



NORWEGIAN MINISTRY
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Report

Norway's humanitarian policy

Annual report 2013





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Foreword

In 2014, the funding requirements of humanitarian aid organisations are greater than ever. The staggering sum of NOK 82 billion is required to meet the needs of people who have lost their homes and livelihoods through war, conflict and natural disasters. The enormous, growing humanitarian crisis in Syria is making huge demands on the international community, with more persons being displaced than at any time since World War II. The Syrian civil war has created a power vacuum that threatens to destabilise the entire region. This can be seen most clearly in Iraq, where extremist rebel groups have mobilised along ethnic and religious lines.

War is also impacting the civilian population in South Sudan, and at the time of writing the world's youngest state faces a great risk of widespread famine. In the Central African Republic, civil war has brought much suffering to civilians. These new large-scale crises have come on top of the enormous humanitarian crisis in Syria and many protracted, enduring crises such as those in Afghanistan, DR Congo, Palestine, Somalia and Sudan.

Although we could easily lose hope, it is vital that we do not, but continue to work actively to provide better humanitarian assistance.

We need to improve conditions for those providing assistance in demanding humanitarian situations. The humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence are crucial for securing humanitarian access to all those in need, irrespective of their real or perceived affiliations. We are seeing increased attacks on aid workers, healthcare institutions and schools. We need to work to ensure that all states meet their responsibilities and obligations in terms of facilitating access, including when national borders have to be crossed.

The most powerful typhoon in history, Haiyan, devastated the Philippines at the beginning of November last year, and the local population and authorities are still in the process of rebuilding. It is notable that where houses and schools were constructed sufficiently robustly to withstand violent weather of this kind, the population coped better than in areas where such building standards were not followed. Being present in countries affected by natural disasters and supporting the authorities in their efforts to reconstruct to a higher standard and build back better, is important.

Robust school buildings are not only important in countries hit by natural disasters. The Norwegian Government has made education in emergencies an integral part of its humanitarian programme. The parties to a conflict must respect the principle that school buildings should be left untouched. This is particularly important for displaced children living in refugee camps. The Norwegian Government aims to reach one million child refugees not presently attending school, and will focus on even closer cooperation with humanitarian actors within the UN and in Norway.

In the Central African Republic, Norway is supporting the reconstruction of a school in the capital, Bangui. Norway is also funding new desks for all pupils and training for teachers on creating a positive learning environment for children in a conflict situation. The result is that more than 90% of the 6 000 pupils in the area are back at school and experiencing a more normal living situation.

I hope that this report will promote openness and transparency about the results of Norway's humanitarian efforts. The example of the school in Bangui shows that our efforts are bearing fruit.

Norway will continue to be an active and engaged humanitarian partner.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Børge Brende', with a stylized, cursive script.

Børge Brende
Minister of Foreign Affairs

Oslo, June 2014

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The past year – the humanitarian situation in 2013

War and conflict again had an enormous human cost in 2013. Lives were lost, people were seriously injured and children's schooling was interrupted. Millions of displaced persons lacked food, water and shelter. All this was the consequence of decisions and actions by warring parties. Humanitarian actors cannot repair such damage, and must simply do their best to limit the human cost as much as possible.

In addition, natural disasters once again caused extensive human suffering and substantial humanitarian needs. Nevertheless, it was also illustrated that prevention works. Before Cyclone Phailin hit parts of India in October 2013, more than one million people were evacuated. Only 38 people were reportedly injured, whereas a similar cyclone in 1999 claimed more than 10 000 lives.

The scale of the humanitarian crises in Syria, the Central African Republic, the Philippines and South Sudan was a severe test for the entire humanitarian system in 2013. These "mega-crises" had to be handled simultaneously with the large number of protracted crises around the world. This made high demands in terms of leadership, prioritisation, coordination, information management and, not least, resource mobilisation.

In 2013, the UN introduced new guidelines specifying how the international humanitarian system should respond to such particularly large-scale crises, which are referred to as level 3 (L3) crises. When an L3 crisis arises, extraordinary measures are triggered, including the immediate mobilisation of highly qualified personnel, funding from the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), and the preparation of a joint plan of action for the entire humanitarian system. These reforms proved to function well in a natural disaster scenario as in the Philippines, but were not as relevant in humanitarian crises created by conflict. Experience shows that conflict-related humanitarian crises present the humanitarian

system with unique challenges. Humanitarian opportunities are limited, and aid workers are dependent on warring parties permitting humanitarian access.

Funding was also a major challenge in 2013. Global economic instability left the world's most vulnerable people even more at risk. State contributions to the UN and other humanitarian organisations dropped. In addition, increased unemployment in Western countries hit migrant workers and reduced remittances to families and friends in poorer countries. In 2013, the UN requested a total of USD 13.4 billion for measures to address 19 humanitarian crises. This was the highest figure ever, and only 60% of the amount was received. The revenue shortfall rendered humanitarian efforts less effective. The good news is that more countries are contributing: whereas 59 countries contributed to UN humanitarian appeals in 2000–2002, 84 countries made donations in the period 2011–2013.

Armed conflicts hit the civilian population hard in 2013, with civilians suffering murder, mutilation, rape and forced displacement. Sexual violence and starvation were used as weapons by warring parties, and 2013 saw an ever-increasing number of targeted attacks on humanitarian aid workers. In Syria, Afghanistan, Pakistan and South Sudan, for example, medical equipment and personnel were held back or attacked as part of warfare. Other civilian infrastructure, such as schools, was also misused and attacked. Assaults on humanitarian aid workers, schools and medical facilities are a widespread problem in many ongoing conflicts. The civilian population suffers and is prevented from receiving vital assistance.

The situation in **Syria** deteriorated further during the course of 2013. Towards the end of the year, almost one in two Syrians required emergency aid, as refugees either in a neighbouring country or within Syria itself. Together with strongly increased violence, further fragmentation of the

opposition, the emergence of terrorist groups, the authorities' blocking of humanitarian access to opposition-controlled areas, the use of high-explosive weapons – including chemical weapons – and the lack of progress in political negotiations, this paints a dark picture going forward. The flow of refugees continues, and is creating enormous financial and political challenges in neighbouring countries.

The **Central African Republic** has been a permanent humanitarian crisis for a long time. In March 2013, the Séléka rebel group took control of the country's capital, Bangui, and thereafter the rest of the country. During the following weeks, the offices and projects of many international organisations and government agencies were looted. Séléka soldiers

terrorised and displaced the civilian population by looting, raping and killing. During the course of the year, resistance to Séléka grew, and in December the anti-Balaka militia attacked Bangui. More than 1 000 people, primarily civilians, were killed in the resulting fighting. Refugee numbers increased dramatically, and by the end of December more than 950 000 people, or 20% of the population, had been displaced.

In 2013, **DR Congo** was once again characterised by misgovernment, conflicts, gross human rights violations and a precarious humanitarian situation. Government forces and various armed groups with shifting allegiances continued to battle for control of the country's natural resources and territory. Yet again, hundreds of thousands of people were forced to flee. The



The Norwegian Foreign Minister visits families in a school in Tacloban, that are supported by Norway through WFP. More than 4 million people became internally displaced in the Philippines after the typhoon Haiyan. Photo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs/ Astrid Sehl.

number of internally displaced persons in DR Congo is estimated at 2.6 million. Some 80% of these are located in the east of the country.

The conflict level in **Afghanistan** increased considerably in 2013. Following a period during which fewer civilians were killed or injured, an increase of 42% was recorded from October 2012 to October 2013. Aid organisations were attacked and suffered kidnappings more frequently. The Taliban and other rebel groups were behind most of the attacks.

When Typhoon Haiyan hit the **Philippines** on 8 November 2013, widespread destruction resulted. More than 6 000 people were killed, over four million were displaced, and some 14.1 million were affected in some way. The poorest and most vulnerable were hit the hardest, with many seeing their livelihoods wiped out entirely. Poor small-scale farmers and fishermen were particularly vulnerable to the impact of the typhoon. The Philippine Ministry of Agriculture estimated that 1.1 million tonnes of crops were destroyed, and that some 600 000 hectares of agricultural land were affected. It was important to initiate clear-up and reconstruction efforts rapidly, so that people could resume their daily occupations to the greatest possible extent. A further priority was to secure school buildings, since strong school buildings capable of withstanding extreme weather conditions are a natural place to seek shelter.

In December, the humanitarian situation in **South Sudan** worsened dramatically as a result of intensified hostilities across the country. The UN immediately requested more than NOK 1 billion to cover food, medicine and other humanitarian needs of those affected by the fighting. At least 90 000 persons were displaced in just a few days around Christmas. Many sought refuge in or close to UN camps in South Sudan. The local UN presence was crucial at this stage, protecting the civilian population and ensuring that help arrived.

There was also positive news in the humanitarian field in 2013. On 2 April 2013, the UN General Assembly adopted a new international Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) following several years of discussion and negotiation. The objective of the ATT is to establish the highest possible common international standards for international trade in conventional arms, and to prevent unlawful trade in such arms. It will be an important instrument in efforts to promote a more responsible international arms trade, and will provide a solid platform for the further development of international rules and standards for the arms trade.

Humanitarian policy objectives and instruments

Humanitarian law and humanitarian principles

Based on humanitarian law and experience of humanitarian efforts in the field, the Red Cross system, UN agencies, humanitarian donors such as Norway and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have jointly developed a set of general principles for humanitarian assistance.

The four main principles are:

- **Humanity:** The purpose of humanitarian action is to protect life and health and ensure respect for human beings.
- **Neutrality:** Humanitarian actors must not take sides in hostilities or engage in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.
- **Impartiality:** Humanitarian action must be carried out on the basis of need alone making no distinctions on the basis of nationality, race, gender, religious belief, class or political opinions.
- **Independence:** Humanitarian actors must draw up and implement their own guidelines independently of the policies and actions of the authorities in the country concerned.

The strategic objectives of Norwegian humanitarian policy

In cooperation with others, we must:

- 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.

Diplomacy, normative work, international cooperation and aid are all instruments for achieving Norway's humanitarian policy objectives.

- The core of all humanitarian assistance is to save people's lives, alleviate suffering and protect human dignity regardless of ethnic background, gender, age, religion or political affiliation. This is a key aspect of Norwegian foreign policy.
- Together with our partners, we also wish to change the operating parameters for humanitarian efforts. Norway will seek to ensure that far greater investments are 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 resilience and their response capacity. Humanitarian crises require political solutions.
- Peace and reconciliation efforts, political dialogue with affected countries, contributions to international peace operations, aid, Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative, humanitarian disarmament and work on strengthening human rights are all important for preventing humanitarian suffering.
- Rights, principles and values form the main basis for Norway's humanitarian assistance.
- Norway's efforts must also be based on knowledge, expertise and robust administration. The administration of humanitarian funds must be efficient, and should result in desired and quantifiable outcomes.

Annual report on Norway's humanitarian policy

The annual humanitarian policy report for 2013 provides an overview of the most important processes in the area of Norwegian humanitarian policy, and of the support for humanitarian assistance given in the past year. This is the sixth annual report on humanitarian policy published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The report forms part of the implementation of Norway's humanitarian strategy and the white paper *Norway's Humanitarian Policy*¹, which the Storting (the Norwegian parliament) adopted in June 2009. Our aim is to facilitate greater access to, transparency about and insight into what we are achieving through our humanitarian engagement. This report is also part of the follow-up of the 2008 investigation by the Office of the Auditor General of Norway into the effectiveness of Norwegian humanitarian aid.

The annual report on Norwegian humanitarian policy must be considered together with Norad's Results Report, which discusses aid results across the field, including the humanitarian sector. The theme of this year's Results Report (to be published on 11 December 2014), is human rights and democracy.

This report has three parts:

Part I: Norwegian humanitarian policy in 2013 provides an overview of the most important steps taken to implement Norwegian humanitarian policy priorities in the past year. Part I mirrors the classification of the humanitarian priorities set out in chapter 5 of the white paper *Norway's Humanitarian Policy*. One important objective of Norway's humanitarian policy is to influence the operating parameters of the international humanitarian system so that aid becomes more effective. In Part I, we discuss some of the results that have been achieved through international cooperation and dialogue in the various forums in which the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is participating and

that will alter the operating parameters of international humanitarian assistance.

Part II: Norwegian humanitarian aid in figures provides an overview of the distribution of the funds allocated to humanitarian aid by the Storting in 2013 via the National Budget². The nature of humanitarian assistance means that there may be large variations in the destinations of these funds from year to year. Part II shows the total humanitarian aid given in 2013, split into a number of main categories including countries and partners. The aim is to provide an overview of humanitarian funds distributed in the past year, while a further aim is to demonstrate certain trends over time by comparing the figures for 2013 with previous years.

Part III: Selected results in 2013 highlights some examples of what was achieved through humanitarian assistance financed by Norway. We can report that humanitarian efforts funded by Norwegian aid money are producing satisfactory results. This year, we have focused on six examples. The sample illustrates not only concrete results, but also some of the challenges that arise when seeking to provide the best possible humanitarian assistance to the largest possible number of people. The examples do not provide a complete picture, but have been chosen to illustrate the results achieved in key projects in 2013.

Through these three approaches, we hope to provide helpful insights into Norwegian humanitarian policy and humanitarian aid in 2013. The information in the report supplements the report of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the budget proposal for 2014. We also hope that this report is useful and of interest to a wider audience.

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

2 Prop 1 S (2012–2013).

Part I: Norwegian humanitarian policy in 2013

Roles and responsibilities in Norwegian humanitarian policy

Norway's policy of engagement, political dialogue with affected countries, efforts to strengthen human rights and humanitarian disarmament efforts are all important contributions to the prevention of humanitarian suffering. The white papers *Norway's Humanitarian Policy* (Report No. 40 (2008–2009) to the Storting) and *Norwegian policy on the prevention of humanitarian crises* (Report No. 9 (2007–2008) to the Storting) form the foundation for the government's humanitarian assistance.

