in the last decade of the role and conditions of survivors. As in the work on the Mine Ban Convention, the humanitarian organisations have played an important role in putting this issue on the international agenda.

Anti-personnel mines were prohibited in 1997 through the Mine Ban Convention. Landmines thereby became an illegitimate and unacceptable weapon. Since the Mine Ban Convention was adopted, the use of landmines has virtually ceased, and extensive human suffering has been prevented. The Convention's Second Review Conference will be held in Colombia, a country hard hit by landmines, at the end of 2009 under Norwegian presidency. Norway holds the presidency for the Mine Ban Convention until the next meeting of the States Parties in 2010. One key task will be to ensure that the 156 States Parties fulfil their obligations under international law, by both upholding the principle of national ownership in the affected countries and emphasising the importance of international cooperation and assistance.

Close cooperation with the ICRC and civil society, particularly the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) played a decisive role in negotiation of the Mine Ban Convention. This cooperation must continue if the intentions and obligations of the Convention are to be realised. Survivors and victims of landmines have contributed to the development of anti-mine work, which has been important in the field, while their experiences have also been important in the work on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The Mine Ban Convention is a model for other initiatives, and the implementation of the Convention will continue to set the standard and serve as a guideline for corresponding initiatives.

As regards small arms and light weapons, there is no international agreement on the prohibition or regulation of their use. Important multilateral processes include the UN small arms and light weapons programme, the Arms Trade Treaty process for the negotiation of an international standard for trade in conventional weapons, and the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development, where Norway is a member of the core group. Norway will play an active part in the efforts to achieve international regulation of small arms and light weapons in the time ahead. We will make use of our experience of development cooperation and other humanitarian disarmament in this connection. Our starting point will be that the grave humanitarian and development consequences of handgun use can generate a new dynamic and result in progress.

The lesson from the work on the Mine Ban Convention and the Convention on Cluster Munitions is that we can achieve results if knowledge gained in the field and norm development go hand in hand. Further diplomatic initiatives and follow-up should therefore also be based on experience and knowledge gained in the field.

Non-governmental humanitarian organisations play a key role in international humanitarian efforts, and a large proportion of Norwegian humanitarian aid is channelled through such organisations. In addition to the International Red Cross movement, an extensive network of voluntary organisations has emerged. They range widely – from small development organisations to global humanitarian organisations with thousands of employees. This diversity represents a challenge as regards ensuring a coordinated effort, but it is also a strength, for example with respect to such organisations' ability to reach the civilian population in difficult circumstances. Several of the Norwegian organisations have comparative advantages that make them key contributors to international humanitarian efforts and important partners for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Close cooperation, but also a clear division of roles, between the Norwegian authorities and Norwegian NGOs has been a precondition for the development of "the Norwegian model". This cooperation has contributed to Norway becoming a prominent donor country and humanitarian actor with a broad international perspective. It has also contributed to several Norwegian NGOs

Table 3.1 Aid allocated via chapter 163 by channel

Group of partners	NOK 1000	Per cent
Consultants	17	0%
Governments/ministries in recipient countries		0%
<i>Multilateral institutions</i>	<i>1 197 210</i>	<i>47%</i>
International NGOs	187 644	7%
Local NGOs	7 488	0%
<i>Norwegian NGOs*</i>	<i>1 048 557</i>	<i>41%</i>
Regional NGOs	13 475	1%
The Norwegian private sector	3 151	0%
Norwegian public institutions (central government and municipal)	48 639	2%
Other countries' private sectors	1 315	0%
Public institutions in recipient countries/other countries	1 756	0%
Public sector, other donor countries	4 876	0%
Other	14 443	1%
<i>Total</i>	<i>2 528 572</i>	<i>100%</i>

* Including donations to the International Red Cross and Red Crescent movement, including the ICRC.

Box 3.3 The Norwegian Emergency Preparedness System (NOREPS)

The NOREPS emergency preparedness system is a partnership between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Directorate for Civil Protection and Emergency Planning (DSB), Norwegian NGOs and suppliers of relief goods. NOREPS provides standby personnel and ready-to-deploy relief goods in connection with international humanitarian crises.

The UN agencies and Norwegian and international NGOs are the main recipients of goods channelled via NOREPS. The scheme, which was set up by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is administered by Innovation Norway.

This partnership has been established in order to strengthen the NGOs' response capacity, particularly during the initial phase of humanitarian crises. Its goal is to rapidly provide the necessary personnel and materials in an emergency relief situation. A system of ready-to-

deploy stocks and personnel on standby makes it possible to have materiel and equipment airborne within 24 hours, and to have service packages and personnel in place within 72 hours. In addition to NOREPS having ready-to-deploy stocks in Norway, the UN's contingency stocks also include NOREPS' products.

NORCAP, which is part of NOREPS, is a standby force of trained personnel that can be deployed on humanitarian operations anywhere in the world at 72 hours' notice. The Norwegian Refugee Council administers NORCAP under a cooperation agreement with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and it can respond within 24 hours to requests for personnel from the UN. The aim is to strengthen the UN's capacity in humanitarian crises.

Further information: www.noreps.no and www.nrc.no.

Box 3.4 Humanitarian reforms

The aim of the extensive humanitarian reforms initiated by the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator in 2005 is to make international humanitarian assistance more predictable and effective for those in need, regardless of the particular circumstances and geographical location. Through the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), a minimum of financial resources will always be available to the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator for the purpose of initiating and continuing life-saving operations. These resources are allocated and organised as required through sector clusters in which national authorities, UN agencies and NGOs coordinate their efforts. The selection and training of humanitarian coordinators will be improved with a view to achieving more robust and coherent management of humanitarian assistance in the field. The partnership between the UN and NGOs will also be strengthened, for example by improving cooperation in "clusters" and allocations from humanitarian country funds. One example of this is

the cooperation between UNICEF and the International Save the Children Alliance on coordination of the educational sector in crises.

In the Government's view, it is paramount that these reform measures are put into practice at all levels. On Norway's part, we no longer regard them as reform measures but as an integral part of how humanitarian work should be run today. There is no doubt that dividing roles and responsibilities in new ways gives rise to challenges, and Norway will therefore continue to contribute to improving accountability in the organisations involved, for example by donor countries communicating a clear joint message in the organisations' governing bodies. Several of the reforms mean that the organisations must put aside narrow self-interest in favour of overriding operational goals. This represents a challenge in relation to mandates and budgets, but it will mean swifter and better emergency relief for those we wish to reach.

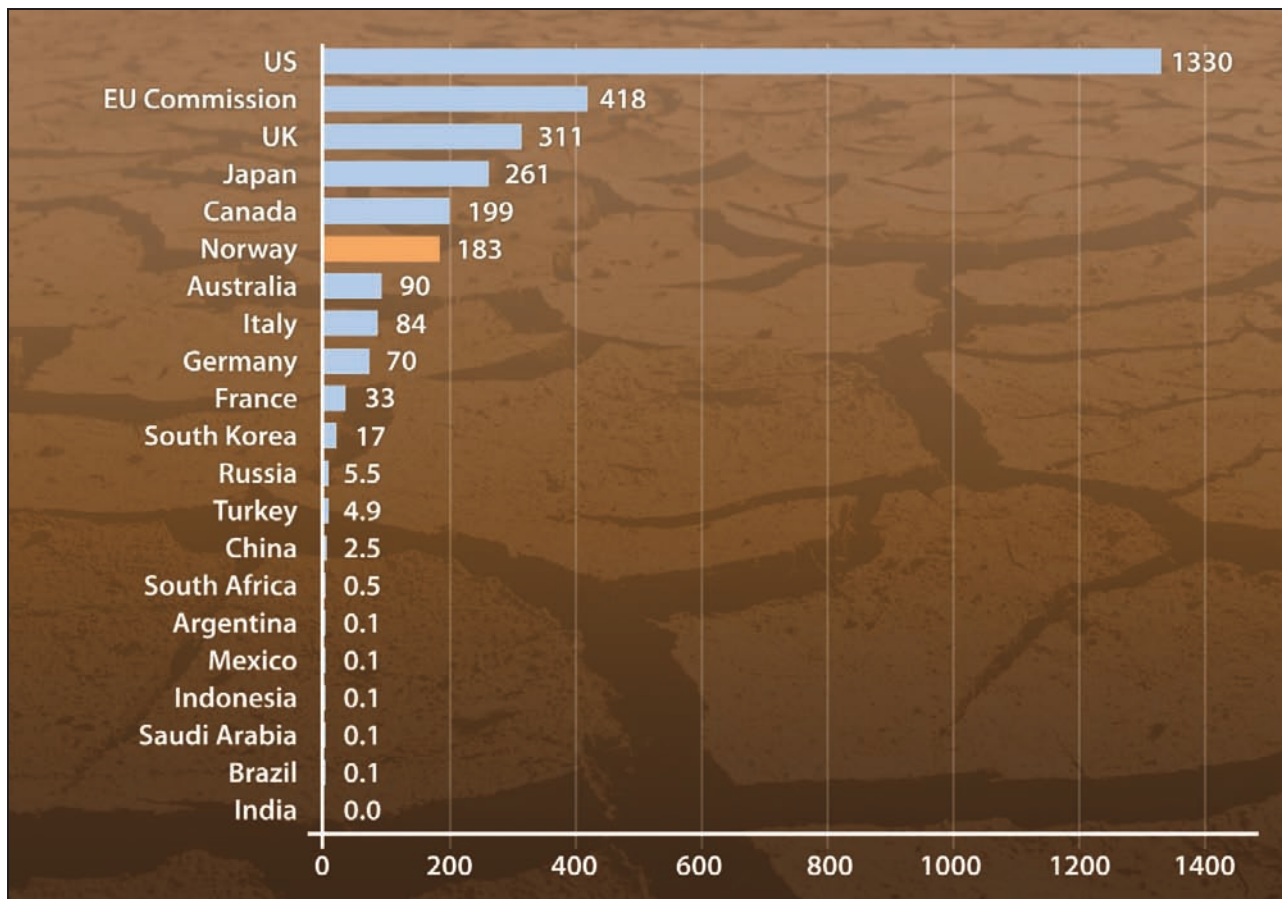


Figure 3.2 The contribution of the G20 countries and Norway to humanitarian aid (2008) through multilateral institutions in USD millions.

Source: OCHA's Financial Tracking System (FTS)

being among the leading organisations in their field internationally. Norway has also built up a separate emergency preparedness system – NOREPS – which can help at short notice in crisis situations.

3.3 The international humanitarian system is changing

Through our partners, we try to reach individuals in order to save lives, alleviate suffering and ensure human dignity and protection in humanitarian crises. The UN system, the Red Cross Movement and NGOs constitute the core of the international humanitarian system.

As a member of, and donor to, humanitarian organisations, we wish to exercise influence in order to ensure a well-functioning global humanitarian system. Continuous humanitarian reform is therefore an important task for Norwegian

humanitarian diplomacy, both in multilateral agencies and in the bilateral context.

The number of international relief agencies has multiplied in the past two decades. During the tsunami disaster in 2005, more than 250 international organisations were active in Sri Lanka and in Aceh in addition to the many national and local actors. Norway expects Norwegian, international and local organisations that receive Norwegian funds to participate actively in the coordinating mechanisms organised by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in disaster areas, or coordination under the auspices of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent. National and local authorities must be involved where possible. This is decisive in order to make emergency relief work more effective and ensure that local authorities and communities are able to benefit from and take over responsibility for relief and reconstruction activities.

