ALNAP
· LEARNING · ACCOUNTABILITY · QUALITY ·
IN HUMANITARIAN ACTION

RECORD OF 13th BIANNUAL MEETING
1st – 2nd May 2003

Meeting held at: Mary Sumner House, 24 Tufton Street, London SW1P 3RB

CONTENTS

1. Welcome and Introductions

Anita Menghetti, the new Chair of ALNAP, opened the meeting by welcoming participants and asking them to introduce themselves to the group.

2. ALNAP Updates

ALNAP Secretariat - staff changes

- Deputy Coordinator Kate Robertson has left the Secretariat, but will continue to work as a consultant between 5 May and 30 June in order to complete work on the two interest groups (The Learning Support Office (LSO) and the Global Study on Participation of Affected Populations in Humanitarian Action).
- Sera Orzel has taken up the position of ALNAP Network Officer.

Forthcoming products

- The ALNAP *Annual Review* is to be published shortly and will be posted to all members in a fortnight.
- The second draft of the *Guidance Booklet on Protection in Humanitarian Action,* by Hugo Slim and Luis Enrique Eguren, is to be assessed by the Peer-Review Group before it goes to the publishers. This will be ALNAP's first guidance booklet. It will be ready for the October 2003 Biannual Meeting.
- The *Guidance Booklet on Evaluating Humanitarian Action,* by Tony Beck, is to go to the publisher very soon. Copies will be available prior to the October 2003 Biannual Meeting.
- ALNAP has commissioned a comparative study of After-Action Reviews (AAR) in the context of the crisis in Southern Africa. Richard Sexton and Isobel McConnan wrote this, and it is included in participants' packs.
- ALNAP's database of evaluation reports continues to expand. At present, it contains 440 evaluative reports.
- Over the past year, ALNAP website traffic has increased by 100%. The 2001 *Annual Review* has been downloaded 300 times and the Key Messages sheet for 2002 at least 500 times.

Financial Report for FY 2002–03

Sera Orzel reported that ALNAP does not have final figures up to 31 March – the end of the financial year – owing to personnel changes. However, there is an approximate overspend of £10,000. This is due to:

- the decision to hold the last Biannual Meeting in India;
- the employment of temporary staff;
- the high production costs of the last *Annual Review;* and
- the increased number of consultancy days required to complete the *Annual Review.*

3. ALNAP Annual Review 2003: Synthesis Findings/Meta-Evaluation/Monitoring

Presentation by Tony Beck, Independent Consultant

3.1 Annual Review 2003: Synthesis Findings

- The synthesis chapter offers up-to-date analysis on key trends in the sector. This year ALNAP looked at 55 evaluation reports in its database (49 individual evaluations and six independent synthesis reports). It is divided up in accordance with the main areas of humanitarian action: food aid; health; water; and shelter and housing. The second part is organised around cross-cutting themes, including staff and human resources, partnerships, coping strategies, consultation, tied aid, gender equality, coordination, the environment, and rights-based approaches. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) commissioned about one-third of the reports, while the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO) and the United Nations (UN) system commissioned approximately one-quarter.
- Almost 50% of reports this year focussed on food aid in Africa. Around 15–18% of reports looked at water sanitation and health. It is interesting to note that rehabilitation absorbs a significant amount of humanitarian action resources: 48% was devoted to relief and rehabilitation, with an additional 16% dedicated specifically to rehabilitation.
- Our overall conclusions are that humanitarian aid continues to achieve its primary objectives: saving lives and meeting basic needs. This should not be underestimated. As in the previous two years, though, the way in which the goals of humanitarian action are defined is problematic, as they disguise the sector's inability to promote capacity building.

3.1.1 Food Aid

- This year seven food aid reports were commissioned by the World Food Programme (WFP) as part of an evaluation of the protracted relief and recovery operation (RRO). Their inclusion was important, since they represent the most sustained intra-agency evaluations of food aid, with a focus on sustainability and connectedness. For people not familiar with the WFP, this programming mode looks at the connection between the relief and development phases of interventions.
- Conclusions show that food aid helped to maintain, and, in some cases, improve, the nutritional status of primary stakeholders. This generally positive view was confirmed over the three years of the *Annual Review.*
- One of the issues raised related to the quality of evaluation report findings and conclusions. Country specialists pointed out that the evaluation of agency performance was better than their own experience suggested, a view supported by the meta-evaluation, which concluded that the evaluation findings of many agencies are often not adequately substantiated. This is an area that the *Annual Review* should take into account in future. How, and by whom, are evaluations commissioned and are they truly 'independent'? It would appear that 'independent' bodies within agencies commission many of the evaluations.

Areas That Need Strengthening

The food aid package is not always appropriate; there are insufficient opportunities for local procurement, and vulnerable groups may be bypassed, such as those outside refugee camps.

An issue that surfaced repeatedly was lack of data to confirm who actually receives food aid beyond the final distribution point. It is not known who benefits from food aid (from the set of evaluation reports). In addition, the seven WFP RRO evaluations pointed to the difficulty of using food aid to support longer-term development.

3.1.2 Water and Sanitation

- Interventions were evaluated as successful in terms of meeting physical targets (such as the provision of hand pumps and latrines). However, there was limited primary stakeholder involvement in the planning and design of programmes, and a deficiency in regard to operational maintenance capacity. This points to both poor practice and lack of institutional learning.

3.1.3 Health Interventions

- This year, four psychosocial interventions were assessed and evaluated as successful. One in particular had made the link between relief and development by building on primary stakeholder coping strategies.

3.1.4 Shelter and Housing Sector

- As in previous years, this sector was found to be less successful, despite some instances of good practice. Only four reports were submitted to us this year, unlike in the previous two years when there were significantly more. Part of the problem in the housing sector seems to be failure to conceptualise new projects from the perspective of the affected population. Several reports note that self-construction is likely to be the most effective means of building. But the fact that some vulnerable groups may not be able to construct their own homes has to be taken into account. The fact that only modest improvements have occurred in the three years casts doubt on the sincerity of the humanitarian enterprise and the strengthening of local capacity and calls into question the learning process. We use Larry Minear's book *The Humanitarian Enterprise* and Joanna Macrae's recent book, looking at sustainability connectedness, as a baseline to direct our thinking on sustainability and connectedness.
- The Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) report on Gujarat after the earthquake is representative of all of the reports appraised this year. There was limited consultation on design and size, contractors not communities were the principal builders, costs were high and new houses and villages left much to be desired etc. These appear to be generic problems associated with the housing sector – they are not evident in the other three sectors.

The above is a summary of the four main sectors; more information can be found in the *Annual Review.*

3.1.5 Sustainability Connectedness

Intertwined factors that reduce sustainability connectedness include: the initial rush to have a logo seen on television; restricted timeframes imposed by donors; limited attention to supporting and developing the capacity of government and civil society; too much attention on international as opposed to national procurement; reliance on expatriate personnel on short-term contracts and high staff turnover; and inadequate guidance and training on how to link relief and rehabilitation in the field.

Findings indicate that, this year, policy linking relief/rehabilitation and development was well ahead of practice and that very little advice was offered to those in the field.