The Section for Humanitarian Affairs in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is responsible for following up on Norway's humanitarian policy engagement and the humanitarian aid that is provided to developing countries affected by conflict and natural disasters. This is done in close cooperation with other relevant sections within the Ministry, Norwegian embassies and Norad.

The administration of Chapter 163 of the National Budget on emergency aid, humanitarian aid and human rights plays a central role in this work, as does Norway's core contribution to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). In 2013, the Section for Humanitarian Affairs administered approximately NOK 3.7 billion in total.

Norway accepts offices, and chairs committees and other initiatives, in order to have a greater influence on the development of the humanitarian system. Here are some of the most important offices held by Norway in 2013:

Norway held the presidency of the **Convention on Cluster Munitions** from September 2012 to September 2013.

Together with OCHA, Norway led the Pooled Funds Working Group (PFWG).

Norway was chosen, along with the World Bank, to lead the **Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery** (GFDRR). One of GFDRR's objectives is to promote more effective cooperation and coordination between preventive-aid stakeholders. We will also focus particularly on the protection of school buildings, both so that schools can function as evacuation centres during humanitarian crises and so that educational programmes can continue in such situations.



Children playing in the Muganga III camp in Goma, the Democratic Republic of Congo.
Photo: Thomas Lohnes / Getty Images

1. A global humanitarian system

The ability of the humanitarian system to respond effectively is being challenged by the ever-increasing number and complexity of humanitarian disasters. Norway is contributing to the coordination of humanitarian assistance by promoting and supporting the adoption of joint humanitarian plans, the UN's coordinating role through UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), humanitarian reforms and new alliances.

Coordination. Norway promotes improved cooperation between local, national and international humanitarian actors. OCHA and the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator, Valerie Amos, are central to these efforts. In 2013, Norway was the fifth-largest donor to OCHA, which developed a performance-based four-year plan for its work during the course of the year, partly in response to pressure from Norway and other donors. Moreover, Norway was an active, critical partner for other UN agencies in 2013, supporting joint humanitarian appeals as a channel for responding to humanitarian crises. New guidelines on such joint appeals were developed during the year to make appeals – or strategic plans as they are now called – a more strategic and effective tool. Humanitarian actors are developing joint needs assessments to determine priorities and guiding indicators. Previously, joint appeals generally comprised a collection of projects and programmes for which the agencies sought support. The effects of the fresh approach will only be seen in 2014, since the new strategic plans were launched early in the new year.

Reform. Various reviews have shown that the humanitarian reforms introduced by the UN in 2005 have made international humanitarian efforts more predictable and effective. The reforms secured a clearer division of responsibilities and leadership at sector level (health, protection, shelter, etc.), as well as quicker and more flexible funding mechanisms

such as the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and humanitarian country funds. A further result is an increase in the number of partnerships between the UN and NGOs. All of these developments have rendered humanitarian assistance more effective. Rapid responses have been possible because CERF funding can be utilised immediately, and funding from donors has been secured at an earlier stage because appeals have been launched more rapidly.

Nevertheless, the major disasters in Haiti and Pakistan in 2010 demonstrated that the humanitarian system required further strengthening. Work began in 2011, and the humanitarian crises of 2013 tested some of the changes introduced since then (see example page 47 in the results chapter). The reforms have focused on stronger, more accountable leadership in the field, quicker and coordinated responses to sudden, major humanitarian disasters, more strategic planning and more effective coordination between humanitarian actors.

Reviews of various large-scale crises ongoing in late 2013 and early 2014 will reveal whether further changes are needed to the reform programme. Amendment of the global humanitarian system is not a one-off event, but rather a constant process based on lessons learned.

New donors. The need for humanitarian funding is growing constantly. New international donors have to be mobilised, as does support for view that humanitarian principles must be respected. In 2013, Norway engaged in dialogue with new humanitarian actors in the OCHA Donor Support Group, as well as through bilateral consultation with the United Arab Emirates. The discussion topics were partnership and joint efforts to assist during humanitarian crises such as that in Syria.

Humanitarian funds. The UN has established permanent humanitarian country funds (Common Humanitarian Funds or CHFs), for

some of the most complex and prolonged humanitarian crises. This applies to Sudan, South Sudan, DR Congo, Somalia and the Central African Republic. Both UN agencies and international and national NGOs can apply for CHF funding. Norway is chairing the Pooled Funds Working Group with OCHA, with the aim of making the CHFs more effective humanitarian channels and strengthening their preventive role. Capacity-building for local and national NGOs is a further priority for Norway. Through the working group, Norway has been able to help intensify the CHFs' focus on enabling local and national organisations to receive CHF funding, by helping to strengthen the organisations' administrative systems.

Smaller, temporary Emergency Response Funds (ERFs) have also been established in some countries. ERFs primarily fund NGOs (both

international and national), and are in principle able to react and disburse funds more quickly than the CHFs. In 2013, there were 13 such funds. Efforts are currently being made to convert the Afghanistan ERF into a more permanent fund (CHF).

Norway has been among the largest donors to CERF since its establishment in 2005. In 2013, Norway's allocation of NOK 380 million made it the third-largest donor to the fund. Norway attaches importance to being a stable donor, and makes payments early on during the year to enable CERF to respond quickly when a crisis arises. When Typhoon Haiyan hit the Philippines at the beginning of December 2013, CERF provided considerable funding within three days, allowing the UN to launch assistance programmes without waiting for funding from other donors.

A girl in a camp for internally displaced persons (IDP) on the outskirts of Belet Weyne, about 315 km (196 miles) from the capital Mogadishu, Somalia 20 February 2013. Photo: Tobin Jones/AU-UN IST PHOTO/Reuters/NTB scanpix



2. Respect for humanitarian principles

Attacks on humanitarian aid workers and medical facilities such as hospitals and ambulances are a widespread problem in many ongoing conflicts. The civilian population suffers, and is prevented from receiving vital assistance. Norway promotes respect for humanitarian principles and international humanitarian law. We also seek to ensure a clear division of responsibilities between humanitarian organisations, other civilian actors and military forces during conflicts.

Armed attacks on patients, health personnel and medical facilities constitute one of today's biggest humanitarian challenges, albeit one that is rarely discussed. The objective of the **Health Care in Danger** initiative is to focus attention on this topic. The initiative resulted from the 31st International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in 2011, which was attended by the Red Cross, Red Crescent and various national governments. The initiative has focused on identifying how to strengthen health-related security in order to ensure the provision of more effective, impartial healthcare during armed conflicts and other emergencies. An extensive information campaign, including in several European capitals, has drawn attention to the opportunities and challenges inherent in providing healthcare during conflicts. In the period leading up to the 32nd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in 2015, the focus will be on mobilising all stakeholders and implementing the recommendations made thus far.

The Norwegian Red Cross has engaged actively in the initiative, particularly with respect to the role and responsibilities of national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies in the provision of health services during armed conflicts and other emergencies. The six expert consultations completed thus far, including one event in Norway, have resulted in more than 150 concrete recommendations.

The Norwegian Red Cross has assumed particular responsibility for supporting the work of the Iraqi Red Crescent. In 2013, efforts focused on health training plans for staff and volunteers, adaptation of the service to improve security and support for the Iraqi Red Crescent's information campaign targeting the Iraqi authorities. The Norwegian Red Cross also held talks with the South Sudan Red Cross in 2013 regarding similar cooperation. However, this collaboration was postponed due to the ongoing conflict in the country, but will resume in 2014. Further, the Norwegian Red Cross and International Committee of the Red Cross published the "Ambulance and Pre-Hospital Services in Risk Situations" manual in 2013, based on experiences from more than 20 countries. The recommendations include strengthening national legislation to protect ambulance services and improving coordination with the authorities, military and other relevant actors, in addition to recommendations concerning practical protective measures. The manual has become an important instrument for the work of national societies, and has facilitated closer cooperation between the Norwegian Red Cross and its sister societies in the Middle East and Latin America on implementation of the manual's recommendations, particularly in the form of the drafting and implementation of new operational guidelines for the Red Cross system's ambulance service.

Norway is supporting the **Norwegian Refugee Council's** information campaign aiming to improve the protection of refugees and internally displaced persons. In 2013, the Norwegian Refugee Council continued its efforts to strengthen respect for humanitarian principles internationally through dialogue with authorities, institutions and organisations. The aim is to secure support for and compliance with the principles from all actors involved in humanitarian crises, thereby rebuilding respect for and confidence in the neutrality and impartiality of humanitarian organisations. As part of these efforts, the Norwegian Refugee

Council and other relevant actors have contributed to the development of guidelines on humanitarian work to prevent support for terrorism. The Norwegian Refugee Council published a report on the topic in collaboration with OCHA: "Study of the impact of donor counter-terrorism measures on principled humanitarian action". In 2013, the Norwegian Refugee Council gave particular emphasis to the property rights of women and greater protection of the rights of those who are displaced by

natural disasters and the effects of climate change, including the legal rights of displaced persons who cross national borders. Ensuring that refugees and internally displaced persons have access to assistance and protection is a challenge in all humanitarian crises. That is why Norway has maintained its support for the Norwegian Refugee Council's efforts to improve its own capacity to secure access for displaced persons.

The Norwegian Refugee Council's information campaign is securing results – a permanent solution for refugees in Panama

Panama adopted an important legislative change in October 2013. Act no. 74 gives refugees who have lived in Panama for three years the opportunity to gain permanent residence in the country. Individuals can apply for residence free of charge, either directly or through a lawyer. The residence permit includes a permanent work permit. This development is a large step towards a permanent solution for refugees in Panama. Previously, refugees had to apply annually for a work permit, and had no opportunity to secure permanent residence. The legislative change is partly due to the joint information campaign run by the Norwegian Refugee Council, its legal affairs partner CEALP, UNHCR and the Panamanian national refugee office (ONPAR). With the assistance of the Norwegian Refugee Council, CEALP systematically contacted members of congress to secure the adoption of the new act. The Norwegian Refugee Council played a key role in coordinating civil society actors and providing leadership training for refugees who presented their cases to the UNHCR, national organisations and members of congress.



A handout picture provided by the South Korean Army on 27 December 2013 shows South Korean hanbit unit nurse officer Chung Hye-Jin helping a baby at a refugee camp in Bor, South Sudan. Photo: Hanbit Unit / EPA / NTB scanpix

3. Humanitarian disarmament

The economic, social and humanitarian consequences are enormous when people are unable to lead normal lives because of undetonated cluster munitions or abandoned landmines, or because small arms get into the wrong hands. The objective of humanitarian disarmament is to prevent and reduce armed violence by focusing attention on the unacceptable humanitarian suffering caused by the use of weapons. Norway is working to promote the adoption of and compliance with international conventions and agreements related to humanitarian disarmament, and to ensure that obligations in this regard are enshrined in national legislation and practice. Norway's ongoing work on and compliance with conventions and agreements that have already been adopted, such as the Mine Ban Convention and the Convention on Cluster Munitions, help to strengthen international humanitarian law further. Norway always seeks to ensure that efforts in the field and multilateral work are closely linked and mutually reinforcing.

Arms Trade Treaty. On 2 April 2013, the UN General Assembly adopted a new international Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) following several years of discussion and negotiation. The objective of the ATT is to establish the highest possible common international standards for international trade in conventional arms, and to prevent unlawful trade in such arms. The aim is for the ATT to promote peace, security and stability, and reduce human suffering. It is also intended to promote cooperation, transparency and responsibility among states party. The ATT will be an important instrument in efforts to promote a more responsible international arms trade, and will provide a solid platform for the further development of international rules and standards for the arms trade. The ATT contains important provisions linking export permits to international human rights and international humanitarian law, and constitutes a strong

foundation for intensified efforts to combat armed violence, the abuse of civilians and human rights violations. It covers various categories of conventional arms, from marine vessels to small arms and ammunition, as well as parts and components. The ATT does not bar states party from retaining stricter national export control regimes or adopting more stringent arrangements.

Norway played a key role in the negotiations and efforts to secure a strong treaty with a humanitarian focus, and cooperated closely with various countries from Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa and Europe to achieve this aim. Civil society actors also played an important part. Norway signed the ATT on 3 June 2013, and ratified it on 12 February 2014 with the unanimous approval of the Storting.

Norway held the presidency of the **Convention on Cluster Munitions** from September 2012 until September 2013, when Zambia took over. To mark the end of its presidency, Norway prepared the "Lusaka Progress Report", which concluded that additional countries had signed up to the convention during the Norwegian presidency, that the standard prohibiting the use of cluster munitions stood stronger despite Syria's continuing use, that all states party were well on schedule as regards destroying their cluster munition stocks by the eight-year deadline, and that almost all affected countries had made good progress on clearing undetonated cluster munitions. Nevertheless, clear challenges remain with respect to safeguarding the rights of victims and maintaining national efforts to clear affected areas.

During 2013, seven new states party ratified the convention. At the end of the year, there were 84 states party and 29 signatories that have yet to ratify. Accordingly, more than half of all UN member states have adopted the ban on cluster munitions. Two countries – the United Kingdom and Macedonia – completed the destruction of their cluster munition stocks in 2013. Norway

completed clearance of undetonated cluster munitions at its former firing range at Hjerkin. A large number of countries, including many that have not signed up to the convention, condemned Syria's use of cluster munitions, including through Security Council resolution 67/262, which received the support of 107 countries in May 2013. This is a clear sign that the standard is growing in strength and that efforts to prevent the use of cluster munitions in new conflicts are succeeding.