Norway has helped to initiate several important humanitarian reforms. Our goal is to improve

financing, strengthen coordination and rationalise the division of labour between humanitarian actors. Norway wants humanitarian efforts to be better adapted to the new global challenges. We are concerned with ensuring that the humanitarian efforts are more broadly supported, less dominated by Western countries and better adapted to the needs and rights of people affected by crises.

The international community is still struggling to invest enough in preventive measures and to ensure good transitions from crisis situation to long-term development. Different policy instruments must be seen in an overall perspective, but we must abandon the notion that efforts of differ-

ent kinds must automatically take place in chronological stages. In complex humanitarian crises, we must be prepared to provide different forms of assistance simultaneously, and long-term, sustainable development must be planned as early as possible in major, acute crises.

In most cases, the humanitarian efforts can and should be based on local resources. The continued strengthening of international humanitarian efforts must not take place at the expense of the development of local capacity for preparedness and response, but must underpin and supplement it, insofar as this is in accordance with fundamental humanitarian principles.

Box 3.5 Gender-adapted humanitarian efforts

Girls and boys, women and men are affected unequally by humanitarian crises, and our humanitarian activities must be adapted accordingly if they are to be effective. Children often have a special need for protection. Women and girls are particularly at risk of sexual abuse and gender-based violence.

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, we can see how the conflict and the humanitarian crisis continue to affect women and children. The work of combating the widespread sexual violence against girls and women, which is particularly rife in the eastern areas of the Congo, has high priority. Among other things, the Government has supported medical and psychosocial treatment of survivors, and it has helped to improve the coordination, and thereby the effect, of the overall efforts. We also fund civil observers who monitor and give advice to the Congolese police. Children are at great risk of being recruited to armed groups in the Congo. The Government supports the efforts to reintegrate child soldiers into their families and local communities, and it makes active endeavours to strengthen the protection of children.

We know that women are often reduced to passive victims and are not heard. Women must be given far greater influence over humanitarian activities. So far, the humanitarian system has failed to achieve this. Consequently, Norway will give particular priority to promoting more balanced and needs-based activities where all affected groups are consulted.

Norway was one of the driving forces when the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security in 2000. The resolution states that women shall participate on equal terms in decision-making processes related to conflict resolution, peace and security, and that women and girls must be protected against sexual violence. UN Security Council Resolution 1820 (2008) follows up Resolution 1325 (2000). It states that sexual violence can be used as a weapon in war and is a crime against humanity. The resolution requires all parties to a conflict to immediately cease using weapons of this kind.

As part of the Government's action plan for following up Resolution 1325, Norway has contributed to the production of a Gender Handbook for Humanitarian Action that has now been adopted by the UN, the Red Cross and NGOs in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC). Norway requires its partners to ensure that the needs of girls and women are taken into account in *all* humanitarian activities, on a par with the needs of boys and men. Norway is the most important contributor to GenCap, an international standby force aimed at strengthening the gender perspective in humanitarian operations. GenCap is administered by the Norwegian Refugee Council. The project strengthens and secures the equality and gender perspective in UN humanitarian operations by providing experts on the gender perspective and equality.

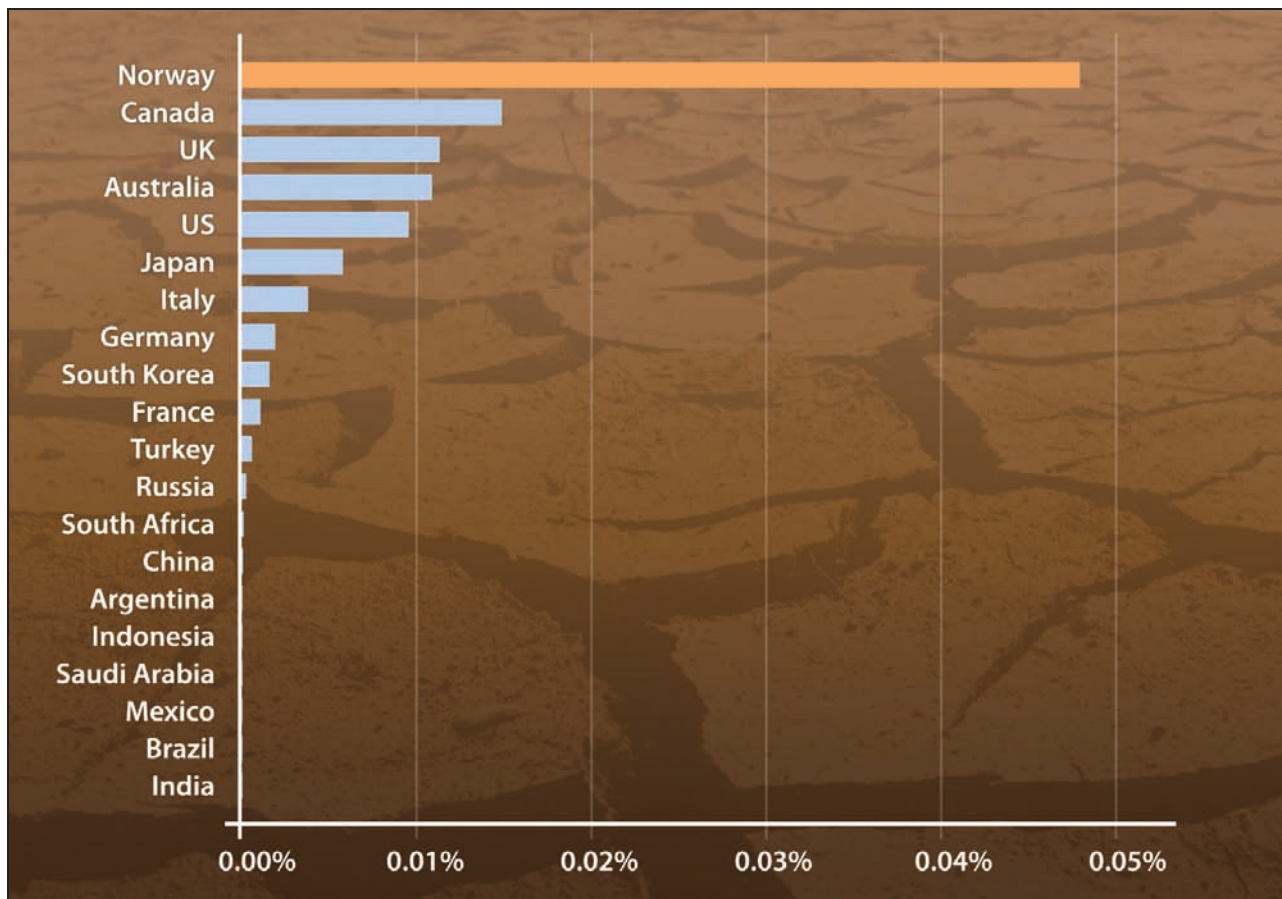


Figure 3.3 The contribution of the G20 countries and Norway to humanitarian aid (2008) through multilateral institutions as a percentage of GDP.

Source: OCHA's Financial Tracking System (FTS)

Box 3.6 Children and young people

Children and young people have a special need for protection in crisis situations. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child refers in several places to the importance of international cooperation to the protection of children, for example in Article 38, no. 4:

“In accordance with their obligations under international humanitarian law to protect the civilian population in armed conflicts, States Parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure protection and care of children who are affected by an armed conflict.”

In the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the involvement of children in armed conflict, Article 7 no. 2 states:

“States Parties in a position to do so shall provide such assistance through existing multilateral, bilateral or other programmes, or, inter alia, through a voluntary fund established in accordance with the rules of the General Assembly.”

Since its inception in 1995, Norway has supported Save the Children's emergency standby team, which consists of personnel trained in the protection of children in wars and disasters. Save the Children has an agreement with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees for the deployment, within 72 hours, of personnel to crisis areas to protect and provide care for children, and for the long-term development of competence in this field.

3.4 Humanitarian principles under pressure

In many conflicts today, humanitarian activities take place alongside peace and reconciliation efforts, development assistance, international policing activities and military peace operations. One of the greatest challenges in such situations is to provide coherent, well-coordinated assistance while safeguarding humanitarian principles (see Box 3.1).

There are many good reasons why humanitarian aid must be viewed in close conjunction with other types of aid. It is important, nonetheless, to insist on maintaining the unique character of humanitarian assistance.

The UN agencies, the Red Cross movement and other organisations base their humanitarian activities on the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence. The need to defend these principles in complex crises involving many different actors is often referred to as ensuring a “humanitarian space”.

The concept is closely linked to the ability of and possibilities for civil humanitarian organisations to gain access to vulnerable population groups in demanding security situations. Often, the sole source of security and access for civil humanitarian actors lies in their being regarded as neutral by various armed groups and the local population. They will therefore need to distance themselves from other activities, both various forms of political and peace-building engagement and international military operations.

The need to keep civilian and military efforts separate is a frequent focus in this discussion, for example in Afghanistan. But the grey areas between humanitarian aid, development assistance, political and diplomatic efforts and other forms of civil assistance mean that it is not always easy to draw clear boundaries around this humanitarian space. More debate is required about

Box 3.7 The humanitarian space

The term “humanitarian space” was first coined in 1990, by Rony Brauman, head of Médecins sans Frontières:

“A space of freedom in which we are free to evaluate needs, free to monitor the distribution and use of relief goods and have a dialogue with the people.”

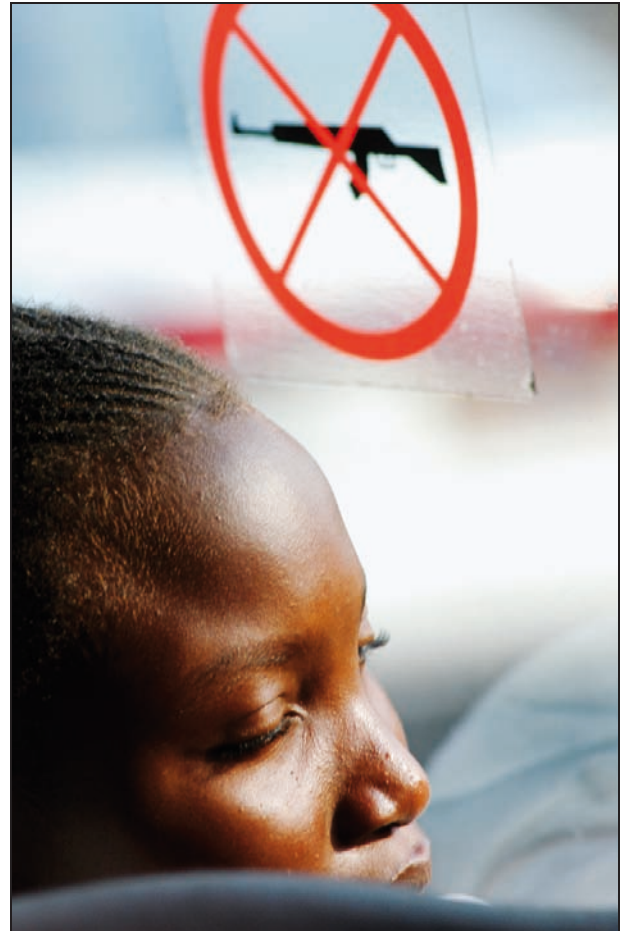


Figure 3.4 The ICRC's “No weapons” symbol is important to the protection of civilians and the humanitarian space. The photo is from a bus in DR Congo.

Photo: ICRC

where the dividing line should be drawn with respect to independence and neutrality and who is entitled to invoke the humanitarian principles. Are development assistance and peace and reconciliation efforts also included? Where does the dividing line go in such case? How can the goal of stronger national ownership of humanitarian assistance be reconciled with these principles? Here, there are no simple solutions. The answers to these questions may depend on the situation to a certain extent.

