OPTIONS FOR REFORM OF THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM FOR

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE: SUMMARY REPORT

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"In the first place we have to devise means of making known the facts in such a way as to touch the imagination of the world. The world is not ungenerous, but unimaginative and very busy". Eglantyne Jebb, Founder of Save the Children, Geneva 1920.

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

Recent events in Somalia, Iraq, former Yugoslavia and elsewhere have demonstrated the inadequacy of the current 'international system' for dealing with humanitarian emergencies. Legal, political and practical difficulties, particularly in complex civil conflicts, have hindered or prevented the delivery of humanitarian assistance, to the detriment of millions. Notwithstanding an avalanche of academic studies and institutional reports on this issue, Save the Children believes it has a special responsibility to highlight problems and make recommendations for reforms, based on its operational experience in these emergencies.

Starting with an analysis of the 'international system' at work in Somalia, Iraq, Liberia and Angola, this study identifies and follows practical difficulties upwards through the 'system', indicating weaknesses, and options for change. It does not seek to apportion blame. Disintegrating states present the greatest test for the 'system', where humanitarian needs mount, as unclear mandates and growing anarchy reduce its ability to respond. Increasingly political and security factors have eclipsed humanitarian actions. But Save the Children believes the 'system' can and must respond more effectively.

The key areas of operation which this report addresses are:

a) Processes of involvement by the 'international system', including information and response, mandates, issues of sovereignty and intervention, military operations and humanitarian assistance, and securing resources.

b) The performance of the UN system as the agent of the international community, especially in managing the political and humanitarian roles, and coordination of humanitarian assistance.

c) The role of member states of the UN, especially their influence as donors of humanitarian aid, in the context of their foreign policies.

d) The impact of the 'international system' on NGO operations, and their potential for a more effective partnership.

e) Recent attempts at reform, especially the establishment of the UN Department of Humanitarian Affairs, and reviews of its performance.

Using UN and NGO documents as a framework, a qualitative analysis of policy and practice was built up through the testimony of key participants. A number of senior UN and NGO officials agreed to give full and frank comment in return where requested for anonymity. As far as possible the contextual application of quotes has been verified with respondents. This summary report should be read in conjunction with the key documents cited at the head of each section.

At the outset it should be conceded that the 'international system' for humanitarian assistance, in so far as it exists at all, is a loose and volatile coincidence of actors. Moreover, as one UN official commented, the assumption is often "that the international system for humanitarian assistance is only the UN...and the term UN is also used very loosely, it is

never clear whether member states are considered part of it"[1]. Save the Children starts from the premise that the international humanitarian system is wider than the UN, that it operates in a wider state-centric system, and that the UN can only achieve what the member states enable it to do. Therefore options for reform are addressed to governments and any organisations or individuals able to influence them.

Because of its focus on the individual rights of children, Save the Children believes the test of any such reforms is their ability to produce lasting benefits for children in accordance with UN General Assembly resolution 46/182[2]. This commits the international community to observing the "cardinal importance" of neutral and impartial aid in humanitarian crises, which should be better coordinated, and should have a long-term preventative as well as relief function.

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[1] Senior UN official, interview September 1993,

[2] December 1991.

1. ANGOLA[3]

Angola has suffered almost continual civil war since the struggle for independence started in the 1950's. The case study, focusing on events since 1990, analyses the problems of maintaining the neutrality of aid where it has been manipulated for political and even military gains. The legitimate, recognised MPLA government only controls 30% of the country. The remainder, where hundreds of thousands are in need of assistance, is controlled by rebel UNITA forces. The UN has maintained both a political and humanitarian role. The roles were originally separate, for a period shared between the political body, UNAVEM, and the UN humanitarian agencies, and latterly under the overall control of UNAVEM. At no stage has the humanitarian effort of the UN had the confidence of the NGO's, but they too have been frustrated in their efforts to deliver aid. And the 'international system' has shown a marked indifference to Angola, even in comparison with other humanitarian emergencies in Africa.

