**Taking Stock of GHD – 2003 to date**

A non-paper prepared by the 2009 – 2010 Co-chairs

*This is ‘live’ document representing a cumulative report on the progress and achievements recorded by the GHD group of donors since 2003. The information contained in the document is by no means comprehensive and is intended to provide a snapshot only.*

**Summary of Broad Achievements**

The coming together of donors under the banner of the Good Humanitarian Donorship (GHD) framework has filled a crucial gap in the broad landscape of humanitarian coordination. Bridging this gap has allowed for the development of **consensus around a comprehensive agenda for good humanitarian donor policy and practice** which, in a few short years, has become near common currency.

The GHD framework, and the associated processes that GHD donors have committed to, has provided a valuable platform for dialogue and an important vehicle for advancing humanitarian policy and practice matters – within the bureaucracies of the GHD donors themselves, and the humanitarian community at large.

It is worth noting that many of the issues which the GHD framework has articulated were not new or of unique concern to donors. However, the establishment of consensus on the 23 principles and good practice tenets of GHD has provided critical **momentum** to the issues that many donors were pursuing in isolation (domestically and internationally).

The GHD framework, and the processes undertaken individually and collectively by GHD donors, has played a critical role in under-writing the process of **humanitarian reform –** many of the recent adaptations to the humanitarian system not least with regard to financing mechanisms and cluster based coordination, have been advanced as a result of donor commitments under GHD.

Below is a summary of *some* of the main outcomes of GHD to date. Many of these outcomes have been achieved exclusively as a result of the donor efforts, while others reflect the results of working with and in support of humanitarian partners:

* A common definition of humanitarian assistance for statistical purposes was developed thus allowing more accurate reflection of humanitarian commitments within the OCHA managed Financial Tracking Service (FTS) and in OECD/DAC statistics. There is now better use of, and support for, global financial tracking systems reflecting more trust in the same;
* Significant achievements have been made, in partnership with implementing agencies, on the development and use of harmonised reporting;
* While still posing enormous challenges, there have been concrete steps towards advancing the commitment to, knowledge on, and support for frameworks that allow better needs-based allocations of humanitarian assistance;
* Predictable and flexible mechanisms for humanitarian financing are now well established including the CERF and various country level pooled funds, and several GHD donors have similarly adapted their mechanisms for financing NGO and Red Cross partners to reflect their GHD commitments;
* There is now better articulation of humanitarian objectives and policy amongst donors individually and collectively (as per the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid which is clearly aligned with GHD);
* There is now greater recognition of the role that effective partnerships play in humanitarian response and the GHD framework has provided an important boost to the unique leadership and coordination role played by the UN in humanitarian response;
* The GHD framework has provided a useful framework for assessing donor performance through the annual Global Humanitarian Assistance reports and via the GHD aligned Humanitarian Assistance Framework within the OECD/DAC’s Peer Review.
* GHD has served as an important basis upon which donors have shared learning and developed norms for good practice through joint evaluations, commissioned studies, training, and dialogue.

Perhaps the single most telling indicator of the value of GHD has been the increasing numbers of donors willing to adhere to the framework; at its inception in 2003, 16 countries and the EC endorsed GHD, by July 2009 the number of GHD committed donors had risen to 36.

However, progress has not been even, and much work remains to be done on issues such as strengthening national capacities for response, linking relief and development, adherence to humanitarian principles, and more regular joint evaluations.

What follows is a synopsis of GHD areas of focus and the progress recorded from 2003 to date.

***2003 – 2004 The Inception of GHD***

Meeting in Stockholm on the 16th &17th of June 2003, representatives of government and multilateral donors, United Nations agencies, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, the IASC and other individuals and organisations involved in humanitarian action, reviewed past achievements and current challenges in global humanitarian action.

Donors underlined their concern at the large number of people that continue to be affected by humanitarian crises. Aware that extensive humanitarian needs were likely to persist in the foreseeable future, donors stressed the need to reinforce global respect for international humanitarian law and humanitarian principles, to allocate resources strictly on the basis of need, to promote capacities for prevention and preparedness, and to strengthen international donor response to humanitarian crises.

While reaffirming the primary responsibility of states for meeting the needs of victims of humanitarian crises within their own borders, donors recognised that there were many measures which they could take to enhance the coherence and effectiveness of their actions, as well as their accountability to beneficiaries, implementing organisations and domestic constituencies, with regard to the funding, co-ordination, follow-up and evaluation of such actions.

