

Part III: Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development

Chapter 8

The Will to Bridge? European Commission and U.S. Approaches to Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development

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This chapter assesses the approaches of the European Commission and the United States Government to linking relief, rehabilitation and development (LRRD). It provides an analysis of their policies, strategies and field approaches in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), South Sudan, Chad and Afghanistan. The analysis shows that promoting LRRD would be easier if systemic tensions between the humanitarian and development sectors were tackled more openly. Currently, the donors' implicit circumvention of these tensions prevents creativity and pragmatism in reaching across the aisle.

In the case study countries, humanitarian assistance has been delivered for decades, sometimes interrupted when a post-conflict phase seemed to be reached. During these phases, donor budgets for food aid, health provisions and other forms of refugee and IDP support were cut and humanitarian aid agencies had to leave, just to return shortly after when fighting and mass displacement resumed. The resulting long term use of short term humanitarian instruments has led to persistent calls to render them more complementary to longer term development instruments. Reacting to this pressure, donors have increasingly underlined their intent to achieve this. Yet moving beyond expressions of intent has proven difficult.

The guiding humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and independence create tensions with a developmental approach that is based on cooperating with national governments. Development assistance is willing to take sides and to pursue broadly political agendas. Principled humanitarians clearly reject such activities for themselves. Institutional compartmentalization and differences in operational activities further contribute to the challenges around linking the two sectors. However, the core question is to what extent the humanitarian and development sectors are *willing* to work together without compromising their distinct identities. To increase credibility and transparency—core values of both the U.S. Government and the European Commission—both donors should make a clear decision if they want to mainstream LRRD into their guidance documents, funding decisions, and field action or if they regard it as threatening the humanitarian identity.

During the last decades, the understanding of what LRRD means has shifted. The assistance *continuum*, dominated by hand-over thinking, has given way to the *contiguum*, which calls for simultaneity and complementarity of different aid instruments to increase their effectiveness. Proponents of LRRD argue that humanitarian assistance can work to the detriment of development in various ways and should strive to prevent that. It may prolong conflict because it frees fighting parties from the pressure to fend for the population under their control. It may

also provide incentives for corruption for local government or rebel members, support apathy among beneficiary communities which get used to free hand-outs or distort local economies by importing large amounts of goods. LRRD calls for humanitarians to take that into account. LRRD for the development sector may mean to increase contributions to preparedness and to be more willing to engage in conflict settings, as their work may deliver important peace dividends.

Despite apparent difficulties to promote LRRD, possibilities for it do exist even in situations of recurring conflict and humanitarian need. For example, training nurses in IDP or refugee camps who are able to react to unexpected displacement movements reconciles the humanitarian and the development realm. But mostly, this kind of capacity strengthening is perceived as being too long term oriented and as subtracting funds from more immediate in-kind service delivery. Investing in people and their existing capacities is perceived as beyond the humanitarian mandate. Better trained nurses, doctors, and water and sanitation specialists originating from the conflict zone, however, are also able to contribute to the health systems development donors aim to support in certain countries of protracted crisis. This is just one example where a genuine link between relief and development could be established. However, these opportunities are rarely seized.

This chapter adopts a donor government perspective and identifies challenges and opportunities for both the European Commission and the United States Government in promoting LRRD. A chapter on the UN or on international NGOs would focus on other and certainly more operational aspects. By adopting an explicit donor focus, the study aims to complement the wealth of material that has already been produced on the implementation of LRRD at the field-level. It prioritizes the conceptual and institutional instead of the more operational sector-specific approaches that are usually chosen to analyze LRRD. Comparing the European Commission and the United States Government is a challenging endeavor, as the former is the executive branch of the European Union - a mixture of a supranational and intergovernmental organization¹—while the latter is a national government. The study thus only aims to provide an overview of these two important humanitarian donors and does not claim to provide strictly comparative data.

Given the difficulty of making reliable predictions about the sustainability of peace agreements, of engaging with politically effective authorities, and rampant insecurity of staff members, achieving LRRD is most challenging in conflict-related and protracted crises.² This is why Afghanistan, the DRC, South Sudan, and Chad were chosen as case studies (see following chapters). The chapter thus focuses on complex emergencies and leaves the discussion on the links between LRRD, disaster preparedness and mitigation in natural disaster contexts largely aside.

These case studies included desk research and numerous key informant interviews both by phone and face-to-face at the field and headquarters level. The amount of field research was very limited, however. To further inform the research process two LRRD workshops were held at the GPPi-CTR transatlantic conferences in Berlin and Washington D.C. in 2008.

¹ See chapter 1.

² European Commission, 2001 Communication, p. 6

The chapter is organized into four parts. The first part discusses the conceptual debate around LRRD. The second deals with the strategic, institutional, and financial set-up of both the European Commission and the United States with regards to LRRD. The third part synthesizes core findings from the four case studies and leads to the fourth part, the recommendations. These recommendations aim to open up avenues for increased interaction between the humanitarian and development sectors to achieve stronger links between relief, rehabilitation and development. The evidence gathered about the two most important donors' differences and commonalities in approach may contribute to mutual learning, increased transatlantic cooperation and possibly joint action in times of important political changes on both sides of the Atlantic.

The LRRD Concept—Evolution, Challenges and Implications

Although conceptual thinking about linking relief, rehabilitation and development (LRRD)³ already started in the late 1980s, there still appears to be no common understanding of the nature, scope and operational relevance of the concept.⁴ This is not surprising given its complexity. The desperate call of many practitioners and academics to put the conceptual debates to rest and focus on more operational and pragmatic steps to promote LRRD is thus understandable. It remains beyond doubt, however, that increased conceptual clarity would also facilitate better implementation. “A lack of clarity at headquarters may lead to serious policy confusion at the operating level,” as Smilie and Minear put it.⁵ There is nothing to lose, but a lot to gain in trying to bring more clarity into current debates around transition, early recovery and LRRD.

What LRRD Aims to Link

Anything close to a consensus on what LRRD means hinges upon a common understanding of the activities of relief, rehabilitation and development that are to be linked. Unfortunately, in attempting to define the borders of these concepts, one cannot help but concede that “there are more grey than black and white areas—certainly much more than many in the humanitarian sector are prepared to acknowledge.”⁶ An important part of the humanitarian sector would argue that relief or humanitarian assistance is a short-term measure; it aims to save lives and to alleviate suffering, respects the humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality, and independence, and does not address the root causes of the crisis at hand. However, a multitude of organizations do much more than that under the label of humanitarianism: They address human rights violations by sending bulletins on rebel or state atrocities across the globe or by

³ See Ian Smilie, “Relief and Development: The Struggle for Synergy,” Thomas J. Watson Jr. Institute for International Studies, Occasional Paper #33 (1998), p. xxv and footnote 14, who argues that the term “LRRD” was developed as an “alternative to continuum thinking” during the 1960–80s, and may have emerged from a 1994 IDS Conference.

⁴ For an overview on LRRD thinking, see Smilie (1998), *Ibid.*, pp. xxii–xxvi; Margaret Buchanan-Smith and Paola Fabbri, *LRRD—A Review of the Debate* (Tsunami Evaluation Coalition, 2005); Margaret Buchanan-Smith and Simon Maxwell, “Linking Relief and Development: An Introduction and Overview,” *IDS Bulletin* 24, no. 4 (1994), pp. 2–16.

⁵ Ian Smilie/Larry Minear, *The Quality of Money: Donor Behavior in Humanitarian Financing* (2003), p. 16.

⁶ Michael Barnett/Thomas G. Weiss, *Humanitarianism in Question—Politics, Power, Ethics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008), p.14.

Box 1. Some Humanitarian Workers' Ideas on the Humanitarian-Development Distinction¹

Interviews in Goma, Kinshasa, Brussels, and Washington D.C. revealed that explanations abound for the core difference between the development and the humanitarian logic. However, the overarching objective of both humanitarian and development assistance is to support people who need it. This common objective is rarely cited. Instead, representatives refer to their differences. An ECHO official stated that humanitarian aid deals with vulnerability and focuses on the individual, while development aid aims to fight poverty and focuses on the community. An OFDA official agreed that humanitarian aid deals with vulnerability and saw development focusing on the viable. In addition, humanitarian aid replaced extraordinary state functions, while development aid took over or supported ordinary state functions. Because of these differences, an OCHA representative said that the link between relief, rehabilitation and development was “not really viable, but necessary,” a statement that underlines nicely the paradox and complexity of that conceptual conundrum: it does not really work but it should be followed.