Bhutan, Hungary and Venezuela declared themselves mine-free in accordance with Article 5 of the **Mine Ban Convention** in 2013. Large, previously contaminated areas were cleared in many countries through surveys and clearance operations, with considerable Norwegian support. Norway is also actively engaged in pointing out that mine clearance efforts are

progressing too slowly in many countries. At the end of December 2012, Poland became the 161st state to sign up to the Mine Ban Convention. The standard is now strongly established internationally, and the use of mines, including by countries that are not states party to the convention, is condemned from all quarters. In 2013, Yemen – a state party to the convention – acknowledged and apologised for the use of mines in its territory. This was discussed thoroughly at the meeting of states parties in 2013, where Yemen was required to report on the incident and who was responsible before the next meeting. Preparations began for the Third Review Conference of the Mine Ban Convention in Maputo, Mozambique in June 2014. Norway has a cooperation agreement with Mozambique on mine-related matters, and has collaborated closely with Mozambique on the preparations. Among other things, Norway has assisted with



A woman from the countryside practises searching for landmines during a training session involving mock landmines in El Retiro, Antioquia 23 January 2013. A law allowing civil organisations to carry out mine clearance in Colombia was approved in December 2010. Photo: Albeiro Lopera / Reuters / NTB scanpix

the drafting of documentation, and is a member of Mozambique's core group. In this context, Norway has a strong focus on more effective mine clearance in the field.

The Ministry's humanitarian grant funds are used strategically to support political objectives and Norway's multilateral efforts in the context of the various processes. In 2013, NOK 287 million was channelled into the clearance of mines and cluster munitions in affected countries, victim rehabilitation and assistance, the securing of stockpiles and information campaigns. For example, **Norwegian People's Aid** received more than NOK 102 million under a strategic framework agreement. The funds were primarily used to help affected countries to meet their legal obligations to clear mines and cluster munitions. Almost 30 square kilometres of land were cleared (through surveys or clearance operations), in 17 countries. In addition, 127 square kilometres were surveyed using a new, more effective cluster munitions survey method developed by Norwegian People's Aid in South East Asia. In total, 97 000 mines, cluster munitions and other explosives were found and destroyed. Norwegian People's Aid estimates that close to 60 000 people were direct recipients or users of cleared land, while some 470 000 are estimated to have benefited indirectly through the elimination of risks in

their local environment. Norwegian People's Aid uses multilateral forums and its operational experience to promote more effective methodology to both countries and other clearance operators, and consults closely with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on cooperation on shared objectives. Norway's support for humanitarian work thus both achieves direct results in affected countries and creates arenas for discussing and developing field-based policies and more effective methods.

Other important topics in 2013 were the humanitarian consequences of armed violence, particularly in Central America and certain African countries, and the launch of a process to reduce the use of explosive weapons in densely populated areas (EWIPA), including in connection with the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict (POC) agenda.

4. Needs-based assistance

Women and men, children and the elderly are affected differently by war, conflicts and natural disasters. Humanitarian assistance must be designed so that needs of all affected persons are met as effectively as possible. To secure the greatest possible effectiveness and avoid discrimination, the gender perspective must be integrated into all humanitarian assistance. The incidence of sexual abuse and gender-based violence often increases during humanitarian crises, and targeted measures are therefore required. The inclusion of women in emergency responses and reconstruction work is vital for identifying needs and initiatives, including how to provide the best possible protection in dangerous situations.

Norway is assisting Norwegian and international organisations in integrating the gender perspective into humanitarian responses, and helping to ensure the implementation of relevant UN resolutions and other common standards in practice. In 2013, Norway supported the promotion and strengthening of standards to prevent sexual and gender-based violence and sexual and reproductive rights, for example in the UN's humanitarian resolution.

Since 2006, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has explicitly required organisations receiving support for humanitarian projects to integrate the gender perspective and report separately on the topic. Organisations are also required to evaluate the relevance of projects with regard to Security Council resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. This has been an important driver behind the inclusion of the gender perspective in the work of the organisations. A review of seven Norwegian organisations carried out in 2009 showed that although many of them had guidelines and strategies in place, there were significant deficiencies in terms of integrating the gender perspective into their operations as a whole. A review conducted in 2012 of UN agencies' humanitarian assistance showed that current guidelines were not known and implemented at all organisational levels.

The need for active promotion of gender-perspective integration remains. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Norad have concluded a three-year global cooperation agreement with the Norwegian Refugee Council. All of the topics under the agreement include dedicated gender equality targets. This is a good example of how efforts to integrate the gender perspective can be intensified.

Sexual violence. In 2013, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) decided to make efforts to combat sexual violence a cross-cutting priority in all its operations. The objectives are a stronger operational response, prevention, mobilisation of the Red Cross system and awareness-raising among staff through training. The ICRC has reversed the burden of proof: arguments have to be presented for why a focus on sexual violence is not relevant to a given ICRC country programme, rather than arguments for its relevance. Incorporating this commitment into all its operational responses has made the ICRC a leader among humanitarian organisations in this regard.

Through cooperation projects with UN Women, UNICEF and UNFPA, Norway is supporting the establishment of response services for victims of sexual violence in Jordan, including psycho-social follow-up, reproductive health services and legal advice. Systematic prevention efforts are also being made with respect to sexual and gender-based violence and early marriage. Systematic documentation of sexual and gender-based violence among Syrian refugees has been initiated.

Sexual violence carries strong social stigma, and available support mechanisms find it hard to reach victims. Project experience shows that a very broad approach is required: the service must be open to both women and men, and the threshold for requesting assistance must be low. Local civil society partners play a key role in locating and assisting victims.

5. Protection of civilians, refugees and internally displaced persons

Armed conflicts hit the civilian population hard. Civilians suffer murder, mutilation, rape and forced displacement. Factors such as asymmetric warfare, diversity and fragmentation of armed actors and failure to distinguish between military and civilian targets increase the negative consequences for the civilian population. In conflicts such as those in Syria and South Sudan, medical equipment and personnel are held back or attacked as part of warfare. Other civilian infrastructure, such as schools, is also frequently misused and attacked.

Protection of civilians during armed conflicts. Although international humanitarian law confers a fundamental right to protection on civilians affected by armed conflict, in practice we see that civilians are still hit the hardest. In February 2013, Norway and Austria arranged a seminar in Vienna for European countries to discuss how civilians can be given the protection to which they are entitled. Representatives from 35 countries, the EU, UN, ICRC and civil society discussed topics such as the challenges presented by modern warfare and the importance of dialogue with armed groups on, and obligation of states to ensure, compliance with humanitarian law. The seminar formed part of the Norwegian-led initiative entitled *Reclaiming the Protection of Civilians under International Humanitarian Law*, and was the last of four regional seminars on the subject.

The initiative concluded with a global conference in Oslo in May 2013, which was organised in collaboration with Argentina, Indonesia, Uganda and Austria, the initiative partners. In total, some 300 delegates, including attendees from 94 states, civil society representatives and military experts, gathered to discuss the main challenges in the area of civilian protection. Asymmetric and prolonged conflicts, lack of respect for humanitarian law and urban warfare were among the challenges identified. The outcome document of the initiative and conference is a “co-chairs’ summary” containing a list of recommendations

to help strengthen the protection of civilians during armed conflicts. One clear recommendation was that states and other parties to conflicts must ensure that humanitarian law is incorporated into doctrines and procedures for the use of force. Further, states and armed actors were urged to take practical steps to minimise civilian harm, including by avoiding the use of explosive weapons in densely populated areas. Rapid, unimpeded access by humanitarian actors to those in need in armed conflicts was a further key topic at the conference, and was included in the outcome document. The full list of recommendations can be found here: www.regjeringen.no/upload/UD/Vedlegg/Hum/recommendations_final.pdf.

The recommendations have subsequently been utilised by various actors including Argentina, which is promoting the civilian protection agenda in the Security Council. The recommendations also form the basis for Norway's continued work on the protection of civilians.

In 2013, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs decided to support Crisis Action, a strategic partner in efforts to further the protection of civilians in conflict situations. Crisis Action works behind the scenes to improve humanitarian access and protect civilians during armed conflicts. It runs concrete initiatives to connect local organisations in conflict areas with larger NGOs, human rights groups, etc. It also has an extensive network of leaders in various sectors. In 2013, Crisis Action had a particular focus on the situations in Syria, Sudan and South Sudan, as well as Israel/Palestine.

In September, Crisis Action brought together more than 50 eminent doctors (including former Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland), from over 25 countries to publish a joint letter in the prestigious medical journal *The Lancet*. In their letter, the doctors warned of a medical disaster in Syria, and urgently requested that steps be taken to ensure that those in need have access to medical and humanitarian aid. The letter was published in newspapers and

journals in 25 countries, including China, Russia, Turkey, the US, France and various Middle Eastern countries. The letter was accompanied by a social media campaign aimed at spreading the letter's message ahead of the UN General Assembly later the same month. Many doctors, students, medical organisations and partners twittered using the hashtag #Doctors4Syria, with more than 2 000 tweets being sent.

Refugees and internally displaced persons.

At the end of 2013, the number of persons registered as displaced by war, conflict or persecution totalled almost 48 million, including approximately five million Palestinian refugees under the responsibility of UNWRA. This represents an increase of around three million on 2012, and means that more people were registered as displaced this year than ever before. Of the 48 million, about 11.7 million were refugees, while almost 24 million were internally displaced. Close to 1.2 million persons were asylum seekers. Of these, around 40% were seeking asylum in Europe, while about 25% had applied for asylum in southern Africa. UNHCR estimates that, in total, there are 12 million stateless individuals, although it has only registered just under 3.5 million.

In 2013, the crisis in Syria was clearly the largest cause of displacement. By the end of the year, more than 2.4 million people – primarily Syrian nationals but also including Palestinian, Iraqi and other residents – had fled the country. Before the civil war, Syria was the largest host nation for Iraqi refugees, and the second-largest host nation globally. Now, it is second only to Afghanistan in terms of the number of persons forced to flee to other countries. Some 9 500 people per day were forced to flee in 2013. Although the number of internally displaced persons is uncertain, it is estimated at 6.5 million. This means that, in 2013, Syria became the site of decidedly the largest refugee crisis since World War II.

The situation in other parts of the world, and not least Africa, was also dramatic. In 2013, Nigeria

produced its first set of reliable figures showing the number of persons registered as internally displaced: 3.3 million. In DR Congo, the number of internally displaced persons grew to 2.9 million, primarily due to conflicts between government forces and Rwandan-supported rebel groups in the north-east of the country. There were more than 2.4 million internally displaced persons in Sudan in 2013, while there were 380 000 in South Sudan before the outbreak of civil war in mid-December. Somalia had 1.1 million internally displaced persons, mostly concentrated around the capital, Mogadishu. In the Central African Republic, some 935 000 people were made homeless as a result of conflict between Christian and Muslim groups.

Many persons remain in what are referred to as protracted refugee situations, and more than half of all refugees come from five war-torn countries: Afghanistan, Somalia, Iraq, Syria and Sudan. Developing countries are sheltering between 70% and 80% of the world's refugees, and the vast majority live in countries bordering on their home countries.

Norway makes substantial annual contributions to the UN, the international Red Cross system and NGOs to enable them to assist refugees and internally displaced persons where they are located, or to help them to return. Support for protection and assistance measures is also provided through Norway's core contributions to the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and the country funds for Somalia, Sudan and DR Congo.

UNHCR and the Norwegian Refugee Council are key in efforts to protect refugees and internally displaced persons, and are the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' most important partners in this field.

Cooperation with UNHCR and the Norwegian Refugee Council. UNHCR received approximately NOK 546 million in support in 2013, making Norway the seventh-largest donor in global terms. NOK 300 million

was given as a non-earmarked contribution at the beginning of the year. The largest earmarked donations in 2013 were NOK 213 million for internally displaced persons in Syria and refugees from Syria in neighbouring countries, NOK 20 million for Afghanistan/Pakistan, NOK 10 million for Colombia, NOK 6 million for persons internally displaced in the Philippines by Typhoon Haiyan and NOK 5 million for long-term Eritrean refugees in eastern Sudan.

In 2013, UNHCR made extensive use of deployed personnel, drawing on both its own ranks and “stand-by partnerships”. NORCAP, which is run by the Norwegian Refugee Council, provided UNHCR with 405 labour months during the course of the year. The Norwegian Directorate for Civil Protection also cooperates with UNHCR and holds emergency preparedness courses in Norway.

In addition to being one of the largest donors to UNHCR, in 2013 Norway gave particular emphasis to maintaining its positive dialogue with UNHCR on important subjects like coordination with other UN agencies and stakeholders in field operations, reliable performance management and reporting, the safeguarding of the gender dimension in humanitarian assistance and the protection of internally displaced persons, environmentally displaced persons and persons vulnerable to sexual violence or persecuted due to their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Permanent solutions to protracted refugee situations were also a key topic. Norway has strongly advocated closer collaboration between UNHCR and development actors, including UNDP in particular and the World Bank. Some progress has been made both in the field and at policy level. A good example of the importance of linking humanitarian aid with development cooperation was provided by the UNCHR Executive Committee Meeting in the autumn of 2013, when UNHCR and neighbouring countries appealed to donors to use development funds to bolster the capacity of neighbouring countries to receive refugees.

Norway's resettlement refugee quota totalled 1 200 persons in 2013, and included several groups for which resettlement was used strategically: Afghan refugees in Iran, Eritrean refugees in Sudan and Congolese refugees in Uganda.

The Norwegian Refugee Council has become an increasingly important partner over the years. At the end of 2013, the council was present in 25 countries, including many of the world's most conflict-intensive. In total, some form of assistance was provided to 4.4 million persons. The government supported the Norwegian Refugee Council's work around the world with a total of NOK 715 million in 2013. Although this amounts to less than half of the council's operating budget, Norway remains its largest donor. The funds from the Norwegian authorities allowed the Norwegian Refugee Council to assist nearly 1.1 million displaced persons in 25 countries in 2013.

