The Humanitarian Response Index

Summary of published news

A recent news piece in the Lancet covered the launch by Kofi Annan, former UN Secretary General, of an index that ranks 23 countries in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation (OECD) according to their effectiveness in humanitarian donorship. The Humanitarian Response Index aims to make donors more accountable by ranking them according to 57 indicators that reflect the principles and good practices that govern humanitarian action. The Indicators are focused around five themes - responding to humanitarian needs, integrating relief and development, working with humanitarian partners, implementing international guiding principles, and promoting learning and accountability. The outcomes are based on hard data and the views of various humanitarian agencies working on the ground in eight countries.

According to the index, Sweden is the most effective donor and Greece is the least effective. The wide-ranging indicators also high-light where donors could 'do a lot better'. For example, the UK is ranked ninth and although it scores well in the amount of money given and its speedy response to humanitarian crises, it is let down by having a poor human rights record.

The authors conclude that this new index is a useful "report card on donor activity" but it will only be truly effective if it inspires donors to improve their humanitarian donorship record. Individual citizens, civil society, nongovernmental organisations, and politicians should use this new tool to hold their governments to account.

For more on the Humanitarian Response Index, visit the website of Development Assistance Research Associates (DARA) who have devised the index, [http://www.daraint.org/](http://www.daraint.org/)

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