Issues, Conclusions and recommendations:

1.1 Involvement: UNAVEM's mandate

UNAVEM II, the political office of the UN in Angola, started with an inadequate mandate and inadequate resources. Although there were subsequent attempts to widen its mandate, including humanitarian assistance, it does not appear to have had the full weight of the

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[3] See Scott, C., Angola case-study, LSE/SCF research project, September 1993.

international community behind it, in such a way that it might, for example, have carried the peace at the Abidjan talks. Even a token 'blue helmet' presence has been refused in stark contrast to UN operations in Bosnia and Somalia. UNAVEM's recent acquisition of overall aid management has met with some criticism and its practical attempts at delivering humanitarian aid have met with direct attack. Its current mandate has been extended to the end of 1993, with some 'Chapter VII backing' of sanctions to encourage UNITA to the peace table[4]. This has been supplemented with an increase in UNAVEM personnel, largely military observers.

Recommendations

1.1.1 The costs of 'creeping involvement' illustrate the weakness of the UN system without the full commitment of the member states. Involvement should be reflected in a decisive mandate, backed with resources, or not attempted at all.

1.1.2 A more proactive approach by the international community might include deployment of a peacekeeping force. However the role of this force should not be to guard humanitarian aid. Since the UN was no longer perceived as neutral, this would be an unnecessary complication. A more useful, though highly dangerous role for any UN force would be mine-clearing.

1.1.3 If UNAVEM is to continue overall in-country management of political and UN humanitarian operations, it should encourage an effective strategy for the latter and guard as far as possible against political entanglement of aid objectives.

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[4] SC Resolution 864.

1.2 Managing the political/security and humanitarian balance

Angola demonstrates the clear link between the political and humanitarian roles of the international system. Political and security actions have humanitarian consequences. Humanitarian actions have political consequences, including positive ones if they are peace-building. But observers in Angola disagree on how the balance should be struck. The problem is most acute for the UN system, particularly since the two roles were combined in UNAVEM. The progress of the new DHA coordination unit will be closely monitored. The issue is whether it should or indeed is able to have a separate identity from the political body. And if it does not, failure on the political side may affect the credibility of all UN agencies. Some commentators felt as a result that an organisation such as ICRC might be a more effective agent for neutral aid. Recent reports of agency in-fighting suggest coordination problems have not yet been solved by the creation of the DHA[5], although its efforts have clearly won greater confidence than previous attempts.

Recommendations

1.2.1 The office of the special representative in-country must remain the place where the political and humanitarian merge. The onus is on it to strike a balance, and for this not to be upset by political lines from the UN completely outweighing humanitarian ones. This requires an equivalent balance in the UN secretariat.

1.2.2 Humanitarian aid should be de-linked from the political process as far as possible, so

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[5] See, for example, The Guardian, Inter-agency differences bedevil UN aid distribution in Angola, Chris McGreal, 16/11/93.

that a strategy for assistance can be made and a structure developed to support it. The DHA and UN humanitarian agencies should therefore maintain their independence from political influence. Where this is unavoidable, the international system should use more ICRC/NGO aid through 'humanitarian corridors'.

1.2.3 Conversely, NGO's need to promote the potential of humanitarian aid more readily as peace-building.

1.3 Coordination of humanitarian assistance

The nature and effectiveness of coordination has been a controversial issue throughout. NGO commentators have clearly had little confidence in the definition, structure, performance and personnel of the coordination function in the UN. The establishment of the DHA in Angola may represent a 'fresh start', although it does appear subject to the multiple control of UNAVEM and its own line-management in Geneva and New York. The quality of DHA coordination staff appears to have won greater confidence among the NGO community than previous attempts.

Recommendation

1.3.1 Line management of the DHA and its coordination of the UN agencies should be explicit, detailed and properly resourced.