The basis for much of this assistance was a global partnership agreement concluded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Norad in 2013. The agreement has a budget of NOK 1.07 billion over three years, including approximately NOK 70 million from Norad. The three strategic objectives of the agreement are: 1) to provide humanitarian support and help to protect the most vulnerable displaced persons; 2) to help prevent displacement and find permanent solutions for refugees and internally displaced persons; and 3) to act as an advocate for displaced persons based on the Norwegian Refugee Council's experiences in the field, with the aim of improving access to services, protection and permanent solutions.

The Norwegian Refugee Council also administers the NORCAP agreement, which arranges for experts to be available to the UN in acute crises. In 2013, the council deployed 600 experts to 55 countries through its stand-by system. For example, when Typhoon Haiyan hit the Philippines before Christmas, experts from the Norwegian Refugee Council arrived quickly and were able to assist the UN in the difficult aftermath of the typhoon.

The Norwegian Refugee Council has continued its information campaigns in Norway and internationally. The council is a strong advocate for the protection of civilians, both those displaced in their own countries and those living as refugees in other countries. In 2013, this was exemplified by its efforts on behalf of the civilian population in Syria, which focused on securing access and protective measures.

As part of the government's focus on education, it has initiated strategic cooperation with the Norwegian Refugee Council (and Save the Children Norway), concentrating on education in conflict situations and investment in school buildings as an effective preventive measure in the context of natural disasters.

Internally displaced persons. Norway is giving high priority to strengthening legal protection for internally displaced persons, a group not covered by the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees. The number of persons displaced in their home countries by conflict, violence or human rights violations has been relatively stable in recent years, and totals more

than double the number of refugees worldwide. The fact that the number of displaced persons reached a record high in 2013 gives considerable grounds for concern. Most internally displaced persons are found in countries like Syria, Colombia, DR Congo, Somalia and Sudan/South Sudan. Africa has a particularly high number of internally displaced persons.

Norway has an important position internationally as a spokesperson for internally displaced persons. It played a key role in the establishment of the Representative of the Secretary-General on internally displaced persons in the 1990s. Norway supported the *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement* developed in 1998, and has supported the *Internal Displacement Monitoring Center* (IDMC) since its establishment the same year. The IDMC is administered by the Norwegian Refugee Council, and is based in Geneva. Norway also chairs the negotiations on a resolution on support for and protection of internally displaced persons which are held every two years during the UN General Assembly. These resolutions are normally adopted by consensus.

Syrian refugees fetch water in the Za'atari refugee camp on 1 February 2013 in Jordan. Photo: Jeff J Mitchell/Getty Images



The UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons, Chaloka Beyani, reports to the UN Human Rights Council twice a year, as well as to the UN General Assembly. Important aspects of his mandate are to visit countries with large groups of internally displaced persons and to engage in dialogue with the authorities, as well as to provide legal and other assistance. In 2013, he visited Serbia, Kosovo, Georgia, South Sudan and Sri Lanka, among others. He also intended to visit Syria, but was unable to do so for security and political reasons. Mr Beyani is a Professor at the London School of Economics, and only works for the UN in a 50% capacity. To strengthen his mandate, OCHA and UNHCR have been allocated earmarked personnel support. The UNHCR member of staff is fully funded by Norway, and seconded via NORCAP. This earmarked personnel support has had various positive consequences, including a better response to internal displacement in countries like Somalia and Yemen.

In the autumn of 2013, Norway chaired negotiations on a resolution at the UN General Assembly on assistance for and protection of internally displaced persons. Despite the difficult nature of the topic, characterised not least by strongly divergent views on the conflict in Syria, consensus was achieved on a resolution that was reinforced in several key areas. The new provisions included: references to the role of development actors in promoting permanent solutions for internally displaced persons; a stronger gender perspective with regard to both protection against sexual violence and increased participation by women; a new paragraph on children's access to education and the protection of schools; increased emphasis on national legislation; new language on internally displaced persons in urban settings and on host communities; references to Security Council resolutions in both the preamble and operational section; and minor strengthening of the language on humanitarian access.

Environmentally displaced persons. The number of persons forced to flee from natural disasters – referred to in this report as environmentally displaced persons – is growing steadily. Although the number of environmentally displaced persons varies greatly from year to year and is difficult to quantify, the IDMC has calculated that 144 million persons had to flee in the period 2008 to 2012. The vast majority of these persons were displaced internally, and able to return after a short time. (The figures for 2013 had not been published as per June 2014, when this report was printed.) The most vulnerable regions are located in Asia. Typhoon Haiyan, which hit central parts of the Philippines in November 2013, was stronger than any previous typhoon, and a reminder of human vulnerability even in countries used to extreme weather. Most environmentally displaced persons flee from extreme weather, although earthquakes and volcanic eruptions are also frequent causes.

Through the Nansen Initiative, Norway, Switzerland and a diverse group of allied countries are working to improve knowledge of and intensify the focus on environmentally displaced persons forced to leave their home countries. The initiative was launched in 2012, and will conclude in the autumn of 2015. An important guiding principle for the work being done is that there are substantial regional differences in the challenges that arise and the responses of local communities, the authorities and at the regional level. The Nansen Initiative therefore encompasses a series of regional consultations, the first two of which took place in 2013. In June, the Pacific consultation took place in Rarotonga, Cook Islands, while the Central American consultation was held in Costa Rica in December. At both consultations, there was a strong emphasis on broad participation, with representatives from the authorities meeting civil society actors and researchers. The consultations have produced useful input for a global protection agenda, the ultimate aim of the initiative.

6. Coherent assistance

Humanitarian crises threaten to reverse progress in many countries, and are serious impediments to poverty reduction. Efforts to ensure better transitions from humanitarian assistance to reconstruction and long-term development are crucial in order to assist vulnerable countries more effectively. Norway is promoting a coherent approach, and will support the coordination of humanitarian assistance, climate change adaptation and development cooperation, with a particular focus on education in emergencies.

Norway has focused on the **prevention of humanitarian crises** for a number of years because prevention saves lives and is cost efficient. However, it is evident that humanitarian assistance alone is not sufficient, and a broader approach to the problem is required. Prevention is no longer solely a concern for humanitarian actors, but rather an important tool for achieving development in a broader sense.

Reliable systems for responding quickly to crises already exist. The UN's Emergency Response Funds and the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund of the Red Cross are effective tools for providing emergency aid quickly, including in less high-profile crises. However, humanitarian aid is not a solution, simply a measure in an emergency.

Humanitarian actors have become more aware of the long-term consequences of their work. In addition, development assistance is being designed to strengthen resilience in the face of new crises. This was evident when Typhoon Haiyan hit the Philippines in November 2013. Steps to restart food production were taken during the first few days after the typhoon, enabling the population to return to normality as quickly as possible and keeping the need for food assistance to a minimum.

Work on prevention and climate change adaptation is proceeding on many different tracks. Prevention was an important topic at the Warsaw Climate Change Conference and in the process of developing new sustainable development goals to replace the millennium development goals in 2015. Also by 2015, an international prevention framework is to be developed to succeed and build on the Hyogo Framework for Action, which is based on the principles that local capacity can respond most quickly to a crisis and that knowledge should remain where it is needed most. The development work is led by the **United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR)**. The organisation is also a key supporter of national and regional disaster risk reduction projects, and aims to coordinate the many international actors involved in disaster prevention.

Large actors like the UN World Food Programme, the international Red Cross system and multilateral organisations are all involved in these processes. They also work to build resilience to new crises in the locations where crises arise most frequently. Countries like the United States and United Kingdom give priority to this field in their aid programmes. National Red Cross associations are a crucial component in efforts to build up local crisis-response capacity. Cuba, Vietnam, Bangladesh and China have built effective systems and local capacity in terms of both prevention and response. Many countries, particularly in Asia, which previously required large-scale international assistance are now able to handle crises on their own. Norway is supporting such efforts in a number of countries.

Together with the World Bank, Norway is leading the steering group for the **Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR)**. (See box, page page 28) In this context, Norway is emphasising coordination and cooperation between GFDRR and other central actors in the prevention field,

including not only UNISDR and UNDP but also civil society and the private sector. In these efforts, Norway will focus particularly on the protection of school buildings and educational institutions.

Norway also collaborates with regional prevention actors, and has been cooperating with the **Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC)** for several years. The primary purpose of the cooperation is to help improve emergency preparedness and prevention in connection with

natural disasters by strengthening the role of the ADPC as a regional prevention and climate change adaptation centre for southern and south-eastern Asia. The centre is an important regional actor, supporting capacity-building among national institutions in fields such as meteorology, weather forecasting, landslide warnings, etc. in various countries, primarily Bangladesh, Vietnam and Myanmar. Through this cooperation, the ADPC has formed close contacts with a range of Norwegian expert institutions, which provide training both locally

The Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR)

GFDRR is a partnership/network comprising 41 countries and eight international organisations. The facility was established in the aftermath of the 2006 tsunami on the initiative of the World Bank (WB). The aim is to strengthen efforts to prevent and reduce the impact of natural disasters. The GFDRR secretariat is located at the WB headquarters in Washington. The facility receives and administers funds from donor countries, which are primarily invested in measures in 31 priority countries.

The facility's work is led by a consultative group that meets twice a year. Norway has participated in the group since GFDRR's establishment in 2006. Membership of the consultative group is conditional upon an annual contribution of USD 1 million. In 2013, Norway's contribution totalled NOK 18 million. Countries from the Global South are invited to participate in the consultative group for two years at a time, under a rota scheme. UNDP and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies participate as observers.

Based on the Norwegian experience of prevention cooperation with "pilot countries", now referred to as partner countries (Bangladesh, Myanmar and Vietnam in Asia), we have emphasised the need for national and local ownership of and support for prevention efforts. In these three countries, we see major opportunities to run larger projects in cooperation with Norwegian expert institutions such as the Norwegian Meteorological Institute, and in conjunction with the WMO's Global Framework for Climate Services.

Norway regards GFDRR both as a valuable instrument and actor in the international prevention field and as a highly valuable "driver". The GFDRR strategy for 2013–2015 contains many elements that align well with Norway's priorities, including the need for flexibility in resource allocation, the importance of strengthening civil society and the role of the private sector, and an emphasis on innovative approaches and new, innovative partnerships.

Norway is the co-chair of the steering group from November 2013 until November 2014. In this context, we will seek to:

- promote and reinforce a prevention culture in which prevention is an integral part of national plans
- secure local support and ownership
- increase financial resources so that effective measures can be used by other countries facing similar challenges
- improve cooperation, coordination, resource utilisation and productive interaction with actors such as the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) and UNDP
- promote broader, more active participation by countries from the Global South in the work of the steering group.

and in Norway. The aim is to develop locally adapted models in these fields for reproduction in other countries in the region. In the meteorology field, this is occurring in close cooperation with the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), in the context of the Global Framework for Climate Services.

Education in emergencies is an important priority. Although there is no guarantee that schools will in fact be safe and protected during conflict or crisis, in the right circumstances they can function as stable oases in an otherwise chaotic situation. Schools can contribute to a feeling of normality and impart a sense of hope, stability and safety. They can also provide teaching and communicate important, life-saving information. When education is interrupted, the risk increases that children will be unable to return to school, and that they will be recruited into militant groups or prostitution. It is vital that education continues during emergencies, even where no school building is available. Half the children who are not currently in school – around 28.5 million young people – live in conflict-affected countries. Millions of other children lack schools due to emergencies triggered by natural disasters. Nevertheless, education is generally a low priority during humanitarian crises. Education in emergencies is an important priority for the Norwegian government.

Norway is one of a handful of countries to include education in its humanitarian policy. Norway has for a number of years been a leading donor to measures supporting education in crises and conflicts. This involvement will be further strengthened as a result of the Norwegian government's education initiative.

In July 2013, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs concluded a framework agreement with Save the Children Norway under which it will support the organisation's work to provide education for children in emergencies. Norway is also a

substantial donor to the Norwegian Refugee Council, UNICEF and UNHCR, supporting their efforts to provide education in emergencies such as wars, conflicts and natural disasters. Norway has also participated in the development of the Lucens Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict, which define the obligations of warring parties with respect to the protection of civilians, with a focus on pupils and educational institutions.

A further priority is the protection of school buildings. Properly constructed school buildings can withstand extreme weather. In addition, schools can teach young people what they can do to limit damage before, during and after a disaster. Schools can also be a preferred location for civilians to seek shelter when a crisis hits. However, this requires school buildings to be safely constructed and located in areas that are not subject to flooding, tsunamis or avalanches. Moreover, in conflict situations, the opposing parties must agree that schools are not to be attacked.

7. Good donorship and efficient administration

By their very nature, humanitarian needs are unpredictable. The Norwegian government is therefore maintaining its flexibility and ability to act swiftly to meet new and changing needs. At the same time, however, it is desirable to improve predictability and thus efficiency for key partners.

Less earmarking. Core contributions and non-earmarked contributions to UN agencies, fund mechanisms and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) are important elements of Norwegian humanitarian policy, as well as key components of the principles of good humanitarian donorship and important for achieving the objective of more efficient grant administration. The decision regarding which organisations and fund mechanisms receive this type of contribution rests on an assessment of efficiency, performance, control mechanisms and relevance in light of Norway's humanitarian policy priorities. The assessment is based, not

least, on organisations' own reports, reports from Norwegian embassies and participation in field trips, donor groups and governing bodies.

In 2013, the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) received by far the largest amount of non-earmarked support, totalling NOK 440 million. UNHCR received NOK 300 million, the ICRC NOK 70 million and OCHA NOK 65 million of such support.