Although presented as dichotomies, all these terms are interconnected. Vulnerability often depends on poverty; the individual is part of a community; and viability is not opposed to vulnerability, it refers rather to utility and feasibility while vulnerability is the description of the state of an individual. But the crucial part of the statements made by both European Commission and U.S. officials is not necessarily what they see as the difference but the fact that they construct a clear difference without acknowledging the links at the conceptual level.

This is, of course, not a new observation. The clear separation gets blurred if humanitarians become interested in societal change. The OECD stated already in 2006: “Like other donors, [the U.S.] has also been considering the relative merits of “traditional” as opposed to “activist” approaches to humanitarian action. Whereas the former emphasizes neutrality and impartiality, the latter seeks to address underlying causes of humanitarian crises, such as conflict, and is prepared to take sides to achieve other goals, such as improving medium-term security.”²

1 Taken from the DRC case study.

2 OECD, The United States. Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Peer Review (2006), p. 81.

lobbying governments and the UN. Some also aim to alleviate poverty, or provide access to medicines to prevent future suffering.⁷ This comes close to what is often understood by development assistance: reducing poverty, promoting adherence to human rights, increasing human security, or even democratization. In addition, development assistance is said to be more long-term oriented and tends to cooperate closely with the government or civil society. “Rehabilitation” is in an even more difficult state. Often lumped together with recovery or reconstruction,

⁷ Ibid, p. 11.

its meaning can be best described as something between humanitarian and development assistance, even though these terms themselves are far from being clearly delineated.

While many implementing organizations do combine both humanitarian and development approaches in their work, bureaucratic logic has it that donors have greater difficulties in linking both areas. In addition, influential humanitarian organizations like the International Committee of the Red Cross and Médecins sans Frontières are forcefully opposing the call for closer integration and cooperation.⁸ This chapter pays strong attention to the conceptual fights between humanitarianism and development because these actors, as well as the European Commission and the U.S., take the distinction very seriously.

The following interview excerpts from the Congo case study illustrate how creatively borders and conceptions are drawn and how the conceptual debates are mirrored in the convictions of humanitarian staff on the ground. Building on the assumption that staff ideas are paramount for policy implementation, this shows that more clarity on boundaries and areas for potential integration would help promote LRRD.

How LRRD Aims to Link

Building on this core challenge of identifying the borders and potential commonalities of humanitarian and development assistance, one can tackle the next challenge: How to organize the linking? It should be kept in mind, however, that linking tends to imply a broader humanitarian mandate that is willing to compromise the purity of the humanitarian principles.

Linear Transition Revisited

Initial thinking on LRRD presumed a rather linear and continuous transition from humanitarian to development assistance, the “continuum model” of LRRD. From that perspective, LRRD is a matter of sequencing relief, rehabilitation and development assistance, and of defining appropriate exit strategies for relief and recovery interventions. This type of linear transition is most likely to occur, if ever, in natural disaster situations in which the government is not contested through conflict and disposes of strong emergency response capacities. In such contexts, relief and rehabilitation can be perceived of as temporary measures designed to deal with an extraordinary disaster situation until a level of socio-economic “normalcy” is achieved and external support becomes unnecessary.

However, even in such contexts, transition is hardly ever linear in the sense of rehabilitation succeeding the relief phase, followed by that of development. Rather, practice and research have shown that LRRD is best pursued if rehabilitation and (return-to) development measures are implemented immediately after the start of and alongside relief activities. Findings of the LRRD studies undertaken by the Tsunami Evaluation Coalition (TEC) have made a case in

⁸ Donini et al. (2008) distinguish between four types of humanitarian actors: 1.Principled; 2.Pragmatist; 3. Solidarist and 4. Faith-based. See Antonio Donini, et al., “The State of the Humanitarian Enterprise,” Feinstein International Center, Tufts University (2008), p. 11.

point for the response to the Indian Ocean Tsunami which for too long was dominated by service-delivery response (i.e. direct handouts of goods).⁹

Context Matters! LRRD in Protracted Crises and Post-Conflict Situations

LRRD is particularly relevant for protracted crises and post-conflict situations. In these aid contexts, it is even more difficult to observe linear transition. Conflict trajectories are usually not linear, but highly dynamic and periodically shifting from periods in which transition appears possible back to full-fledged armed hostilities. Many crises are “protracted,” with conflict and natural disasters reinforcing instability and poverty. Moreover, existing government authorities may support transition and development in some parts of the country for political motives, but not in others.

As a result, different population groups are likely to have different needs at the same time. Thus, relief, rehabilitation and development assistance may actually coexist and overlap. This insight has given way to what is referred to as a “contiguum” approach to LRRD, a term reportedly coined by the European Commission. The contiguum acknowledges that different aid instruments need to be applied simultaneously, in complementary fashion and linked across space and time.¹⁰ Given that even in natural disasters linear transition is neither likely nor desirable, the “contiguum model” of LRRD, is now largely considered, including by donors, to be more adequate than its “continuum” predecessor.¹¹ However, the latter approach continues to be dominant and strongly influences current approaches to “achieving LRRD,” in particular among donors, despite them saying that a contiguum approach to LRRD is generally more adequate.

Implications of the Current Understanding of LRRD

Despite the evolution of the concept from continuum to contiguum, the latter faces substantial implementation challenges and implies crucial choices the assistance community has to make. Under the assumption that every crisis has a designated time slot for either humanitarian or development actors, assistance is comparably easy to organize. It also better allows the humanitarian sector to stay faithful to the principles. By contrast, the expectation that all actors should stay alert and engage in a complementary fashion requires a much higher level of analysis and communication and even compromise among them.

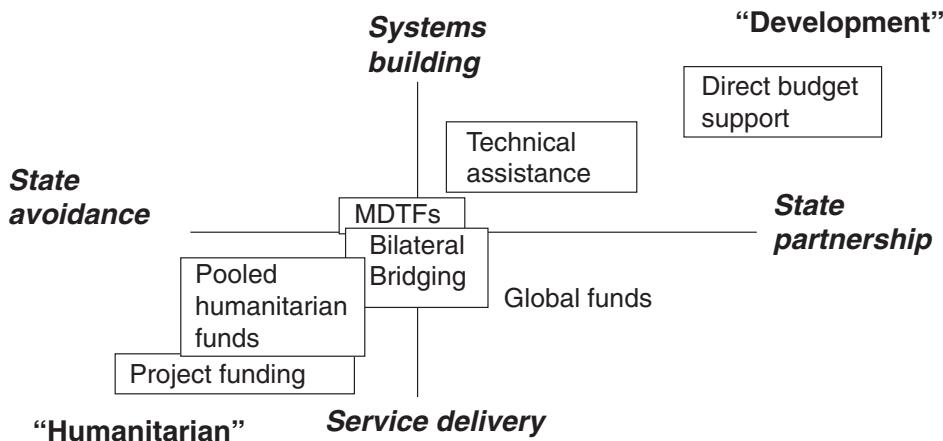
Working with the State and Building Systems

The core dilemmas of LRRD in protracted crises evolve around the relationship with the state and the willingness to promote more long-term systems building. This is a consequence of the relationship between humanitarian neutrality and independence and development assistance with its more transformative outlook. Establishing, for example, a sustainable health sys-

⁹ See the 2006 studies of the Tsunami Evaluation Coalition.

¹⁰ Smilie (1998), op. cit.

¹¹ Buchanan-Smith and Fabbri, 2005, op. cit.; Smilie (1998), op. cit., p. vi

Figure 1.

Source: Olga Bornemisza, Ann Canavan, Petra Vergeer, *Post-Conflict Health Sectors: The Myth and Reality of Transitional Funding Gaps*, Health and Fragile States Network, Royal Tropical Institute, Amsterdam, 2008.

tem in a protracted crisis region is not possible without engaging the political authorities in the area. Getting access to internally displaced persons (IDPs) or refugees in order to hand out food aid (the service-delivery approach) also has to be negotiated in case of conflict, but actors do not necessarily need to build a solid working relationship with the respective authorities. They do the handouts themselves. From a donor perspective, these fundamental choices translate into different funding mechanisms, implying different levels of working or not working with the state and building or not building systems. The following graph from the Dutch *Royal Tropical Institute* illustrates this:

The graph shows overlaps that make rigid linear phase thinking hard to sustain. When a donor provides, say, technical assistance, pooled humanitarian funds, and project funding in a country at the same time, these mechanisms need to be simultaneous and complementary. This points to the contiguum logic. A clear-cut phase approach would only be thinkable if donors engaged with only one instrument at a time, i.e. only project funding or only direct budget support. In the protracted crises of our case studies this is clearly not the case.