Improvements Suggested in the Evaluation Reports

- Coping strategies and vulnerability need to be better understood.
- Extending financial planning horizons and analysing how links can be made within country would support solutions.
- Hiring national personnel to reduce high staff turnover is encouraged.

- Supporting and developing the capacity of government to respond is a longer-term solution.

3.2 Meta-Evaluation

This year, ALNAP examined the findings of 37 reports (a subset of the 55 covered in the synthesis chapter). These were rated against the ALNAP meta-evaluation tool, the quality proforma to be found at the end of the *Annual Review 2002.* In addition, trends from the last three years were analysed. Heavy reliance on international relief intervention militates against greater mutuality and local participation.

3.2.1 Strengths Identified in the Meta-Evaluation

- Assessment of management issues and human resources**.**
- Reports were strong in looking at effectiveness, sustainability, connectedness and relevance, appropriateness and the provision of contextual backgrounds.

3.2.2 Weaknesses Identified in the Meta-Evaluation

- Failure to use agency policies for evaluation purposes.
- Lack of attention to rights-based approaches and protection (this year, only two of 55 reports adequately assessed protection or rights-based issues).
- Failure to consult with primary stakeholders and poor recommendations that were unlikely to be followed.
- The methodology of many reports was weak, often a paragraph or less with no clear connection between report findings and conclusions. Limited substantiation of key findings with adequate evidence undermines the credibility of many reports – an issue that has emerged in previous ALNAP meetings.
- The credibility of the Evaluation of Humanitarian Action (EHA) process itself.

3.2.3 The Three-Year Picture

The three-year picture reveals more areas that are unsatisfactory than satisfactory. Only three areas demonstrated some balance between satisfactory and unsatisfactory: human resources, coordination and the DAC criteria. The overall picture for the three-year period appears to be fairly poor. ALNAP also investigated if an improvement had occurred over the three-year period, but none was evident.

3.2.4 Recommendations Concerning Evaluation Practice

- Ensure that international standards of protection are included in Terms of Reference (ToR).
- Raise the awareness of evaluators in regard to relevant agency policies and pay particular attention to DAC criteria that may be less well covered (impact efficiency and coherence).
- Make it clear that consultation and participation must be included.
- Ensure that methods used provide a credible basis for conclusions.
- Consider a requirement in tenders that at least one person from the affected country be included on the evaluation team. The DEC is the only agency that specifies this in its ToR.

While many of these problems are familiar to agencies, the reasons that they are not addressed are usually to do with a shortage of resources and a lack of capacity. This means that we have been highlighting the same problems for three years now. ALNAP is following up with individual agencies by visiting them. To date visits have been made to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the WFP.

Main Monitoring Findings

3.3.1 Issues Highlighted in This Year's Monitoring Chapter

- Monitoring is often seen as 'the poor cousin' of evaluation. Recently, however, there appears to have been a renewal of interest in it.
- Agencies are overloaded with reporting requirements, lack staff capacity, and maintain a limited focus on measuring quantitative rather than qualitative areas, particularly in relation to inputs and outputs (as opposed to outcomes and impacts).
- Too much – or inappropriate – data is collected and there is a lack of analytical capacity. In addition, many agencies are asked to monitor a whole range of international commitments. Currently, they do not have the capacity to monitor across all sectors, including gender equality, human rights, and protection, so there is a clear disjunction between what is happening at headquarters level, where these commitments are made, and what is happening in the field.

3.3.2 General Areas Needing Improvement

- Increase and improve trust and feedback.
- Simplify systems (staff overload).
- Develop information bridges Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development (LRRD) (real-time evaluation (RTE) monitoring could provide the information).
- Establish a balance between quantitative and qualitative monitoring.
- Develop monitoring to help in consulting with primary stakeholders.
- Look to improve the quality of evaluations.

Tony Beck noted that it would be interesting to see how budgets were divided between these activities. This information was not included in the reports.

3.3.3 Recommendations for Operational Agencies

- Ensure that there are adequate financial resources.
- Ensure that recruitment guidelines and competencies reflect the need for staff with appropriate monitoring skills.
- Conduct an annual review as an incentive for staff to maintain high monitoring standards.

3.3.4 Recommendations for Donors

- Undertake a system audit of the monitoring and reporting structures of implementing partners to see if policy objectives can be streamlined. Make it simple.
- Assess the costs of looking at impact and adjust budgets accordingly. Of 55 reports assessed this year only two included a figure on the cost of the evaluation.

3.3.5 Recommendations for Inter-Agency Initiatives

- Analyse how learning initiatives, such as humanitarian information centres (HICs), can play a stronger role in enhancing monitoring capacities.
- Encourage collaboration in regard to monitoring initiatives.
- Establish a community of practice on real-time evaluation and monitoring to address some of the issues raised in this year's *Annual Review.*

<u>Issues Raised by Members</u>

- This report highlights the importance of monitoring. We cannot conduct an effective evaluation without effective monitoring.
- There are lessons to be learnt from the development sector regarding monitoring that could prevent the humanitarian sector from reinventing the wheel.
- Monitoring systems need to be streamlined to meet better the needs of the prime users, such as programme managers and decision-makers rather than evaluators.
- ALNAP needs to involve evaluators in order to improve the overall quality of monitoring. There is a core set of evaluators (used by organisations) from which ALNAP could gain feedback. Perhaps the creation of a peer-review group would be a strong incentive to improve learning.
- Work on the UN system points to a disjunction between what happens in the field and what takes place at headquarters, as addressed each year in the *Annual Review.* It would be useful to target and have more contact with people in the field and to provide feedback to them directly on evaluation trends and challenges. One way of doing this would be to send them the quality proforma.
- As a group we should look at producing a document or product that would help the sector to improve in future.
- We need to give serious consideration to the fact that, as a group of agencies and individuals, we do not seem to be improving. It is important to bear in mind, though, that it has only been a few years since we started meeting as a group.
- If we say that two years is not enough to show whether the process of quality improvement has been successful, how much time do we need? What is the cut-off point? When do you say this is not working and we need to change?
- Lack of good criteria enhances problems in relation to communication (language and cultural differences). Good communication is vital to any programme.
- It should be noted that all of the evaluations assessed were based on reports of poor quality. We need to be careful, therefore, of drawing conclusions based on such poor material.
- This year the following submitted evaluations: NGOs (35%), UN agencies (28%) and ECHO (26%). It would be pertinent to look at the difference in quality between these groups. Although unpleasant for the agencies involved it is important to analyse weaknesses in order to identify where performance can be improved.
- It is important to look at what are the incentives and disincentives in terms of encouraging change. A conference to be hosted by the Swedish government on good donorship might be a place to examine this in more depth. The objective of the conference is to identify principles to encourage good donorship and to initiate a cycle whereby good practice is promoted.
- One way of improving the standard of the evaluation reports would be to outline a specific set of standards for EHA.
- In terms of whether the ALNAP process is having an impact, a clear message is that there may be a need to package the *Annual Review* in different formats for particular groups.
- Where cash-for-work has been deployed in a more focused manner, it has proved quite useful.
- That ALNAP has analysed evaluation reports over the past three years is positive and constructive, especially if one takes a longer-term view. This highlights the fact that a certain amount of transparency has developed in the humanitarian sector, which should not be overlooked.
- Taking into account that 75% of evaluations this year were on rehabilitation, it would be interesting if ALNAP were to look at the LRRD question.
- Outsiders largely carry out evaluations, whereas monitoring is an operational field activity. It would be helpful to look at the synergy between evaluation and monitoring, primarily around

the issue of accountability. What do we mean by accountability and how is it addressed through this body of information? We must also examine to what extent learning is being satisfied.