Bearing in mind these considerations, and emphasising the need for implementing organisations to continue their pursuit for enhanced effectiveness, efficiency and accountability, donors endorsed the Principles and Good Practice of Good Humanitarian Donorship.

A work-plan elaborated for the period of 2003 to 2005 included the following priorities:

1. the identification of one humanitarian crisis subject to a Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal, to which the Principles and Good Practice of Humanitarian Donorship will be applied in a concerted and co-ordinated manner no later than 2005;
2. emphasising the importance of peer reviews of humanitarian action, donors would invite the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) at the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) to consider ways to significantly strengthen the coverage of humanitarian action in existing and/or complementary peer reviews;
3. drawing on donor progress within the field of development co-operation, including relevant elements of the 2003 Rome Declaration on Harmonisation, donors undertake to jointly explore the possibility of harmonising reporting requirements and management demands placed upon implementing humanitarian organisations;
4. donors will aim, in consultation with the United Nations and the OECD-DAC, to agree on a comprehensive common definition of official humanitarian assistance for reporting and statistical purposes, including clarity of definitions between multilateral and bilateral humanitarian assistance;
5. participating donors will seek to promote the wider use among all official donors of the Principles and Good Practice of Humanitarian Donorship, and to invite all interested donors to participate in the follow-up of this Plan.

With the objective of effectively pursuing the aims outlined in this plan, and of ensuring appropriate co-ordination with other ongoing processes, donors agreed to establish an informal Implementation Group for Good Humanitarian Donorship to be based in Geneva for one year (unless otherwise decided). Sweden and Canada were appointed as co-chairs of the informal implementation group.

***Progress update:***

DRC was selected as a pilot country and Consolidated Action Plan (CAP) to which the principles and practice for GHD would be applied. A sub-group was established led by the US and Belgium which had a number of significant achievements over the course of the year. These included an intensive series of meetings, awareness raising events, and the creation of monitoring framework for the application of GHD principles to the formulation and response to a CAP. The focus was very much on the funding aspects of GHD while only limited progress was made (reflecting the enormity and complexity of the issue) in promoting better use of common needs assessments. However, the 2005 Consolidated Humanitarian Appeals Process (CHAP) for DRC did, for the first time, reflect a hierarchy of needs in response to the work of the sub-group.

A second sub-group was established to take forward a similar pilot in Burundi however this initiative suffered a series of set backs and little progress was recorded this year.

Good progress was made on reflecting GHD principles and practice in the DAC peer review process. A humanitarian assessment framework reflecting GHD was developed with the DAC in April 2004 and piloted during the peer reviews of Australia and Norway later that year.

On reporting, a sub-group was established which mapped existing donor reporting requirements and examined donor behaviour with regard to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR). The sub-group produced a series of recommendations for donors on how the burden of reporting might be addressed without compromising accountability.

In seeking to establish a common definition for humanitarian assistance (for reporting and statistical purposes) a sub-group was established which undertook a series of meetings with OCHA, the OECD/DAC and others. The outcome was improvements in the criteria for reporting humanitarian contributions on the Financial Tracking Service, better donor performance in using this service, and more appropriate coding and reporting of humanitarian assistance within the DAC system.

In promoting GHD amongst all official donors, members undertook an extensive series of briefings, updates, and panel discussions over the course of the year. Key events where GHD was tabled and promoted included the humanitarian segments of ECOSOC 2003 and 2004; the 2003 retreat of Humanitarian Coordinators and the 2004 Montreux Donor retreat.

The invite list for the 2004 high-level meeting of GHD was expanded to include all DAC members.

***Some studies commissioned and presented:***

# Quality of Money: Donor Behaviour in Humanitarian Financing, the Humanitarianism and War Project for AusAid, 2003.

***2004 – 2005 Continued commitment to GHD***

On the 21st & 22nd of October 2004, representatives of 22 governments and multilateral donors, along with United Nations institutions, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and other organisations involved in humanitarian action met in Ottawa to take stock of progress achieved on the follow-up to the Good Humanitarian Donorship initiative over the past year, and to consider opportunities for its further strengthening and implementation.

At Ottawa, those who were present at Stockholm re-asserted their commitment to the Principles and Good Practices endorsed there, and new donor government participants asserted their support for the initiative process.

The high-level meeting in Ottawa included a stock-take of progress to date, a consideration of the challenges associated with funding according to need (with a focus on the principle of independence), and the challenge of responding to transitional needs. The way forward for GHD was also discussed.