This challenge must be taken seriously, however. A great effort is required from the international community in order to strengthen respect for humanitarian law and secure unlimited access for the humanitarian organisations to population groups in need. The “global war on terror” has contributed to weakening the universal application of the humanitarian principles and respect for

Box 3.8 Afghanistan – an unclear humanitarian space and difficult access

A deterioration in the security situation and hostilities resulted in an increase in civilian casualties in Afghanistan in 2008. Around 2100 people were killed as a result of hostilities in 2008 compared with 1523 in 2007, an increase of around 40 per cent. Attacks on humanitarian actors are alarmingly frequent: 36 aid workers were killed, and 120 direct attacks or threats against humanitarian organisations were registered. OCHA estimates that as many as 40 per cent of Afghanistan is inaccessible to humanitarian organisations. Access problems are also emphasised by the ICRC, which has been forced to primarily concentrate its activities around the cities. This is compensated to a certain extent by the access enjoyed by the Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS) out in the provinces.

The challenges relating to the humanitarian space have been great in Afghanistan, and Nor-

way has endeavoured to clarify the dividing lines between humanitarian actors, other civil organisations and military forces. These endeavours also form part of the strategy for a coherent Norwegian civil and military effort in Faryab Province. Norway's views on this issue have gained increasing international support. The UN's Humanitarian Action Plan 2009 for Afghanistan emphasises the need for a clear division of labour and protection of the humanitarian space, a message clearly addressed to the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs). The humanitarian actors maintain that the confusion of roles creates problems in relation to their security and access to the population. In the end, the issue is about the right of Afghans in need to protection and assistance.

human rights in several countries. It allows little room for a neutral humanitarian space. Humanitarian organisations' access to the civilian population has become more difficult.

Undemocratic regimes, parties to conflicts and hostilities continue to block life-saving help for millions of vulnerable people. Together with the UN and like-minded countries, the Govern-

ment wishes to continue Norway's endeavours to ensure that all civilian populations and groups in need have access to help. The international community has an obligation to help and protect, while those in power and armed groups have an obligation to facilitate humanitarian relief.

International military forces often engage in various types of aid and reconstruction efforts.

Box 3.9 Guidelines for humanitarian-military collaboration

The main guidelines for international military contributions in connection with humanitarian crises are the OCHA *Guidelines on the Use of Foreign Military and Defence Assets in Disaster Relief* (the Oslo Guidelines) in the case of natural disasters, and *Guidelines on the Use of Military and Civil Defence Assets to Support United Nations Humanitarian Activities in Complex Emergencies*. OCHA is the custodian of these guidelines.

Another important document is the Inter-Agency Standing Committee's (IASCs) Principles on Civil-Military Coordination. What these guidelines have in common is their statement of the humanitarian principles, their recognition of the overriding coordinating role of the UN, and

their view that the use of military contributions is a last resort when no corresponding civilian resources are available.

The message of the guidelines is clear: even if the military can do an important job in filling humanitarian gaps in connection with natural disasters and difficult security situations, their engagement should be limited to exceptional situations and be closely coordinated with humanitarian actors and the host country.

This approach forms the basis for Norway's involvement in international peace operations, including our overall civil-military contribution in Afghanistan.

The guidelines are available on the following website: <http://ochaonline.un.org/cmcs>.

The motives for this can be varied and complex: they may be motivated by a desire to satisfy public opinion back home, to meet genuine needs and requests from the civilian population or to win the support of the civilian population for their presence. In extreme cases, situations can also arise where, pursuant to the Geneva Conventions, military forces are obliged to help civilians.

However, efforts of this type have often resulted in an unfortunate confusion of roles between civil and military actors that makes it difficult for the population to distinguish between the political, military and humanitarian actors. Playing the role of armed soldier the one moment and aid worker the next can create confusion, among both the civilian population and combat-

ants. This increases the risk of attacks on humanitarian aid workers and undermines the humanitarian space. Consequently, stronger compliance with the UN-based guidelines for humanitarian-military collaboration is necessary.

In Norway's view, there must be a coherent approach to the various types of initiatives involved in international peace operations and other peace-building efforts, an approach that is based on a clear division of roles between humanitarian organisations, other civil actors and military forces. At the same time, however, there are no easy answers to the many dilemmas that arise at the interface between the different types of assistance.

4 Global humanitarian challenges

4.1 Climate change adaptation and prevention

We are facing a clear increase in the number of humanitarian disasters resulting from climate and environmental change. Three out of every four humanitarian disasters are now climate-related in one way or another, according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). We will experience more floods, droughts and other climate-related extreme weather events in the years to come.

Those parts of the world where the capacity for prevention and dealing with extreme events is limited will be hardest hit. Africa, small island states and the large deltas in Asia are particularly at risk. The population in these areas will experi-

ence an increase in water shortages, poorer food security and new health risks. The most vulnerable groups will be people who live in dry regions, tropical coastal areas and people living in large and medium sized cities, as well as already vulnerable groups such as children, young people, single parents, the elderly and disabled and indigenous peoples.

It is uncertain how the national authorities will respond to these challenges. Disasters could threaten the stability and security of the countries affected. Experience shows that some regimes will choose continued control and repression, while others will strengthen the ability of civil society to deal with the challenges. Some fragile states may collapse completely.



Figure 4.1 Flooding in Bangladesh

Photo: Reuters Alertnet/Rafiqur Rahman

Box 4.1 The white paper *Norwegian policy on the prevention of humanitarian crises*

In the white paper *Norwegian policy on the prevention of humanitarian crises* (Report no. 9 (2007-2008) to the Storting), the Government states that Norway will actively promote a culture of prevention.

The following figures illustrate the extent of natural disasters: according to the UN, approximately 20 million people have been affected by natural disasters every year since 1991. That is seven times more than the number of people affected by armed conflict. It is always the poorest people who are hardest hit. Given that the extent of the phenomenon is so great, it is natural to ask whether preventive measures can make a difference. The World Watch Institute has previously estimated that one dollar invested in preventive measures means seven dollars saved in reconstruction. The prevention of natural disasters saves lives and is an effective and necessary part of the fight against poverty.

Norway cannot achieve much on its own. In cooperation with a number of partners, we will actively endeavour to promote understanding and

mobilise political willingness to intensify work on prevention. Initially, Norway has entered into cooperation with China, Bangladesh, Vietnam and Cuba on the challenges these countries are facing. Based on their experience, prevention plans and needs, and in close cooperation with experts in different fields, we are in the process of defining the areas where we can contribute.

In the white paper, the Government states that a reduction in local vulnerability, developing local capacity to cope with disasters and active local participation are the most important instruments in the prevention and emergency response efforts. In other words, local communities at risk must be put in a better position to deal with the challenges themselves. Capacity development is becoming an important issue in the international development context, i.e. helping people to help themselves. The need for broad capacity development also includes training children, young people and adults in relevant knowledge and skills that can increase the quality of local emergency preparedness and crisis management.

The choices made by the authorities may exacerbate existing patterns of conflict or contribute to the creation of new ones. These conflicts will not necessarily be between countries. They may be internal conflicts between different population groups at the local level. Regardless of which of these scenarios becomes a reality, the impact on people's right to water, food, health, education and protection will be great.

There is continued uncertainty about how severe climate change will be, for example at the local level, and about society's need to adapt to climate change. We know enough to act, however. We also know a lot about vulnerability and about how we can prevent natural disasters from having extensive humanitarian and societal consequences. Great human suffering can be avoided and money saved if we grasp the opportunities currently available to us to do more to adapt society to climate change.

The Government wishes to further develop Norway's climate adaptation policy. Effective efforts in this area will require far better dialogue between international, national and local authorities, and civil organisations. It will also require

better coordination between humanitarian assistance, climate change adaptation and development cooperation. Experts on climate change and prevention must cooperate much more closely if we are to achieve effective climate change adaptation.

The new climate agreement currently being negotiated under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) for the period after 2012 will probably include commitments for industrial countries to finance climate change adaptation and prevention in developing countries. To ensure a sound basis for future work on the issue, it will be very important that the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) places greater emphasis on the humanitarian consequences of climate change.

The Panel's expert assessments carry great weight with the authorities the world over. This is one of the reasons why, in 2008, the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) and Norway jointly proposed a UN special report on the handling of extreme climate events and disasters, which has now been adopted. A report of this kind will give new substance to the work on climate

adaptation in the years ahead and serve as a guide for practical measures in the most vulnerable countries.

The ability of the developing countries to address climate change depends on familiar development policy factors such as good governance, access to resources and an active civil society. The consequences of climate change cannot be seen in isolation from development processes. Consequently, adaptation strategies must be rooted in countries' own development strategies, based on knowledge about risk and vulnerability. Climate considerations must be incorporated into national development plans and strategies for agriculture, water management and forestry management, town planning and, for example, energy, infrastructure, health and education plans.

Many developing countries have now drawn up the first plans that identify immediate measures for climate change adaptation, and organisations are working actively with local partners to incorporate adaptation measures into various fields of cooperation. The need for funding is growing and funds will have to be raised from various sources. The financing of climate change adaptation is currently insufficient in terms of both volume and predict-

ability. A strong escalation of support is needed in order to ensure continued development and attainment of the Millennium Development Goals. A new climate regime after 2012 will entail strengthening the financing of the work on adaptation. It is important that these resources contribute in a good manner to the integration of climate change considerations with development in the most vulnerable countries.

In the end, it is the severity of climate change and developments in extreme weather that will decide how far adaptation measures can take us. As the white paper *Climate, Conflict and Capital* points out, some countries have already done a great deal to prevent the negative consequences of climate and environmental change, for example Bangladesh. These efforts have resulted in great human and material gains.

Increased focus on climate change adaptation will affect how Norway, as a humanitarian actor and long-term partner for developing countries, organises its assistance in this area. The climate negotiations and the results of the upcoming IPCC report will require the coordination of measures and budgets, a matter to which the Government will return.