At the heart of LRRD is therefore the choice to be made between working with the state or not, and of being willing to build systems instead of engaging in decade-long service delivery in protracted crises—in short, to adhere to the strictly humanitarian logic described in the first section or to be ready to integrate a more developmental perspective. This choice has direct implications for increased accountability to beneficiaries and to their ownership. The following paragraph attempts to explain why.

LRRD and Ownership

As argued by Beatrice Pouliquen,¹² local ownership is increasingly recognized as important even in the humanitarian realm. Ownership thinking requires focusing on cooperative processes in the theatre of intervention as much as on impact. Cooperative processes are understood as an end in themselves. A logistical service delivery approach may have an impact on affected populations in the short term, but in its current state does not allow a serious participatory process that would increase accountability towards them and increase long term impact. This is the case because this approach tends to be accompanied by state avoidance and avoidance of almost all categories of local actors. This may partly be explained by the humanitarian duty to remain neutral and the resulting fear to get trapped in the complex social environments of conflict zones. But if neutrality is understood as not engaging in communication and cooperation with those concerned, the principle becomes self-defeating. Such an understanding is detrimental to establishing sustainable partnerships in humanitarian assistance.

Furthermore, the assumption that community level or local level partnerships can be sustainable without dealing with the state or its temporary subsidiary in rebel held zones is unrealistic. The separation between state and society often found in humanitarian and development discourse comes very close to wishful thinking. One cannot provide assistance in a conflict zone against the will of the reigning power brokers. Even when trying to circumvent them, the work of humanitarian agencies will be inadvertently influenced and even determined by them. Thus, establishing partnerships with the people who receive assistance also requires entering into negotiations with those exerting power over them. This is what state partnership and systems-building also call for and this is where LRRD can be strengthened.

Donors adopting a less rigidly compartmentalized approach to humanitarian assistance and development are thus better placed to live up to the calls for ownership. With its consideration of the long term impact of humanitarian assistance, LRRD is thus a useful framework to promote beneficiary ownership in humanitarian assistance. It is an open question, however, if the broader humanitarian mandate resulting from this really is in the interest of humanitarian donors.

Three Ways to Square the LRRD Circle

To illustrate the implications of this core question consider two hypothetical scenarios on how to square the LRRD circle that aim to expose the inherent contradiction in adhering to humanitarian principles and to LRRD *at the same time*. The first scenario shows the possibility of promoting LRRD if all aid sectors adopt the humanitarian rationale. The second explores the opposite: All sectors openly do international politics.

Scenario 1: Humanitarian assistance remains true to independence and neutrality, as most of the guidance suggests. As a consequence, to eliminate the conceptual contradictions in the call for LRRD, donors work hard to reframe development assistance as a solely needs-based activity without any political objectives. To push this further and to live up to the calls for

¹² Béatrice Pouliquen, *Supporting Local Ownership in Humanitarian Action*, GPPi Policy Paper, 2009, available at: www.disaster-governance.net/publications

increased civil-military coordination coming from the security end of the aid spectrum, even the military adopts this rationale. In such a scenario, linking humanitarian, development and military assistance would become quite feasible, as they would have the same objective: Saving lives without politics. LRRD could become a reality.

Scenario 2: Humanitarian assistance abandons strict adherence to the humanitarian principles and acknowledges that it is politics in two ways. First, as an important tool of harnessing *soft power* for both the Commission and the U.S., humanitarian assistance is explicitly integrated into the family of foreign assistance tools. It so becomes a field of experts being logically able and willing to take risks while contributing to the overarching policy aim of reducing suffering and poverty worldwide. This stabilizes international order, prevents terrorism from spreading and migrants from migrating. Second, humanitarian assistance has considerable political effects in its area of intervention—another reason why the decision to consider it a political affair was taken wisely. Linking relief, rehabilitation, and development becomes a rather straightforward affair, for humanitarians, development agencies and the military pursue the same political objectives and are eager to work together. However, humanitarian access to populations in need in politically sensitive countries becomes severely restricted and security of humanitarian personnel continues to deteriorate.

The current approach of living with the contradictions and to keep muddling through, we may call this **scenario 3**, has to be situated between these two extreme cases. Muddling through, however, is not squaring the LRRD circle. Complementarity is not systematically sought and cooperation between donor departments is haphazard and scarce in contrast to the situation in scenarios one and two. Tensions and contradictions remain deliberately untackled. For donors, this may of course be a very suitable strategy. It has worked for the last twenty years and might continue to do so for the coming decades. Particularly the humanitarian sector has attracted increasing budgetary support over the years by mobilising around the principles and by not explicitly refusing the calls for more cooperation with the other parts of the aid spectrum—such as LRRD. Whether this is the most effective assistance possible remains in doubt.

Most publications on humanitarian assistance call for preserving a narrow humanitarian mandate without providing hard evidence for its superior effectiveness. Recent statements by reputable scholars underline this. Analyzing the impact of integrated missions and the broader humanitarian mandate enshrined in it on the security of humanitarian personnel, Adele Harmer states: “Organizations based their arguments on anecdote and general speculation, and were limited in their argumentation because most information about the security of humanitarian operations is not shared among humanitarian agencies.”¹³ Referring to the coherence debate and thus on the relative benefits of narrow and broad humanitarian mandates, Antonio Donini acknowledges that “despite the new data, however, it remains unclear whether greater coherence makes a difference in terms of how aid agencies are able to do their work and/or are perceived by local communities.”¹⁴ He further qualifies this by stating: “‘Integration’ and ‘coherence’ are not particularly controversial from the perspectives of commun-

¹³ Adele Harmer, “Integrated missions—A Threat to Human Security?” *International Peacekeeping*, 15 Vol. 4 (2008), p. 533.

¹⁴ Donini et al. (2008), p. 18.

ties in DRC, while they are in Afghanistan and Iraq.”¹⁵ Detailed and context-specific analysis is thus required. Increasing attention to LRRD could facilitate this. In some contexts a narrow mandate might be desirable in others a broader one.

Although considering strategic muddling through as an explanation for current donor approaches, this chapter is based on the assumption that the reasons for not moving forward on LRRD lie in a lack of conceptual scrutiny and clarity. Despite the calls to move the debate to the more operational level, it seems paramount to provide more clarity on the matter. Norms and ideas shape the way institutions are built and how they operate. Contradictory norms lead to overly complicated institutions. At the institutional level, it is thus critical to gauge the commitment of donor departments to the differing and partly opposing messages sent by normative and strategic LRRD guidance documents. More specifically, it means to scrutinize to which parts of these messages the departments revert to.

Donors and LRRD

Why a Donor Perspective on LRRD?

Most policy research and evaluations on LRRD, including those commissioned by donors themselves, so far have focused on the ‘LRRD quality’ of aid projects by implementing aid agencies, either by sector (e.g. food security, shelter, water and sanitation), by project region or a combination thereof.¹⁶ Given the often high numbers of relief agencies on the ground and the corresponding challenge of proper coordination, this focus on implementing agencies is understandable. At the same time, the extent to which donors, as one important actor group in humanitarian action, may be able to promote LRRD objectives—particularly through the provision of funding to specific assistance projects and initiatives—remains understudied.

This chapter argues that adopting a LRRD focus, which spans policy formulation as well as crisis-related decision-processes and funding decisions, enables donors to think more clearly about the often quite solid boundaries between their humanitarian and development departments. By clarifying existing boundaries, strategic aims and recognizing bureaucratic egoisms, donors can enter a negotiation process between their different departments resulting in greater flexibility. This promises to increase the effectiveness of donor assistance strategies because it better takes diverse needs and complex social processes into account.