A key learning from Ottawa was that a long-term commitment was needed to advance GHD. There was some debate as to whether GHD could now be mainstreamed into donor bureaucracies or whether there was a need to sustain the distinct forum of donors. The group was unable to reach consensus in the time allowed and instead agreed to postpone any decision regarding the future of the initiative until June 2005. Canada agreed to continue to chair until that time.

This decision allowed donors to thus commit themselves to building on achievements and processes initiated in 2003, namely the continued integration of GHD considerations in the DAC peer review framework, further improvements to the DAC coding and reporting on humanitarian assistance, the finalisation of a revised FTS reflecting the common definition of humanitarian assistance, greater harmonisation in donor reporting requirements, more progress towards a fully GHD aligned CAP, and continued outreach to new donors.

In addition to reaffirming commitments to these on-going work-streams, donors agreed to develop domestic implementation plans for GHD. The GHD group, now comprising 22 donors also agreed to pursue options for joint learning and evaluation, work for greater political buy-in to GHD, and develop better understanding, support and capacity for the protection of civilians within humanitarian contexts. The UK committed to explore options for elaborating performance indicators on some elements of GHD.

The group agreed that Transition and Civil-Military cooperation, while related to GHD priorities, would be better advance in other fora. As such Transition was recommended for consideration by donors in the margins of ECOSOC where follow-up could be sought on the recommendations in the UNDG/ECHA Working Group on Transition. Recognising that Civil-Military issues pose a significant challenge and the need to pursue dialogue on the matter, donors agreed to use existing fora for such dialogue, including the UN Special Committee on Peacekeeping.

***Progress update:***

In taking stock of these commitments in July 2005, GHD participants noted the important progress made in advancing the activities of the Implementation Plan to date, particularly within the OECD/DAC and on the harmonisation agenda.

The DRC country pilot continued and included a survey of ‘good’ donor behaviour with regard to the CAP process, and a series of discussions at field level focussing on issues of transition. The Kinshasa based GHD group instituted regular coordination meetings to accommodate consideration of relevant aspects of GHD. The GHD field group was supporting the use of the UN needs analysis framework in country in an effort to improve common needs assessments; while critically, a group of five donors agreed to pool their funding for 2006 in an effort to improve flexibility and needs-based allocation.

In January 2005 the DAC adopted the GHD aligned Humanitarian Assistance Framework as an annex to the main methodology for the Peer Review. In June 2005, GHD recommendations concerning the definition and classification of humanitarian assistance continued to be reflected in the DAC documentations and decisions. Funding from a number of GHD donors was made available to the DAC for the continued prioritisation of humanitarian considerations in the statistical and peer review processes.

On the area of harmonised reporting, work continued with UNHCR, OCHA and the ICRC concerning the continued refinement of donor reporting requirements and the adaptation of global reporting formats such that they could be more widely accepted. Seven donors were now in a position to accept UNHCR’s annual report; while several others indicated that they were working towards this in the near future. The number of donors that could accept OCHA’s annual report remained the same as for last year however one donor did indicate that it would soon be in a position to accept the revised format.

On new donor outreach, a number of individual donors took it upon themselves to promote the Principles and Good Practice in their dialogue with other donors, humanitarian partners and their respective governing boards. Two important examples are the Swedish-led initiative to engage non-DAC donors in Abu Dhabi, as well as the annual ECOSOC GHD side panel session.

Participants found the sharing of domestic strategies to be a useful exercise. Those that had gone through the process of drafting such strategies noted the importance of the experience in incorporating GHD into their respective national dialogues. Those that had developed national humanitarian policies also expressed the importance of such initiatives in increasing domestic awareness of GHD.

***Some studies commissioned and presented:***

* Study on Revised CERF Mechanism, Report by Barnaby Willitts-King and Tony Faint for Development Cooperation Ireland (DCI) and DfID, June 2005;
* Good Humanitarian Donorship and the European Union: a study of good practice and recent initiatives, report by Barnaby Willitts-King for DCI, September 2004;
* Review of Good Humanitarian Donorship Domestic Strategies, Adele Harmer (HPG, ODI) and Abby Stoddard (CIC, NYU), July 2005;

***2005- 2006 From Cheque-books to Partners***

For the period 2005 to 2006, with the UK as chair, donors agreed to continue with the following activities:

