

Response to the GHA Evaluation

We are extremely pleased by the summary finding. For a small, independent organisation to achieve the status of ‘publisher of record’ on the global response to humanitarian crises is a very significant achievement. To go further and say that the evaluator considers that the role GHA has played in creating greater transparency has contributed to increased accountability is even more important: *“While there are other monitoring devices and organizations, it can be argued that GHA has been very important in creating greater transparency – through consistent and reliable data analysis over time – and thus greater accountability in helping donors to achieve this goal.”* The people who have been involved with the development of the GHA programme since 1998 and its increase in scope since 2008 should feel proud of the quality of their work and we hope that the donors who have supported and engaged with the programme will also feel that this has been a good use of their resources, both financial and intellectual. We note the finding that *“The programme has met or exceeded all of the output targets that were contained in its 2008 proposal to donors.”*

Principal recommendations

- In GHA’s newer and more challenging workstreams -- notably conflict and the military, domestic response and non-DAC donors -- greater depth in a few carefully selected countries makes more sense in the short run than attempting to cover the entire spectrum of organizations;

We **partly agree** with this recommendation. We believe that GHA’s added value is its transparent methodologies for drawing trends from whatever data is available. There is a demand for these ‘best informed guesses’ at the policy levels at which GHA operates. We are not a research programme and in-depth analysis has only limited traction in the contexts in which we work. In particular on data on conflict and military we plan to build up data on global and regional trends, which will be matched by selective analysis where appropriate, for instance on the inventoring of activities financed by resources from security and non-security origins. On non-DAC donors we agree that a degree of concentration would be efficient and we will work on identifying the largest or most influential donors in different situations. We agree that *“participation of local research organizations that can, over time, gain the confidence of relevant ministries and individuals in target countries”* would be advantageous. On domestic response we will continue a two-track approach of building up datasets from as many countries as possible on the institutional and financing arrangements for domestic response but we do also accept that the benefits of work in this area should contribute to policy on *“how and where to build local capacity, and how to improve relationships between domestic and international actors [and that]... better data alone will not achieve this objective.”* and that this may be better achieved through some in-depth case work.

- Marketing should become a more prominent priority, aimed at reaching policy-makers and actors that have hitherto been the *subject* of study: non-traditional donors, domestic responders, the military;

We **agree** with the recommendations that marketing, or outreach as we would probably term it, to actors that have hitherto been the subject of study should be a priority. In our forward planning we will work on ways that we can expand the access to GHA data at regional and country level, including to domestic responders (something that has already been started with the Country profiles) in a way that is consistent with other data transparency initiatives such as IATI and country aid management systems. We will be prioritizing engagement with the military because of the importance of security, both in the priorities of vulnerable people and the flows of resources.

We **agree** that a more political and public audience *“parliamentarians and their research staff (or top-rank agency decision makers), academics and the media [...] need to be brought closer to the centre of the target because of their importance in shaping both political will and humanitarian policy”*. In **addition**, we will be considering ways of engaging publics in donor countries, in particular to build a more informed constituency and contribute to finding ways for the public to express solidarity with people affected by crisis which will enable a more effective response.¹

We strongly agree with the recommendation that options for translation of GHA into relevant languages should be tested.

- GHA’s editorial policy should be reviewed and consideration given to the provision of greater meaning and context as an accompaniment to basic data provision;

We agree with this recommendation and will be developing methods for providing greater meaning and context for the data **subject to** the overriding priority to the provision of objective information presented in ways that allow people from many different institutional backgrounds to use it as a shared evidence. We believe that this is DI’s comparative advantage and, while we wish to give more meaning and context, if there is a trade off, we cannot allow this to compromise the reputation for objectivity.

- Synergies with the rest of the DI family should be improved so that the GHA program can consolidate its strengths and streamline its work;

We strongly agree with this recommendation. DI’s strategy and planned new ways of working, its strengthened partnership with DRT and the scope offered by the award of the PPA from DFID will be strong enabling factors to help us make progress on what has, to date, been a rather intractable problem.

- On questions of sustainability, the need for GHA outputs is likely to grow and evolve over the next three to five years. Then, perhaps, a more substantive stocktaking would be useful.

We agree with this recommendation. The changes we anticipate in the availability of more transparent, detailed and trackable data on resources for humanitarian and development assistance and the moves towards the convergence of humanitarian and development agendas are important conditions for the added value of GHA and its outputs. We will consider these developments and the

¹ Currently giving money, supporting an NGO or going out as a volunteer are the ways in which people can express solidarity. This can have unintended consequences in terms of the proliferation of NGO and voluntary activity in environments where coordination is at a premium and in the less-than-optimal allocation of funding according to need.

role of GHA in real time and schedule a substantive review for early 2014 to allow GHA to feed into the post-2015 settlement.

We appreciate the nuanced discussion on the programme area on scale and severity of needs and the conclusions that effort in this area which *“results in more equitable and more appropriate funding is essential to the GHA purpose, and to the purpose of humanitarian principles”*. We will be reviewing this area of the programme and reflecting on exactly where we can add value.