- How can we ensure that monitoring improves the situation so that errors are not repeated? How do recommendations from this work fit into an organisation's change management programme? Do organisations have such programmes? If not, how can they build this into their programmes?

<u>Limitations of the Evaluation Chapter in the *Annual Review*</u>

- How do agencies determine whether to evaluate a particular project, operation, programme, policy issue etc? What is the selection process? Perhaps we are evaluating the wrong things.
- A limitation seems to be that the assessment of the evaluation stops when a report has been published. We do not find out how, or indeed whether, the findings and recommendations are used. In order to take evaluation findings and recommendations forward it would be useful to identify examples of practice that could be shared in the next report. This would do us all a service.
- It is necessary but difficult to gauge the longer-term use and impact of evaluations. For example, we found that in planning for the current crisis in Iraq we have returned to a past evaluation, reaping benefits 10 years later. The longer-term use of evaluations would be an interesting topic and perhaps could be examined in the next *Annual Review.*

4. Global Study on Beneficiary Consultation and Participation: Update and Next Steps
Presented by François Grunewald, Groupe URD

Outputs of the study will include those listed below.

- The five case studies (Afghanistan, Angola, Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Sri Lanka) are different in terms of their situation, culture, social setting, type of understanding, and the assumptions of local societies regarding what participation and consultation mean. The views of agencies and societies were either complementary or contradictory, making standardisation of the process quite difficult. As people prefer to have literature in their mother tongue, the Angola book is being translated into Portuguese. What is outstanding is a case study on the onset of a natural disaster, a piece of research on Eastern Europe and one on a refugee context.
- ALNAP produced literature reviews in three languages (English, French and Spanish).
- A *Handbook for Practitioners* is in draft form. It is organised in two parts: the first looks at generic issues related to the overall project cycle and participatory approaches; the second takes into account day-to-day issues facing practitioners. The Steering Group is considering the piloting of the handbook, and provision of training on how to use it.
- The website contains all of the information pertaining to the Global Study. It is in four languages: English, French, Portuguese and Spanish.
- An *Overview Book* will be published at the end of the study.

<u>Issues Raised by Members</u>

- Care must be taken in regard to protection. Badly managed programmes can lead, in the most extreme scenario, to people being killed.
- It is recommended that participatory protection programmes have a gentle touch, as this is a very sensitive area of work.

- It is crucial that the Global Study be tested, since many people who are going to be asked to use the handbook will not have been trained in participation techniques and will not have the skills necessary to use it.
- It is important to take note of the national context, as NGOs do not operate in isolation from this or the national government.
- Take the lead from ALNAP's 2002 *Annual Review*, acknowledging in particular that most so-called humanitarian assistance is not relief but rehabilitation . Therefore, humanitarian action time phases should relate to the severity of the disaster.
- The type of emergency needs to be taken into account, since an acute condition is different to a chronic condition. In regard to an acute condition, it is hard to adopt a participatory approach – in the same way as it might be difficult on an accident and emergency ward, for example. Similarly, participation is difficult in relation to a chronic condition, as one of the usual signs is a collapse of government.
- It is often assumed that humanitarian action has been imported from the North. It is essential to involve people from affected populations in the South. We need to allow regional institutions to develop. Unless we listen and allow people from affected communities to be involved in the delivery of programmes, we will continue to engage in circular debates.
- Often there appears to be lack of communication between international organisations, such as the World Bank and the UN, and national NGOs and affected populations in specific countries. When conducting an evaluation, it may be wise, therefore, to work closely with NGOs and communities that speak the same language as members of the affected population. This needs to be taken into account when employing international evaluators.
- What is needed now is guidance on what a minimum adequate level of consultation is in different situations. How much will it cost in terms of time and resources and what are the necessary methods? The Global Study is well placed to provide such guidance.

5. Accountability Initiatives: Updates

5.1 SPHERE
Presented by Nan Buzard

Update on Activities

- Some 30,000 SPHERE handbooks have been sold through Oxfam Publishing.
- SPHERE is particularly pleased that more governments are finding the handbook useful, such as in Afghanistan, Central America, India, and Sri Lanka.
- The revised SPHERE handbook adopts a similar format to previous editions: the humanitarian charter is followed by technical standards. In this edition the main change is the introduction of crosscutting issues like HIV/AIDS, the environment, food security, children, the elderly, and the disabled. There is also a new chapter called 'Common Standards'.

Update on Projected Activities

- Continuing to raise awareness of SPHERE.
- Revision of the handbook.
- The making of an orientation video for new humanitarian workers in the field. The plan is to convert the video into a DVD that fieldworkers can insert in their computer and thus have instant access to a wealth of information (without carrying around heavy books and tapes). The video provides a profile of a humanitarian worker at the beginning of the twenty-first century. It looks at the following issues: human rights; humanitarian principles; political economy; anthropology; technical importance; the background to the humanitarian movement.

- Recent findings confirm that SPHERE institutionalisation at agency headquarters is going fairly well, but that there is a significant gap between awareness and application (how it is actually being used in the field). Due to limited resources we have focussed on three areas to see how SPHERE is being used: Central America, India and the DRC.
- A lessons learned report, available on the SPHERE website in French and Spanish, examines what is working and what is not, how SPHERE is being used, where it is not being used and what gets in the way of its use.
- Finally, an evaluation has taken place of the SPHERE project conducted by Columbia University in partnership with Makere University in Uganda. Both of their first and second quarterly reports have been posted on the SPHERE website.

5.2 HAP International
Presented by Sara Davidson

HAP International emerged from a joint evaluation of emergency assistance supplied to Rwanda in 1996. It highlighted the efforts that the humanitarian sector had made to establish codes and standards of practice – that is, the Red Cross and NGO Code of Conduct. In order for accountability to work in practice, however,there was felt to be a need for a more eclectic set of tools, which would assist agencies in listening and responding to the concerns of beneficiaries. To date, therefore, HAP has concentrated on three areas of activity.

- Field learning and field trials that examine how different accountability mechanisms might work on the ground. So far, field trials have been held in Sierra Leone, Afghanistan and, most recently, in Cambodia.
- Research (similar to that of ALNAP).
- Advocacy on the subject of accountability in regard to humanitarian assistance.

As to what HAP should do next, its members, board and advisors have proposed various options. Eventually, the decision was taken, primarily by the chief executives of HAP's member organisations, to set up – for the first time in the sector – an international self-regulatory body that will support its members through technical support and monitoring. HAP International's mission is, therefore, to achieve and promote the highest standards of accountability through self-regulation by members. Membership will open in June and the first board meeting and the first general assembly meeting are scheduled for December.

