

It is most likely that the present crisis and its humanitarian response will have longer term durable effects. A possible impact may be a shift of some of the rural population to an urban lifestyle in the towns around which they have settled and particularly so for the younger generation. It clearly appears that education is a major concern to parents and better provision of this service and, along with improved health care, water supplies and perceived physical security, is expected to be a significant factor in preventing early return. As the younger generation grow into this environment while time passes, it is expected that a proportion of them will prefer not to return to the hardships of village life.

From an ecological perspective, this would paradoxically be a positive change, particularly in respect of those families returning to the Goz (sandy) soils which are already exhausted and anyway more suited to forest and livestock production. This is an unfortunate point to conclude in light of the very (violent) reasons for which the populations departed from their farms.

In expectation of such a change, however, those Members who operate in the livelihoods sector should seriously consider skill training in trades for which there is an urban demand. In the shorter term, the displacement linked environmental damage in terms of deforestation and inappropriate exploitation of non-rechargeable water tables is serious and needs to be addressed by NGOs.

While some partners do offer assistance to nomadic or transhumant Arab populations, most of the aid has been disproportionately targeted towards the non-Arab, largely sedentary, population because it is largely they who have been displaced. This can only have very negative medium and long-term impacts in terms of peace and reconciliation – not all Arabs are Janjaweed aggressors. While noting that Tufts University made the recommendation about one year ago (and upon which there has been little action), the Team would recommend that the subject of impartiality be addressed without delay.

## **11. Conclusions and Recommendations**

### **Conclusion 11.1**

DEC funds presented the members with timely and flexible resources with which to mobilise a very significant response to the crisis in Darfur. For those already in theatre, the funds facilitated the necessary changes for a rapid adjustment from development to emergency relief. For those Members without a presence in the country, the funds eased the very difficult process of their establishment in Darfur.

### **Recommendation 11.1**

The flexibility, rapidity of distribution and lack of ear-marking of DEC funding, which is most appreciated by all Members, should be defended in the face of other, sometimes valid, criticisms of the DEC institution.

### **Conclusion 11.2**

The difficulties of working in Darfur and the frustrations placed in the path of agencies may explain much of the slowness in the achievement of results.

### **Recommendation 11.2**

While not wishing to reduce management rigueur, a level of patience is recommended to meet the challenges of Darfur.

### **Conclusion 11.3**

Nevertheless, 2004 has been perceived as a lesson learning year in which humanitarian performance was mediocre and could be described as a sequence of 'trial and error' before NGOs were able to 'come up to speed'. The Team considers that the cause of such was the result of several issues:

- i) a lack of newcomer NGO experience both in Darfur and in the complex circumstances they encountered there - exacerbated by recruiting inexperienced staff;
- ii) an inability (or maybe an unwillingness) and a lack of capacity of NGOs, already present in theatre, to swiftly make a change from development to emergency relief;
- iii) an inability to benefit from the knowledge, experience and loyalty of existing local staff;
- iv) a lack of investment in emergency preparedness capacity, notably for long-term staff.

### **Recommendation 11.3**

While not necessarily recommending that every Member should maintain an international emergency response unit, there is a place for emergency preparedness, motivation and training of all staff to cope with unforeseen disasters. This needs to be built into their ongoing development programmes and not left until an emergency happens. At the same time, the value of local staff and local knowledge needs to be better appreciated.

### **Conclusion 11.4**

2005, on the other hand, was a year in which Members established a coherent humanitarian response and brought the condition of the victims to a degree of stability and to a tolerable living environment. Some of the key factors in turning the situation around were:

- i) the leadership of some of the stronger Members;
- ii) the willingness of specialist Members to help out more 'generalist' ones;
- iii) the unprecedented cooperation, collaboration and coordination amongst all agencies.

### **Recommendation 11.4**

Point **iii)**, above, is one of the key lessons of this operation and which must not be forgotten.

### **Conclusion 11.5**

Most Members experienced a major constraint in attracting (or keeping) international aid workers in Darfur. Many expatriates were debutantes and a number of staff moved on to the well-resourced tsunami response at the expense of Darfur operations. This is a poor reflection on western humanitarian motivation.

### **Recommendation 11.5**

A better knowledge of emergency disaster relief, its challenges in terms of mental hardship and its ethos in terms of dedication need to be instilled in Member staff. Development and retention of cadres of expatriates with specific skills to deal with emergency humanitarian aid operations is recommended to each Member.

**Conclusion 11.6**

The proportion of unspent funds at the end of the DRP (nearly 17%), and the volume of ‘returned funds’ anticipated at the end of the ERP, supports most Members’ argument that the time limitations on DEC funds’ expenditure is too tight.

**Recommendation 11.6**

This is a subject which needs to be seriously addressed within the DEC Board of Trustees.

**Conclusion 11.7**

A certain amount of information provided to the Team was not always correct and some figures could not be reconciled. This could be of concern to audit but is most likely to be due to poor institutional memory and slack information updating.

**Recommendation 11.7**

From Members in the field to the DEC Secretariat, financial and physical information control needs to be tightened in order to avoid audit problems and loss of control.