Framework agreements. As part of Norway's efforts to strengthen and improve the efficiency of grant administration, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has concluded framework partnership agreements with key Norwegian and international organisations. Donated funds are invested in specific measures in the field in countries featuring major humanitarian needs. Experience shows that these agreements have encouraged more strategic, long-term cooperation on the thematic priorities outlined in the white paper

*A Rohingya woman stands outside to warm herself up in the morning sun; nights are cold under the thin shelter of the IDP refugee camps in Sittwe, Myanmar.
Photo: Jonas Gratzer / LightRocket via Getty Images*



*Norway's Humanitarian Policy*³. Examples in this regard include cooperation with the Norwegian Refugee Council on the protection of displaced persons, cooperation with the Norwegian Red Cross on the prevention of natural disasters, cooperation with Save the Children Norway on education in emergencies, cooperation with Norwegian People's Aid on humanitarian disarmament and cooperation with Norwegian Church Aid on humanitarian assistance focusing on water, sanitation and hygiene. The agreements describe the expected results and how each organisation and the Ministry are to work together to achieve them. Efforts to improve results-reporting are vital in this context, and Norwegian embassies and the field offices of organisations are highly integrated in this work. The agreements also require the publication of annual reports on the steps taken to combat financial irregularities.

This form of cooperation has helped to intensify the professionalism and result-focus of the public administration by ensuring that decisions regarding continued support take greater account of dialogue and reporting on implemented measures. The agreements have also provided the organisations with greater predictability and flexibility, and promoted concentration by reducing the number of agreements, thus making the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' administration of grants more efficient.

Early disbursement. Norway's focus on early disbursement to countries and thematic projects meant that 40 per cent of humanitarian allocations were disbursed in the first quarter, and 70 per cent within the second quarter. This improved financial flexibility and predictability for the organisations, and helped to ensure rapid assistance to victims of war and conflict.

³ Report No. 40 (2008–2009) to the Storting.

Strategic partnerships through framework agreements

To increase the effectiveness of grant administration, framework agreements are concluded with key Norwegian and international partners in areas in which the partners have specialist expertise. The framework agreements help to ensure that a more strategic, long-term approach is taken to cooperation relating to the thematic priorities outlined in the white paper *Norway's Humanitarian Policy*.

Overview of framework agreements:

<i>Organisation</i>	<i>Theme</i>
Norwegian Refugee Council	Standby roster (NorCap)
Norwegian Refugee Council	Global cooperation agreement
Norwegian Red Cross	Disaster risk reduction
Norwegian Red Cross	Humanitarian disarmament
Norwegian Red Cross	Humanitarian assistance in Afghanistan
Norwegian Church Aid	Gender-based violence in DR Congo
Norwegian Church Aid	Water, sanitation and hygiene
Norwegian People's Aid	Humanitarian disarmament
OCHA	Core funding
Feinstein International Center, Tufts University	Humanitarian research
UN World Food Programme	Emergency aid/food security
Action on Armed Violence	Humanitarian disarmament
ICBL-CMC	Humanitarian disarmament
Save the Children Norway	Education in emergencies

Part II: Norwegian humanitarian aid in figures

Norway's humanitarian budget totalled approximately NOK 3.7 billion in 2013 (Figure 1). In other words, humanitarian aid accounted for around 11 % of Norway's total aid budget, including core contributions to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. According to the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD/DAC), Norwegian humanitarian aid comprises about 4.4 % of the total humanitarian aid provided by OECD member countries (2012 figures).

Humanitarian needs determine how humanitarian funds are used. Aid is channelled not only to the largest humanitarian crises, but also to "forgotten", protracted ones. The list of the largest humanitarian aid recipients varies over time, as does the range of partners. (See box on page 33)

Syria was decidedly the largest recipient in 2013 (Figure 4). Similarly, Somalia was the largest recipient in 2011. South Sudan and DR Congo were major recipients in both 2012 and 2013.

Just under half of the humanitarian aid provided by Norway is channelled through the multilateral system, not including support given via the international Red Cross system. Aid to the Red Cross system accounted for 19 % of the total humanitarian aid provided by Norway in 2013 (Figure 2).

A Palestinian man carries a sack of flour as refugees receive humanitarian aid at the United Nations aid distribution centre in the Rafah refugee camp in the southern Gaza Strip, on 6 October 2013.

Photo: Said Khatib / Afp Photo / NTB scanpix



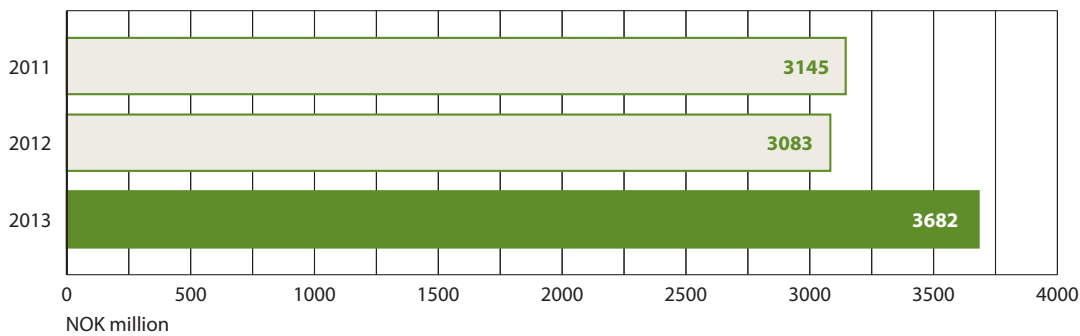
Humanitarian aid 2011–2013

Figure 1: Several major humanitarian crises contributed to an increase in humanitarian aid.

Whereas the humanitarian aid total was around NOK 3.1 billion in 2011 and 2012, it increased by NOK 600 million in 2013 in response to the various major humanitarian crises that arose during the year. The Storting approved increased humanitarian aid funding for Syria, South Sudan, DR Congo and the Philippines. While the intensified humanitarian needs of the first three countries were linked to armed conflict, the emergency in the Philippines was due to the extensive damage caused by Typhoon Haiyan.

Humanitarian aid partners

The Storting (the Norwegian parliament) makes annual allocations to humanitarian aid via the National Budget. The funds are allocated to a range of operational humanitarian organisations responsible for providing practical humanitarian assistance to those in need. Norway's most important partners in the context of humanitarian aid are the UN's humanitarian organisations, the international Red Cross system and other non-governmental humanitarian organisations, both Norwegian and international.

The choice of partner depends on the humanitarian situation in question. Norway always seeks to select the humanitarian actors that can provide the most effective assistance. This varies in different emergencies and depends on the local context. A small actor with good local contacts and knowledge will be able to reach areas that are closed to larger actors. In acute humanitarian crises, it is the local actors that will be able to provide initial, life-saving help. In the case of large, long-term humanitarian needs requiring strategic coordination of many humanitarian actors, the UN will often be a key, effective channel.

Effective crisis coordination and response require emergency preparedness systems that can be activated quickly once a crisis arises. Humanitarian funds are vital in this regard. The purpose of the emergency aid funds and country funds established by the UN is to provide rapid emergency aid in acute crises, cover critical funding gaps and function as a flexible financial reserve during unforeseen crises.

Aid channels in 2013

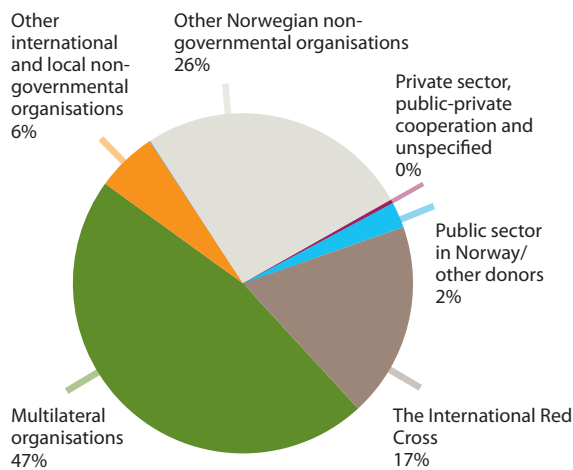


Figure 2: Multilateral organisations remain the most important channel.

Use of the various channels has been relatively stable in recent years. In 2013, 47% of humanitarian aid was channelled through multilateral organisations, representing a reduction of three percentage points on the previous year. At the same time, support given via the international Red Cross system, which is based on voluntary work though transnational cooperation, increased by two percentage points. Support through Norwegian non-governmental organisations totalled 26%, an increase of one percentage point on 2012. The statistics for Norwegian non-governmental organisations show that the Norwegian Red Cross received the most support. However, the majority of this support is passed directly on to the International Red Cross.

The largest partners in 2013

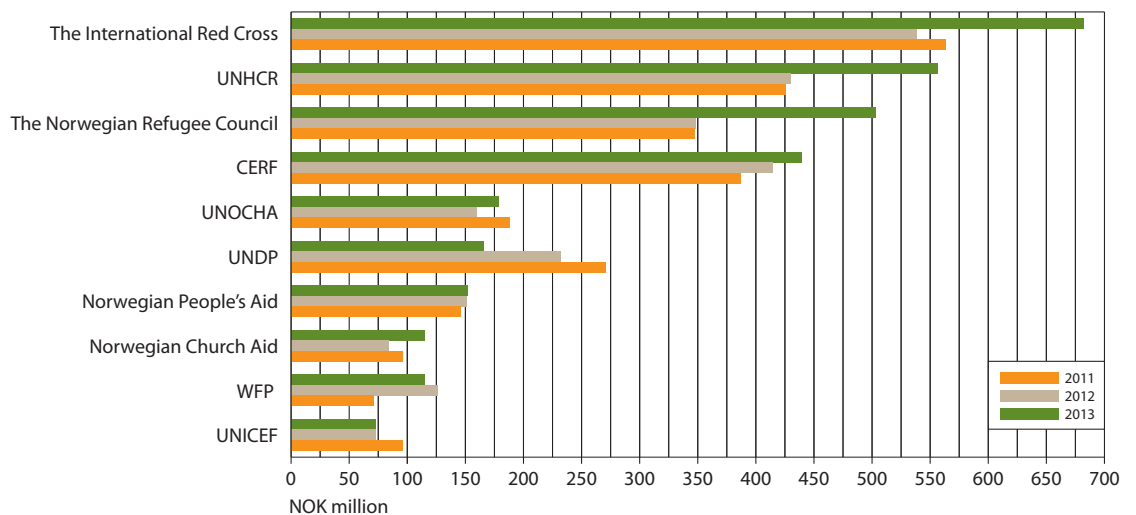
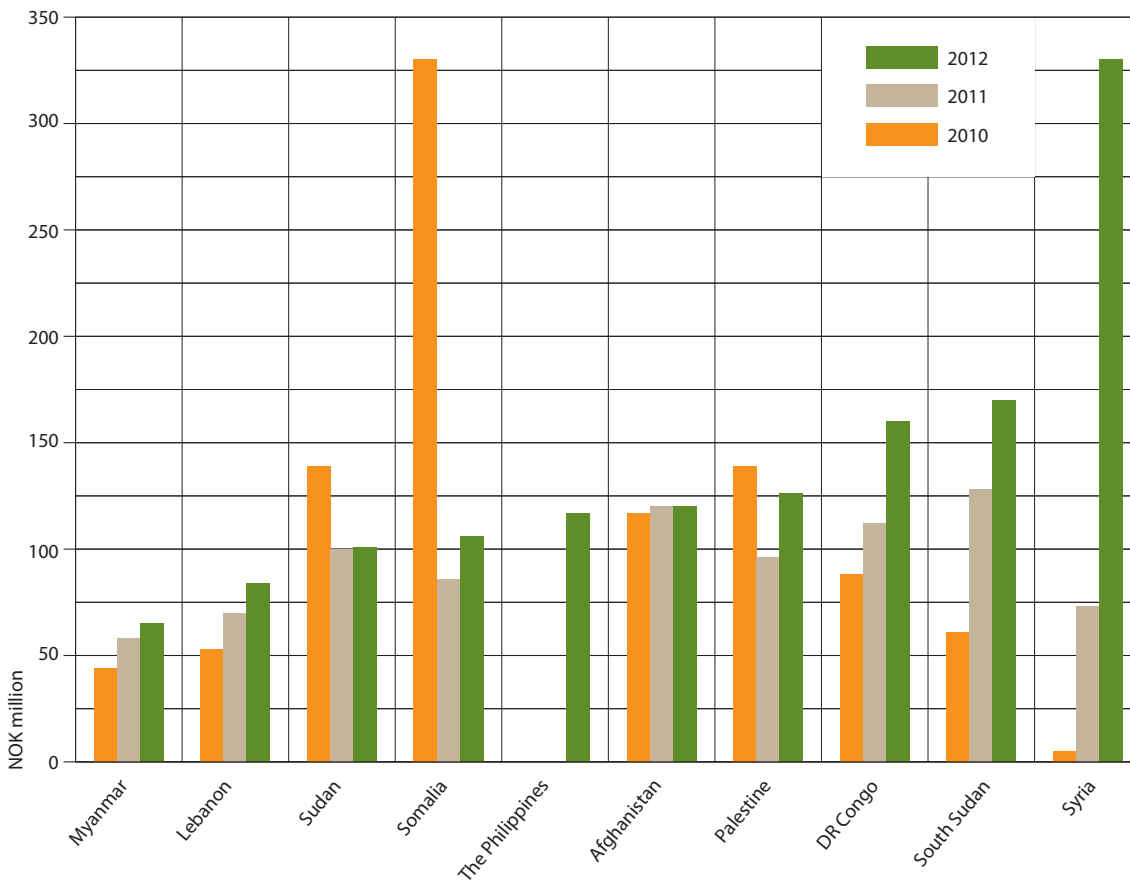


Figure 3: Increased use of the International Red Cross, UNHCR and Norwegian Refugee Council.