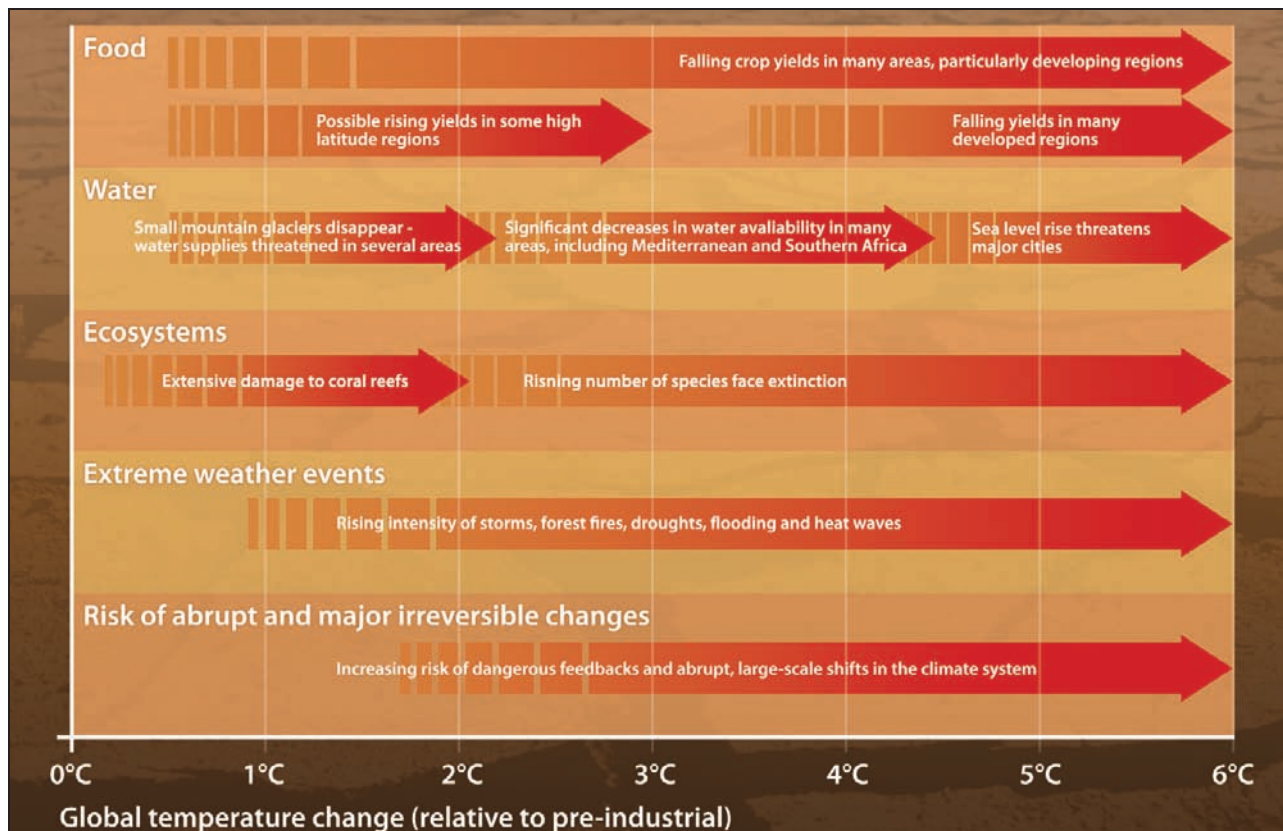


Figure 4.2 Consequences of a warmer climate given different increases in temperature.

Source: Stern Review

4.2 Protection of civilians in complex conflicts

Protecting civilians from violence and abuse has become an increasingly important element in humanitarian activities. Warring parties' lack of respect for humanitarian law is a major challenge. We note that the distinction between civilians and combatants is becoming blurred. Civilian populations have become targets for military and paramilitary forces, also in densely populated areas. Wars and conflicts are increasingly being waged in towns and villages.

Attacks on women, children and young people are part of the tactics employed. Children and young people are forcibly conscripted into armed insurgent movements or the regular army. Breaking down people's dignity through, for example, sexual abuse, and thus destroying the fabric of society, has become a common strategy. According to recent research, as many as 90 per cent of

those killed in today's conflicts are civilians and only ten per cent soldiers.

The conflicts are often asymmetrical, and the parties use unconventional warfare. Groups of insurgents hide among the civilian population and use the people as a shield. The use of heavy weapons against such adversaries exposes civilian populations to disproportionate risk and extensive losses.

The number of internally displaced persons is increasing, while the number of refugees who cross borders has fallen in relative terms. This highlights the problem of internally displaced persons not being protected by the UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees. One important goal for the humanitarian reforms of recent years has been to improve protection of internally displaced persons, but this has yet to be satisfactorily achieved. The so-called *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement* (1997) form a non-binding framework for safeguarding the rights of inter-

Box 4.2 Running camps for internally displaced persons in the Congo

The Norwegian Refugee Council's programme for running camps for internally displaced persons in the Democratic Republic of the Congo was established in 2007 in response to the increased tension in the north-eastern areas of the country. An increasing number of internally displaced persons had sought refuge in makeshift camps in and around the provincial capital of Goma. The goal of the programme was to improve the living standards of and provide protection for internally displaced persons in nine camps in and around Goma and Masisi.

The Norwegian Refugee Council's emphasis has been on improving the coordination of humanitarian assistance in several sectors where the needs are great (for example water, food, sanitary conditions and health). The internally displaced persons have been involved in decision-making processes concerning the situation in the camps.

The conflict escalated once more in autumn 2008, with resultant abuse and mass flight. Several new camps had to be built. In all, around 100 000 people now live in the nine camps for which the Norwegian Refugee Council is responsible in the Congo. While most of the support for this work comes from the Ministry of Foreign

Affairs, the organisation also receives funds from the UN, ECHO (the EU Commission's humanitarian agency) and Sweden through SIDA. The Norwegian Refugee Council cooperates closely with the UN and with UNHCR, WFP and UNICEF in particular.

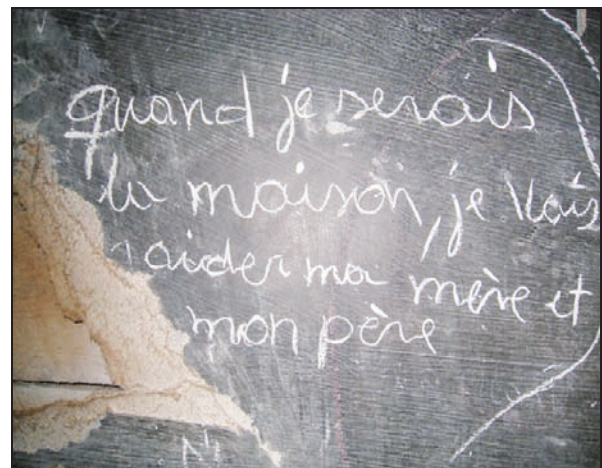


Figure 4.3 "When I come home, I will help my mother and father," writes a former child soldier from the Congo.

Photo: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs

nally displaced persons. The principles are supported by the UN and other humanitarian organisations, but they do not provide internally displaced persons with the legal protection they need. In many countries, they are much more at risk than refugees, particularly in countries in conflict and where the authorities do not wish interference from the outside world. It is nonetheless encouraging that several countries are now incorporating the guidelines into national law and regulations.

Refugee situations are regional. Regional cooperation is therefore required, among other things to facilitate reintegration once it is safe for refugees to return to their countries of origins and homes. Where it proves impossible to find solutions in the region, Norway can, in cooperation with the UNCHR, offer a place in Norway for a small number of refugees at particular risk. Any expenses incurred after the first 12 months fall outside the scope of what may be funded under Official Development Assistance (ODA).

There is growing recognition among humanitarian actors that many different political instruments and actors must be involved in order to find permanent solutions to the problems of refugees. This applies in particular to protracted refugee situations such as those in the Horn of Africa or the Great Lakes region. Used strategically, an offer of resettlement can make it easier for the host country and the country of origin to accept local integration and return. It is often a precondition that donor countries, the UN and others support concrete measures. In practice, many refugees have lost their rights to land and will need help, not just financial assistance but also legal and political help.

The use of rape as a weapon emerged in earnest during the Balkan wars in the 1990s. Widespread gender-based violence, such as sexual abuse and mass rape, has been documented in several countries, including DR Congo and Darfur. Security Council Resolution 1820 deals with rape on a par with other weapons and methods of war. It states that sexual abuse can be a crime against humanity. Abuse must be prosecuted, but only a few cases have been brought to justice so far. It is necessary to improve the follow-up of international law in this area and to consider the possibility of increased monitoring. In the International Criminal Court's indictment against Sudan's president al-Bashir, rape as a weapon is a separate count.

There are also examples of aid workers having been guilty of abuse of women and children. It is

Box 4.3 Security for aid workers

The lack of security for humanitarian aid workers often prevents aid from reaching those affected.

“And yet, with the evolving nature of armed conflict, the deliberate targeting of humanitarian workers has increased, establishing a tension between the imperatives of staff safety and effective humanitarian action. This is an issue which continues to generate acute dilemmas,” said the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Antonio Guterres, in his address to the UN Security Council on 8 January 2009. He told the Security Council that UNHCR employees were bombed in Bosasso last year, shot at in Garowe and taken as hostages in Mogadishu, adding that while the security risk is high, the nature of the UNCHR's work is such that it requires proximity to those whom it aims to help. The way in which the local population and relevant actors perceive the UNCHR is much more important to the safety of UNCHR staff than armoured vehicles and barbed wire fences, he told the Security Council, adding that, while it will never be possible to completely eliminate such risk, more concerted efforts could be made to deal with it.

important that the humanitarian actors have a clear and unequivocal policy of zero tolerance in relation to such acts. Humanitarian actors must take the issue into account in their recruitment work and have a strong focus on preventive efforts at all levels in order to prevent such incidents. Moreover, the humanitarian organisations must have an effective apparatus for dealing with situations in which abuse is nonetheless committed.

Sexual harassment and exploitation have also occurred in UN operations, perpetrated by forces with mandates that commit them to protecting the civilian population. Norway has played an active part in the efforts to promote the UN's zero tolerance policy in this area in order to prevent UN personnel from committing sexual abuse. One important measure has been the establishment of dedicated teams that train UN personnel, establish complaint mechanisms and hold meetings with the local population.

Weapons such as landmines and cluster munitions mainly kill civilians, and children and young people in particular. In addition to the humanitarian consequences while conflicts are still ongoing, unexploded mines and cluster munitions result in ruined livelihoods and security problems long after a war has ended, not least in connection with the return of refugees and internally displaced persons.

War, suffering and disease are interconnected. Violent conflict results in more disease and an increase in mortality and it has ripple effects that are much more extensive than direct war injuries. Disease strikes unequally, however. Vulnerable population groups are hardest hit: children, women and migrants.

Child mortality is a good indicator of the conflict level in a country. Maternal mortality in connection with childbirth is also particularly high in conflict situations, both because normal health services break down and because such help is not given priority in the aid that is given. The lack of reproductive health services hits women hard in conflict situations.

Infectious diseases are a problem in disaster areas. This is primarily due to the disaster situation itself, but a lack of infrastructure, sanitary facilities and water supply will also have a major impact in a situation in which people are living in crowded and makeshift conditions and health services do not exist.

The declaration presented by the "Foreign Policy and Health" initiative in March 2007¹ advocates taking a more coherent approach to monitoring the disease and health situation of populations affected by conflicts and wars, particularly as regards the indirect effects. More attention must be devoted to women's role as carers and the situation of women and girls at risk of violence.

Armed conflicts arise most often in countries in which the state lacks the capacity and/or power to exercise control over society. This may be due to a lack of institutional, organisational or financial capacity, or it may be because of the absence of norms and rules for the state and the population. Such weak or failed states lack a functioning government administration that fulfils its obligation to provide security, health and education. The development of social services such as healthcare can

Box 4.4 Responsibility to protect

The genocide in Rwanda gave rise to an international debate on the responsibility of the international community when faced with genocide, ethnic cleansing and other grave abuses. This resulted in the UN Summit in 2005 confirming the principle that states are responsible for protecting their own citizens ("responsibility to protect") from genocide, crimes against humanity, ethnic cleansing and war crimes. The summit also confirmed that the international community has a joint responsibility to help states to fulfil their obligations and to intervene in special cases when states clearly fail to do so.

Military intervention is the last resort among a number of alternative courses of action that largely involve preventing and averting the most serious crimes known to man through diplomatic, humanitarian and other peaceful means. There was debate about the international community's possibility, willingness and ability to assume this responsibility, both by peaceful means and through the use of force, in connection with the conflict in Darfur and following the cyclone in Burma.

The agreement in principle on the "responsibility to protect" raises new challenges when the international community is faced with concrete situations in which the principle proves difficult to apply in practice. It is paramount that the agreement achieved in 2005 is consolidated and not undermined. International law must be developed in order to establish an obligation for UN Member States to follow up these intentions in practice.