1. The continuation of the CAP pilots in DRC and Burundiuntil the end of 2005. At that time, lessons learned should be consolidated and best practices rolled out to all CAPs during 2006 (thereby feeding into the 2007 CAP cycle). The lessons learned from the pilots could be discussed at Montreux 2006.
2. On harmonization of reporting requirements and management demands, it was agreed that a two-pronged approach would be adopted which includes: deepening progress (e.g. management demands) with agencies that have donor support group-type bodies (e.g. ICRC, OCHA, UNHCR), while at the same time, exploring the possibility of expanding work with other agencies, e.g. Rome based agencies, as appropriate.
3. On outreach and advocacy initiatives, the UK volunteered to take the lead on this item and make it a priority for the next phase of GHD. Inter alia, the UK agreed to promote and coordinate activities vis à vis non-DAC donors and humanitarian partners, including at the field level.
4. Donors agreed to test the set of indicators developed for GHD by Development Initiatives. It was agreed that these indicators should be integrated into the next version of the *Global Humanitarian Assistance Report* thereby allowing a means to track progress against them. If needs be these indicators would subsequently be revised and updated.
5. GHD donors noted that the provision of adequate, flexible, timely and predictable funding remains central to the GHD agenda and thus engagement with on-going processes for the development of the UN E-CERF and evolving country level pooled funding mechanisms would be expanded over the course of the year.

***Progress update:*** *to be completed pending input from chairs*

***Some studies commissioned and presented:***

* Proposal for a Good Humanitarian Donorship Fund for the DRC, Development Initiatives for DfID, October 2005;
* Proposal for a Common Fund for humanitarian assistance to Sudan, Development Initiatives for Canada, Denmark, Netherlands, Sweden and the UK, August 2005;
* Lessons Learned from the Good Humanitarian Donorship Pilot in Burundi 2002 – 2005, Sally Gregory, DfID, December 2005;
* Practical approaches to needs-based allocation of humanitarian aid Barnaby Willitts-King for Irish Aid, 2006.

***2006 to 2007 From Policy to Practice***

The United Kingdom continued to chair the GHD group for the period 2006 to 2007 with Denmark as the co-chair.

Priorities for the year included the following

1. Developing best practice in needs based resource allocation;
2. Strengthening donor coordination at country level;
3. Continuing to monitor progress against GHD indicators;
4. Continue to progress the harmonisation and simplification of donor reporting and engagement with agencies;
5. Continue to develop and share good practice in the creation of national policies and domestic implementation plans;
6. Share best practice in the promotion and implementation of disaster risk reduction.

***Progress update:***

The GHD group had by now expanded to include 24 governments and the European Commission.

Much work was carried out this year to address the very challenging but fundamental issue of needs- based allocations. Amongst other things the group examined the use of severity indices in informing funding decisions, a workshop was conducted looking at the value and use of severity indices, and Canada drafted a guidance note on the same. Through its work on needs-based allocations, the group concluded that a number of pre-conditions must be in place if donors were to ensure that resources follow needs. In addition to having access to a credible evidence base, there is a need to understand how different financing mechanisms can affect impartial timely and predictable allocations. There is a clear need for better communication between donors and also between donors and operational agencies. The issue of impartiality is not simply a matter for donors – multilateral agencies and NGOs also have a role in ensuring that the resources they receive are allocated in an impartial manner. A workshop on allocating Humanitarian Financing According to Need was hosted by CIDA, DfiD, ECHO and Irish Aid in March in Brussels.

In deepening donor coordination, donors looked at means to promote greater harmonisation of donor procedure. The Netherlands led a newly strengthened donor group in the DRC which continued to meet on a monthly basis and with regular attendance from eight GHD donors. Over the year, the group focused on the structure and response to the Humanitarian Action Plan and in doing so worked in close collaboration with the Humanitarian Coordinator.

In Sudan, donors came together and worked to streamline and strengthen the various existing formal and informal donor fora. Key successes noted by the group included the strengthened donor coordination, improved donor-UN coordination, and greater donor engagement in early recovery led by the Resident Coordinators office.

A new donor coordination group for Chad was established in May 2007. Based in Geneva and chaired by the UK, this forum has provided donors the opportunity to receive more detailed briefing on the humanitarian crisis, review the adequacy of financing, and discuss some key strategic issues.

And finally, Denmark worked on updating the guidance note on strengthening donor coordination at country level.

In progressing harmonisation of donor reporting and engagement with agencies, the Rome group[[1]](#footnote-1) noted that for WFP, all donors receive its Standard Project Reports and many accept it as the sole reporting requirement. However there would appear to be a counter-trend of donors requesting additional reports at country office and HQ level. WFP also noted that special reports have to be generated for multi-donor trust funds and this may become increasingly difficult to manage as the number of such mechanisms increases.