1.4 The 'international system' and Angola.

'International indifference' seems to summarise commentators views on the response of the

international community to the crisis in Angola. Certainly it has been sporadic by comparison with similar emergencies, even those in Africa. A greater and more urgent response, for example, to a peacekeeping initiative might have helped the peace talks at Abidjan and improved the chances of delivering humanitarian aid.

Lack of international initiative is also reflected in the response of the major donors, and the sporadic nature of media attention. Whilst commentators confirm that spending money in Angola is not easy in the current crisis, they expressed concern about the response to the consolidated appeal. Clearly donor response reflects international interest, and although not conditional, can give clear messages to warring factions.

Although the relationship between the media and international action is complex, according to commentators, sporadic coverage appears to be both a result of, and a determinant of international indifference.

Recommendations:

1.4.1 Major diplomatic initiatives should be encouraged particularly from the US administration, European Union (Community) and OAU by linkage to regional security issues.

1.4.2 NGO's should make a more concerted effort to mobilise public opinion and persuade governments to back diplomatic initiatives.

2. IRAO/KURDISTAN[6]

The response of the 'international system' to the plight of Iraqi Kurds in early 1991 was hailed as signalling the 'new age' of humanitarian intervention. Subsequent analysis has concluded that the 'safe havens' initiative, enabling operation 'provide comfort', established only a very limited precedent for any intervention principle. Subsequent events have demonstrated the practical limitations of such an intervention. During 1991 there seemed no limits to aid as it expanded well-beyond the 'safe havens' zone, encouraging Kurdish resettlement in areas that implied a continued Western obligation. Since the beginning of 1992 international commitment to the Kurds has faltered and come close to collapse. In essence, regional political considerations have overtaken the humanitarian priorities set by security council-resolution 688.

Save the Children has maintained pressure on the major donors and DHA to continue aid for the Kurds, independently of Baghdad if necessary. The UN, which originally provided a coordinating framework, renewed an agreement with the Iraqi government in September 1992 on conditions for delivering aid. However this has done nothing to increase its effectiveness. SCF chose to operate outside this framework, feeling it compromised the NGO position. The aid operation, UN and NGO alike, has been increasingly subject to Iraqi obstruction, harassment and even attack. Nevertheless it appears there is some international political will to avoid a repeat of a humanitarian crisis, if only from a sense of recent historical commitment to the Kurds and fear of political embarrassment.

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[6] Much of the information and analysis in this section is drawn from the internal reports of Simon Mollison, SCF Field Director in Iraq, 1992-3, and David Keen, The Kurds in Iraq: How safe is their haven now?, June 1993.

2.1 Political and security considerations versus humanitarian concerns.

The predominance of world and regional political factors in decisions regarding aid to the Kurds is well-documented. From a humanitarian viewpoint this has lead to inadequate international protection for the Kurds. Coupled with inadequate aid, it leaves the Kurdish population at constant risk. In short, fear of Kurdish self-determination has overtaken fear of Kurdish extermination.

Recommendations

2.1.1 There is little individual agencies can do persuade the international community to tackle the political, root cause of the Iraqi-Kurdish dispute. A question remains as to whether the international system for humanitarian assistance (operating through an empowered DHA for example) could elevate humanitarian concerns on the political agenda, notably the potential risks to Kurds of further Iraqi aggression.

2.1.2 Security and aid solutions are interdependent. There can be no lasting protection without adequate aid, and appropriate aid requires proper protection. So do the Kurdish population. So long as the current GOI regime exploits the Kurdish situation, Western military protection should be put on a more secure footing. This could have been through a UN peacekeeping force, although both resources and maintaining neutrality now make this a more difficult proposition. The UN needs to make its aid more effective by avoiding GOI

restrictions.