The UN Secretary-General's report from January 2009 on the implementation of "responsibility to protect" emphasises that a range of perspectives is required, and it attempts to remove some of the controversy surrounding the principle. It states that the principle is based on three pillars: the protection responsibilities of the State, international assistance and capacity-building, and timely and decisive response.

¹ A political collaboration between Brazil, France, Indonesia, Norway, Senegal, South Africa and Thailand aimed at shedding light on the connections between foreign policy and global health issues.

make it easier to build the trust that is needed to create peace. This is relevant, for example, to the work of the UN Peacebuilding Commission and

the Commission's cooperation with the World Health Organization (WHO).

4.3 Migration and urbanisation

A failed agricultural policy, climate and environmental change and population growth are factors that contribute to increased migration and urbanisation. This is not a new phenomenon; migration is a traditional adaptation strategy. The new element is that Africa's agricultural land is more depleted than before. Desertification is a contributory factor to the rapid urbanisation taking place in Africa.

There are many different and complex reasons why people leave their homes, but increased poverty is probably the decisive factor. Most of the migrants will not be defined as refugees under international law, but as economic migrants and internally displaced persons.

A majority of the world's population now lives in towns and cities. Many migrants have settled in rapidly growing slums. For many people, cities

Box 4.5 The cities of tomorrow

It is a distinctive feature of urban population growth in the 21st century that it will largely consist of poor people. In Africa and Asia, the urban population will double during the period from 2000 to 2030. The cities' self-generated population growth will account for approximately 60 per cent of this growth. Most migrants from the countryside and other towns will settle in new, rapidly-expanding slums.

The urban population is increasingly vulnerable to humanitarian disasters because of their proximity to the coast (75 per cent of the biggest cities in the world are situated near the coast), a lack of regulation and control of building development and a lack of social services. These challenges must be addressed, but the planning of transport services, water supplies and sanitary and social services has hardly begun.

While cities create environmental problems, they also contain the seeds of improvement. Density of population can reduce the ecological footprint, for example by reducing energy consumption.

represent hope and the possibility of a better future, but if the increase is due to flight and the urban refugees fail to find paid employment, this can easily lead to an increase in the formation of slums and social unrest.

Urban refugees represent a phenomenon with which the humanitarian system has little experience. While the classic approach to refugee problems has been to establish camps, urban refugees necessitate new forms of humanitarian assistance.

Migrants may experience an increased risk to their security in their country of origin or in the transit and receiving country. Violence, human trafficking and abuse are important keywords in this context, as we saw in South Africa in spring 2008, when migrants from Zimbabwe were persecuted and harassed. Several thousand people die every year attempting to cross the Mediterranean, in the Caribbean area and along the border between the US and Mexico.

Technological and ecological disasters can have unforeseen consequences for cities and towns. Uncontrolled chemical or radioactive emissions, also as a result of acts of terrorism, can result in massive destruction and require humanitarian initiatives. At present, these challenges are not well addressed by the established humanitarian system.

4.4 Food security, health and education

Food security

Improved food security for those most at risk must be dealt with through coordinated action, not just in the form of food relief and humanitarian aid, but primarily by addressing the underlying causes. Productivity in the agricultural and fisheries sector must be increased through sustainable measures.

Given the strong population growth, increased food production and the development of global agriculture, including climate change adaptation, will be one of the most important preconditions for preventing future humanitarian disasters. Land reform and other changes to existing power structures are also necessary if vulnerable groups are to have access to the food that is produced.

Food aid must be used with caution in order to prevent it undermining sustainable local and regional agriculture. The distribution of seed corn also requires thoroughgoing analyses of needs. The distribution of money to victims is often a

Box 4.6 The UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement

Internally displaced persons, people who have fled within their own countries' borders, emerged on the international agenda in the early 1990s. Since then, Norway has played a central role in drawing attention to this group and in developing policy and guidelines in this area. In 2009, at least 26 million people have fled within their own countries' borders because of wars, conflicts and violations of human rights. In addition, there are tens of millions of internally displaced persons as a result of natural disasters and climate change.

The first UN special representative for internally displaced persons was appointed in 1992. Francis Deng was in charge of the development of the UN guidelines for internally displaced persons throughout the 1990s. The need to formalise and specify international standards for the provision of protection and aid to internally displaced persons was a direct result of the dramatic increase in internal armed conflicts during that period.

The special representative presented his first report to the UN Human Rights Council in 1993, and the second report in 1996 contained an extended overview of which international legal standards were relevant to the protection of internally displaced persons. This group is not protected by the Refugee Convention of 1951. The reports concluded that existing law provided broad protection of the rights of internally displaced persons, but that there were also a number of grey areas and deficiencies. Following thorough consultations with international

experts, the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement were finalised in 1998 and confirmed the same year by the UN Human Rights Council.

Since the introduction of the guiding principles in 1998, they have become recognised as the international standard for the rights of internally displaced persons. At the UN General Assembly in 2005, 190 Member States endorsed the principles and recognised them as an important international framework for the protection of internally displaced persons. The guidelines are used by many international authorities as the basis for the development of national legislation. They are also important advocacy tools for a number of actors, such as the UN and NGOs.

From the start, Norway has been an important advocate of the rights of internally displaced persons, and Norway's unceasing support for the UN special representative in this field is well known. The first conference on the development of the guidelines was held in Norway in 1992 in a collaboration between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Norwegian Refugee Council. In 1998, the Norwegian Refugee Council was requested to establish a centre for monitoring and reporting on the situation for people who have fled within their countries' borders because of wars, conflicts and violations of human rights. The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (www.internal-displacement.org) in Geneva has been in charge of this work since 1998. It is now regarded as the leading international institution in this field in terms of information and analysis.

more effective alternative in many situations in that it offers the recipients more options and helps to strengthen the local private sector. When distributing food or money, it is important to ensure that vulnerable groups benefit from this help.

Health

In relation to the population's survival, access to clean water and functioning sanitary services is in many cases as critical a factor as food supplies. Clean water is decisive in relation to preventing

the spread of infectious diseases and ensuring the survival of children.

Climate change gives rise to an increased risk to health: food production can be hit in vulnerable regions, floods carry new waterborne diseases with them and an increase in temperature means that the carriers of, for example, malaria will become more widespread.

In recent years, the international community has devoted a great deal of attention to improving emergency preparedness for a new global pandemic. The WHO believes that the question is no longer whether but when such a pandemic will strike. A disease with high mortality, a very great

and rapid proliferation potential and ineffective treatment measures will make great demands on coordination between the UN aid apparatus, international organisations, NGOs and national authorities. The response to swine flu in spring 2009 illustrates the extensive countermeasures that are deemed to be necessary.

HIV/Aids remains a very serious health challenge in certain countries, and it has also been in focus in connection with wars and conflicts. However, several surveys show that it is often migration and the discontinuation of health services that are decisive in relation to the spread of HIV/Aids, rather than the conflict situation itself. Crises, particularly those that involve mass movements of people, increase the risk of HIV infection because, for example, they lead to the breaking up of social networks and family structures, increase the risk of sexual violence, reduce access to preventive and HIV treatment services and/or because people move to an area where HIV is more prevalent.

However, the greatest threats to human life and health in disaster situations are neither surprising nor unusual. People die in connection with childbirth, from diarrhoea and pneumonia, from normal diseases and lack of treatment, and from both acute and chronic complaints such as Aids and tuberculosis. That is why the burden of disease is as great if not greater *after* a disaster is over.

After the acute phase of humanitarian disasters, it is important to maintain focus on fundamental health services, particularly for children and women. The humanitarian organisations that mobilise during disaster situations will be able to compensate for a short period for the breakdown of a country's own health system. Once the acute situation is past, however, there will be great pressure (financial and political) for the withdrawal of these organisations.

At the same time, experience shows that health services and infrastructure that ensures water supplies and sanitary conditions are rarely prioritised in national and international reconstruction efforts. Moreover, many countries' chronic shortage of health professionals will be strongly exacerbated because of migration caused by the crisis.

This makes better coordination of health efforts increasingly necessary. Children are particularly vulnerable to the mental health effects of disaster situations. Violence, abuse or the loss of parents exposes children to major mental strains

that will leave their mark on them and their surroundings for a long time.

Education

The lack of educational provision in the world is worst for children and young people affected by crises and conflicts. Education is often perceived by international donors as a number two priority during humanitarian responses, and it is often underfinanced as a result. The UN and international humanitarian organisations must become better at integrating education in connection with humanitarian crises.

Knowledge and education help individuals to achieve an overview, security and self-awareness. Better basic knowledge improves people's chances of looking after themselves and makes it more difficult for profiteers to exploit the population for their own ends.

The prioritisation of education is also part of the broader development agenda. Among other things, education during humanitarian crises is a necessary focus in order to achieve Millennium Development Goal 2, universal primary education for all children by 2015. Education is also often a prerequisite for reconciliation initiatives, creating mutual respect and establishing lasting peace. Support for educational measures during humanitarian crises contributes to the protection of children and it may prevent children being recruited as child soldiers or becoming victims of prostitution. It is important that the planning of education during humanitarian crises is part of prevention and emergency preparedness plans. The Government believes that the work being carried out under the auspices of the Interagency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) is important.

Box 4.7 Standards for education

Stronger focus is required on support for education for children in vulnerable states and countries in conflict. However, the education must be *relevant* in relation to children's needs, *adaptable* to children's educational level, *participatory* by involving both children and parents in the learning process, *inclusive* in order to ensure access for all and *protective* so that children are not exposed to violence and conflict.

Schools can be a suitable arena for the distribution and coordination of other humanitarian aid such as food and medicines. Schools establish a more secure framework for children and young people. Their rights are often ignored during

armed conflicts and natural disasters. Inclusive education also contributes to the early recovery and normalisation of affected communities. Both pupils and teachers need information about how they best can tackle a new disaster situation.

5 Norway's humanitarian priorities

Main goals

As an actor in the field of humanitarian policy and a financial donor, Norway is facing a number of large and complex challenges. In cooperation with others, we will:

- ensure that people in need are given the necessary protection and assistance
- fund humanitarian assistance based on the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence
- equip the international community to meet the global humanitarian challenges of the future
- prevent, respond to and initiate reconstruction following humanitarian crises.

In order to achieve these goals, Norway will give priority to the following areas:

5.1 A global humanitarian system

As long as the international humanitarian system is dominated by a few Western donor countries, it will not be capable of dealing with future humanitarian challenges.

New humanitarian alliances

Humanitarian principles are universal. They do not belong to a specific cultural group. While all the world's major religions and faiths contain elements of humanitarian values, it is largely donor countries from the North and the West that have defined the humanitarian system as we know it today.

The humanitarian system will also have to be globalised in order to deal with the global humanitarian challenges, not least in light of climate and environmental change and the growing number of natural disasters. Countries that are vulnerable to humanitarian disasters and that have experienced extensive humanitarian crises will be valuable partners in the work of further developing the humanitarian system. We therefore wish to build new humanitarian alliances, contribute to broader

support for the humanitarian principles and foster understanding for the necessity of the humanitarian space.

The white paper on the main features of Norwegian foreign policy states that the G20 countries' growing economic and political influence should also result in them taking greater international responsibility for reducing poverty and vulnerability.¹ There are tendencies towards greater humanitarian efforts in G20, for example through bilateral contributions to the UN Emergency Relief Fund (CERF), but these efforts are still at a low level and irregular. Many of the G20 countries are far from reaching the UN's goal of 0.7 per cent of GDP being spent on international assistance. Together with the UN and like-minded countries, we wish to involve the G20 countries in humanitarian efforts in the years ahead.