The ICRC reports that most of its major donors now accept standards reporting.

With regard to UNHCR, only six donors accept sole reporting on all contributions. A further 12 accept sole reporting on un-earmarked contributions. The agency is continuing to improve its Global Annual Report and is thus hopeful that this will encourage more donors to accept it as their sole reporting mechanism.

Canada, Denmark and the UK finalised a Joint Organisational Strategy for UNHCR for the period 2007 to 2009. This is seen as consistent with the principles of GHD in that its overall aim is to strengthen UNHCR’s capacity for operational delivery.

In monitoring progress against GHD indicators a sub-group chaired by the US drafted a revised matrix of indicators for GHD and these are currently in use in the annual Global Humanitarian Assessment reports prepared by Development Initiatives.

Little progress was recorded in terms of donors sharing good practice on the development of policy and domestic implementation plans during this year. However, there was a good degree of exchange on the promotion and implementation of disaster risk reduction (DRR). Norway convened a meeting to discuss donor approaches to DRR and prepared a concept paper on the issue, while in Rome, WFP and the FAO met with donors to discuss their efforts to build regional, national and local capacity to prevent, mitigate and respond to humanitarian crises

***Some studies commissioned and presented:***

* Paper D, Report on GHD indicators in 2004 and 2005, Development Initiatives, August 2006;
* Earmarking and Visibility in Humanitarian Assistance Development Initiatives for Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, July 2007;
* Good Humanitarian Donorship and Disaster Risk Reduction, A Concept Paper, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, July 2007;
* Revised Good Humanitarian Donorship (GHD) Indicators, Development Initiatives for USAID, March 2007;
* Allocating humanitarian funding according to need: towards analytical frameworks for donors, Discussion Paper, Barnaby Willitts-King, for Irish Aid, March 2007;

***2007 – 2008 A Year of Transition***

This year, 11 new donors endorsed GHD through signature of the EU humanitarian aid consensus in December 2007.

Sweden and the United States co-chaired the group from July 2007 and identified the coming year as a period of transition for GHD noting the need for the framework and group to become broader and with a greater focus on strategic partnerships.

The work-plan for the year was organised around the following themes:

1. Improving donor decision making for resource allocation;
2. Improving the choice of mechanisms available for humanitarian financing;
3. Measuring GHD performance;
4. Improving outreach and advocacy on GHD.

Significant progress was made by the GHD group towards objectives outlined in the 2007/2008 work-plan.

GHD donors undertook a number of steps to improve knowledge and practice on needs-based decision-making for humanitarian assistance. The EC committed to financing the OCHA Assessment and Classification of Emergencies (ACE) Project, which is working with implementing partners to map needs assessment methodologies. As well as providing for greater inter-agency coherence at the field level, this exercise should help facilitate more developed discussions with donors on strengthening decisions for funding based on need. ECHO also shared details of its Global Needs Assessment (GNA) methodology; while Canada continued to work on developing a Severity Index and conducted a presentation on the same. A training workshop on needs-based decision making was hosted by Sweden, and the US commissioned a paper on Evidence Based Decision Making.

Over the course of the year, the 2nd objective relating to financing mechanisms was broadened out to include consideration of other aspects of donor coordination and harmonisation. Specifically, the GHD donors addressed the following issues:

* Coordinated approaches on conditionality and donor funding;
* Improved donor coordination at country/regional level;
* Steps towards identifying good practice in humanitarian financing.

The Rome-based group agreed to look at two or three conditions donors impose on FAO and WFP to determine best and worst practices and come up with achievable solutions for efficiency gains.

The DRC group continued to meet on a monthly basis and amongst other things discussed the Pooled Fund and field mission reports. As there is no common terms of reference for applying the GHD principles to field-level, coordination meetings are customised according to locally identified priorities.

Denmark completed the guidance note on strengthening donor coordination at country level, distributed it to donor country representatives, and posted it on the GHD website

To improve understanding of financing instruments, the US commissioned an in-depth study entitled, “International Humanitarian Financing: Review and comparative assessment of instruments”. The report provides an analysis of how donor humanitarian funding has been channelled and the comparative advantages and disadvantages of each funding instrument. This formed the basis for a very useful series of discussions where donors looked at how existing funding mechanisms could be used to address current funding gaps and how management and administration of new funding mechanisms could be streamlined. The paper and discussion served as a trigger for a spin-off process to lookat financing mechanisms for non-UN partners in 2009.

In addition, a one-day workshop was organized in Montreux, with GHD members and representatives of the IASC, to discuss themes related to humanitarian financing.