In 2013, support for the International Red Cross, UNHCR and Norwegian Refugee Council was increased substantially in connection with the major humanitarian crises of the year. The choice of channel depends on access, expertise and local knowledge in relevant situations, and these factors guided the funding increases for these organisations. UNHCR, the International Red Cross and the Norwegian Refugee Council are running a range of large projects, including to alleviate the situation in Syria.

Funding for the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) increased somewhat in 2013, in line with a gradual increase in the use of CERF over the period 2011 to 2013. CERF is an important emergency preparedness mechanism, and is involved in both acute and "forgotten" crises. Norwegian Church Aid also experienced an increase in 2013, as a result of concluding a three-year framework agreement on water and sanitation projects with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Similarly, the trend towards reduced use of UNDP continued in 2013.

The countries that received the most humanitarian assistance from Norway in 2011–2013**Figure 4: Acute humanitarian needs determine which countries receive the most humanitarian aid.**

Acute crises, both natural and man-made, cause humanitarian needs to vary greatly from year to year. In 2013, the Syrian conflict made Syria the largest recipient, with close to NOK 350 million being channelled into measures in the country and to assist Syrian refugees in neighbouring countries. However, these statistics do not provide a complete picture, as they exclude the substantial contributions made through multilateral channels. In 2013, the total humanitarian aid given in connection with the Syrian crisis amounted to NOK 635 million. A considerable increase was also noted in support for South Sudan and DR Congo. Whereas the Philippines received no humanitarian aid in 2011 and 2012, the country received over NOK 100 million in 2013 in response to Typhoon Haiyan, which struck in November 2013. This illustrates how humanitarian support for individual countries varies from year to year. Somalia is a further example, having received approximately the same amount in 2011 as Syria in 2013, to alleviate the impact of drought and conflict. Norway's humanitarian support for Somalia was then greatly reduced in 2012, once the emergency had passed. Somalia's needs remain substantial, and the country is still a major recipient of Norwegian humanitarian aid.

The 10 largest recipient countries from 2011 to 2013

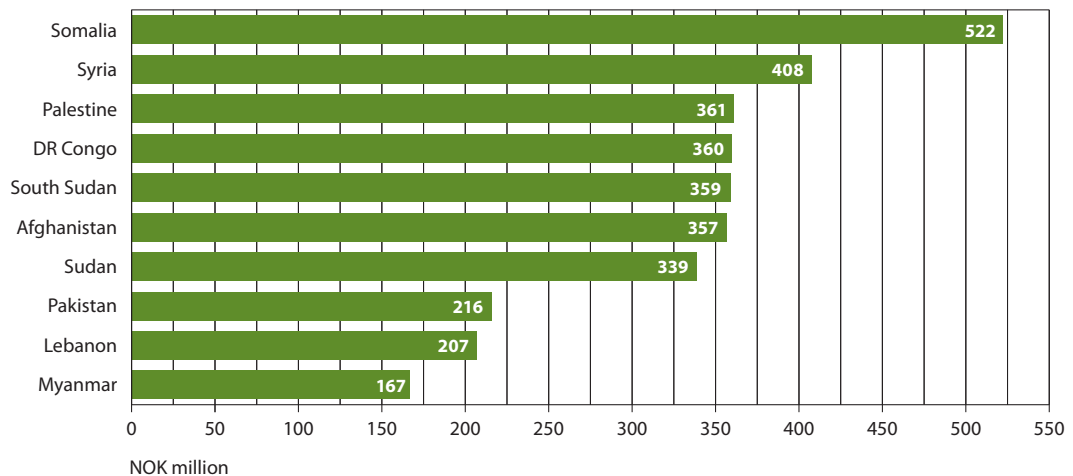


Figure 5: Protracted humanitarian crises dominate over time.

Despite large variations in which countries receive the most humanitarian aid from year to year, countries suffering protracted humanitarian crises – such as Somalia, Palestine, DR Congo, South Sudan and Afghanistan – top the statistics over time. The exception is Syria, which was not even among the top 10 largest recipients in 2010–2012.



Rapid response and “forgotten” crises – the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF)

CERF is the UN's largest humanitarian fund, and is mandated to fund life-saving humanitarian assistance for people in need.

In 2013, CERF received contributions totalling USD 478 million from 65 UN member states, in addition to smaller donations from the private sector, regional organisations and private individuals. Although CERF may only channel funds through UN humanitarian organisations, these organisations cooperate with NGOs on implementation when appropriate, for example when the NGOs have better access to those in need than the UN.

The need for rapid disbursement of emergency aid funds continues to grow, and in 2013 CERF gave USD 307 million in rapid emergency aid to alleviate acute crises. The fund supported humanitarian projects in 45 countries and territories, contributing life-saving emergency aid to almost all of the world's humanitarian crises. Nevertheless, in 2013, the majority of support went to the Central African Republic, the Philippines, Syria and Sudan.

In many countries, ongoing humanitarian crises have lost their news value and become “forgotten crises”. Although assistance is still needed, the lack of international attention results in limited donor contributions. CERF therefore acts as a guarantor of important humanitarian contributions. In 2013, humanitarian assistance totalling USD 173 million was provided to address underfunded, forgotten crises, in addition to CERF's payouts to alleviate acute crises.

The following countries received funds under CERF's underfunded-crises programme: Chad, Niger, Somalia, Colombia, Mauritania, Pakistan, Myanmar, Madagascar, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Sudan, Yemen, Djibouti, Afghanistan, Haiti, Algeria, Uganda, North Korea, Eritrea, Liberia and Burundi. Through its contribution to CERF, Norway also provides humanitarian assistance in countries and regions to which it gives no direct bilateral humanitarian aid.

Since its establishment in 2005, CERF has received contributions from some 125 of the 193 UN member states. This is noteworthy, as is the fact that 45 countries have both made donations to, and received support from, the fund. Nevertheless, a few traditional donors bear the majority of the funding burden – just seven member states provide more than three-quarters of CERF's funds. In 2013, Norway was the third-largest donor, behind the United Kingdom and Sweden and followed by the Netherlands, Canada and Denmark.

CERF is administered by OCHA on behalf of the donors. Although the donors are not directly involved in the allocation of funds to different measures, they do participate through an advisory group, not least to ensure that the fund mechanism is continuously improved. In 2013, Norway had one representative on the advisory group.

An internally displaced Somali girl prepares the traditional breakfast "anjero" in the Sayyidka camp in the Howlwadag district south of Mogadishu, Somalia, 3 May 2013. Photo: Omar Faruk / Reuters / NTB scanpix

Part III: Selected humanitarian aid results

We have selected six case studies exemplifying the achievements made through Norway's humanitarian aid programme in 2013. The examples focus on important, major projects supported during the year.

In 2013, the UN classified four particularly large-scale emergencies as level 3 crises, namely those in Syria, the Central African Republic, South Sudan and the Philippines. Whereas the first three situations are conflict-related, the crisis in the Philippines resulted from the extensive damage caused by Typhoon Haiyan. We consider the international humanitarian system and the experiences gained from these four major crises below. We identify concrete lessons to be learned, both positive and negative, and examine the results of Norway's humanitarian assistance in three of the crises.

We illustrate the impact of Doctors Without Borders' life-saving medical aid provision through its work in the Central African Republic. We look at what has been achieved by Save the Children Norway and the Norwegian Refugee Council in the child education sector in a highly critical situation in Syria and neighbouring countries. The World Food Programme's activities demonstrate how the distribution of rice seed is supporting reconstruction in the Philippines.

We also highlight the ongoing humanitarian crisis in DR Congo, and consider the results of the Norwegian Refugee Council's work there. Finally, we examine the protection and assistance given to displaced persons by the Norwegian Refugee Council and UNHCR.

Mother with her newborn child in the maternity ward in Doctors Without Borders (MSF) clinic for internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the Central African Republic.

*Photo:
Laurence Geai*



Measuring results

All partners that conclude an agreement with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs are required to report annually on the results they achieve with the support they receive. A substantial amount of useful information on Norwegian humanitarian aid results is found in partner reports and independent evaluations, as well as the annual reports of UN agencies. In the humanitarian aid context, "real-time evaluations" are also used to identify whether help has reached those in need in a given crisis. Situation surveys and studies of how crises are resolved also form an integral part of efforts to deal with humanitarian crises.

Although the measurement of humanitarian aid results does not differ materially from the measurement of other aid results, it does have certain unique characteristics. Humanitarian aid is frequently concentrated on acute situations, and often involves re-establishing an earlier state of affairs rather than generating change and development. Unlike other aid, whose final objectives are often long-term, humanitarian aid is about saving lives or improving the quality of life of affected persons in the short or medium term.

In a sense, it is easier to measure the results of humanitarian assistance than those of other forms of aid. The problems and starting point are often very clear, and there is generally widespread agreement as to the objectives. This makes results easier to monitor. However, the fact that results can be measured fairly easily must not be taken to mean that it is easy to achieve results. Humanitarian aid initiatives often carry considerable risks, and major, sudden changes may occur during the life of a project. This makes planning difficult, and setbacks are common, as shown by the example of the Central African Republic. The majority of humanitarian aid is channelled through multilateral partners, central emergency response funds and transnational organisations such as the international Red Cross and Red Crescent. In these channels, Norway's contributions are mixed with those of other donors, making it difficult to "trace" the Norwegian funds. In some cases, the "results" for which Norway can take credit can be estimated based on the proportion of total funding accounted for by Norway's contribution. However, this requires quite precise performance reports from the organisations. The organisations are complex and operate in many fields, and often report concrete but delimited results in individual countries or specific crises.

Norway monitors the larger organisations closely and actively, and is often represented on the boards of multilateral organisations or in other support forums. Norway's representatives work actively to help ensure that the organisations develop reliable systems for results-reporting, and that better use is made of the systems. Annual reports on the effect of humanitarian aid in the field are discussed, and support is given for improved reporting. There is a positive trend towards more systematic results-reporting, based on multi-year strategies and results frameworks that specify predetermined objectives and indicators on which annual reports are made. In addition, increasing emphasis is being given to the need for information on results to be easier to communicate to a wider audience.

Even though the supply of information is large, difficulties are encountered in creating an integrated presentation of the results of Norway's humanitarian engagement, and in effectively summarising all of the "results". The information is too extensive and varied for this. It is also difficult to summarise what has been achieved with the humanitarian funds granted in a particular year.

The Philippines: distribution of rice seed important in reconstruction

When Typhoon Haiyan hit the Philippines on 8 November 2013, widespread destruction resulted. More than 6 000 people were killed, over four million were displaced, and some 14.1 million were affected in some way. The poorest and most vulnerable were hit the hardest, with many seeing their livelihoods wiped out entirely. Poor small-scale farmers and fishermen were particularly vulnerable to the impact of the typhoon. The Philippine Ministry of Agriculture estimated that 1.1 million tonnes of crops were destroyed, and that some 600 000 hectares of agricultural land were affected. It was important to initiate reconstruction rapidly, so that people could resume their daily occupations. Measures to help people to re-establish their livelihoods were therefore important.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs donated NOK 20 million to a project run by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) to distribute rice seed to farmers in the most affected areas. FAO is an expert in this field, and highly familiar with the Philippines through its long history in the country. The organisation was therefore well placed to provide rapid, effective emergency aid when the typhoon struck. FAO helped more than 13 000 poor farming households to re-start agricultural production in the aftermath of the typhoon.

The need for rice

Typhoon Haiyan hit between two planting seasons. As a result, damage was caused not only to the rice that was ready for harvesting, but also the rice that had already been harvested. Seed stores and tools were also destroyed. The time aspect was important: the fields had to be planted in December/January if the first harvest in 2014 was not to be lost. If the first harvest was lost, there would be no harvests for almost a whole year, and this would have consequences for food security and the livelihoods of the local population.

FAO therefore decided to make the affected farmers the top priority for its emergency aid immediately after the typhoon. This was also explicitly requested by the Philippine government.

Filling the gap

FAO distributed around 40 000 40kg sacks of certified rice seed to 44 000 households. In addition, 80 000 sacks of fertiliser and 13 000 simple agricultural tools were distributed. The harvests are expected to feed more than 800 000 people for over a year. The funding provided by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs paid for 13 621 sacks of rice seed and 48% of the fertiliser.

FAO's emergency aid project cost around USD 5 million, and is expected to produce rice valued at USD 84 million. One 40kg sack of rice seed produces a crop sufficient to feed a family of five for a whole year, as well as a surplus that can be sold to generate income.

Local ownership

FAO began liaising closely with the Philippine government immediately after the typhoon to evaluate the scale of damage. The organisation adapted its response to the strategic response plan developed by the Philippine Ministry of Agriculture. At the local level, FAO cooperated closely with local authorities to identify priorities and the villages (barangays) with the greatest needs. The local authorities maintain a strong presence in these communities, which comprise poor small-scale farmers. FAO also conducted a close direct dialogue with the local communities to ensure that its contributions matched the population's needs. This dialogue allowed the immediate needs following the typhoon to be identified. A major priority was to determine which type of rice seed would produce the best crop.

Accountability

A fundamental principle in FAO's work is accountability to the affected population. Active inclusion of the recipients helped to build a sense of ownership among the families that received help. This allowed FAO to address problems and needs as they arose. These were then addressed collaboratively at the local community level, through discussions with village council leaders and municipal agriculture

officers. This participation and transparency-based approach ensured that FAO was regarded as a partner by the population it was assisting. The involvement of women is a priority in FAO's work, and was particularly important for the distribution of a broad range of information to targets groups in the population. Given the increased risk of sexual assault and exploitation in the aftermath of the typhoon, information on these topics was also included.