5.3 Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response Peer-Review Initiative
Presented by Joel McClellan

With publication of the report on sexual exploitation in West Africa by Save the Children and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), we were again reminded of the importance of accountability in humanitarian work. As outlined by previous speakers, the issue of compliance and accountability has been discussed over the past six years. However, lack of consensus on how to take this issue forward encouraged further debate on this matter within the SCHR. The SCHR participated actively in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) task force on sexual exploitation, which led to an inter-agency planning committee policy statement on protection from sexual abuse and exploitation in humanitarian crises. By signing the statement, the SCHR and other humanitarian agencies committed themselves to incorporating certain policies into their work in relation to sexual exploitation.

Based on this commitment, it was agreed, in January 2003, that the SCHR would set up a pilot peer-review initiative to look at implementation of the commitments made with respect to the sexual exploitation policy statement. Three agencies volunteered to be part of the pilot scheme and a work advisory group was created with representatives of each of these agencies. It was agreed that two of them would begin by

reviewing the third. This work is still in progress. In brief, though, it was decided that it would consist of the following three steps.

- All agencies to participate in drawing up a memorandum indicating what they are doing with respect to sexual exploitation and abuse.
- The review team will then prepare a questionnaire based on the memorandum to assist the agency preparing to be reviewed.
- The review team will then visit the agency being reviewed for up to three days. A report will be compiled for the SCHR meeting in January for the peer review.

Once the pilot phase is complete, we hope to have some indication of how we can institutionalise this review process more widely.

6. Operationalising the ALNAP Vision – Future Options
Presented by John Mitchell

The ALNAP vision was agreed and ratified in February 2002, and a study undertaken as a first step towards operationalising it. This study, by Howard Standen, suggests that ALNAP is reaching a 'maturity stage' but that it needs to expand its membership, making it more inclusive while at the same time retaining the intimacy and informality of the network. The membership needs to decide how to do this. Five options are listed below (note that all budgets are estimated).

1. Increase levels of membership through the creation of topic-based interest groups. Budget £536,944
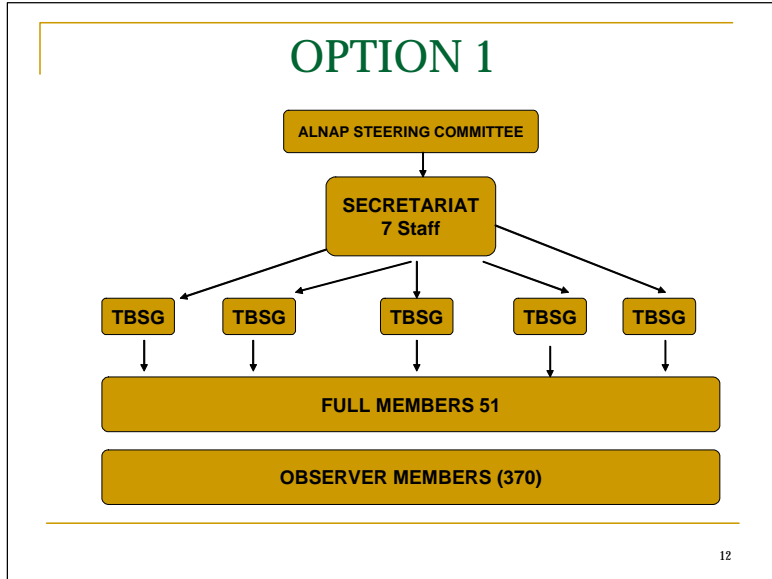
Key here is that groups of like-minded people would come together around a particular topic. The advantages of this include the following.

- It leads to cutting-edge thinking and practice because the people who are interested gather and take issues forward.
- It is self-targeted, meaning that the information produced will naturally reach those who are most interested.
- It will expand membership while maintaining the inclusive nature of the network.
- It could solve problems concerning participation in the Biannual Meeting.
- It would lessen the pressure on full members of ALNAP by increasing membership through active interest.

A disadvantage is that it may be confusing to donors to have this web of topic-based subgroups that may be difficult to manage and coordinate.

2. Increase levels of membership through the establishment of geographically based subgroups. Budget £603,800
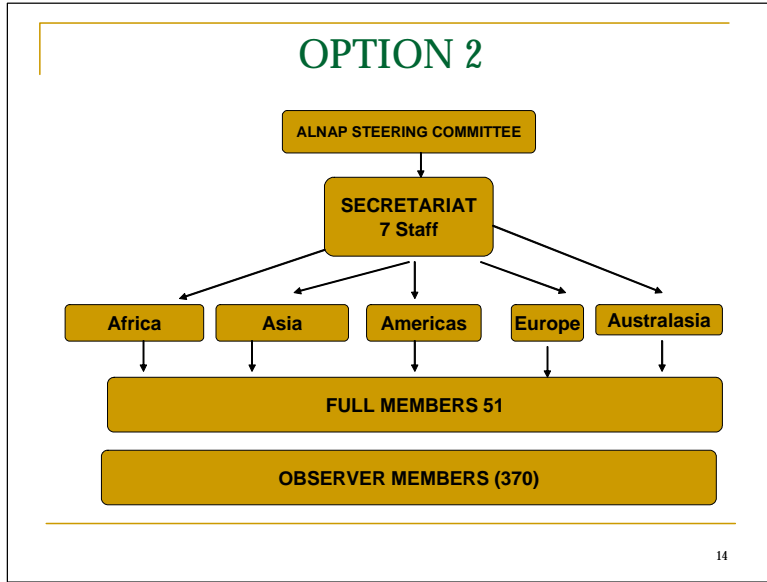
This will create a sub-network in different geographical regions. Each subgroup will be created along similar lines to ALNAP – self-financed and self-managed – and will be represented in the main ALNAP network by a sub-network. Expanding membership in the South is something that we hear about all of the time. This option would utilise regional expertise and in a broader sense may stimulate global learning. The disadvantage is that it could be very complicated.

3. Develop new membership categories for members based in the South. Budget £566,944
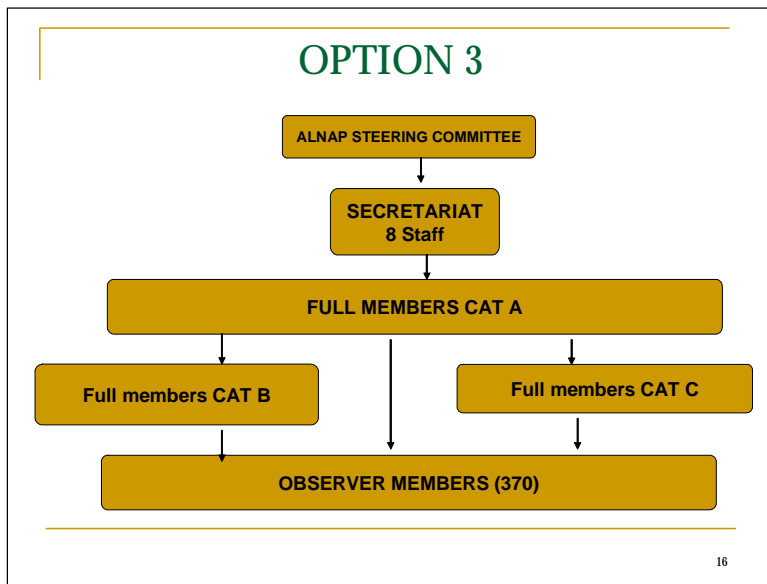
This would mean increasing the number of full and observer members. The advantage is that ALNAP would be more inclusive. The disadvantages are that it would lose intimacy and the Secretariat would have to be restructured to manage the expansion of the membership.