2.2 Aid Inadequacies

Again these have been well-documented, especially the excess of relief programmes, when a shift to rehabilitation was urgently needed. Thus the task of rebuilding the Kurdish economy has been largely neglected and gravely underfunded, especially in the area of agriculture and rural rehabilitation. Here the UNDP and FAO in particular have failed to meet Kurdish and NGO expectations. Instead of realising the potential for Kurdish self-sufficiency, the international system has left them dependent on expensive emergency operations (which have themselves suffered from problems of timing and quantity). This deficiency has in turn prevented a return of displaced Kurds to their rural way of life, and many remain in towns pursuing 'destructive' economic activities.

Aid inadequacy has been made worse by the Iraqi government's obstruction of assistance through a range of legal and illegal means. Exchange rate manipulation reduced the value of aid. In 1992 the government delayed an agreement on aid operations, which were then subjected to harassment and even terrorism. This has been exacerbated by the premature departure of UNHCR, many of its functions being assumed by UNICEF who are more vulnerable to obstruction.

Recommendations

2.2.1 To avoid Iraqi obstruction aid donors should consider continuing operations which do

not require Baghdad's consent. Channelling resources outside the UN system may avoid manipulation of exchange rates. Donors need to maintain their own needs assessments (and offices) independently of the UN. At the same time all agencies should avoid exclusive reliance on individual arrangements with the government of Iraq, which could lead to further interference. UN agencies themselves need to explore ways of working directly with the Kurdish administration.

2.2.2 Aid operations need to take a longer term view of their role in a prolonged Iraq-Kurdish conflict, although of necessity they will be an interim measure. Support for rehabilitation and the Kurdish administration is the only way to reduce repeated, costly emergency operations, and give the Kurds some degree of political security. Some emergency aid will likely need to continue, but would be better if planned within the longer-term framework. Such an aid strategy need not represent a commitment to Kurdish independence, but would decrease Kurdish political and economic vulnerability in the interim period.

2.3 Coordination

Coordination was clearly limited where two parallel operations existed, one direct, one through Baghdad. In addition there were three Kurdish governorates largely independent of each other, and four DHA officials in Iraqi Kurdistan managed from Baghdad. There was thus no obvious centre for a cooperation forum, even if the will existed.

Recommendation

2.3.1 Notwithstanding the likely need to continue parallel operations, more encouragement

could be given to the Kurdish authorities to take on a coordinating role in-country. Better donor policy coherence would set the tone for this.

2.4 Donor policy

No long-term strategy for humanitarian aid is clearly discernable among the major donors. Early donor interest has not been consistently followed through, and an 'emergency only' mentality has limited quality and timing of funding. Nor does international aid appear to tie in with any political strategy for the future of Kurdistan. The politics of aid were those of "sitting it out" with little apparent willingness to adjust policies to the changing situation. Cohesion between donor policies is also lacking. The EC appear to be establishing an independent humanitarian operation in parallel, if not in 'opposition', to the UN. German aid concentrated on one geographical area. US aid through OFDA was controlled by the military, limited to gifts in kind and therefore only distributable by the UN agencies.

Recommendations

2.4.1 Coordination and continuity of donor strategy would be the first indications of an international system at work in Kurdish Iraq.

2.4.2 Greater flexibility of donor funding criteria would allow longer-term planning.

2.5 The International System for humanitarian assistance in Iraq

Nowhere is the system more compromised than over Iraq. Humanitarian assistance is divided between a UN coordinated channel through Baghdad and an independent operation direct to the Kurds. In addition national foreign policies appear to be eclipsing, not complementing, aid policies, evidence that the humanitarian system has not yet established a legitimacy for itself.

Recommendation

2.5.1 The DHA should be making a major example of the Kurds in Iraq to illustrate the shortcomings of the international system. In particular the failings of 'short-termism', and lack of donor policy cohesion should be high-lighted.