Sweden commissioned a study entitled “Indirect Support Costs” and a workshop was organised in Montreux, Switzerland with GHD members and representatives of the IASC to discuss themes related to indirect support costs. At the June GHD meeting in Geneva, a related options paper was presented focusing on recommendations for possible donor action, including the scope for agreement on harmonization of cost classification and an overview of calculation models that were deemed to be “fair” by the author. An open discussion among GHD donors took place on suggested “good practice”.

On monitoring donor performance and accountability, GHD donors explored ways of further measuring their performance. Amongst other things the group worked to strengthen the linkage between the GHD initiative and the OECD/DAC. The DAC’s Humanitarian Expert made a presentation to GHD donors on DAC findings regarding donors’ humanitarian programs. Findings from 2006-2007 indicate that GHD principles are slowly becoming embedded into practice; some donors have done better than others, and those who are doing well need to share best practices. Donors considered the Proposed Next Steps for strengthening the Linkage between GHD and OECD/DAC. A majority of donors supported suggestions for enhancing the linkage between the DAC and GHD.

On advocacy and outreach,donors (facilitated by the EC) launched an informal ‘new donors’ process which provides orientation to new GHD members and which included a number of meetings to look at aid policy and domestic implementation plans. Eleven new donors were integrated into GHD through signature of EU humanitarian aid consensus in December 2007 and a GHD briefing was given to the EU Council working group on development in Brussels in March.

Recognising that the make-up of the GHD group had evolved since its inception in 2003, and reflecting on developments in the humanitarian environment more broadly, the co-chairs facilitated a discussion designed to inform the future direction and format of the GHD group and process. The process was concluded during the July 2008 meeting when the 35 adherents to GHD agreed that “the initiative should continue as a donor-led informal process of collective and individual efforts to focus on donor-behaviour and how it impacts on the overall humanitarian response”. In terms of process, it was decided to continue on a basis of donor 'volunteers' for both chairing and taking forward particular activities/work streams, without institutionalisation or an external secretariat.

***Some studies commissioned and presented:***

* Policy paper on principle 6 of the good humanitarian donorship initiative, URD, for the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, July 2008;
* Policy paper on Principle 7 of the good humanitarian donorship initiative, URD for the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, July 2008;
* International Humanitarian Financing: Review and Comparative Assessment of Instruments, Abby Stoddard for USAID, 2008.

***2008 – 2009 Consolidation and Growth***

By the end of this year, the GHD group of donors had grown to 36 with the Republic of Korea being the most recent donor to join. Chaired by the European Commission and the Netherlands, the group worked on advancing GHD principles and practice under three over-arching themes:

1. Enhancing partnership – reinforcing the humanitarian system model;
2. Strengthening the operational/field focus of GHD - donor coordination;
3. Humanitarian financing and allocation based on identified need.

While working together to progress these collective priorities, donors reaffirmed the importance of mainstreaming good donorship practice within individual bureaucracies.

In enhancing partnership, priority was given to strengthened and systematic dialogue between donors and humanitarian partner organisations in line with the Principles of Partnership[[2]](#footnote-2). Over the course of the year the co-chairs and wider group met with OCHA, the IASC, ICVA and the SCHR, while the Montreux IX retreat brought together UN agencies, the Red Cross Movement, NGOs and donors for a series of discussions on needs assessment and humanitarian financing.

A number of GHD donors began contributing to the work of the new inter-agency Needs Assessment Group while the GHD donors wrote to the ERC underlining the importance of making progress in this area. Further recommendations from the Montreux discussions went on to form the basis for much of the subsequent year’s work-plan.

‘Newcomer’ facilitation continued this year with sessions held in October and again in March. Co-hosted by ECHO, Hungary, and Estonia the sessions looked at humanitarian aid policy, financial tracking systems, the EU Consensus and the Montreux Retreat.

On outreach to non-GHD donors, the GHD co-chairs presented the framework at an ODSG outreach event hosted by Estonia, at which 5 non-GHD donors were represented in addition to 10 GHD ‘newcomer’ donors.

In strengthening the operational/field focus, the EC commissioned a mapping study of GHD donors’ field coordination practices. This study formed the basis for a substantive lesson learning session with the GHD donors which included inputs from donor group representatives from Chad, the DRC and the oPT. Coordination informed by GHD principles continues on a regular basis in the latter two contexts.

In tackling the area of humanitarian financing and needs based allocation, a thematic session was held with the GHD group in January during which the EC presented its vulnerability assessment methodologies while Canada shared its humanitarian needs index (HNI), and OCHA detailed how the ‘under-funded’ window of the CERF was allocated.