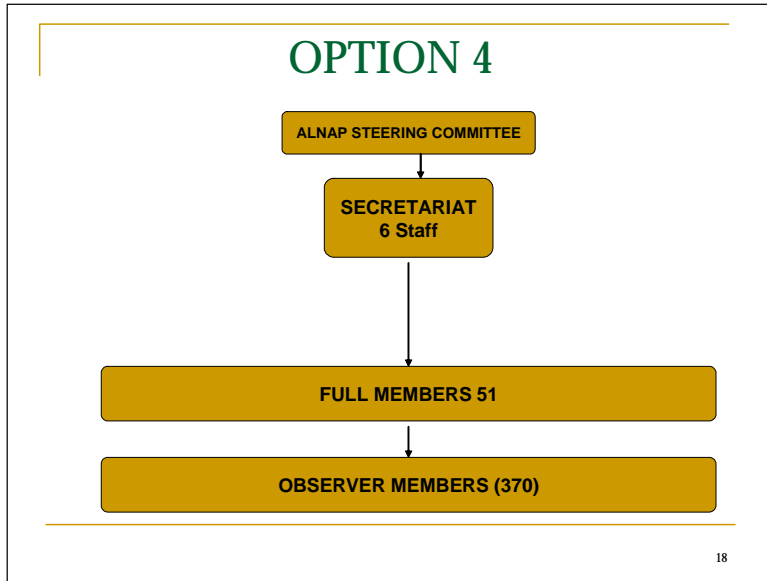**4. Network remains in current form.**

OPTION 4

ALNAP STEERING COMMITTEE

SECRETARIAT
6 Staff

FULL MEMBERS 51

OBSERVER MEMBERS (370)

18

Budget £528,800

This means that we impose a ceiling on our 51 members. We decide that it is not practical or desirable to expand the membership further. We refine and consolidate core products and maintain the network.

5. Formalisation of the network to create a professional association of humanitarian agencies. Budget c. £1,250,000

The logic is that ALNAP is a mature network. Given its range of activities and products, it has arrived at a transitional point at which it needs to develop some kind of professional organisation.

Current ALNAP Activities

ALNAP Biannual Meetings Bringing people together from our target groups and different organisations is believed to be valuable and worthwhile. ALNAP is the first sector-wide forum and has contributed to increasing understanding and trust between numerous humanitarian organisations. This cannot be underestimated, as trust is vital in the pursuit of better accountability and improved performance. The weakness of bringing people together in sector-wide groups is that some people are experts in a particular area while others are there to learn. Therefore, the Biannual Meeting may not be the best forum for specialist debate. Hence, we may want to consider what we look at in these meetings, as well as the number of future meetings. Do we need two or is one enough?

ALNAP Annual Review This is the only independent assessment of the humanitarian sector's performance. There is universal agreement that the first two *Annual Reviews* were a great success. They are read by agency staff, and academics use them to teach. The *Annual Review 2001* has been downloaded in its entirety at least 300 times in the past year, and the Key Message Sheet at least 500 times**.** Nevertheless, primary issues remain on the agenda, such as increasing awareness of the *Annual Review,* disseminating it more widely, and following up on feedback and assessing its impact.

Evaluation Synthesis There are concerns that this may become a little too repetitive. The synthesis monitors trends and identifies problems.

The Meta-Evaluation Standards set by the quality pro forma may be too high. This needs to be discussed.

Themed Chapters in the Annual Review Thus far we have looked at evaluation, learning and, this year, monitoring. As a result, we are developing guidance booklets and training modules, all of which will contribute to the development of good practice. Next year we will look at field-level learning (FLL).

Website, Evaluative Reports Database (ERD) and Training Website traffic doubled this year. Distribution of the *Annual Review* has also almost doubled due to electronic circulation. The ERD database is growing steadily. There are 449 reports in the database and it is clear that it is being used by many humanitarian agencies. Training modules similarly have been downloaded from the website and are one of ALNAP's most popular products.

ALNAP Interest Groups (The Global Study and the LSO) This year the Secretariat has been stretched beyond its capacity in coordinating the Global Study and the LSO. Each group needs one full-time manager to ensure sound administration, funding, financial management, coordination, final product management, dissemination, and follow-up etc. The question is whether we want to continue with the interest group concept and, if so, how we can ensure that adequate resources and management are put in place?

Issues Raised by Members

- Each of the options outlined above clearly affects the way in which we all as members interact with ALNAP.
- ALNAP discussions are useful but products that add value to its work are also important. ALNAP can outsource these products.
- The DAC network functions because members do the work, taking initiatives forward and financing tasks. If ALNAP projects are to be taken forward perhaps they need to include an overhead to ensure that the Secretariat is funded to do the work? Perhaps there should be no revision of the organisational structure but a prioritising of the work and the way it is handled and financed?
- We need to distinguish between inclusiveness and accessibility. It is important to invest in communications, as it seems that we are willing to invest in new products but not in their dissemination. We need to think more about access to the products that ALNAP generates.
- ALNAP has a number of important roles to play, including the creation and collection of knowledge, as well as in knowledge sharing.
- We need to encourage a more active membership.
- We need to be clear about the mechanism that allows ALNAP to put a stamp of approval on a report.
- We need to be careful in regard to diversity: it can either be positive and vibrant or it can become very limiting by reducing discussion to the lowest common denominator.
- The Secretariat must assume a more dynamic role in making the membership more active.
- The Secretariat's core activities should stay the same. However, communication needs to be examined because it is important to place products in the right hands and at the right time.
- We need to be very clear about why ALNAP exists and then to think about what it should be doing.
- One of the implications of option 4b is to see whether member agencies could actually assume some of the Secretariat's responsibilities.
- Is ALNAP the most appropriate body to produce all of these products? Should ALNAP help others to produce them?
- If ALNAP is about products and ALNAP does not expand, how are we going to protect the products?
- Working groups should replace interest groups, securing funding, getting things organised and conducting a particular project. ALNAP can disseminate the work.
- ALNAP should not be operational in the field. ALNAP is a network: a learning network, a communications network and an inter-action network.
- ALNAP should look at its membership and perhaps develop a self-regulating mechanism. In order to retain full membership each member should be asked to carry out a minimum amount

of work. If members do not remain active they should leave, creating a vacancy for other favourable organisations or governments, such as MFA Spain.

- There does not need to be dramatic re-engineering of the ALNAP model. The focus of the Secretariat should be on the *Annual Review,* the Biannual Meeting, evaluation reports, the database, website and listserv, as well as on encouraging the working groups.