¹⁵ Donini et al. (2008), p. 20

¹⁶ The Tsunami Evaluation Coalition e.g. focused on how LRRD had been achieved (or not) in tsunami-hit Aceh and Sri Lanka. Also see Groupe URD: Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development in Afghanistan (2007). For sectoral studies on LRRD, see e.g. Aqua Consult, “Concept Paper for Mainstreaming Water and Sanitation in Emergencies, Protracted Crises, LRRD and Disaster Preparedness Operations,” commissioned by DG ECHO (2005). For evaluations of the LRRD quality of donor-funded activities in specific crisis contexts, see e.g. Peter M. Schimann, Joanne Philpott (AGEG Consultants), ”Mid-Term Evaluation of DG ECHO Financed Actions in the Greater Horn of Africa” (2007) .

European Commission and U.S. Approaches to LRRD

European Commission

Given the conceptual complexity indicated in section one, it is not surprising that clarifying the role of humanitarian and development assistance is a challenge for the European Commission. This is visible in the core strategic guidance documents the EU has issued both to motivate member states to harmonize their policies and to bind the Commission's approaches. Contradictions exist for example between and within the European Union *Consensus on Humanitarian Aid* and the *Consensus on Development*. These contradictions show how difficult it is to implement LRRD when confronted with the bureaucratic and principled urge to preserve and fortify established boundaries and separate mandates.

Conceptual Challenges

The 2007 *EU Consensus on Humanitarian Aid* states that the humanitarian principle of “independence means the autonomy of humanitarian objectives from political, economic, military or other objectives.”¹⁷ However, the *Consensus* also underlines that “in transitional environments, there remains a need to ensure synergies between humanitarian and development assistance whilst respecting their distinct objectives, principles and approaches.”¹⁸ This is the core contradiction: Synergies cannot be found by staying completely autonomous. Furthermore, while “[t]he principles that apply to humanitarian aid are specific and distinct from other forms of aid, EU humanitarian aid, including early recovery, should take long-term development objectives into account where possible, and is closely linked to development cooperation whose principles and practices are outlined in ‘the European Consensus on Development’.”¹⁹

That 2005 *EU Consensus on Development* adds another level of contradiction, as it regards humanitarian assistance as a *modality* of development assistance and thus situated *under* its umbrella not *next to* it. This is a problem from principled humanitarian action: “Development assistance can be provided through different modalities that can be complementary (project aid, sector programme support, sector and general budget support, *humanitarian aid* [emphasis added] and assistance in crisis prevention, support to and via the civil society, [...], etc.), according to what will work best in each country”²⁰. The Humanitarian Consensus has not replaced the Development Consensus. Both are valid guidance documents and LRRD applies to both the humanitarian and the development DGs of the Commission.

The crux of the matter is: How do you take “development objectives” into account while staying “autonomous” of any other objectives than humanitarian ones? Is there really a way of squaring this circle? The LRRD logic would say so, but existing guidance and institutional

¹⁷ EU (2007), *Consensus on Humanitarian Aid*, paragraph 22.

¹⁸ EU (2007), *Consensus on Humanitarian Aid*, paragraph 78.

¹⁹ EU (2007), *Consensus on Humanitarian Aid*, paragraph 22.

²⁰ EU (2005) *Consensus on Development*, paragraph 26.

setups point to the opposite while calling for LRRD at the same time. The guidance documents issue contradictory messages.

The 2007 *EU Communication Towards an EU Response to Situations of Fragility* mirrors this. It states with regard to LRRD that “the purpose remains to try and achieve better harmonisation of analyses and policies, integration of strategies (including coordination, coherence, complementarity), and synergy of activities over a period of time, covering both humanitarian and development approaches to the situation.”²¹ As distinct approaches, they are, again, regarded as different entities and thus impossible to link²² or even integrate. LRRD features prominently in this Communication and is presented as a post-crisis response strategy, even connecting to overarching “governance and security concerns,” which is certainly far outside a narrow humanitarian mandate. The recently devised programming guide for strategy papers *Integrated Transition Strategies*²³ from October 2008 calls for “very close liaison” between different Directorate Generals and for “linking and integrating in a complementary way different interventions and instruments.”²⁴ It remains unclear, however, how this integration of strategies shall be achieved without damaging fundamental humanitarian principles or, to the contrary, “de-politicizing” development cooperation (see scenario one above). Is there really a way to link the two assistance logics if they are understood as following distinct and even opposing principles?

Institutional Challenges

The European Commission has made efforts to clarify the roles and responsibilities of its humanitarian and development services, but the institutional setup remains as complex as the strategic guidance analyzed above. In the European Commission, five Directorate Generals are involved in humanitarian and development assistance: DG ECHO as the lead-DG in humanitarian assistance,²⁵ DG Development as the development and foreign policy lead for African, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) countries, DG RELEX for the non-ACP countries, DG AIDCO as their implementing agency and DG Environment when it comes to civil protection activities. Similar to the U.S. missions, from 2004 on the European Commission has engaged in a de-concentration process transferring authority for funding decisions, programming and contracting to its country delegations. This process, however, only concerns DEV, RELEX and AIDCO. ECHO does not participate in this process and operates largely independently from the EU Delegation. This is, of course, not very conducive to establishing links through joint assessments or planning. This underlines the ambivalence which ECHO experiences in promoting LRRD while trying to remain independent. In this instance, ECHO prioritizes distinction and separation over synergies and complementarity.

²¹ EU COM(2007) 643 final, p. 8.

²² Accepting the identity of humanitarian assistance as separate and purely independent from everything else makes linking impossible. You can only link entities that have a minimal degree of overlap. Linking French to English, for example, would only make sense if some French words existed also in English and vice versa. A certain degree of commonality is required. The narrow humanitarian mandate prohibits this, as it is completely separate.

²³ European Commission (2008), *Programming Guide for Strategy Papers, Programming Fiche, Integrated Transition Strategies*.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 2.

²⁵ In 2007, the short-term food aid budget line moved from DG Europe Aid to ECHO, which means that it is now able to provide a multi-sectoral assistance package.

As LRRD is about linking humanitarian and development assistance, it is important to note that the revised 2005 *Cotonou Accord* established a complex system for European Commission development assistance. Disbursing the intergovernmental European Development Funds in its A- and B-envelopes,²⁶ it is based on the cooperation between a National Authorizing Officer (usually the Minister of Finance or his designee) and the European Commission Head of Delegation. The EU draws up a Country Strategy Paper (CSP) which is then signed into a National Indicative Program (NIP) after joint consultations between the European Commission and the respective government. The political development rationale of working with the state cannot be made institutionally more obvious. The B-envelopes can be used for emergency assistance. It is often from this fund that Commission “LRRD-programs” as seen in Chad, DRC and Afghanistan are financed.²⁷ This creates a window of opportunity for LRRD. However, the crucial relationship to ECHO remains untouched by this budgetary instrument managed by DG RELEX, DEV and AIDCO.

The realignment of European Commission foreign assistance instruments in 2007 has introduced changes that may improve the implementation of LRRD. In particular the newly established Food Security Thematic Program managed by AIDCO offers a potential opportunity. In addition, the RELEX-managed Instrument for Stability may prove flexible enough to reconcile short-term with long-term assistance although the Instrument for Stability strategy paper of 2007 states that a clear distinction can be made between it, the European Development Fund, the Development Cooperation Instrument and ECHO funds. The strategy stresses that the Instrument for Stability will only be used in “the post-crisis early recovery phase (as opposed to the more immediate humanitarian relief phase).”²⁸ Obviously, this is a hard distinction to make. It also follows continuum thinking despite the official acceptance of the contiguum concept.

At the operational level, the institutional and strategic lack of clarity is mirrored in various documents guiding European Commission funding decisions connected to LRRD. The 2008 ECHO operational strategy for the Democratic Republic of Congo states, for example, that it will “step up its advocacy for, and active involvement in, LRRD to address more effectively many of the root causes of peoples’ vulnerability to food crises (poverty, livelihood erosion, chronic food-insecurity).” This constitutes a major step into the direction of the conceptual integration of humanitarian and development assistance, as it explicitly acknowledges that vulnerability and poverty are linked. Nevertheless, it violates the humanitarian principle of independence from any objective other than humanitarian.