Sweden hosted a second session of training on needs-based decision making while Ireland worked with the EC, Luxembourg, New Zealand, the Netherlands, Sweden and the United Kingdom on a paper to illustrate how humanitarian financing mechanisms for non-UN partners might be structured to meet GHD principles. This paper will be finalised in 2010.

In addition to the three over-arching themes, a series of awareness-raising sessions on issues relating to good donorship were undertaken. These included a presentation on the IFRC’s work in the promotion of International Disaster Response Law and Norway’s work on the commonalities – and distinctiveness – within the GHD and Aid Effectiveness agendas.

In mainstreaming GHD, four donors had updated their policy documents or GHD implementation plans in the past year while three others indicated their intention to do so in the near future.

The group continued to monitor its performance through the annual GHA report prepared by Development Initiatives. In addition, the co-chairs, on behalf of the GHD donors facilitated dialogue with the OECD/DAC with regard to the revision of the DAC Peer Review Humanitarian Assessment Framework while the 2008 DAC Peer Review synthesis report was presented to the group.

***Some studies commissioned and presented:***

* Study on the Mapping of Donor Coordination (Humanitarian Aid) at the Field Level, Channel Research, by DG ECHO , July 2009;
* Study on the relevance and applicability of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness in Humanitarian Assistance, HPG for Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, March 2009;
* Good Humanitarian Donorship Principles in PracticeAssessing humanitarian assistance to internally displaced persons in Sudan and Sri Lanka Humanitarian Policy Group for USAID, February 2009.

***2009 – 2010 Back to the Future***

The twelve months from mid-July 2009 saw the GHD group, within the broader framework of the GHD initiative, continue to consolidate as a fruitful forum for advancing good practice in humanitarian donorship and humanitarian action more broadly. The various GHD meetings held over the course of the year were well attended and productive in terms of experiences shared, learnings generated, and the advancement of key policy and practice issues within - and beyond - the humanitarian donor community.

As co-chairs, Estonia and Ireland assumed responsibility for a number of actions intended to help better define the GHD group’s parameters and ‘ways of working’, including in the context of the group’s expanded membership. Following on from the consultations and processes undertaken by previous chairs, which were aimed at guiding the evolution of the GHD initiative, the co-chairs undertook a reflection and consultation process. This resulted in the agreement for the first time of a Terms of Reference (ToR) for the GHD group. The ToR reaffirm the role of the GHD group as an informal donor-led forum with a clear focus on improving donor behaviour, while underlining the commitment of the group to engagement with partners in the wider humanitarian community.

In a related exercise, the co-chairs re-developed the GHD website for the twin purposes of a) better communicating the GHD agenda and framework and b) facilitating more active engagement and collaboration across the group itself.

In terms of the thematic focus for GHD, the 2009-2010 period saw a continued commitment to advancing the three over-arching themes prioritised in 2008:

1. Enhancing Partnership
2. Strengthening the operational focus of GHD
3. Enhancing needs-based allocation and mechanisms for humanitarian financing

***Strengthening partnership*** within the GHD group was prioritised through a variety of initiatives including a shared donor monitoring mission to Haiti, and the continuation of regular GHD-SHARE[[3]](#footnote-3) meetings for purposes of orienting and mentoring donor personnel new to the humanitarian environment and to GHD in particular. The re-vamped GHD website with its members’ working area will further enhance communication and information sharing between GHD members in coming years, allowing for greater and more dynamic engagement between work-stream members and observers.

Building partnership beyond the immediate GHD group took a number of forms. In January, Estonia hosted a lunch for newer GHD donors and those not currently members of the group including countries such as Brazil, UAE, Singapore, and Turkey. In February, a dialogue was held with a representative of the Government of the Philippines – a country that recently experienced a major humanitarian crisis – in relation to national and international humanitarian response, while in May, a representative of the Government of Brazil presented on Brazil’s approach to humanitarian donorship, including their role in responding to the Haiti earthquake.

Relationships with non-donor entities such as the IASC were consolidated and reflected in the GHD group Terms of Reference while day two of the 2010 Montreux Donor Retreat, the traditional IASC-GHD day, proved valuable and productive in terms of advancing the selected discussion theme, safety and security.

The group retained the commitment to ***strengthening the operational focus*** of GHD from the previous year, recognising the need to ensure the continued relevance of, and adherence to, GHD over time.