1. Reflections, Consolidation and Conclusions of Day One, and Future Options for ALNAP

ALNAP's basic quality-driven network is working well. Only minor modifications are necessary. Specifically, these concern improving communication and the dissemination of ALNAP products, a clearer structure to facilitate working group activities, and a more active membership. The current core budget of approximately £400,000 will remain as it is, as will the Secretariat team. The new work plan and budget will thus reflect pragmatic sustainability, rather than scope for the exploration of new ideas.

ALNAP Activities

The Secretariat does not have the capacity to continue to produce the current volume of products, since additional resources are not available. Thus the membership wants the Secretariat to focus on the *Annual Review,* the Biannual Meeting, the evaluation database, the website and a list serve.

In addition, the Secretariat will help to establish and facilitate working groups – similar to interest groups, but they will adhere to clearer procedures and have clearer roles and responsibilities to ensure that the Secretariat does not assume responsibility for their administration and the management of their activities.

The Secretariat and the ALNAP Steering Committee will agree on the process under which the working groups will be set up and will propose a flexible framework for developing and implementing their activities.

Communications Strategy

ALNAP has already built an impressive portfolio of products. But targeting is currently ad hoc, with inadequate follow-up to ensure optimal usage. A new communications strategy should aim to define and target different groups of people, such as evaluators, evaluation managers, researchers, and CEOs. This will involve a varied approach, using and building on electronic distribution networks, and developing CD-ROMs and other methods of electronic distribution. It will also entail personal follow-up meetings with full members of ALNAP and/or ALNAP consultants: for instance, Tony Beck's visits to agencies to follow up the meta-evaluation.

A More Active Membership

ALNAP has 51 full members, not all of which are active. There is a need to develop new ways of improving the involvement of the membership so as to maintain vibrancy and to add value to the network. This may require looking more closely at criteria for membership and rotation.

2. Experiences of Field-Level Learning

2.1 Key Lessons from the Learning Support Office Test, Malawi
Presented by John Borton, Independent Consultant

The LSO is 'an independent capacity dedicated to supporting learning by and between organizations in teams involved in an operation and having a positive impact on the performance of that operation'. It is based on three methods of learning (previously conceptualised in the work of Mihir Bhatt, Moira Reddick and John Telford): 'learning in' – that is, from previous operations and experience; 'lateral learning' –

between organisations and individuals involved in the operation; and 'learning out' – which involves capturing lessons from an operation for use in subsequent missions.

LSO Malawi: Summary

This test was about verifying the applicability of the concept in a particular context. It lasted for six-and-a-half months: from mid-September to the end of March. Funding was provided by DfID, World Vision International and CAFOD. The Steering Group included OCHA, WHO, CARE, CAFOD, SPHERE, DMI and the ALNAP Secretariat. The host agency was the Malawi Red Cross. An independent evaluation of the LSO in Malawi reported that it had been a successful endeavour.

Six Key Points arising from the LSO Malawi Experience (based on John Borton's personal experience)

1. There is an amazing lack of resources in field operations. Access to the internet, for instance, can be very poor. Hence there is a need to think about libraries, resource centres and resource materials and field workers' access to them. It is important to remember that the average day of a field worker may last between 12 and 14 hours, therefore he/she does not have time to be looking for specific reports and documents. The LSO in Malawi had an online bibliography. Since internet access was so poor, though, it would be useful if a group like ALNAP compiled a CD-ROM containing documents key to every operation.
2. The advantage of LSO people is that they can attend meetings and ask obvious questions that organisational representatives do not ask, such as: are you aware of this? How about thinking about that?
3. It is important to link the capacity to develop 'tailored training', which will be of value to other operations. The LSO Malawi developed a workshop training cycle that involved bringing together field officers – the first time that they had come together as a group, thereby generating rich lateral learning. The LSO workshops focused on three areas: sensitisation and targeting, distribution, and monitoring and reporting. In these workshops we posed the AAR questions: what should have happened? What actually happened? What will you do differently next time? This was a very powerful process, via which a sensitisation and targeting station and a monitoring and reporting station were set up – a direct result of the Central Region workshop.
4. Following the workshops we moved on to writing a manual and running training courses that made use of it. We trained 245 field officers. The success of this programme was that it made field officers feel valued. The LSO Malawi facilitated cross-agency learning and generated material for practical use. The manual can be used to train large numbers of people, since it is a powerful way of increasing commonality and standardisation across a consortium.
5. There is a sharp difference in attitude between 'hard' (learning in) and 'soft' (lateral and learning out) learning. We did not manage the transition from soft to hard learning well. Learning out is fundamentally different and requires careful management. Ground rules need to be discussed with agencies before introducing judgment issues into a cross-organisational setting. Appreciative enquiry may be a good way of introducing cross-agency learning out.
6. Cross-agency learning will require changing organisational cultures. Head offices and funders need to encourage this, as agencies can become defensive of current work practices. Head offices need to signal to field offices that it is fine to be self-critical.

2.2 Sphere Standards: Lessons from Field-Level Dissemination and Training
Presented by Sean Lowrie, SPHERE

SPHERE's goal is to improve the quality of disaster response and to make the organisations involved more accountable. Training is intended to encourage enough people to use the handbook to influence these two variables. It is assumed that if people use this tool quality and accountability will be affected in a positive way.

Five different methods are employed to achieve this goal.

- Field-based workshops;
- Training of trainers courses;
- Training materials;
- Inter agency field learning; and
- Coaching.

Field-Based Workshops

These workshops demonstrate how to use the SPHERE handbook in general situations, such as in relation to the project cycle and disaster preparedness, and how to address questions concerning value and principle via the humanitarian charter.

Inter-agency three-day workshops involve local and international NGOs, donors, UN agencies, academics and national governments. The host agency takes responsibility for inviting participants, administration, and logistics. There are usually three trainers: one lead trainer and two apprentices (one apprentice is usually from the host agency).

The focus is on adult learning methods, knowledge inputs, followed by practice and reflection (which does not ordinarily occur due to the fact that people in the field are too busy). A neutral dialogue takes place on humanitarianism, away from organisational politics. Each participant leaves the workshop with a new frame of reference to employ as and when is relevant in an analysis of his/her work.

The main weakness is that once people leave the workshop there is no control over what happens in future. Also, it is difficult to get the right people to attend a workshop, as they tend to be preoccupied with their own organisations. Recruitment, therefore, may be time consuming. In addition, training alone will not guarantee learning. Training may result in significant positive outcomes, but these are often difficult to measure. Another constraint is that people often leave workshops feeling very positive but are unable to implement what they have learned once they return to their jobs. This may be due to a heavy workload, unclear priorities, or because the handbook as a tool is too far removed from the nature of their daily work.

The necessary conditions for success in regard to this type of training are listed below:

- The training directly responds to what participants want to know.
- It is well targeted.
- It has clear objectives.
- There is clear organisational support for all of the training objectives.
- Training programmes are well implemented.
- The training enjoys the support of managers, and of the management of participating agencies.
- It is followed up. SPHERE follows up with the offer of a couple of months of free coaching.