Today, the EU's humanitarian body, the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Office, ECHO, is the world's biggest humanitarian actor. ECHO's humanitarian budget for 2009 is approximately NOK 6.8 billion. The EU has increased its humanitarian efforts by developing a joint position on both humanitarian response and prevention, and it has established forums for cooperation. Norway now has a good expert dialogue with the most important EU countries in the humanitarian area, and it cooperates well with ECHO in multilateral forums. It will be natural for Norway to intensify its dialogue with ECHO in order to improve coordination of the international humanitarian efforts.

The Government will

- endeavour to expand the circle of donors by including non-Western donors and to strengthen the dialogue with countries affected by humanitarian crises
- follow up and strengthen cooperation with China and other priority countries on climate adaptation and the prevention of natural disasters in accordance with the white paper *Norwe-*

¹ Report no. 15 (2008-2009) to the Storting, p. 11.

gian policy on the prevention of humanitarian crises

- intensify the dialogue with the EU and other central humanitarian donors on increased humanitarian assistance.

Continued support for the UN and continued humanitarian reform

Norway's efforts to reform and improve the UN's humanitarian work are a central part of our UN policy. In addition to its normative work, the UN plays a pivotal role in coordinating humanitarian assistance at country level. A well-functioning UN and close cooperation between the UN and NGOs are essential in order to ensure an effective humanitarian response.

The strengthening of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), new coordination mechanisms such as the sector approach, new and innovative financing arrangements, and a better and more equitable partnership between the UN and NGOs are examples of

the results of humanitarian reform which Norway has supported and contributed to.

A great deal has been achieved, but much remains to be improved. There should be greater focus on strengthening national preparedness and response capacity in countries that repeatedly experience humanitarian disasters. We should also contribute to more coordinated and strategic UN-led aid in protracted crises and transitional situations.

The Government will

- make substantial, predictable contributions to the UN Central Emergency Response Fund, humanitarian country funds and UN humanitarian appeals, and help to further develop financing arrangements
- be an active, critical partner for the UN agencies in further efforts to reform the humanitarian system with a view to improving the effectiveness and capacity of the UN's humanitarian response

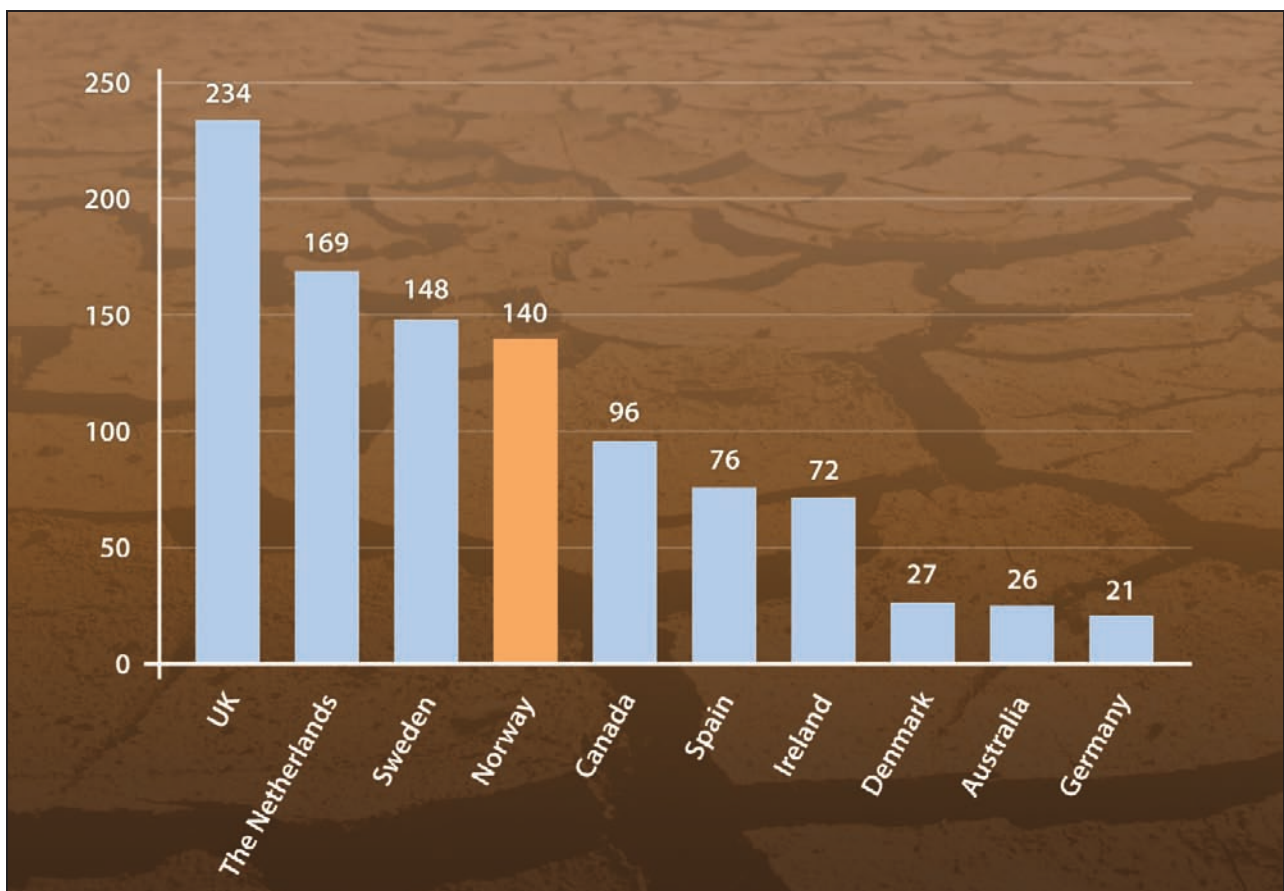


Figure 5.1 The ten largest donors to the UN Central Emergency Response Fund, which is tasked with responding rapidly to new humanitarian crises and providing support in connection with underfunded/ forgotten crises. Figures for the period 2006-2008 in USD.

Source: OCHA/CERF

- accept offices and responsibilities in the most important humanitarian organisations, including chairing the OCHA Donor Support Group (ODSG)
- work to improve coordination between the UN's humanitarian arm and the UN's development activities in order to achieve a unified UN at country level, better handling of transitional situations and to attain the UN Millennium Development Goals
- continue to promote further development of the UN's multi-dimensional, integrated peace operations in order to achieve a coherent approach in the field in which humanitarian considerations are also taken into account
- support the UN's plan for food security (Comprehensive Framework for Action) and strengthen cooperation with national authorities in order to deal with the global food crisis.

5.2 Respect for humanitarian principles

The humanitarian space is under considerable pressure. Norway will promote respect for humanitarian principles and international humanitarian law, and it will work to promote a clearer division of roles between humanitarian organisations, other civil society actors and the military in increasingly complex situations.

A more complex humanitarian system

The humanitarian system is changing. The number of NGOs with different value bases is growing, and untraditional actors, such as military forces, civil-military stabilisation teams, national and local authorities, private security companies etc., are playing a greater role. In particular, the growing use of private contractors in connection with various reconstruction initiatives in conflict situations, such as in Iraq and Afghanistan, represents a challenge for both the established humanitarian system and international humanitarian law.

We have witnessed a gradual politicisation of the humanitarian space, not least in countries associated with the "global war on terror". Humanitarian aid workers no longer enjoy the same protection as their role previously afforded them. In several areas, humanitarian actors are not seen as being neutral and independent, and the local population has problems distinguishing between the different international actors. This

has serious consequences for aid workers' security and for their access to those affected.

The Government will:

- continue its efforts to ensure as coherent an approach as possible to the division of roles between humanitarian organisations, other types of civil contributions and military peace-keeping forces
- promote the use of the UN guidelines for military contributions to humanitarian operations, which set clear limits on such contributions
- work to ensure that humanitarian access and the protection of aid workers is on the agenda in important international forums, the UN in particular
- together with other humanitarian donors and organisations, consider the consequences for humanitarian efforts of the use of private security companies
- strengthen the dialogue with untraditional humanitarian actors and donors, and contribute to increased international support for humanitarian principles.

Strengthen international humanitarian law and support the Red Cross movement

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is one of the main channels for Norwegian humanitarian assistance in crisis and conflict situations. The ICRC is also the most important individual organisation in relation to ensuring a well-functioning humanitarian system based on international humanitarian law. The ICRC is a key partner for Norway in the further development of humanitarian law, including humanitarian disarmament. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) also plays a particularly important role in helping local communities affected by natural disasters. Together with the Norwegian Red Cross, Norway can help to strengthen respect for international humanitarian law, both nationally and internationally.

The Government will:

- respect and promote respect for international humanitarian law and counter attempts to undermine it
- support the unique position of the ICRC as defender of the humanitarian principles

- cooperate with the ICRC on measures aimed at ensuring compliance with and further development of international humanitarian law
- further develop the tripartite cooperation between the Norwegian authorities, the Norwegian Red Cross and the ICRC, and supplement it with closer cooperation with the ICRC, among other things through increased direct financing
- take on offices and responsibilities to support the mandate and role of the Red Cross movement, including chairing the ICRC Donor Support Group in 2009-2010.

5.3 Humanitarian disarmament

The economic, social and humanitarian consequences are enormous when people are unable to lead normal lives because of unexploded cluster munitions, abandoned landmines or because illicit small arms get into the wrong hands. Humanitarian disarmament is one of the main themes of Norway's humanitarian diplomacy.

Humanitarian disarmament is disarmament motivated by humanitarian and development considerations. It is also a concrete application of the humanitarian rules for the protection of civilians. The Government is strengthening the various Norwegian initiatives relating to humanitarian disarmament and armed violence by combining its efforts in this field. The Mine Ban Convention, the Convention on Cluster Munitions and processes and initiatives relating to armed violence and small arms and light weapons are part of our work for humanitarian disarmament. Norway played an important part in the work on both the Mine Ban Convention and the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

“Armed violence” is a generic term that includes the use of small arms, explosives, mines, cluster munitions and other conventional weapons. According to the UNDP, more than two million people die or suffer mutilation every year as a result of armed violence, which is a pressing humanitarian and development problem. In the UN's view, the use of armed violence is one of the largest obstacles to achieving the Millennium Development Goals. What the various issues relating to armed violence have in common is that civilians are affected in an unacceptable manner through violations of human rights and humanitarian law and that the use of violence is the direct cause of human suffering and lack of development.

The Government will:

- strengthen implementation of the Mine Ban Convention through Norway's chairmanship of the Convention's Second Review Conference
- provide support for affected countries, thus enabling them, in accordance with national plans, to fulfil their obligations under the Convention
- continue to support the monitoring and advocacy efforts of humanitarian organisations in order to ensure that the States Parties to the Mine Ban Convention fulfil their obligations
- work to promote the rapid entry into force and full implementation of the Convention on Cluster Munitions
- together with other countries, support Laos's preparations for and implementation of the first meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions in Laos in 2010
- ensure that Norway continues to play a leading role and engage in active partnership with other states and organisations in support of the Convention on Cluster Munitions
- make an active contribution to the establishment of a consolidated and dynamic Convention on Cluster Munitions that serves as a good framework for implementation and compliance
- make an active contribution to international and UN-based processes concerning armed violence and small arms and light weapons in connection with the Millennium Development Goals and based on knowledge from the field
- work to improve control of the production of, trade in and proliferation of small arms and light weapons
- give priority to measures that strengthen the protection of civilians from threats of war and other armed threats in affected areas and that help to strengthen international norms and rules in this area.