The Norwegian Foreign Minister distributes seeds in a school in Tacloban, Philippines after the typhoon Haiyan. The distribution of seeds are supported by Norway through WFP. Photo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs/ Astrid Sehl.

The Central African Republic: Doctors Without Borders provided life-saving medical aid in a forgotten conflict

2013 was the year in which the Central Africa Republic (CAR) came onto the international agenda. A government coup in May and the resulting conflict triggered the collapse of the few existing state services, and the evacuation of many international organisations. Doctors Without Borders stepped up its already considerable programme in CAR in response to the crisis, and during 2013 provided medical aid at 18 locations across the country, and to refugees from CAR in four neighbouring countries. Doctors Without Borders received NOK 15 million from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for its humanitarian work in CAR in 2013. This sum was additional to CAR's considerable own investments and the contributions of other donors.

CAR has been a humanitarian crisis for a long time. The virtual non-existence of a health service has resulted in high mortality rates that even in peacetime often exceed 10 000 people per day – the defined threshold for the existence of a humanitarian crisis.

In March, the Séléka rebel group took control of the country's capital, Bangui, and thereafter the rest of the country. During the following weeks, the offices and projects of many international organisations and government agencies were looted. Séléka had a weak central command, and its soldiers terrorised the civilian population by looting, raping and killing. As a result, the civilian population fled into the forest, or gathered in churches and mosques that were in no way equipped to receive such large refugee numbers. During the course of the year, resistance to Séléka grew, and in December the anti-Balaka militia attacked Bangui. More than 1 000 people, primarily civilians, were killed in the resulting fighting. Refugee numbers increased dramatically, and by the end of December more than 950 000 people, or 20% of the population, had been displaced.

Following the explosion of violence in December, a peacekeeping force led by the African Union and including French troops was

deployed to CAR under a UN mandate. In January 2014, the head of Séléka was forced to resign as president. The peacekeeping forces have been unable to stop the violence, which has gradually become more sectarian. This has particularly impacted the Muslim minority in the country, and by March 2014 almost the entire Muslim population had been displaced to various neighbouring countries.

Medical aid for the most vulnerable

At the end of 2013, Doctors Without Borders was running eight regular and eight temporary crisis-oriented projects in CAR, which has almost no public health service. In Boguila and Kabo, Doctors Without Borders is offering primary and secondary health services with the aim of reducing mortality and sickness rates in the population.

In Boguila, Doctors Without Borders aims to reduce the mortality rate by 70% over three years by providing primary health services and qualified maternity care, with priority being given to children under five years of age and women of reproductive age. The project is focused on improving malaria treatment, the primary cause of death among children in the area. The aim is to offer more patients early treatment, to prevent malaria from causing complications. This is done through mobile clinics in the area around Boguila, which ensure that the greatest possible proportion of the population has access to health services. The project has also started training persons from local communities to identify and start treatment of simple malaria cases. At the hospital in Boguila, Doctors Without Borders is focusing on building up the skills of local staff to improve treatment for patients with complications.

The dramatic change in the profile of the conflict in 2013 necessitated adjustment of the project's targets. Mobile clinics require access to surrounding areas, something that became increasingly difficult to achieve as the security situation worsened. Further, it became

necessary to redirect resources from mobile clinics to conflict areas. The planned distribution of mosquito nets could not be completed either. This meant that the project aim of boosting malaria-prevention measures could not be achieved. The security situation also meant that the project was unable to operate at planned capacity. Following the coup in March, the project was looted, and many international field workers were evacuated. The uncertainty also meant that the number of local project staff had to be permanently halved.

Despite the changes in the security situation, the projects exceeded their targets in several cases. In total, the projects in Boguila and Kabo conducted almost 275 000 consultations during the year. Recurring violence following the coup in March, and again in December, caused people to flee into the forest, where they were more

exposed to malaria. As a result, Doctors Without Borders treated almost 100 000 people for malaria in Boguila, 38% more than planned. Of these, almost half were children aged under five. The large number of malaria cases also increased the number of hospital admissions. In total, the project admitted 3 350 people in Boguila in 2013.

The increased level of violence was reflected in the injuries treated by the projects. Some 10% – 10 times higher than average – of the surgeries carried out in Boguila involved treatment for injuries resulting from violence. Experience indicates that the rape rate rises in conflict situations. The project in Kabo treated 25 victims of sexual violence in 2013, a lower figure than in 2012. This suggests that victims suffer considerable stigma, and that the conflict has prevented more victims from seeking medical assistance.



Field coordinator Lindis Hurum from MSF talks with the local inhabitants in the Mpoko camp for internally displaced persons (IDPs) near the airport in Bangui, the Central African Republic December 2013. After fighting in Bangui in December around 100 000 persons came to the camp for protection. Photo: Samuel Hanryon / MSF

Increased humanitarian assistance is still required

The coup in March 2013 and subsequent looting caused the few existing state institutions, public health services and educational services to collapse. Staff fled, and medicines were stolen from hospitals. The conflict topped a pre-existing, prolonged crisis that had already caused extensive mortality in the population. Society's resilience was therefore low, and when the violence intensified in north-western CAR in 2013, the humanitarian situation quickly became catastrophic.

Faced with a rapidly growing flow of refugees and extensive attacks on the population, the humanitarian system struggled to step-up its efforts. Doctors Without Borders launched six new projects outside Bangui in response to the crisis, but there were few other actors on the ground. A large proportion of the population therefore had to cope without humanitarian assistance. The first few months of 2014 have heralded very worrying developments in CAR, with brutal attacks on the Muslim minority and mass flight to neighbouring countries. An increased humanitarian presence in CAR will be a priority for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs going forward.

After fighting began in Bangui in December, the refugee flow intensified greatly. As a consequence, Doctors Without Borders established projects in six camps for internally displaced persons, and carried out surgeries and provided maternity care at four hospitals in the city. In December alone, the organisation treated more than 2 000 victims of violence. Some 100 000 people sought refuge at Bangui airport, and a makeshift refugee camp quickly developed. Supplies of food, water and latrines were insufficient, and the majority of the refugees were still living in the open several weeks into the crisis. Doctors Without Borders opened two clinics and a hospital in the camp, but few other actors were present. To address the deficient response, Doctors Without Borders published an open letter to the heads of the UN humanitarian agencies at the end of the year, criticising the UN for its failure to mobilise and requesting escalated efforts in CAR. The UN has subsequently stepped up its presence, but the needs remain extensive.

Syria – an education in emergency situation

The situation in Syria deteriorated further during the course of 2013. Towards the end of the year, almost one in two Syrians required emergency aid, as refugees either in a neighbouring country or within Syria itself. Together with strongly increased violence, further fragmentation of the opposition, the emergence of terrorist groups, the authorities' blocking of humanitarian access to opposition-controlled areas, the use of high-explosive weapons – including chemical weapons – and the lack of progress in political negotiations, this paints a dark picture going forward. The flow of refugees continues, and is creating enormous financial and political challenges in neighbouring countries.

The impact of the civil war in Syria will be long-lasting even if a political solution is found. One of the most obvious long-term effects is the risk of “losing” a generation of children without access to schooling. This generation will be responsible for rebuilding the country at some point in the future. The conflict in Syria has displaced millions of children from their normal routines, and 1.3 million Syrian children are currently refugees in neighbouring countries. Even greater numbers have been displaced within Syria, where fighting and destruction have devastated much of the national educational service. UNICEF estimates that some 2.8 million Syrian children now lack access to schooling. According to the Syrian Ministry of Education, 35% fewer Syrian children and young people are now attending school compared to before the war. A total of 1.9 million pupils between the first and twelfth grades dropped out or were never enrolled for the school year 2012/2013.

In 2013, UNICEF launched the “no lost generation” initiative, which aims to bring as many Syrian children as possible back to school, both in refugee camps in neighbouring countries and in Syria. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs donated NOK 90 million in education support in connection with the Syrian crisis in 2013. These

funds went to UNICEF, Save the Children Norway and the Norwegian Refugee Council.

During 2013, Save the Children Norway renovated 39 educational institutions in northern Syria. Almost 800 volunteers were recruited, including 650 teachers and 75 principals. Around 260 teachers were trained in teaching methods, the provision of psychosocial support, and health and hygiene instruction in challenging, less formal circumstances. The teachers were also given information about how to protect children as effectively as possible against exploitation and assault. Further, emphasis was given to the use of positive, non-violent discipline in schools. Desks, chairs and blackboards were installed, teaching materials were developed and teaching aids were purchased and distributed. Water and sanitation facilities for girls and boys were installed at eight educational institutions in accordance with international standards on education in emergencies (INEE/Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies). Following the renovation of educational institutions and capacity-building among teachers and school staff, Save the Children Norway launched an extensive “back to school” campaign. By the end of 2013, Save the Children Norway had reached around 14 000 children of primary school age through this project.

The educational response has been demanding and, at times, affected by the confused and constantly changing situation on the ground. Access to qualified, motivated Syrian staff on both sides of the border has been crucial. Experienced emergency aid workers, continuous monitoring of the security situation and the effective utilisation of quieter periods and opportunities have helped to restrict the number and duration of implementation delays compared to what was feared beforehand.

Education-related activities are an important part of the **Norwegian Refugee Council's** response, both in Syria and in the neighbouring

countries of Jordan, Lebanon and Iraq. The objective is to ensure that the greatest possible number of children receive an education in safe surroundings. The organisation's activities include enabling Syrian children to attend schools in their host countries, providing additional tuition, training teachers in crisis management, providing materials for pupils and teachers and renovating schools.

These initiatives are being run by Norwegian Refugee Council staff in cooperation a network of partners including UNHCR, UNICEF, other international organisations and local actors. Efforts in countries bordering on Syria are coordinated with the national authorities. The Norwegian Refugee Council's educational

programmes vary from country to country, reflecting local needs, priorities and funding opportunities. In Jordan and Iraq, the programmes are focused on refugee camps. Work in Lebanon is concentrated on integrating children into local schools and establishing alternative educational programmes. In Syria, the Norwegian Refugee Council is providing educational materials and renovating school buildings to enable local authorities to re-open schools that in many cases have been closed for prolonged periods.

In 2013, aid provided by the Norwegian Refugee Council reached 40 000 Syrian children and young people in the region, including almost 20 000 in Syria itself.

*Children in a school
in Domiz refugee
camp by the Syrian-
Iraqi border in Dohuk,
Iraq 4 August 2013.
Photo: Thomas Imo/
Photothek via
Getty Images*



The international humanitarian system – experiences gained from four major crises

Motivated by the experiences gained in connection with the earthquakes in Haiti and Pakistan in 2010, the UN decided to implement a number of reforms to improve the ability of the international humanitarian system to respond rapidly and effectively. OCHA, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, has been tasked with coordinating these efforts. Norway is actively supporting the reform programme.

New guidelines were introduced on how the system should react to particularly large-scale emergencies, which are referred to as level 3 (L3) crises. The senior executives of UN organisations with humanitarian mandates decide whether to declare a given situation a level 3 crisis. When such a declaration is made, extraordinary measures are triggered, including the following:

- International humanitarian organisations are required to release staff to deal with the crisis.
- Funding from the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) is released.
- The sector-based cluster system for humanitarian work is activated (unless already activated).
- A joint plan of action setting out funding needs is drafted.

Four level 3 crises. In 2013, four such level 3 crises were declared: Syria, the Central African Republic, South Sudan and the Philippines. Whereas the first three situations are conflict-related, the crisis in the Philippines resulted from the extensive damage caused by Typhoon Haiyan. Experience shows that conflict-related humanitarian crises challenge the system in an entirely different way from situations such as in the Philippines.

Lessons learned. UN Under-Secretary-General and Emergency Relief Coordinator Valerie Amos decided almost immediately after Typhoon Haiyan struck the Philippines that funds should be taken from CERF to finance aid

measures in affected areas. In four days, the UN produced an action plan setting out funding needs, an important prerequisite for obtaining support from donor countries. The declaration of a level 3 crisis initiated the process of deploying highly qualified, highly experienced staff. These could be drawn from stand-by rosters, since UN agencies had agreed beforehand to make “their best men and women” available if a situation demanded it. Although this was such a situation, it still took 10 days from the appointment of an individual to travel to the Philippines to act as deputy humanitarian coordinator until that person actually arrived. However, other staff were sent quickly from OCHA's regional office to the Philippines to assist in the coordination of the emergency aid effort. In other words, coordination capacity was in place quickly. In many respects, the international effort reflected the authorities' coordination structures, a fact that was important for the quality of efforts on the ground, and probably also in the longer term after the crisis had peaked. However, it has subsequently been questioned whether too much emphasis was given to staff to coordinate the work and too little to actual implementation capacity. In other words, too few people were in the field providing actual emergency aid, and too many in Manila leading, coordinating, preparing plans and responding to information requests from headquarters and donors.

Nevertheless, the general impression gained from the international response in the Philippines is that the humanitarian system is now better equipped to deal with sudden, major natural disasters than a few years ago.

A review of the immediate response in the Central African Republic shows that some of the same challenges relating to the balance between coordination and implementation capacity also arose there. Those deployed to assist also found that they were subject to too many requirements from headquarters, and thus had less time to do the job in the field. Accordingly, the UN is now

stating that it will continue to work on delegating and strengthening leadership in the field to give field workers the requisite flexibility and decision-making authority. In the Central African Republic, major security challenges arose in relation to both those in need of assistance and those who were supposed to help. Although many humanitarian aid workers were deployed, they were not accompanied by a sufficient number of security personnel. The UN's security regulations left aid workers "stuck" in the capital, Bangui. Great frustration has been reported among aid personnel, who could see the considerable needs of the population with their own eyes but were unable to assist due to a lack of security, strict security regulations, insufficient funding and missing aid shipments. The reforms made to the humanitarian system, which in certain respects proved to function well in a natural disaster scenario as in the Philippines, are not as relevant in humanitarian crises created by conflict. This is because a humanitarian situation characterised by conflict does not offer

the same opportunities to provide help and protection to those in need. Humanitarian opportunities are limited, and aid workers are dependent on warring parties permitting humanitarian access.