Training of Trainer Courses

These courses equip people to deliver field-based workshops and focus on three areas: adult-learning principles, organisational learning issues and how to apply the handbook in disaster response. Courses generally last for eight days and are residential and inter-agency. Normally there are 24 participants, as well as three trainers and one full-time administrator. Participants teach 50% of the course, so trainers can focus on providing feedback to those who present the sessions.

Training Materials

Dissemination is successful if materials are translated into appropriate languages, if they are posted free on the web, and if there is an organised system of distribution (Oxfam). The advantage of this method is that a large number of people can be reached, providing tools that save time for those in the field.

Inter-agency field learning projects

This is a country-piloting programme or field level institutionalisation work. The aim is to focus the SPHERE project/secretariat resources in five countries to support pilot agencies to experiment with and learn from the use of the handbook.

Coaching

This refers to the use of coaches or consultants in coaching, either by going to the field or long-distance by phone or emails. It means giving people individual feedback on problems that they have or questions about how to use the SPHERE handbook in their work.

In conclusion, field-based learning can work but it must be an organisational priority, including in regard to funds, staff time and management support. In addition, an organisation's headquarters must support field-based learning, and there must be a focus on methods which are simple to use.

2.3 Lessons from a Real-Time Evaluation
Presented by Ian Christoplos, Independent Consultant

Ian Christoplos was the real-time evaluator of two of the three HAP trials. He examines the meaning of RTE and how we interpret it.

Ninety-nine point nine percent of all field-level learning (FLL) occurs in situations where there is no FLL project going on (no SPHERE, no HAP, no specific initiative). It is important to bear this in mind so that we do not talk only about FLL initiatives but also field-level learning generally.

General conclusions drawn from the HAP trials in Sierra Leone and Afghanistan are set out below.

- The link between learning and accountability is now more accepted than it was in the past. Today there is greater realisation that we have to understand learning processes to achieve sustainability in the field. For example, there has been a shift from teaching people about what they are supposed to do to understanding the learning process. During HAP trials, when issues to do with learning have been raised with people in the field there has been a great deal of lively discussion.
- The question of whether 'one-size-fits-all' has been debated by groups like SPHERE in the past. Field-level learning demonstrates that, rather than people pushing one approach, what they have done is contextualise what they have learned and utilise as much of it as possible. In this respect, a common sense approach seems to be working in the field.
- Human resource management is central to the learning process; however this remains problematic due to a large turnover of staff. In relation to the agency with which HAP was working in Afghanistan, for instance, 40% of people were leaving within two weeks and 40% of people had only been there for two weeks. Hence the potential for developing learning initiatives was extremely limited.
- In both Sierra Leone and Afghanistan the centre of attention shifted fairly quickly to early rehabilitation. In these situations it appears that we do not have the tools because of shifting accountabilities. We have to learn together with the government, and donors. The question that arose was: how does our learning fit with their learning?

- When talking about FLL it is important to consider how we learn from people who live in a country. We need to be sensitive or else we risk being viewed as threatening or patronising. When looking at rights-based approaches, for instance, people in the field have a lot of experience and we can learn a lot from them.
- Developing links with local partners and tapping into their learning processes can be problematic, as often these agencies are more development-orientated than relief-orientated. They may wish to 'piggyback' on a relief operation for a few months, yet they may not be the most appropriate agency with which to work.
- In practical terms it can also be problematic developing ties with local partners. In Harat, Afghanistan, for example, it is difficult to get permission to sit and talk with someone in the evening after work. There is also a strong risk of being viewed as patronising when we talk about teaching.
- When working in the field it is important to understand that the security concerns of local NGOs may be different to those of international NGOs (INGOs). The security of a local NGO may be put at risk by liaising with an INGO.

In sum, it is likely that INGOs will have to adapt issues of accountability to specific contexts. In order to ensure that INGOs are not perceived as patronising, it is essential that they try to get to know the community with which they are working as well as possible.

2.4 The Quality Project: From Learning in the Field to the Development of Quality Assurance Tools
Presented by François Grunewald, Groupe URD

The main aim of Groupe URD is to improve the quality of humanitarian action through evaluation, action-orientated research, experience and training. This quality project rests on two pillars. The first is the learning process, which involves the creation of quality management tools. The second focuses on iterative evaluation, which involves listening and extracting information rather than being prescriptive. The iterative process works in parallel with discussions on learning.

There was much debate about the cost of learning and whether learning can be achieved in a team format. The process was tested over three years with regular visits to Afghanistan, Honduras, Nicaragua and El Salvador. Visits are scheduled to Côte d'Ivoire, the Gulf of Guinea, Guinea, and Sierra Leone.

A key element of the learning process is the notion of regular and repeated RTE. The same team should always visit the same project and should visit other projects to compare evaluations of different projects in the same place. The idea was that a variety of evaluations under different conditions would provide added value and richness to this study. In Afghanistan, for example, it is important to evaluate in both summer and winter because different problems confront a project and field actors at different times of the year.

This study examined sectoral and crosscutting issues. Throughout the study particular attention was paid to listening to individuals and groups. In order to ensure ownership of the process, at the beginning of each project, we brought together in meetings as many different stakeholders as possible. After each visit, a report was drafted and circulated to all of those involved in the discussions. A key learning issue for Groupe URD was the process of asking for feedback on reports that was very successful in terms of people continuing to attend meetings. Another point learned was that lessons from one country can help another. As a result of this process the design of shelters in Nicaragua was changed.

The idea is not to promote solutions but to ask the right questions, which will help different actors in the field. The first step is to identify problems; the next is to ask the right questions that will help groups to come up with their own solutions.

We try and share this information on the URD website and by developing training modules. All lessons learned are incorporated into reports and books, which are distributed at conferences.

3. Monitoring as a Field-Level Learning Tool
Presented by Hugh Goyder, Independent Consultant

Key points that emerged from this study by Hugh Goyder, which will be published in the 2003 *Annual Review,* are listed below.

- Monitoring has tremendous potential in regard to learning.
- There are some familiar constraints: high staff turnover (as mentioned by Ian Christoplos and others); lack of staff time and energy, resulting in an overloaded system – it is quite common for people to work 12 hours a day and sometimes report writing can be one task too many; and pressure for immediate results, applied internally (within agencies) and often by donors. Furthermore, as humanitarian operations increase in size, they often become quite specialised. People seem to get boxed into their particular disciplines. A space needs to be created so that different sectors can talk to one another (this sometimes applies within an agency).

What is apparent is that learning occurs all of the time. The problem is how to capture, record and document it. There seems to be a need to balance approaches, formal and informal, with the latter called something like 'bar learning'. That is, the learning that occurs in a bar or during social time – the dialogue that takes place between staff and beneficiaries, and between staff members themselves. What emerge in this pressurised system are highly filtered reports, which negate learning to a great extent.

If it is accepted that the system is highly pressurised, acquiring sensible feedback at different levels is challenging and often does not happen. It seems important to have internal strategic review meetings at regular intervals. In order to do this effectively, time needs to be set aside so that true reflection can occur. An indicator here would be the perception of staff members of the usefulness of these meetings. Are they seen as useful learning opportunities? NGO leaders and managers may have to be trained to run such meetings in a non-threatening way.