3. LIBERIA[7]

Although recent, Liberia's civil war has deeply rooted historic causes. It has had severe regional as well as catastrophic national consequences. It provoked a regional rather than international intervention, but subsequent events led to an increased political intervention by the UN eclipsing its primarily humanitarian operation. Maintaining the neutrality of aid has been a continual problem. Until October 1992 the UN was accused by the NPFL (holding most of Liberia) of siding with ECOMOG (the West African peace-keeping force) and the interim government in Monrovia (IGNU). Subsequently the UN attempts at aid to people behind NPFL lines (ie 'Greater Liberia) came under attack from the ECOMOG and IGNU for aiding the 'rebels'.

In November 1992 the appointment of a special representative to the secretary general signalled a swing to a politically-led UN approach to Liberia. An ECOMOG ban on aid via the Cote d'Ivoire to NPFL, has been supported by the UN, putting political goals before humanitarian needs. In addition the departure of the much-respected head of UNSCOL, Ross Mountain, has further weakened the humanitarian operation. But the current peace accord will require the maintenance of a critical balance between political and humanitarian measures if it is to succeed where others have failed. In particular maintaining the visible neutrality of aid by supplying those behind NPFL lines will be a vital step in building confidence and supporting the peace process.

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[7] See Scott,C., Liberia Case Study 1990-3, LSE/SCF research project, October 1993.

<u>Issues, Conclusions and Recommendations:</u>

3.1 Humanitarian Intervention

Because it was primarily a political intervention, albeit with immediate humanitarian gains, the ECOMOG action does not clarify any international right of humanitarian intervention.

On a practical level ECOMOG's experience demonstrates the short-term benefits of a military intervention as an 'act of rescue'. In the longer term it demonstrates the difficulty of a military presence with a political/security role preserving the effectiveness and neutrality of aid.

Recommendations:

3.1.1 Attempting to extract any general principle of humanitarian intervention from the Liberia example is unlikely to inform humanitarian operations. But the practical limitations are clearly demonstrated. Humanitarian intervention may be necessary and useful as a short-term rescue measure in situations of anarchy.

3.1.2 Subsequent humanitarian operations should not be dominated by security considerations or directed by military command.

3.2 Regional intervention

Although a regional intervention could be a complicating factor, there is no clear case for

preferring UN to regional interventions on the basis of ECOMOG's experience in Liberia. Either initiative will run into the difficulties of intervening in a civil war, and either must manage skilfully the balance between political and humanitarian roles.

3.3 The UN: combining political and humanitarian roles.

Until November 1992 the UN humanitarian role was more prominent and successful than the political. Since then the balance has been reversed. Although the two roles are bound to coincide at some point in the UN system, some balance must be maintained. As yet the presence of the DHA in the system has not corrected the balance.

Recommendations:

3.3.1 The political and humanitarian role needs to be vested in one overall, in-country authority, the secretary general's special representative. Although UNSCOL rightly is accountable to SRSG, the 'safety-valve' through the DHA in Geneva and New York is essential to correct any imbalance.

3.3.2 The peace dividends of neutral aid should not be underestimated. Equal assistance to Liberians in NPFL territory will have valuable peace-building results[8].

3.4 Coordination of humanitarian assistance

At an operational level, good coordination resulted from competent staff in UNSCOL in whom UN agency heads and NGO's could put their trust. Improved quality of personnel was

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[8] As described in 'Agenda for Peace', para.56.

a reform that all agents of the system supported. Fund raising although largely effective, suffered from delays, and appeals were overtaken by demands.

Subsequent loss of ground by UNSCOL has weakened the entire humanitarian operation. As a senior UN official put it, "The reasons for the breakdown in the coordination mechanisms in the first six months of 1993 need analysis". This was clearly a reference to increasing political interference with humanitarian aid.

UNSCOL clearly saw itself having line management accountability to the DHA. By August 1993 UNSCOL's entire coordinating role was being put in doubt by UN officials in-country.

Recommendations

3.4.1 The style of coordination developed by UNSCOL in 1991/2 represents a model which could gain the confidence of NGO's in other crises.