5.4 Needs-based assistance

Women and men, children and the elderly are affected differently by war, conflicts and natural disasters. Norway will give priority to the work of protecting women and children against sexual abuse and strengthen the gender sensitivity of the UN and other actors in connection with humanitarian activities.

Integrating the gender perspective into humanitarian initiatives means recognising that women and men, boys and girls are affected differently by war, conflicts and humanitarian crises. Good and effective humanitarian assistance means that initiatives must be adapted to different needs and that the abilities and resources of the affected population are utilised. Humanitarian actors must base their work on gender and age-specific analyses and develop good indicators for measuring the results of humanitarian efforts.

Important tools, such as the Inter-Agency Standing Committee's (IASC) handbook and guidelines, are now in place and set a common standard for the whole UN system. While the Norwegian organisations are well on their way to integrating the gender perspective, this work will never be finished once and for all. It is a precondition for the effective integration of the gender perspective that the issue is given continuous attention and is subject to continuous improvement.

In addition to integration of the gender perspective, targeted measures are essential, including combating sexual violence in wars and conflicts. A great deal of the work that has already been done has taken the form of responsive measures rather than more preventive solutions. This is largely a result of women's low status and vulnerability. It is therefore important to focus systematically on major structural changes so that women can have access to, for example, education, the employment market and the courts on a par with men.

As regards work with women and children, Norway's policy of engagement in the humanitarian area is particularly concerned with following up the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the supplementary protocol on the participation of children in armed conflicts and UN Security Council Resolution 1612 on child soldiers.

In addition to children's right to protection in conflict situations, environmental and climate change has major consequences for children and young people's right to health, food, protection and education. Awareness of children and young people's needs in crisis situations, as well as their potential to act as agents of change in areas such as peace, human rights, the environment and climate, is still often lacking.

The Government will:

- demand that Norwegian and international organisations integrate the gender perspective

into their humanitarian response, among other things by using gender and age-specific needs analyses in the field, strengthening women's participation and reporting specifically on the results of this work

- give priority to ensuring that the UN intensifies its efforts in accordance with the IASC handbook on gender sensitivity and improves its reporting on the results and lessons learned
- work to ensure that gender experts are included in UN crisis teams (UNDAC) and that gender-sensitive data are used more systematically by these experts in crisis operations
- in cooperation with the UN and relevant humanitarian organisations, give priority to measures aimed at combating sexual violence, focusing on affected countries and particularly vulnerable groups (women and children)
- devote particular attention to health services for women and children, qualified natal help and reproductive health services in crisis situations
- strengthen the efforts aimed at following up UN Security Council Resolution 1325 in connection with the tenth anniversary of the resolution in 2010
- intensify the efforts aimed at following up UN Security Council Resolution 1820, which states that rape can be used as a weapon in war
- support relevant educational initiatives for children, young people and adults in humanitarian situations in order to prevent them being recruited as child soldiers and exploited as prostitutes
- contribute to an increase in innovative efforts aimed at meeting children and young people's special needs and rights in humanitarian crisis situations, including natural disasters
- intensify the work on following up UN Security Council resolution 1612 and the Paris Principles concerning the recruitment of children to armed forces.

5.5 The protection of civilians, refugees and internally displaced persons

The protection and re-integration of refugees and internally displaced persons is a precondition for stability and development in countries in crisis, but this will require greater use of regional solutions.

Refugees and internally displaced persons are the most important target groups for Norway's

humanitarian assistance. More than 40 million people are currently refugees from wars and conflicts. At the same time, the reasons for such flight are becoming increasingly complex. Many flee because of the destruction wreaked by natural disasters and a deterioration in living conditions.

Protection is a key task for some of our most important humanitarian partners, primarily the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other organisations that have a mandate to protect, such as the ICRC, UNICEF and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). Voluntary humanitarian organisations also have an important role to play in protecting refugees and the growing numbers of internally displaced persons.

By establishing a good framework for protection and assistance, locally and regionally, and in cooperation with these organisations among others, humanitarian efforts can help to prevent the emergence of large secondary groups of refugees and internally displaced persons.

It is the civilian population that is hardest hit by today's conflicts. In several situations we have witnessed attacks targeting civilians or attacks aimed at targets in densely populated areas. While the need for protection is increasing, we also note a weakening of the access of humanitarian actors to the victims in several countries. In recent years, more aid workers have been kidnapped and murdered and, in some cases, organisations have withdrawn their international personnel from conflict areas.

There is a growing need to find lasting solutions to the large numbers of refugees and internally displaced persons. Deadlocked refugee situations, for example in the Middle East, have political causes that call for political solutions.

Humanitarian activities should be conflict-sensitive and not contribute to increasing human suffering. In their efforts to promote zero tolerance of sexual abuse of women and children, the humanitarian actors are also under an obligation to ensure that aid workers are not themselves guilty of committing abuse.

The Government will:

- prioritise measures to protect and re-integrate refugees, internally displaced persons and other vulnerable groups
- engage in active diplomacy to promote respect for international humanitarian law, the protec-

tion of civilians and access to humanitarian assistance

- work to ensure that the UNHCR expands its own capacity and expertise relating to the protection of internally displaced persons, including coordination in the field, and improve cooperation with independent national institutions and voluntary organisations on internally displaced persons
- contribute to lasting solutions to protracted refugee situations, also regionally, based on good coordination of humanitarian, foreign policy and development policy instruments
- improve the dialogue with grant recipients and UN agencies on zero tolerance of sexual abuse committed by their own employees and of failure to prosecute the perpetrators
- participate in the debate on reform of the UN's peace operations and become involved in particular in processes aimed at improving such operations' capability to fulfil their protection mandates in the field
- work to ensure that humanitarian efforts are conflict-sensitive, that they do not exacerbate the harm caused by conflict situations, and that organisations or measures that contribute to peace are strengthened.

5.6 More coherent assistance

More coherent assistance can improve conflict management, humanitarian assistance and the prevention of humanitarian crises, but it must be based on local participation in aid activities.

Much greater coordination is needed between the various actors and technical experts in order to prevent and respond to humanitarian disasters and initiate reconstruction and development in their wake. Differences in the mandates of relevant organisations or the organisation of the various budget items must not prevent necessary follow-up of the transition from the acute phase to self-sufficiency through the rehabilitation and development of affected areas. So far, the international community has failed to strike a satisfactory balance between national and international efforts, between long-term development and humanitarian aid, and between different international institutions and organisations. There is also potential for improvement as regards cross-sector cooperation.

It is especially important in the case of protracted crises that humanitarian initiatives are

adapted to local conditions and contribute to local participation, organisation and sustainability. It is in such situations that the risk is greatest of aid leading to the abdication of responsibility by the national authorities, to aid dependency and corruption, and to indirectly cementing power structures.

Meeting urgent needs while at the same time ensuring long-term sustainable solutions is a task that requires participation across departmental and intradepartmental boundaries and between bilateral and multilateral actors.

Without a more coherent approach to development policy, it will be difficult to strengthen preventive efforts, achieve more effective climate change adaptation and attain the Millennium Development Goals. There must be greater focus on reducing local vulnerability, increasing local capacity to cope with disasters and active local participation, as emphasised in the white paper *Norwegian policy on the prevention of humanitarian crises*.

Norway plays an active part internationally in the field of climate change, for example in the climate and forest initiative, carbon capture and storage, the “Clean energy for development” initiative and the proposal for financing climate measures based on the income from auctioning carbon allowances. The reduction of greenhouse gas emissions is an important contribution to reducing the need for adaptation and prevention in the long term.

There is also a great need, however, to increase efforts aimed at adapting to climate change. It is essential in relation to both adaptation efforts and the prevention of humanitarian disasters that we succeed in preserving biological diversity through ensuring intact ecosystems. Forest stewardship, water resource management and more sustainable agriculture are important in this context. In order to prevent the deterioration or destruction of human habitats and people's means of livelihood, it is important that a price is put on the environmental costs and that we



Figure 5.2 Reconstruction efforts following the earthquake in Pakistan in October 2005.

Photo: The Norwegian Refugee Council

develop effective incentives for preserving ecosystems.

Given the continued weaknesses in international efforts aimed at early recovery, more attention must be devoted to this issue. More natural disasters will also necessitate more reconstruction work. This means that the need for coherent assistance, where several instruments are focused on the same goal, is even more urgent. Norway has flexible instruments that can be used in connection with transitional aid/reconstruction, and we are working to promote more coherent overall efforts in the governing bodies of multilateral organisations. Norway's long-standing engagement for humanitarian disarmament is an example of humanitarian initiatives that can enable local communities to start reconstruction.

The Government will:

- invest in the whole range of adaptation measures – from prevention, preparedness for and the handling of crises to reconstruction and long-term development
- strengthen the participation of affected parties in humanitarian activities, particularly with respect to prevention and preparedness, in accordance with the white paper Norwegian policy on the prevention of humanitarian crises
- contribute to better coordination between humanitarian activities, climate change adaptation and development cooperation
- contribute to increasing knowledge in developing countries about climate change and possible measures, and promote greater focus on the humanitarian consequences of climate and environmental change, for example through the work on the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's special report Managing the Risks of Extreme Events and Disasters to Advance Climate Change Adaptation
- implement the climate and forest project in order to conserve the rain forests which contribute in many ways to adaptability in the form of water, food, climate regulation, protection against extreme weather and access to resources
- support a coherent approach to water resource management in areas that will experience less precipitation or that will experience great fluctuations in precipitation
- support the African "Adaptation Framework for Agriculture" based on the positive experience from the Norwegian-supported "Conservation Agriculture" programme in Zambia

- improve the coordination of Norwegian efforts in transitional situations, for example through closer cooperation in country teams in the Ministry
- contribute to reconstruction starting at an early stage in affected local communities by intensifying efforts to clear mines and unexploded cluster munitions
- promote greater focus on the long-term effects of humanitarian assistance in order to reduce undesirable consequences for individuals and local communities
- support water, health and sanitary initiatives in crisis areas in order, for example, to prevent waterborne diseases and a deterioration in general health
- work to ensure that good and secure education and relevant vocational training for girls and boys is an integral part of international humanitarian assistance and reconstruction, and help to ensure speedy and sufficient funding of education for children and young people in wars and conflicts
- ensure that Norway's humanitarian activities are based on the INEE's (Interagency Network for Education in Emergencies) international minimum standards for education in crisis situations and early recovery.

5.7 Norway as a good donor

To be able to deal with the humanitarian challenges, Norway must strengthen its administration and follow-up of humanitarian assistance.

Flexibility and predictability

By their very nature, humanitarian needs are unpredictable. Norway must therefore maintain its flexibility and ability to act swiftly to meet changing needs, on the basis of the current model for allocating grants. At the same time, however, it is desirable to increase predictability for important partners through increased use of framework grants that are disbursed early in the year.