Critical to the operationalisation or application of GHD, has been its roll-out at field level; in that regard, work continued to enhance field-level coordination in a number of countries including DRC and oPT. In the DRC, the GHD group continued to meet regularly while minutes, updates on GHD relevant initiatives, and key documents generated were circulated to GHD HQ focal points. The GHD group in the oPT agreed its ToR and held regular meetings.

A joint donor monitoring mission to Haiti was conducted in June, the rationale for which was informed by the desire to advance GHD commitments at field level. The mission illustrated GHD member efforts to improve coordination, share learning, and reduce duplication, but also frank consideration of the participant donors’ own performance with regard to the application of GHD principles and good practice.

During the year, the group elected to prioritise principles 8 and 9, enhancing approaches to and financing for LRRD with an emphasis upon national capacities for same. As such, Finland presented its experiences on developing a strategy for LRRD and Norway disseminated a study which examined the viability of developing a thematic CAP for preparedness. The dialogue with the Philippines, referenced above, also facilitated a useful reflection on how national capacities for disaster response can be developed, supported and enhanced.

An important consideration for the GHD group since its inception has been the necessity of ‘measuring’ and monitoring adherence to GHD commitments. Over the year, a group was convened with the express purpose of examining the existing frameworks for monitoring GHD and exploring options for the further development of same. Members of the ‘indicators’ work-stream have considered various options for taking forward the challenging process of developing meaningful indicators for GHD. As the yaer concluded the group was actively consulting with OECD/DAC colleagues around options to develop the framework for monitoring GHD adherence.

Central to the GHD framework is the commitment to impartial and ***needs-based financing*** for humanitarian crises. For the period 2009-2010 the GHD group focussed its attention on a) supporting efforts to improve the quality of needs assessment methodologies while b) ensuring that donor mechanisms for financing are appropriately structured to respond to these needs.

In supporting efforts for quality needs assessments GHD donors closely followed the work of the IASC Needs Assessment Task Force (NATF) and met with implementing partner agencies to forge common positions on these issues. Though the process itself has been slow, some concrete progress has been made in the development of the Humanitarian Dashboard/Strategic Humanitarian Assessment and Response Exercise (SHARE), and the establishment and integration of the ACAPS (Assessment Capabilities) project in the NATF.   GHD donors were particularly encouraged by the commitment to field testing and by the support for this process shown by humanitarian country teams.

Reflecting efforts to improve the equity of financing, Sweden continued its informal CAP financing meetings which considered in particular under-funded appeals and provided an opportunity for donors to informally exchange views on the quality of these appeals and other factors influencing funding decisions. To share learnings around more flexible and predictable mechanisms for financing partners, work-stream 3.3 comprising eight GHD donors shared information outlining key elements of their NGO and Red Cross financing mechanisms to demonstrate how they meet GHD good practice recommendations on partner financing. This exercise will be finalised during the coming period.

To conclude, in a year marked by the tragic and overwhelming event of the Haiti earthquake on January 12th, the GHD group did well to record as it did the significant achievements noted above. Concrete progress was demonstrated not only in terms of clarifying and defining parameters for the group but also in terms of the advancement and operationalisation of GHD commitments. In particular the group’s commitment to partnership - with GHD colleagues and with other donors and stakeholders - was very evident, as has been donor support for advancement of good humanitarian donorship at field level.

In terms of moving forward, a significant number of the initiatives reflected in the work-plan, such as the work around refining indicators and encouraging more joined-up needs assessment will require sustained engagement from the membership over the coming year. Similarly, and amongst other things, there is significant scope to build upon and further advance the achievements noted around Principles 8 and 9: LRRD and enhancing donor support for national humanitarian capacities.

To put it simply, for the GHD group, the year 2009-2010 saw a lot done while the year ahead sees plenty more to do.

***Some studies commissioned and presented:***

* MFA Finland/Unit for Humanitarian assistance internal review “Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development (LRRD) approach”, 2009
* MFA Norway commissioned: “Thematic CAP for natural disaster preparedness Feasibility study’, Adele Harmer, Glyn Taylor, Katherine Haver, Abby Stoddard and Paul Harvey, Humanitarian Outcomes, December 2009.

***2010 – 2011***

1. Set up the year previously to explore options for more harmonised reporting with agencies based in Rome [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. endorsed at the July 2007 [Global Humanitarian Platform (GHP)](http://www.globalhumanitarianplatform.org/ghp) meeting [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. GHD-SHARE refers to Sessions for Humanitarian Awareness Raising and Exchange [↑](#footnote-ref-3)