In addition, the current Financial Partnership Agreement (FPA) which NGOs have to sign to be eligible for ECHO funds mentions LRRD as a cross-cutting issue and asks NGOs to present their “continuum strategy.”²⁹ While cross-cutting issues could be regarded as overarching and important in general, they tend to be those topics that administrations do not really

²⁶ See chapter 1 and case study chapters for specific examples of B-envelope use.

²⁷ See case study chapters for more.

²⁸ http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/worldwide/stability-instrument/documents/ifs_strategy_2007-2011_en.pdf, January 14, 2008.

²⁹ ECHO 2007 FPA, p. 7.

know how to deal with. Gender also tends to be a cross-cutting issue.³⁰ Moreover, the FPA wording disregards the official European Commission communication on LRRD of 2001; the Inter-Service Group report on the implementation of LRRD from 2003; The Inter-Service Quality Support Group LRRD programming guide of 2006; and the preliminary LRRD analysis framework by still referring to a continuum instead of a contiguum.

The 2001 LRRD Communication called for an integration of LRRD thinking into the Country Strategy Paper (CSP) process³¹ managed by DG RELEX, DG DEV and DG AIDCO and into ECHO Global Plans. As seen in the DRC case, however, the DRC 2002-2006 CSP and the subsequent addenda signed in 2005 and 2007 do not mention LRRD at all. Furthermore, there is an explicit LRRD-program in Eastern DRC, managed by the EU Delegation. The country strategy does not even mention this program. The same applies to the new CSP 2008-2013, mentioning humanitarian assistance on half a page despite its yearly allocation of roughly €50 million and the stated aim to mainstream LRRD thinking into it.³² By contrast, the ECHO Global Plan 2008 frequently alludes to LRRD and underlines ECHO's willingness to "pursue the Commission's policy of LRRD." It is doubtful whether this is actually implemented to any meaningful extent.³³

These examples show that hand-over and continuum thinking still abound even at the strategic headquarters level, although such approaches have officially been declared dead since 2001. The deliberately unresolved tensions between the humanitarian and development assistance logics are the basis for this. Moreover, more specific operational guidelines, strategies and plans remain imprecise. Clarifying and explicitly naming areas of integration and separation may enable the European Commission to come to terms with the complex call for simultaneous and joint planning, assessing, and partial implementation which LRRD and the contiguum idea imply.

United States

LRRD is not a common term within the U.S. assistance family. It uses terms like development-relief, relief to development, or relief, transition, and development. The variety of these terms shows that there is a less focused debate on a specific conception like LRRD. The issues, however, are comparable and have been debated for decades. Already in 1976 a U.S. report stated that the relationship between USAID's disaster assistance programs and its general development programs currently was "conceptually confused."³⁴ The U.S. thus grapples with similar challenges of clarifying boundaries and areas of possible integration.

³⁰ The others are "connectedness," "sustainability" and "mainstreaming (e.g. Disaster Risk Reduction, Children, Human rights, Gender, Environmental impacts, others to be specified)," see ECHO 2007 FPA, p. 7.

³¹ European Commission (2001) *Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development—An assessment*.

³² European Commission (2008), *Country Strategy Paper République Démocratique du Congo 2008-20013*, pp. 22–23.

³³ See DRC chapter for examples of a rather non-linked relationship between ECHO and other European Commission instruments.

³⁴ Olson, *The Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) A Critical Juncture Analysis, 1964–2003* (2005), p. 38.

Conceptual Challenges

The United States has seen major strategic and institutional realignments in the last years and a proliferation of guidance. After the 2002 *Foreign Aid in the National Interest Strategy*, USAID issued in 2004 the *Foreign Aid in the 21st Century White Paper*, which led to the 2005 USAID *Fragile States Strategy*—a remarkable succession of strategic documents. The ensuing 2007–2012 *Strategic Plan for USAID and Department of State* called *Transformational Diplomacy* grapples with the distinction between development and humanitarian assistance: “Humanitarian assistance is [...] the *genesis* [emphasis added, KK] of the transition to long term political, economic, and social investments that can eliminate the root causes of conflict and displacement.”³⁵ This is a delicate choice of terminology. Calling humanitarian assistance the *genesis* of development points to a certain degree of connection and thus of inseparability. Humanitarian assistance “gives birth” to development assistance. However, eliminating root causes is a task of the more “long term political, economic and social investments.” The separation and integration challenge in the U.S. thus resembles that of the European Commission. A connection is supposed to exist, but objectives are said to be separate.

The more specific 2006 *USAID Policy Framework for Bilateral Aid* underlines that humanitarian assistance is provided on the basis of need. Nevertheless it “is often provided to countries where USAID is concerned with other goals, such as transformational development, overcoming fragility, and [...] will be provided in ways that reinforce the Agency’s interests in these other goal areas and set the stage for follow-on development efforts.”³⁶ This is clearly a call for closer cooperation between the humanitarian and development realm—exactly what LRRD requires. It is also an example of clearly and potentially overtly politicized humanitarian assistance. Critics decry that; others may welcome it as transparent and honest.

Yet, even this clear guidance does not manage to eliminate the tensions between linking humanitarian assistance to development and safeguarding the independence of the former. Following the 2005 *Fragile States Strategy*, for example, resistance emerged to the proposition to merge the OFDA Disaster Assistance Teams with the envisioned Fragile States Quick Response Teams on the grounds that OFDA sees its work as distinct and separate from transformative political action.

Nevertheless, the U.S. has made more progress than the European Commission in clarifying what complementarity and cooperation between the humanitarian and development realms may mean. The *USAID/Food for Peace 2008 P.L. 480 Title II Program Policies and Proposal Guidelines* have entirely integrated the LRRD perspective under the name of development-relief. In fact, this document is the clearest and most specific guidance document about LRRD among both the European Commission and the United States. It is used to guide implementing agencies’ applications and program designs and states that in trying to reduce food insecurity, “development-relief programs will usually be designed to achieve both an immediate impact—protecting lives and maintaining consumption levels, and longer-term impacts—helping people and communities build more resilient livelihood bases.”³⁷ In this document, the

³⁵ U.S. Department of State, *Transformational Diplomacy* (Washington, DC, 2007), p. 30.

³⁶ USAID, *Policy Framework for Bilateral Aid: Implementing Transformational Diplomacy through Development* (Washington D.C., 2006), p. 18.

³⁷ USAID, *P.L. 480 Title II Program Policies and Proposal Guidelines* (Washington, DC: 2008), p. 13.

idea that short-term interventions should also contribute to a more long-term approach towards the underlying causes of food insecurity is regarded as self evident. This is an unusual statement, as shown above.

Institutional Challenges

In the U.S., three Departments and one agency are involved in the provision of humanitarian and development assistance: The Department of State, the Government agency USAID (whose head is also Director of Foreign Assistance under the Secretary of State), the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Defense.³⁸

Within USAID, the Department for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance comprises the core humanitarian offices. The Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) has the lead on humanitarian assistance and deals mainly with non-food humanitarian assistance, while the Office of Food for Peace deals with food aid. The newly established Office for Military Affairs, the Conflict Management and Mitigation Office, and the Office for Transition Initiatives also play a role in humanitarian assistance, but only on the margins. The margins, however, are at the core of LRRD. The Office for Transition Initiatives (OTI) is “helping local partners advance peace and democracy in priority countries in crisis. Seizing critical windows of opportunity, OTI works on the ground to provide fast, flexible, short-term assistance targeted at key political transition and stabilization needs.”³⁹ The Conflict Management and Mitigation Office promotes “social cohesion and reconciliation through community-driven reconstruction, building local capacity for decision-making and conflict resolution [...].”⁴⁰

The remaining humanitarian funds are disbursed by the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM) under the authority of the State Department. It has the refugee protection mandate and deals with returning refugees and repatriation programs.

The U.S. Office for Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) decides on the need for country strategies on a case-by-case basis.⁴¹ They are part of an overall USAID country strategy, which points at OFDA’s high degree of integration into the overall U.S. assistance structure. In contrast to the ECHO Global Plans, these strategies remain internal. It is thus hard to gauge what position OFDA has on development-relief. It remains to be seen how OFDA deals with the urge to further integrate and align with the other U.S. foreign assistance actors in the near future—an eternal and recurrent topic within USAID.⁴²

Another novelty embodying LRRD within the U.S. foreign assistance structure is the Office of the State Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization. Drawing on staff from both State and USAID, it is tasked to “prevent or prepare for post-conflict situations, and to help stabilize and reconstruct societies in transition from conflict or civil strife so they can reach a

³⁸ For more, see chapter 1.