3.4.2 However greater effort should be put into working in NPFL territory, and if political and security considerations inhibit the UN here, the 'international system' should make more use of the ICRC and NGO's.

3.4.3 Resources: staffing and funding. Obvious but necessary improvements in quality and speed of resources were a universal recommendation. UNSCOL had done some useful assessment and fund-raising coordination, which might be replicated elsewhere.

3.5 The 'international system' and Liberia

The limited success of the ECOMOG intervention was partly due to the international community's over-optimism in believing a regional intervention would work. Wider membership of the peace-keeping force and UN monitoring may allay suspicion of regional power politics.

The main donors, the US and EC, received some criticism, for not having greater political involvement in the peace process, and not doing more to prevent clandestine commercial contact with rebel factions. Winning their continued support of the peace process is a more valuable goal than criticism of past conduct.

Recommendations:

3.5.1 NGO's have a special responsibility to maintain a concerted flow of information about humanitarian conditions in Liberia, and to systematically encourage donors participation in the peace process.

3.5.2 Apart from rehabilitative infrastructural aid, particular help should be given to specialist work on reconciling the warring factions. Supporting the reconstruction of the educational system would be crucial in this respect.

4. SOMALIA[9]

Because of intense world attention and the UN-sanctioned military intervention, Somalia has become a test case for the 'international system'. And because of the speed, complexity, and violence of events it has proved the hardest test, with political and humanitarian roles on a collision course when they were intended to be complementary. Somalia has painfully demonstrated the limitations of military operations in assisting humanitarian aid, particularly in a peace enforcement role under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. Above all the crisis has raised questions about the critical nature of US-UN relationships.

Neutrality of humanitarian operations has been a problem since the onset of the crisis. Changes in UN attitudes and actions have continually threatened the non-partisan positioning of aid agencies. In particular the retaliatory, enforcement role of the UN/US forces following the June 1993 killing of Pakistani UN troops heightened concern. Yet it must be recorded that humanitarian services could never be totally de-linked from the political and security operations. Indeed at the height of the anarchy in mid-1992 many humanitarian voices were calling for the international community, and specifically the UN, to provide both the political/security and humanitarian framework. For the international system the enduring problem is how its main agent, the UN, slipped from welfare to warfare.

Operational, in-country coordination of humanitarian aid is the other main issue to arise from the Somalia crisis. Progressive changes have been made by the UN system to deal with

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[9] Penrose,A. and Timpson,A., Submission by Save the Children to the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Select Committee on the UN, 1993.

failures of coordination, but with little international agreement about what the word actually means.

By contrast the progress of humanitarian assistance in Somaliland, with minimal UN political involvement, suggests the international system should first seek local solutions. Importing an international formula, even if one emerges from recent crises, may still not meet the need.

Issues, Conclusions and Recommendations:

4.1 Failure of response by the international system

The swing of international response from negligent inactivity to a full-scale military intervention highlights the inconsistency of the system, and its subjection to the wider political context. The early failure of response is well documented[10]. It was not due to lack of information or failure in early warning systems, although there is always room for improvement in these. It appears that security rather than sovereignty prevented the UN from acting more decisively.

Recommendation

4.1.1 Somalia should be analysed as a test case to devise new, more flexible security

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[10] See Penrose, ibid, especially chronology.

guidelines. This should not be an internal bureaucratic procedure, but a system-wide process in a forum such as the IASC structure.

4.2 The limitations of humanitarian intervention

The anarchy of Somalia in late 1992 weakens any legal case upholding the intervention as a guiding precedent for a doctrine overriding the state sovereignty principle. The world political context gives a fuller explanation for the intervention. The practical consequences provide the strongest argument for recognising its limitations.

Recommendation

4.2.1. Somalia should be cited to illustrate the limits rather than extension of humanitarian intervention. But it should not totally annul consideration of a role for military forces in assisting humanitarian operations.