The emergency aid response in the Philippines quickly transitioned into early reconstruction, and the situation is no longer defined as a level 3 crisis. However, the situation of those caught in the three conflict areas remains such that the L3 classification continues to apply.

It is important to maintain efforts to improve the international humanitarian system so that it can respond to real needs on the ground, irrespective of whether a crisis is due to a conflict or natural disaster. New crises will teach us new lessons, and present new challenges. It is vital that all actors are willing and able to learn lessons and make necessary adjustments to the way they approach humanitarian crises.

A Philippine girl smiling as she receives food assistance at a center in Tacloban, Philippines 14 November 2013. Photo: Getty Images



The Norwegian Refugee Council – assistance and protection for displaced persons

At the beginning of 2013, 45.2 million people were displaced worldwide. Of these, some 28.8 million were displaced in their own country, while 16.4 million had fled across a national border.

The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) is an independent humanitarian organisation that assists, protects and supports the identification of permanent solutions for displaced persons all over the world, and is an important partner for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In 2013, the Ministry and Norad concluded a three-year Global Partnership Agreement with the Council focusing on refugees and internally displaced persons. The agreement has a total budget of NOK 1.07 billion over the three years, including approximately NOK 70 million from Norad, and promotes foreseeability and flexibility in the Council's work. It is also an instrument for increased strategic cooperation on the protection of refugees and internally displaced persons.

The agreement enables the Norwegian Refugee Council to assist people in acute crises such as those in Syria and South Sudan, in protracted refugee situations as in Afghanistan and Kenya, and in transitional countries like Liberia and Zimbabwe. In 2013, the agreement covered a total of 21 countries. More than one million persons displaced within or outside their home countries received help from the Norwegian Refugee Council under the agreement in 2013. The Council's emergency aid initiatives focus on five core areas: the construction of homes and schools, water and sanitation, education, food security and distribution, and information, counselling and legal assistance. NRC participates actively in the UN cluster system (for the coordination of humanitarian crisis responses) in order to coordinate its work with other actors. In 2013, the organisation was responsible for sector-level coordination in seven countries (Afghanistan, Colombia, DR Congo, Jordan, Pakistan, Palestine and South Sudan).

The continued development of NRC's programmes concentrating on crisis response, humanitarian responses in urban areas and collaboration with local organisations is an integral part of the agreement with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Norad. The crisis response focus allowed the organisation to launch programme activities quickly in connection with the Syrian crisis. For example, NRC's crisis response team, which was established in 2012, helped to install water and sanitation infrastructure in three new refugee camps in Iraq. In total, the organisation supported more than 481 000 people in Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq using funds from the Ministry in 2013.

Support for the NRC's **advocacy work** to protect the rights of refugees and internally displaced persons is an important component of the partnership agreement. In 2013, the organisation sought to improve humanitarian access to conflict areas, focus attention on the high number of people displaced by natural disasters and the impact of climate change, and promote a more effective and better-coordinated international humanitarian system. In 2013, NRC influenced 13 different policies through its advocacy efforts. For example, the organisation assisted the regional organisation East African Community (comprising Kenya, Tanzania, Burundi, Uganda and Rwanda), in the development of regional legislation to assist victims of natural disasters and prevent new disasters. NRC's efforts helped to strengthen the rights perspective in the draft legislation and secure the inclusion of additional references to displaced persons and a separate paragraph protecting the rights of those who cross national borders as a result of natural disasters. The inclusion of natural disasters, climate change and displacement in legislation is a ground-breaking legal development, and will secure more integrated and sustainable practice across countries and national borders.

The property and land rights of women are a main advocacy priority. In 2012–2013, NRC surveyed women's access to land and property rights in six countries. The survey showed that the primary challenge is the existence of social norms that repress and obstruct both women's own understanding of their rights and their opportunities to secure compensation for breaches of these rights. Despite substantial

investment in the development of equitable legal systems in conflict countries, internally displaced women are still refused housing, land and property rights during and after conflicts. NRC's report on the topic includes legal, political and practical recommendations to humanitarian actors on how to protect the land and property rights of women and girls.

Displaced boys at a UN-camp in Juba, South Sudan laughing as the photographer is approaching. The camp has become a shelter for thousands of displaced persons after the fighting in South Sudan.
Photo: Ben Curtis / AP Photo / NTB scanpix



The work of the Norwegian Refugee Council on behalf of internally displaced persons in DR Congo

DR Congo is home to one of the world's largest humanitarian crises. The country has suffered many years of misgovernment, conflicts and gross human rights violations, and is in a precarious humanitarian situation. In addition, it is one of the world's least developed nations. Government forces and various armed groups with shifting allegiances have long battled for control of the country's natural resources and territory, and 2013 was no exception. Once again, hundreds of thousands of people were forced to flee. The number of internally displaced persons in DR Congo is estimated at 2.6 million. Some 80% of these are located in the east of the country.

The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) is one of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' partners in DR Congo. In 2013, NRC received NOK 21.2 million under the Global Partnership Agreement for its work in the country, which is focused on internally displaced persons, refugees and host communities. NRC has been operating in North Kivu and South Kivu provinces in eastern DR Congo since 2001. These regions are marked by long-term conflict and displacement. In 2013, NRC focused on emergency aid for the most vulnerable: distributing food and emergency aid articles, improving water, sanitation and hygiene conditions, education, housing and school construction, and information, counselling and legal advice. During the course of the year, more than 336 000 people received help through Council programmes.

Distribution of food and emergency aid articles

Despite the signature of a framework peace agreement by 11 African countries in February 2013 and the adoption of a new, expanded mandate for the UN operation in March 2013, eastern DR Congo continues to suffer unrest and various local conflicts. As a result, the civilian population still lives in constant fear and uncertainty in many regions, and is often forced to flee. Every time this happens, people lose

their property, and crops are lost. It is in such situations that NRC distributes food and emergency aid articles to the most vulnerable. Using cash and coupons, the organisation organises local markets at which internally displaced persons can themselves purchase the food they need. This is done in close collaboration with local traders and other humanitarian organisations to ensure that prices remain at real local market levels, and to avoid creating economic imbalances. Women are the primary recipients of such emergency aid, since they run the household. The use of cash and coupons has proven to be an effective, dignified way of assisting people in need. Moreover, it allows a quicker response once a crisis arises.

Due to the unstable situation in eastern DR Congo, NRC decided to establish a store of emergency aid articles to enable a rapid response to crises. The aim is to reduce the vulnerability of those who are forced to flee. In total, the organisation distributed food and emergency aid articles to 59 677 people in 2013, using funds from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the European Commission.

Water, sanitation and hygiene

NRC expanded its water, sanitation and hygiene activities programme in 2013. The organisation ran several hygiene-promotion activities to improve hygiene knowledge in the civilian population, including the distribution of hygiene packs. NRC collaborated with volunteers from the local health service, primary school teachers and local leaders to secure local support. When local health committees were to be established, special attention was paid to ensuring an equal balance of women and men. The health committees were trained in hygiene promotion, and then ran information campaigns on hygiene and latrine maintenance. In total, 8 000 people received training on water, sanitation and hygiene topics in 2013.

Information, counselling and legal assistance (ICLA)

In DR Congo, land rights are associated with major conflict. Accordingly, NRC's work is strongly focused on supporting land access for internally displaced persons, improving their rights of occupation and strengthening understanding and implementation of land and property rights among both recipients and local authorities. Measures in this regard include dispute resolution and property law training for local mediation boards. Due to the deteriorated security situation, the ICLA programme failed to achieve all of its objectives in 2013. However, in North Kivu NRC made great progress in terms of the number of conflicts resolved by means of a written agreement between the parties. This resulted in an increased number of radio programmes, sponsored by the local authorities, encouraging people to become involved in organisation's land and property rights work.

The ICLA programme has highlighted women's rights through information campaigns and brochures, and in discussion groups. By

working closely with women's groups in which women can freely express their opinions, NRC has helped to reduce barriers to communication and spread information on women's land and property rights. The organisation's registration of births and marriages has also had an important impact on women's ownership and inheritance rights by documenting and formalising their family relationships.

Humanitarian assistance for internally displaced persons in urban areas

Humanitarian actors have inadequate information on internally displaced persons in cities, and eastern DR Congo's largest city, Goma, is no exception. Supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, NRC therefore conducted a multi-sector survey of internally displaced persons and host families in Goma in 2013 to gain insight into their situations and assistance needs. The findings of the study will form the basis of NRC's future work in Goma, and will be shared with the authorities and other humanitarian actors working in the city.

A tailor in the UNHCR camp Mugunga III in Goma, the Democratic Republic of Congo 24 January 2013. Photo: Thomas Lohnes / Getty Images



UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

Under the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, UNHCR is mandated to protect and assist persons persecuted and fleeing due to race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership of a particular social group, and to find permanent solutions to the world's refugee problems. UNHCR also assists internally displaced persons, even though its mandate in this regard is dependent on decisions by the UN's governing bodies. Under the UN's cluster approach, and to ensure a more efficient humanitarian response, UNHCR has a leading role in protecting internally displaced persons and providing housing and administering camps for them. UNHCR's mandate does not extend to Palestinian refugees (approximately 4.9 million), who fall within the remit of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). In practice, UNHCR assists many people who are not refugees in a strict sense, and therefore generally employs the collective term "persons of concern". UNHCR also promotes permanent solutions through measures such as assisted return, local integration and resettlement of refugees from first asylum countries. Although UNHCR's mandate authorises such activities, these are often complicated in practice by the need for political goodwill on the part of countries of origin, host countries and third countries.

UNHCR's operations are reviewed and monitored by its Executive Committee (comprised of 94 member states in 2013), which holds one formal meeting a year but meets more frequently in the form of the Standing Committee working group. UNHCR reports annually to the General Assembly and the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

UNHCR's budget has increased dramatically in recent years, and totalled approximately USD 5.3 billion, or around NOK 34 billion, in 2013. Although the budget is based on needs estimates, income is not fully covering all expenditure. On the contrary, the organisation faces an increasing income-expenditure

disparity, and in 2013 income only totalled approximately 60% of the budget. Combined with the increasing earmarking of contributions and unforeseen events in the field, this underfunding is making it difficult for UNHCR to achieve the results on which its budget is based. Priority tasks are defined in the list of "Global Strategic Priorities" at the beginning of each year.

2013 was yet another challenging year in UNHCR's history, which goes back more than 60 years. In addition to ongoing crises, fighting in Syria displaced even greater numbers of people within the country or across its borders into neighbouring countries. At the same time, a critical situation developed in the Central African Republic, the conflict in eastern DR Congo escalated and civil war broke out in South Sudan towards the end of the year. The situations in Darfur and northern Nigeria also deteriorated in 2013.

Results achieved in 2013

No new countries signed up to the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees in 2013, and the number of signatories therefore remained at 148. However, the following countries signed one or both of the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness: Montenegro, Côte d'Ivoire, Lithuania, Nicaragua, Ukraine and Jamaica. The 1954 convention now has 84 signatories, and the 1961 convention 58. UNHCR's Executive Committee expanded to include the following new members: Afghanistan, Belarus, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Latvia, Peru and Senegal. Endorsement of the legal instruments and UNHCR's governing bodies is important because it obliges national authorities to protect people classified as "persons of concern".

In 2013, the Executive Committee negotiated and adopted a recommendation on civil registration. Recommendations and similar documents, which are often referred to as "soft law", have

become rare in recent years, primarily because the processes involved have become so politicised and polarised that no agreement has been achievable on any matter of substantial importance. The conclusion on civil registration an exception, and an important contribution. It will simplify the issue of birth documentation to children born in exile, thus ensuring that such children have access to help and assistance later on and perhaps preventing them from ending up stateless.

The debate within UNHCR shows that the member states hold strongly contrasting views, not least regarding burden distribution. Large host countries consider that they are bearing an excessively large proportion of the costs of hosting many refugees. Many countries are also sceptical about UNHCR's priority focus on internally displaced persons, since they regard this as interference in internal affairs. Nevertheless, in December 2013 UNHCR successfully conducted its Dialogue on Protection Challenges – *Protecting the Internally Displaced: Persisting Challenges and Fresh Thinking* – which aimed to secure a greater focus on and support for this vulnerable group.

Of almost 43 million “persons of concern”, 11.7 million were refugees falling under UNHCR's mandate. Some 8.5 million of these received some form of protection or assistance from UNHCR. In 2013, the five largest refugee host

countries were Pakistan, Lebanon, Iran, Turkey and Jordan. Although Germany was previously found high up on this list, its status has changed due to the adoption of a new refugee definition. A total of 414 600 people returned to their home countries voluntarily, with the largest group in fact comprising Syrians returning from Turkey (140 800 persons). Overall, this represented a drop from 2012, when the number was 526 300. The number of internally displaced persons receiving some form of assistance from UNHCR, directly or through partners, was 23.9 million in 2013. This represented an increase on 2012, when the figure was 17.7 million. In total, 98 400 refugees were put forward for resettlement in 2013, an increase from 89 000 in 2012. Of these, 71 000 were in fact resettled. According to UNHCR, the total number of persons requiring resettlement is 859 000, but due to capacity limitations on the part of UNHCR and the setting of small quotas by resettlement countries, normally only 10% are resettled in a new country. The inclusion of Switzerland as a new resettlement country last year increased the number of those willing to accept resettlement refugees to 27. In 2013, Norway's quota was 1 200 persons, mostly reserved for five refugee situations.

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Front page photo: Syrian refugee children in Domiz refugee
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