³⁹ http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/cross-cutting_programs/transition_initiatives/, May 27, 2009.

⁴⁰ http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/cross-cutting_programs/conflict/support/afr.html, May 27, 2009.

⁴¹ USAID, *Policy Framework for Bilateral Aid* (2006), op. cit., p. 17.

⁴² See Olson (2005), op. cit.

sustainable path towards peace, democracy and a market economy.”⁴³ It is building up a Civilian Response Corps, funded with \$248.6 million in FY 2009, tasked to complement the OFDA disaster assistance and reconstruction teams and the military in post-conflict settings.

This institutional setup is replicated in the U.S. mission structure in the countries of crisis. The U.S. mission there usually hosts staff from OFDA, the Office of Food for Peace and the regional bureaus of USAID that are responsible for the development realm. According to interviewees, Food for Peace exerts less project oversight than OFDA; it is less involved in implementation.

Being part of the overall USAID and U.S. Mission structure, the humanitarian and the development side are institutionally connected. A U.S. official describes it as such for the DRC case: “USAID/DRC has the overall development assistance relationship with the DRC and is the primary office implementing projects using funding allowed to our mission under various accounts (DA, CSH, ESF⁴⁴). Our humanitarian offices, OFDA and FFP, conduct analyses to determine whether that assistance is required. The Ambassador must declare a disaster and request humanitarian assistance in order to allow for these offices to provide assistance.”⁴⁵ However, OFDA and FFP retain a certain degree of autonomy because their funding decisions are made by their headquarters in Washington D.C.⁴⁶

This latter fact points at the structurally similar challenges that the European Commission and the U.S. face. The humanitarian departments insist on having a high degree of independence because this is their preferred identity. Nevertheless, this renders the coherence and complementarity called for by LRRD difficult. In sum, this analysis shows that the U.S. is both more willing to chose the more political scenario by acknowledging that OFDA contributes to overall policy aims and has managed to integrate short-term and long-term assistance better in their Office of Food for Peace. This is not necessarily a coincidence. Choosing a broader humanitarian mandate also makes LRRD more achievable, as shown above. Many criticize the U.S. for this, as this is not in line with the humanitarian principles and endangers humanitarian assistance as a separate field. Donors like the European Commission try to opt for a more principled approach with ECHO. This does not square well with the LRRD concept. To really preserve the independence of ECHO, the Commission would have to let it off the LRRD-hook.

Operational Hurdles to LRRD

The analysis of strategic guidance documents and the overview of institutional complexities in the European Commission and the U.S. Government show why achieving LRRD is challenging for both. These strategic and institutional challenges translate into specific operational

⁴³ <http://www.state.gov/s/crs/66427.htm>, May 27, 2009.

⁴⁴ These are congressional budget accounts: DA = Development Assistance, CSH = Child Support and Health, ESF = Economic Support Fund.

⁴⁵ USAID official.

⁴⁶ USAID official.

practices that further impede increased cooperation between the humanitarian and development realms.⁴⁷

Separate Needs and Situation Analyses

A core hurdle to determining “who does what, where, and when” and to what extent humanitarian and development assistance are to go hand in hand has to do with the lack of joint situation and needs analyses. If perceptions differ, actions will hardly be brought together.⁴⁸

The European Commission has recently tested an LRRD analysis framework, which would be a step in the direction of joint situation analysis. This LRRD analysis framework explicitly calls on DG DEV, AIDCO, RELEX and ECHO to engage in joint situation analysis, needs assessment, and to develop a consolidated response building on their respective strengths and weaknesses. Adhering to this framework would render complementary and simultaneous humanitarian and development assistance possible. However, interviewees from the South Sudan case study have described it as a desk document without real field relevance.⁴⁹

The lack of interest in that framework underscores that coordination and working relationships between the different Commission services are limited. Each service appears to picks its region and does not engage jointly and simultaneously with others in a region with multi-faceted needs. It also illustrates again that officials think that humanitarian assistance and development follow distinct norms and objectives.

Exit over Contiguum

However, there are examples where the wide variety of Commission instruments is applied simultaneously. In North Kivu in eastern DRC, for instance, some funding comes from development budgets like the European Development Fund A-Envelope, some from the B-Envelope, from ECHO, the Instrument for Stability, and the Food Security Thematic Program. Nevertheless, the Commission’s approach still appears to follow phase thinking. In North Kivu, for example, ECHO exited and returned repeatedly. It did not provide relief funds to North Kivu in 2006 and 2007 and regarded the situation as no longer humanitarian in nature. It was thus the development instruments that tried to minimally cover the region. When heavy fighting returned in 2008, ECHO resumed its activities. Although people have been continually displaced and it was foreseeable that all-out fighting would return, Commission operations were heavily tilted towards getting out and handing over instead of working together with an LRRD and preparedness perspective in mind. In fact, this resembles an understanding of LRRD as being primarily about ensuring linear transition.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ The results obtained for the LRRD case studies are much more detailed for the European Commission than for the United States Government. This explains that some paragraphs are more substantial on the European Commission side.

⁴⁸ T. Mowjee, *European Union policy approaches in protracted crises*. HPG Background report (London; ODI, 2004), p. 9.

⁴⁹ For more, see South Sudan case study, Chapter 9.

⁵⁰ See e.g. ECHO, *Operational Strategy* (2008), p. 2: “In the wider field of the links between emergency, rehabilitation and development (LRRD), the need for effective links between the different instruments must be considered not only to

This phase-driven approach, and the fact that different funding lines come with specific limitations attached concerning scope, time, and local involvement, means that the European Commission misses opportunities for more comprehensively strengthening livelihoods and crisis resilience among the affected populations it seeks to support.

Differences in Capital Intensity

Humanitarian assistance allocates several times as much per beneficiary than development assistance.⁵¹ Any effort to render the two complementary needs to take this fact into account. Sphere standards are high and should be scrutinized in light of their possible link to development. LRRD thus does not mean that every humanitarian activity should be followed up or complemented by a matching development activity. Affected populations that enjoyed a relatively decent provision of health services in IDP camps, for example, will have to accept an inferior level of coverage once they are back home and supported by development assistance. The Chad case study provides ample evidence on this.⁵² It is thus even more paramount to prioritize and strategize jointly to at least identify some core complementary programs.

Complex Contracting Procedures

Both the European Commission and the United States Government have accelerated contracting procedures for their main humanitarian offices, ECHO and OFDA. However, their developmental services are considered to have complex and extremely time-consuming legal requirements that are hard to bear for more fast-paced and less risk-averse humanitarian actors.⁵³ To improve LRRD, fears of critical auditing have to be eased and contracting procedures harmonized.

Lack of Knowledge on LRRD Organizations

To implement their LRRD policies, donors to a large degree depend on able organizations and suitable assistance activities. In both the European Commission and the United States, the identification of such organizations and activities seems to be haphazard rather than strategic. Major implementing partners like the United Nations World Food Program complain that LRRD activities, such as their Protracted Relief and Recovery Operations, remain heavily underfunded because neither OFDA or ECHO, nor the respective developmental services perceive them as fitting neatly into their mandates. They fall through the grid.

ensure a *continuity of action towards the transition to development*" [emphasis in text by author]. 10 years ago, Ian Smilie had already observed that "in practice the continuum is alive and well largely because no better image has gained currency. Successful attempts to encourage synergy—that is, to conduct emergency activities in ways that promote positive and enduring change and to approach development activities as investments in preventing emergencies—have been rare. Significant impediments present challenges in the areas of timing, funding, and understanding. As a result of impediments related to these three challenges, humanitarian efforts within the framework of the continuum still replicate earlier mistakes." See Smilie (1998), op. cit.

⁵¹ European Commission official.

⁵² See Chapter 12 on Chad.

⁵³ For more detailed discussion, see the information provided on the Commission LRRD-program in chapter 10.

Lack of Knowledge on LRRD Activities

Although frequently discarded as buzzwords, capacity development or capacity strengthening are clearly assistance activities that are more in line with the LRRD logic than service delivery approaches. But both the European Commission and the United States are extremely hesitant to fund them despite resulting opportunities to link service-delivery with systems-building, the short term with the long term. Funding for NGOs such as the International Medical Corps (IMC), which is training nurses who are able to react to unexpected displacement movements triggered by renewed fighting, might constitute genuine LRRD funding. Better trained doctors and water and sanitation specialists, for example, will also be able to contribute to the health systems the European Commission and the United States aim to support.