Issues Raised by Members

- There remains a huge need for capacity building in relation to local NGOs in order to improve learning systems, especially in regard to monitoring systems.
- Field people accept that evaluators are necessary – they may not like them but they accept them.
- Transparency leads to good governance.
- Field workers are not as sensitive as we seem to portray them – they are tough enough to take criticism.
- Ultimately, what difference does any of this make? We have heard about standards, training, the LSO, HAP, the RTE, quality and monitoring, but so what?
- Evaluations should not be controlling. Therefore, individuals or organisations should not be mentioned by name.
- Is ALNAP interested in the possible utility of Appreciative Inquiry? Perhaps the founder of Appreciative Inquiry, David Cooper Ryder, could expand on this?
- What are we really trying to do at ALNAP? Maybe we have lost sight of what is needed to bring about transparency in operations and the defence of humanitarian rights. From this one develops a basis for accountability.
- Can one really achieve hard learning from a robust internal monitoring system as opposed to some kind of evaluation? ALNAP should continue to examine this issue over the coming years.

- Ron Waldman should be invited to the autumn Biannual Meeting to discuss whether SPHERE is making a difference in the sector.
- The LSO had about 900 documents on humanitarian guidelines and best practice, for instance, and several hundred on Malawi. It was difficult to identify a 'home' that could guarantee security and maintenance. Consequently, it was decided that the Malawian material would be donated to the UN resource centre and that the other humanitarian material would be brought back to the UK.
- It is important that field documents are either on CD-ROM or placed in libraries. There needs to be some kind of central mechanism for making sure they are kept for the future.
- There could be a helpdesk approach for those on the field, offering a mixture of coaching and support.
- One point of concern in regard to all of these initiatives is that they are a substitute for learning rather than a support for it.
- What sort of participatory processes can you introduce and how do you develop authentic mechanisms for collaboration to ensure that an external intervention makes sense, reflects local realities and allows for a joint decision-making process of some kind? The AAR is a particular type of learning mechanism that asks some very simple questions periodically during an emergency response. What happens? Where are we now? Why did it happen? What would we do differently next time? Such questions in a participatory workshop can cut through differences in culture, resulting in common understanding about what is happening.
- We need to think about how we can make organisations view the whole matter of learning more seriously.
- A common problem with the 14 AARs completed to date concerns the taking of the learning process to an organisational level. The report is treated in the same way as an evaluation report: it often just sits on the shelf. How can we develop a mechanism that looks at AARs and evaluation reports?
- If we talk about FLL in future we need to look differently at three categories: the field staff agencies from outside the field; agencies which are based and rooted and located in the field itself; and the field community. We should not mix them up, as lessons for staff will then be combined with lessons for the community. If we want to institutionalise local learning or FLL we need to provide the field agency with money, otherwise we will have very learned international field staff, but not local agency personnel. Money needs to be separated along these lines in budgets.
- Perhaps ALNAP could discuss how to design an evaluation process.

4. Field-Level Learning and the Iraq Humanitarian Crisis: A Study of Existing Evaluations and Learning Relevant to Iraq
Niels Dabelstein, DANIDA

This paper was produced over a two-year period in preparation for the DAC meeting at Easter. Its audience was senior decision-makers in aid agencies and governments. A similar type of paper was written in December 2001 for Afghanistan. The question posed was: 'What from the Afghanistan paper is now relevant in the context of Iraq?' There are a number of similarities and differences.

A clear message gained from watching television footage of military food distribution is how necessary it is to be impartial and independent in humanitarian work. Several countries are beginning not to distinguish much between military and humanitarian objectives. Humanitarian aid, however, must be needs based and must be provided in a neutral way. Humanitarian assistance was recently used in Afghanistan to win the hearts and minds of the people. This is something that we should protest against at all costs. We are now seeing this in Iraq.

A major concern pertains to the question of when humanitarian work is really over. Different agencies define the different phases of relief and development work differently. The humanitarian immediate catastrophe that was expected during the war didn't happen, apparently, so we're almost immediately moving into a reconstruction phase.

We will have to rebuild the physical infrastructure. So we're really talking about rehabilitation rather than reconstruction in many areas. But there's also a social infrastructure and a governance infrastructure to be rebuilt. It is not the traditional humanitarian workers that will be in Iraq, but large companies.

We've seen in many situations that the pledge for support initially is very high, but rehabilitation periods tend to receive not more than 60 percent of the funds that were originally pledged, because the next conflict or catastrophe moves the money there. We're seeing that now: people and money are moving from Afghanistan into Iraq. On the other hand, there could be opportunities for leaving more to the Iraqis themselves, to manage their reconstruction. Afghanistan showed that initially, we tried to establish a government, we tried to give the power to the government but it's the donors who are making the decisions still. So there are lessons on that side too.

Issues Raised by Members

- The humanitarian community in Iraq has been marginalised to a great extent.
- The occupying powers have an obligation to assume responsibility for protection and assistance. They are also responsible for providing space for humanitarian agencies to work.
- Information should not just be stored in the field but also back at headquarters or in the region. In Iraq people began to destroy information out of fear.
- There is a real opportunity for learning in relation to the situation in Iraq. In part this is because the skills needed and the context are completely different to elsewhere.
- In Iraq the implication of any action is highly political. For example, the choice of whom you engage with has enormous political implications. We need to look at how we relate impartiality and independence to proportionality by viewing Iraq in a global context.
- Oil-for-food is traditionally a crisis-management mechanism. Obviously this is useful, but it can undermine long-term development, especially when it continues for a significant period.
- The intervention in Iraq is more one of rehabilitation than of relief.
- In Iraq most needs assessments focus on the reconstruction of infrastructure (good contracts for allied companies). Hence they tend to be non-participatory. In future, to ensure accountability, DAC members should include a component on the need to evaluate interventions. One reason there has not been much money invested in evaluations is that funds have been transferred to other projects.
- It is especially difficult in Iraq to define the different stages of relief, rehabilitation and development.

Summary of the Day by Members

- The quality of evaluations needs to be improved. ALNAP could reflect on how to design evaluation processes.
- We need to start thinking about how learning implicitly changes power relationships within organisations. If one learns, and particularly if one does so in a transparent manner, power relations do not stay the same. Power structures are changing and we should start to think about how we are going to justify dispatching expatriates as humanitarian fieldworkers.
- Why is the institutional memory on-site (that is, in the field) not retained? What systems are in place in relation to knowledge retention management?
- We need an incentive framework of learning.

- We need to think about encouraging cultural change (embedding management processes), rather than relying on tools.
- There is a lot of knowledge around, but it often gets transferred to a different 'home'. NGO personnel, for instance, leave to work for the Red Cross.
- What kind of knowledge is relevant in the field? How does one provide that knowledge? By putting it on a CD-ROM?
- The UN website www.hiciraq.org is a virtual HIC that has been set up for Iraq. It also has a contacts database.
- The USAID and DfID are thinking of collaborating on an evaluation of some HICs in Iraq.

End of conference.

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