4.3. The limitations of military operations

With the failures of the various UN-sanctioned military options in Somalia, there has been a tendency to write off all military assistance in such a situation. The fear is that "the military means are in danger of taking over from the humanitarian ends"[11]. But a properly mandated, resourced and trained peacekeeping force might still be a viable option. In essence the humanitarian operation became too dependent on the military operation with no guidelines

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[11] 'Dial Emergency', The Economist, 17/8/93.

to help it work alongside the military, whilst maintaining effective independence.

Recommendation

4.3.1 The Somalia experience should be analysed to help humanitarian agencies establish guidelines for working alongside military operations. Again a forum such as the IASC might be appropriate.

4.4 Managing the political/security and humanitarian balance

At secretariat level the Somali experience demonstrates the problems which can arise when there is a division of responsibility between UN departments for political and humanitarian affairs. Policy issues remained unaddressed for the lack of clarity about responsibility for overall strategy, as witnessed with James Jonah's much-criticised visit in January 1992.

The appointment of an in-country UN head covering both political and humanitarian affairs, the special representative of the secretary general, has not redressed the balance. Indeed, the degree of humanitarian commitment in the UN operation has lessened since the departure of the first special representative, Sahnoun. The humanitarian objectives of foreign intervention have become overshadowed by a focus on military and political objectives. Humanitarian assistance and the organisations providing it have become either linked to the political process or have become identified with particular political positions. Save the Children's attempts to express neutrality and humanitarian concern have been associated with support for General Aideed. The confusion between the political process and humanitarian assistance will hamper

the effectiveness of any humanitarian aid organisation including the UN agencies.

Recommendation

4.4.1 An overall strategy for political and humanitarian progress, based on an informed analysis of local political and economic realities is still required. This should include a UN coordinated relief effort, within which UN agencies and NGO's could perform their usual functions. To reach this position after the recent polarisation of the UN operation will take a radical reappraisal and probably change of senior personnel.

4.4.2 Within the overall framework, it is vital that an independent humanitarian strategy and structure is developed, clearly based on need. The independent humanitarian mandate of the aid organisations needs to be reasserted to support such a structure and divorced from the immediate political processes.

Whilst aid may have political dividends, need not political goals, should direct it.

4.5 Co-ordination

Again the confusion over co-ordination both pre and post DHA is well documented. The establishment of the DHA created a new opportunity, but the immediate division between operational (Geneva) and political (New York) centres perpetuated an existing weakness.

In-country there have been three DHA co-ordinators, who have struggled to win the confidence of the aid community. Problems have been reported both vertically up to the

SRSG and horizontally with UN agencies. Confusion over the meaning of co-ordination has been reflected in practice, especially between UNOSOM/DHA and UNDP. Some recent improvements were reported.

4.5.1 It is necessary to establish a non-managerial, co-operative model of co-ordination, which can only be facilitated by DHA in UNOSOM. This does not preclude accountability. For example, NGO's taking part in a multi-agency operation should forfeit UN protection for unwarranted breach of agreement.

4.6 Appropriate aid

From the beginning of the crisis there were opportunities to support remaining civil structures. For example, SCF's objective was to maintain the structure of basic mother and child health services. The decision by UN agencies not to deal with those who overthrew the government in 1991 missed an opportunity. This makes for an interesting comparison with Somaliland, where there has been no major famine. Here there has been little external assistance, but ministries have attempted to function.

Any progress towards peace and stability must now be seen as a slow, incremental process.

Recommendations

4.6.1 Whilst meeting immediate humanitarian needs, aid should also be supporting rehabilitation work: the reestablishment of welfare services, the revitalisation of the economy, and the reconstruction of the political process. This is not the same as diverting

humanitarian aid to serve political goals.

4.6.2 Aid should be suited to local circumstances. Local structures where they still exist should be used and strengthened, and Somali people involved in conception, planning and implementation. The incremental approach also means that more emphasis should be placed on rehabilitation in the north of Somalia.