Recent Approaches and the Way Forward—Lessons from the Case Studies

In previous sections, this chapter has analyzed the overall approaches of the U.S. Government and the European Commission to LRRD. They uncovered that donors face challenges to promote LRRD on a conceptual, institutional, as well as operational level. These levels are all interdependent and without thorough attention to all three, improvements will continue to take place slowly and accidentally.

This section summarizes additional lessons from the case studies on the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), South Sudan, Chad, and Afghanistan. They show in particular the effects of contextual factors for LRRD, the similarities and differences of the U.S. Government and the European Commission in this respect, and their concrete programs attempting to link relief, rehabilitation, and development.

Contextual Factors Affecting LRRD

Political Interest

As promoting LRRD requires departing from a narrow humanitarian mandate it comes as no surprise that both the European Commission and the United States choose to invest more in development and LRRD programs in those countries that are of higher political interest to them. This is indicative of the dangers that LRRD entails for principled humanitarian action.

Chad, as part of the French “pré-carré,” is politically much more important to the European Commission than to the U.S. As a consequence, the European Union stationed nearly 4,000 EUFOR peacekeepers there between 2008 and early 2009 and has made Chad a considerable testing ground for a less principled humanitarian mandate, an LRRD-program and their new Instrument for Stability. The U.S., by contrast, has little political interest in the country and only engages in narrow mandate humanitarian funding.

South Sudan has been a political priority for both the European Commission and the U.S. for decades. The exceptional mobilization around the Darfur conflict in the U.S. and the privi-

leged relationship of the Khartoum Government with the former U.S. administration turned Sudan into the most important receiver of U.S. funds in all Africa. Because of its political importance, both the European Commission and the U.S. have been creative in setting up LRRD activities such as the European Commission's Humanitarian Plus Program, Post-Conflict Community-Based Recovery and Rehabilitation Program and the U.S. BRIDGE Program.

Thanks to its central geographical position, its resources and particular historical relationship with both the European Commission and the U.S., the DRC also receives a lot of attention from both donors. This political interest, demonstrated by the massive funding provided for the 2006 elections and the largest UN peacekeeping mission MONUC, has translated into several LRRD or development-relief activities on both sides.

Afghanistan is a special case. Because of the highly militarized nature of both European Union (which is the context the Commission is perceived in in Afghanistan) and U.S. assistance strategies, LRRD cannot be seen as separate from the Provincial Reconstruction Teams and the controversies surrounding them. In addition, the explicit state-building agenda of both donors points to the heart of the LRRD challenge: After providing predominantly humanitarian assistance under the Taliban regime, both the European Commission and the U.S. have been struggling to link their humanitarian and development assistance under the umbrella of a highly political security agenda whose overarching aim is to strengthen the central state in order to counter terrorism. In situations such as these, humanitarians have a hard time isolating and distancing themselves from the more transformative activities of their development and security colleagues.

Military Security

The case studies show that military security provided by the UN, NATO, the EU, or unilateral military missions is a double-edged sword for LRRD. While it may reduce humanitarian space and endanger access, it is also an enabling factor for more long-term development activities and for the institutional willingness of donor departments to get involved in LRRD-activities. Afghanistan, South Sudan, and eastern DRC are clearly cases in point. Without the substantial military presence of MONUC in Goma, the provincial capital of North Kivu, the European Commission would certainly be less willing to continue its large LRRD-program activities in the area. Without the protection provided by the Provincial Reconstruction Teams, humanitarian convoys would not leave their warehouses in many parts of Afghanistan.

The Existence of a Political Framework

Connected to political interest and security is the political framework within which development cooperation and humanitarian assistance take place. Is there a formal peace agreement detailing the way forward? Is there an official cooperation contract between the donor government and the partner government? LRRD tends to take place in situations where a clear political framework and state contracts exist and the state is sufficiently willing and able to cooper-

ate in more development-oriented activities. This is the case with the current LRRD-program in DRC and the South Sudan BRIDGE program. The Humanitarian Plus Program, however, was established in the absence of a formal cooperation contract. There is obviously a high degree of variability—a sign that a lot is possible in the grey area of LRRD. However, much more could be done if the key challenges outlined above were systematically addressed and conceptions clarified.

Key European Commission and U.S. Similarities and Differences

The humanitarian offices of the European Commission and the U.S. Government, ECHO and OFDA share a strong commitment to humanitarian principles and to a narrow understanding of the humanitarian mandate. To overcome their “obsession” with exit strategies and to allow a more pragmatic approach to LRRD, they both need to improve their relationship with their development departments. OFDA could improve its cooperation with the development side within USAID and ECHO could liaise more closely with DG DEV, DG AIDCO and DG RELEX (as well as other DGs that touch upon their activities, such as DG Environment and DG Trade). As discussed, the most comprehensive and conceptually sound development-relief guidance of both the European Commission and the U.S. was produced in USAID’s Office of Food for Peace. To what extent that best practice in the food sector might be expanded to other sectors remains to be seen.

The European Commission and the United States also share a lack of enthusiasm for pooled and multi-donor trust funds, mostly managed by the United Nations and/or the World Bank. Many NGOs interviewed in the case studies welcome this because it gives them the possibility to pick and choose, as it creates a “humanitarian funding market” with varying requirements and administrative procedures. The UN is understandably more critical of this lack of integration into common structures. It sees pooled funds as an important mechanism to increase effectiveness and accountability of humanitarian funds. In theory, multi-donor trust funds provide opportunities for more flexible funding as they comprise funding from different donors and departments. This flexibility would then render LRRD more feasible. It is for that reason that the Dutch *Royal Tropical Institute* positioned them right at the intersection of the state and systems continua (see graph on page XXX).

In their relationships with implementing partners, evidence is mixed on whether the European Commission and the U.S. support LRRD programs. While the EDF B-Envelope was sometimes praised for its flexibility and sometimes criticized for its slowness, there were complaints that both the U.S. and the European Commission were hesitant to fund programs like the World Food Program’s Protracted Relief and Recovery Operations (PRRO). According to interviewees, they were regarded as being neither humanitarian nor development and would thus sometimes fall through the funding grids.

European Commission and U.S. LRRD or Development-Relief Programs

European Commission and United States LRRD program design is varied and non-systematic, but at the same time quite flexible. This is due to different political and humanitarian situations and the lack of clear guidance and institutional responsibilities in the grey area

between humanitarian and development assistance. The variety of programs set up in Chad, South Sudan, DRC, and Afghanistan reflect this.

As indicated in the context section above, the more political interest a donor has in a country, the more likely it will be to set up LRRD-programs. In **Chad**, the European Commission has set up three programs that can be brought under the LRRD label:

- The *Programme d'Accompagnement à la Stabilisation* (Stabilization Program) which supports IDP return, host populations and the transition from relief to development. It is financed by the 9th European Development Fund and has a total budget of €13.1 million.
- The *Programme multisectoriel pour l'intégration socioéconomique des populations autochtones et réfugiés du département de Grand Sido*, also known as the *LRRD-project*. Its aim is to improve living conditions for the local population and refugees in the Grande Sido area, and to reduce the risk of insecurity brought about by local inter-community conflicts.
- The *Instrument for Stability*, which is sometimes referred to as an LRRD instrument and sometimes is not, is used in Chad to support the police and the census process for the upcoming elections—neither of which is closely related to humanitarian activities.

The U.S. is providing a limited amount of funding to the LRRD-project but has not set up any programs on its own. The U.S. lack of political interest can be seen in the fact that its Office for Transition Initiatives (OTI) has engaged in Chad with only \$118.000 in 2007.

In **South Sudan**, both donors engage in LRRD activities. The U.S. focuses currently on the following:

- The *BRIDGE Program* aims to help the Southern Sudanese Government at state and county levels with the transition from existing relief programs to more sustainable methods of government-managed service provision. This program is still in its early stages.
- OTI works through the NGO PACT and a private sector actor, Development Alternatives Incorporated (DAI).⁵⁴ The approach is to provide quick, flexible and small grants to a range of local government and civil society actors in ways that demonstrate immediate peace dividends.