The Government will:

- increase the proportion of non-earmarked funds disbursed early in the year to the UN Central Emergency Response Fund, humanitarian country funds and to UN and ICRC appeals

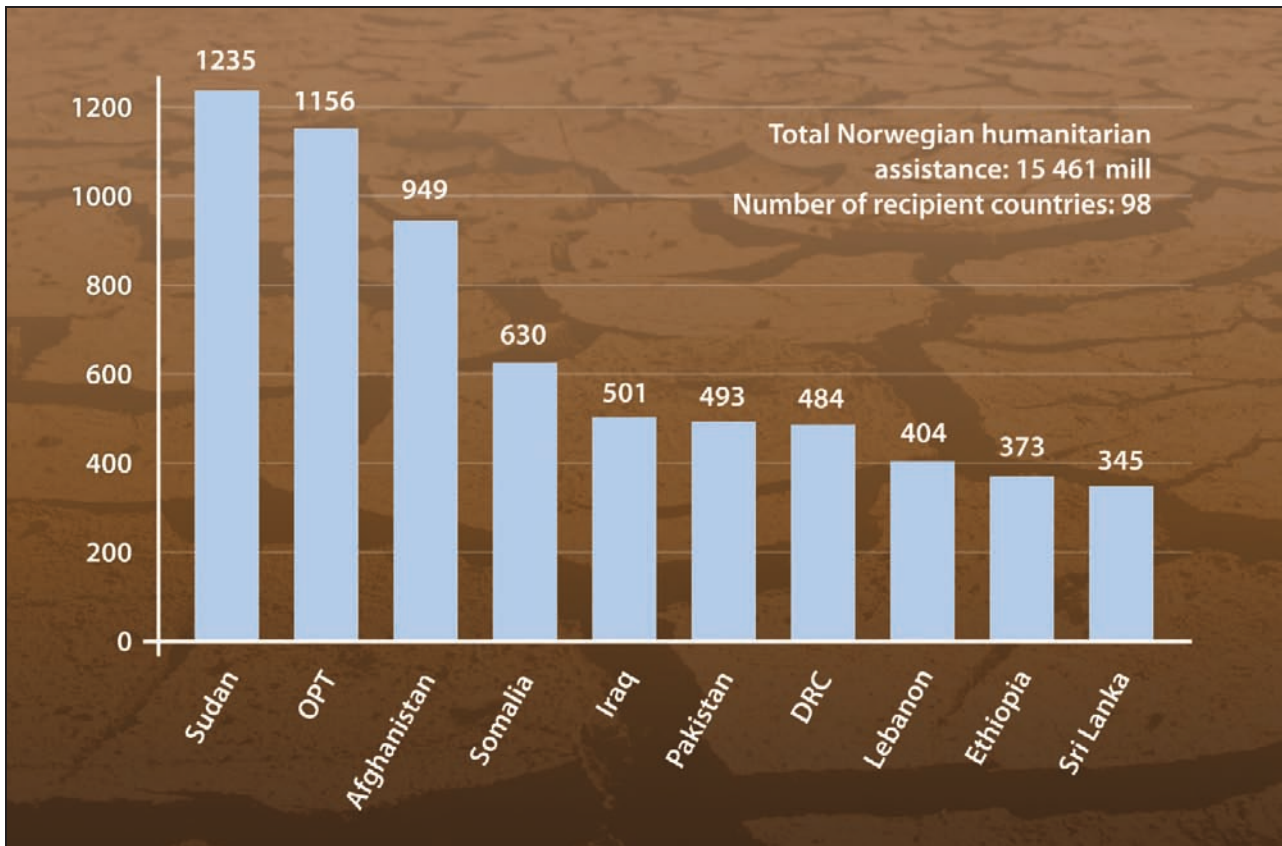


Figure 5.3 The ten largest recipient countries of Norwegian humanitarian assistance 2002-2008 in NOK.

Source: Norad/MFA. Provisional figures for 2008

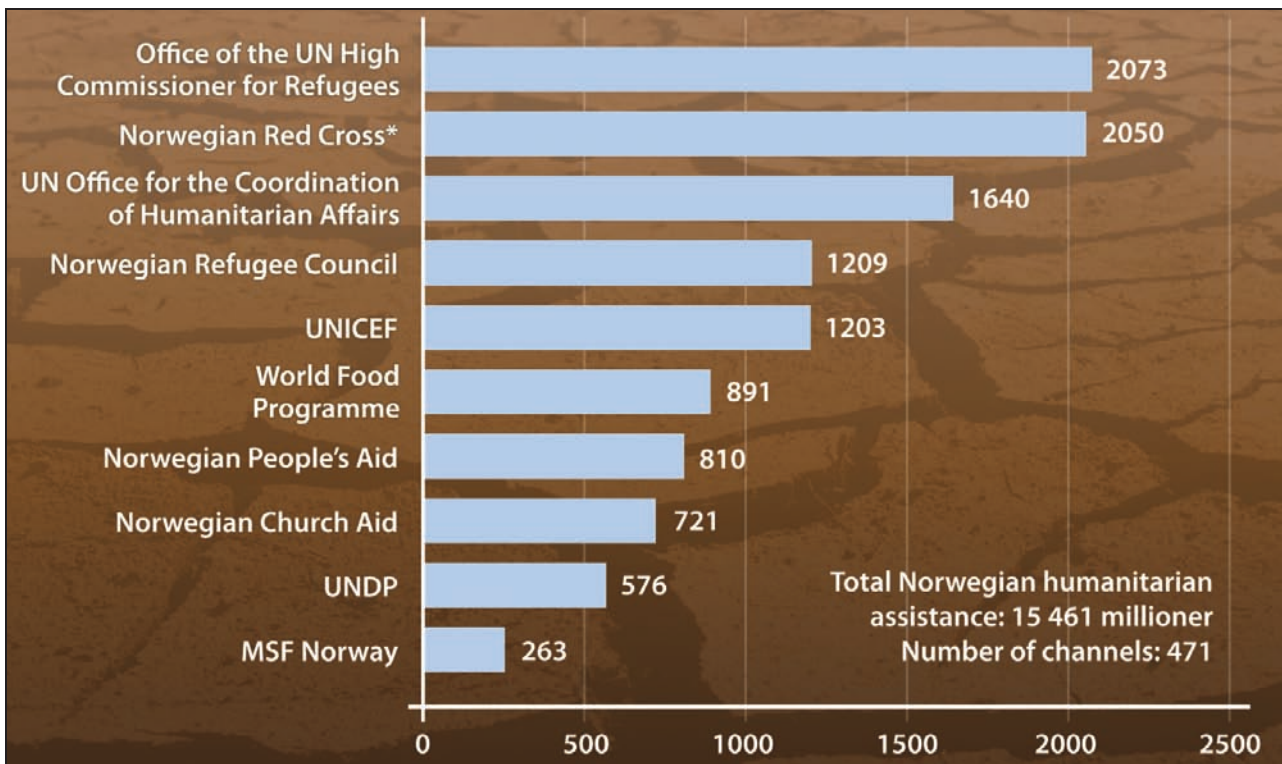


Figure 5.4 The ten largest recipient organisations of Norwegian humanitarian assistance 2002-2008 in NOK.

* Includes contributions to the International Red Cross movement

Source: Norad/MFA. Provisional figures for 2008

- maintain the capability to respond swiftly and with substantial funds to new humanitarian crises throughout the budget year by having sufficient reserves
- contingent on the approval of the Storting, enter into multi-year cooperation agreements with selected partners in order to provide more predictable financing for priority humanitarian areas where these partners have special expertise.

Further development of the Norwegian model

The Norwegian model for humanitarian assistance has made Norway a dynamic, flexible and respected partner in the international humanitarian system. The tradition of solidarity and philanthropy still has deep roots in the Norwegian population, and the humanitarian organisations enjoy strong support.

In recent years, these organisations have become highly professional institutions. Most of them have a broad network of international contacts, often with their sister organisations, and they have unique expertise and proximity to grassroots organisations and institutions. It is by financing these organisations that the Norwegian authorities can reach individuals, in both the response and prevention context. This means that we are dependent on there being a good trusting relationship between the Norwegian authorities and these organisations. At the same time, however, we must focus on goal attainment, quality assurance and efficiency. Stronger investment is required in research into humanitarian issues.

The Government will:

- collaborate on a more strategic, more predictable and less project-oriented basis with Norwegian humanitarian organisations
- make clearer demands on our partners and support professionalisation, competence-building and improved follow-up of results
- continue efforts to ensure that the Norwegian Emergency Preparedness System (NOREPS) can mobilise emergency relief goods, personnel and service packages quickly and effectively in connection with natural disasters and humanitarian crises, with the emphasis on the further development of ready-to-deploy stocks
- in cooperation with Norwegian partners and international actors
- increase investment in Norwegian and international humanitarian research and promote the establishment of a strong humanitarian research community in Norway.

More efficient administration and learning

Continuous efforts are made to further develop the administration of Norwegian humanitarian assistance.

As funding increases, the demands on the administration in terms of sufficient capacity and efficiency also increase.

More knowledge, research, learning and evaluation of humanitarian efforts are required. Norad and international networks and organisations will have an important role to play in evaluating how we administer humanitarian funds.

Where we have a diplomatic presence, the embassies will play a key role as contact points for Norwegian organisations, and as the link to the UN at country level and to the national authorities.

The Government will:

- improve capacity in the administration of humanitarian assistance and introduce improved tools relating to grants
- involve the foreign service missions more in humanitarian assistance where appropriate
- intensify the follow-up of humanitarian projects in the field through increased use of field visits/ spot checks
- improve its ability to document that Norwegian humanitarian assistance is beneficial and produces results, among other things by preparing an annual report on the results of its humanitarian activities
- increase the use of evaluations and reviews in cooperation with Norad and facilitate learning through increased use of the results achieved in the assessment of new initiatives
- have zero tolerance for fraud and corruption and require recipients of Norwegian aid funds to practise good financial management
- require organisations that receive Norwegian humanitarian funds to have clear ethical guidelines for their employees' conduct in humanitarian situations.

5.8 Financial and administrative consequences

The Government wishes Norwegian humanitarian activities to be based on clear attitudes and values. Vulnerable people in need have a right to protection and assistance. If the national authorities are unable or unwilling to protect their own population, Norway and the international community must help.

Undemocratic regimes, ongoing hostilities and strong national conflicts of interest often block life-saving help for millions of vulnerable people. Norway will work together with the UN and like-minded countries to ensure that people in need receive help in crisis situations. The international community has an obligation to help and protect, while those in power and armed groups have an obligation to facilitate humanitarian relief in conflict areas.

Climate change and enduring poverty in many vulnerable countries and regions mean that a greater proportion of overall assistance is devoted to the prevention of natural disasters. This theme has been discussed in various ways in white papers presented during the past two years. Work on climate change adaptation already has a central place in the ongoing negotiations leading up to the climate summit in Copenhagen in December 2009. Norway will play an active part in the negotiations on adaptation and will take steps to facilitate increased efforts in this area when the new climate agreements are in place.

Norwegian humanitarian assistance must also be based on knowledge and expertise. The administration of humanitarian funds must be robust and result in the desired goals and outcomes being achieved. This is a difficult task. By definition, humanitarian funds are allocated for use in

the least clear situations imaginable. The Government sees no reason to conceal the fact that this involves a high risk that we will not always succeed in reaching those in greatest need quickly enough.

It is decisive, therefore, that we work more strategically, that we give certain areas and countries higher priority than others, that we select the correct partners and that we evaluate and assess the results we achieve.

The measures in this white paper will be funded within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' current budgetary limits for aid purposes. In the national budget, humanitarian assistance is largely allocated via Chapter 163 Emergency relief, humanitarian aid and human rights, but it must also be seen in conjunction with other budget chapters such as Chapter 162 Transitional aid, Chapter 164 Peace, reconciliation and democracy, and multilateral items and long-term assistance items under programme area 03 International aid. The work will have administrative consequences, in both the Ministry and foreign service missions. They are described to a certain extent in the white paper, but the administrative consequences will be discussed further when measures are subsequently proposed in connection with the budget.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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The recommendation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of 29 May 2009 on Norway's humanitarian policy will be submitted to the Storting.

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Cover illustration: Sand storm in the Hamadiya camp
in Western Darfur. More than two million people have
been displaced since the war in Darfur began. Several
hundred thousand have been killed.
Photo: Lynsey Addario/Corbis/Scanpix

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