The European Commission funds LRRD-activities through the following mechanisms:

- The *Sudan Post-Conflict, Community Based Recovery and Rehabilitation Program* (RRP), which is a rural livelihoods focused program that also provides support to basic services and to building the capacity of local government. The RRP is administered by UNDP and implemented by a consortium of 48 NGOs in ten states (5 Northern and 5 Southern, affected by the North/South conflict. For the time being, Darfur has been

⁵⁴ For more, see Chapter 13.

excluded from this initiative. The European Commission committed €50 million (\$70 million) to the RRP.

- *Multi Donor Trust Fund (South)* European Commission financing for this World Bank-administered trust fund is €48 million, €24 million of which was specifically given for the WFP road rehabilitation program.
- The *EU Humanitarian Plus Program* was launched in 2002 and came to an end in 2008. It was designed as a one-off program aiming to revive development cooperation between Sudan and the European Commission in the absence of a valid country agreement. It took a longer-term view of addressing immediate needs by supporting the rehabilitation of systems and services and enhancing local capacities. The second phase of the Humanitarian Plus program was launched in 2004 and particular emphasis was placed on linking relief, rehabilitation, and development in the priority sectors of food security, education, health care, and water and sanitation.
- With the *Food Security Thematic Program* the European Commission supports 12 ongoing projects in southern Sudan to a value of €15 million. These projects focus on agriculture, alternative livelihoods, water and natural resource management, and environment.

In the **DR Congo**, while none of the two donors engages in the OCHA and UNDP-managed Pooled Fund, a variety of instruments are used by both the European Commission and the U.S..

The European Commission has engaged all of its new foreign aid tools applicable to the “grey area” between humanitarian and development assistance:

- It has set up a large *LRRD-program* for Eastern Congo worth about €100 million for 5 years. It focuses on infrastructure rehabilitation, health and capacity building. With its varying levels of cooperation with ECHO since its inception in 2002 and its conflicted relationship with the Congolese central Government, it is a revealing example of the challenges of active LRRD-promotion.⁵⁵
- The *Food Security Thematic Program* comprises €11–12 million in both 2007 and 2008.
- The *Instrument for Stability* contained €18.5 million for 2006 to 2008.

The United States engages in development-relief activities particularly in the food sector:

- The Office of Food for Peace (FFP) has three *Multi-Year Assistance Programs* from 2008–2011, worth about \$34 million, with Mercy Corps, Food for the Hungry International, and Africare/ADRA in South Kivu, Northern Katanga and non-turbulent parts of North Kivu. These are meant to be a transition from the emergency to development. Meanwhile, FFP funds WFP for its emergency operations.

In **Afghanistan** the European Commission has started to fund LRRD programs in specific areas, known for their high level of vulnerability. A good and recent example of this trend is

⁵⁵ For more, see Chapter 10.

the Commission's Food Security Thematic Program call for proposals entitled "Linking relief to rehabilitation and development through food security interventions in areas affected by natural disasters and prolonged insecurity in Afghanistan." The call used terms such as "vulnerability linked to conflict and disaster," "recovery from disaster" and "strengthening resilience."⁵⁶

The variety of funding mechanisms chosen in contexts that are quite similar with respect to the needs of the population and to the limited grasp the central state has on the regions of protracted conflict shows the slightly reactive and haphazard decision-making process on LRRD among both the U.S. and the European Commission.

It seems it is not the situation that determines the choice of instruments but rather the current political relationship with the host government and staff priorities in the country and at the respective country desk at headquarters. This leads to shifting willingness to engage with the state in systems-building or to fluctuating interest in UN or World Bank pooled or multi-donor trust funds. In DRC it did not meet European Commission or U.S. needs, while it did in South Sudan. Multi-donor trust funds provide opportunities to link relief, rehabilitation, and development, despite frequent NGO criticism of relatively slow funding disbursement, because they are based on a unified situation analysis. The reactive nature of LRRD also leads to varying levels of support to LRRD-prone activities like the WFP's Protracted Relief and Recovery Operations. A more strategic approach to LRRD might render these donor choices more systematic.

Recommendations

This analysis of the two donors' conceptual approaches, institutional set-ups, and operational challenges has shown that LRRD does take place in a rather haphazard and non-systematic way. Linking the conceptual and organizational cultures of humanitarian and development assistance is a highly complex and controversial topic that both the European Commission and the United States are struggling to deal with. To achieve pragmatic change in this realm, the donors should adopt the following steps:

The Conceptual Level

1. A first step towards improving LRRD would be to recognize clearly that there is an LRRD or early recovery gap in specific operations.
2. An honest and pragmatic discussion should then take place about the boundaries, the objectives and guiding principles of the humanitarian, transition, and development sectors that have caused that gap to emerge. Although this seems to be a continuous discussion, it is very rarely thought through. It is only through normative clarification and better understanding that serious steps at linking and complementarity can be made. Some officials complain about the defensiveness of both the humanitarian and development scene, which is not conducive to problem-solving. A better understanding of each other can only be achieved through open dialogue. This includes taking a hard look at current guidance and international declarations. Both the European

⁵⁶ For more, see the Afghanistan case study, Chapter 11.

Commission and the United States have subscribed to the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Good Humanitarian Donorship Initiative (GHDI). Unfortunately, the core principles of coordination, coherence, and complementarity partly contradict the narrow and principled humanitarian mandate advocated by the GHDI. These contradictions resurface in the strategic guidance analyzed above. Increased dialogue has to tackle this.

3. This dialogue will open up at least three avenues on how to deal with LRRD. First, keep muddling through by adhering to the humanitarian principles and paying lip-service to LRRD. Second, preserve a narrow humanitarian mandate which necessarily entails that the humanitarian sector stays clear of the LRRD agenda to retain its independence. Third, broadening the humanitarian mandate—which compromises core humanitarian principles—but makes humanitarian participation in LRRD possible. To increase credibility and transparency—core values of both the U.S. Government and the European Commission—both donors should make a clear decision on these three options and mainstream it into their guidance documents.
4. To facilitate this decision both donors should conduct a cost-benefit analysis of the narrow vs. broader humanitarian mandates. This is obviously methodologically hard to do but has to move to the center of donor attention if an informed decision between principles and pragmatism is to be made.

The Institutional Level

5. During that dialogue, assuming that LRRD remains desirable, institutional responsibilities should be clarified to prevent LRRD programs of implementing agencies from falling through the grids.
6. At the same time, the European Commission and the U.S. Government as the biggest development and humanitarian donors should recognize the opportunities that lie in their broad engagement. Competition between their departments should thus be transformed into increased complementarity.
7. To keep the dialogue realistic it should be kept in mind that the capital intensity of humanitarian assistance per beneficiary is substantially higher than that of development assistance. This leads to disparate levels of service provision and poses a challenge to complementary humanitarian and development activities. Sphere standards are very high and should be scrutinized in light of their possible link to development.

The Operational Level

8. Joint situation analysis and needs assessments among the different donor departments and services are essential to develop a common understanding of the crisis situation at hand and to harmonize policies. Without rapprochement of analyses, policies will not come closer.
9. Building on increased joint analysis, we recommend developing specific scenarios on how to link service delivery with system-building in all sectors in specific country con-

texts. This needs to be *very* specific and practical. Scenario-building will have the effect of opening avenues for cooperation between humanitarian and development assistance that were not considered before.

10. In the context of scenario-building it is important for donors to develop a clearer understanding of implementing agencies approaches and strategies towards LRRD. There are organizations that are much more advanced than others in this respect. Systematic screening of the organizations that receive European Commission and U.S. funding with regards to their LRRD capacities is a key mechanism for donors to promote LRRD.
11. Particular emphasis should be placed on funding organizations that engage in capacity development. The activity that is hardest to support in both humanitarian and development assistance is capacity development. This has been on the agenda for a long time in the development community, with its longer term approach and more strategic interaction with beneficiaries. In humanitarian assistance it has been less of a focus. However, capacity development is the activity that will yield the highest results in linking relief and development. People in the beneficiary country tend to stay there and contribute to humanitarian response and to the development of the country. They are also important agents of preparedness—the other side of the LRRD-coin. Supporting them is both life-saving and sustainable—the ideal combination called for by LRRD.

