

## 1.2 Methodology

Because of the size of the British public's response to the DEC appeal, expenditure was spread over four phases.<sup>1</sup> This evaluation covers Phases I and II of the DEC Kosovo Appeal expenditure, the period from 6 April 1999 to 31 January 2000 covering the spending of approximately £37 million. The work of the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) evaluation team<sup>2</sup> took place between January and July 2000, with the main field work taking place in March and April 2000.<sup>3</sup>

### Evaluation approach

The multiple objectives of accountability, quality control and lesson learning were considered in designing the evaluation. In addition, the approach emphasised:

Involving the DEC agencies and keeping them well informed by means of workshops and preparatory visits to their headquarters and field offices.

Obtaining the views of beneficiaries and war-affected populations by assigning two team members almost full time to this aspect of the fieldwork, with support from other team members.

Adopting a regional approach, visiting all the countries and territories affected by the emergency where DEC funds were spent, in order to develop a comprehensive overview of the humanitarian needs and responses.

The main report, Volume I, generally follows the structure of the Terms of Reference (ToR). The team has given additional emphasis to a number of areas that were thought to be relevant and important, including protection (Chapter 6), advocacy (in Chapter 10) and the functioning of the DEC system (Chapter 12). Some attention has also been given to human resource issues in Chapters 3, 6 and 11.

The definitions of terms such as coherence and connectedness used in the ToR and the chapter headings follow the generally recognised definitions in the Relief and Rehabilitation Network Good Practice Review, Number 7 (Hallam, 1998) and the guiding questions in the ToR.

### Information sources

The evaluation team drew on many sources of information, enabling it to cross-check data and clarify any contradictory information. The team endeavoured to discuss and check findings with DEC agency staff as the evaluation progressed.

Agency and key informant interviews: the evaluation team conducted over 420 interviews. In addition to the DEC agencies, over 30 partner organisations and 11 government departments were interviewed. Over 30 interviews were conducted with multilateral agencies, donors and INGOs. The interviews were semi-structured, guided by a standard check-list of questions based on the criteria and themes outlined in the evaluation ToR (refer to Appendix 1). Sectoral check-lists were also used and a questionnaire on cost-effectiveness issues was sent to each agency. Following the fieldwork, additional time was spent identifying further documents which were required, cross-checking facts and clarifying financial reports. Agency feedback on the draft report was an integral part of the evaluation as an opportunity to clarify data and to fill gaps.

Interviews with beneficiaries and affected populations: over 100 interviews were conducted with people directly and indirectly affected by the crisis (refer to the Section 7 in Volume II). This included 15 interviews with Albanian and Macedonian families who hosted refugees, 12 interviews with refugee/IDP families and 77 interviews with people who had received assistance provided by DEC

---

<sup>1</sup> Phase I, 6 April – 4 October 1999; Phase II, 1 August 1999 – 31 January 2000; Phase IIb, 1 August 1999 – 30 March 2000; Phase III, 1 January 2000 – 31 June 2000. A Phase IV is expected to cover the expenditure of any final funds remaining in the appeal.

<sup>2</sup> In association with Valid International. For a full list of team members refer to Appendix 2.

<sup>3</sup> Details of the evaluation team's timetable and informants interviewed can be found in Appendices 3 and 4.

agencies in Kosovo. Interviews were conducted with individuals, families or in groups. For practical reasons, the interviewees were mostly identified by the DEC agencies or their partners.

Documentation:<sup>4</sup> key DEC-related documents that were consulted by the evaluation team included the agencies' 48-hour and four-week plans of action, final reports, internal reviews, monitoring reports and end-of-contract reports written by key staff. Due to the DEC reporting line of the end of February 2000, the evaluation team did not see Phase II reports until well into the fieldwork, and in some cases not until after the fieldwork had been completed. The evaluation team also placed a particular emphasis on studying the findings of other evaluations such as the UNHCR and Red Cross Movement evaluations (Stone, Anema & Wissink, 2000; Suhrke et al., 2000).

Observation: emphasis was placed on visiting projects in the field, for purposes of verification and appraisal. A cross-section of DEC-funded projects were visited, so that at least one project by each agency was covered. The time spent with different agencies and in each country was guided by the amounts of DEC money spent and committed.

Meetings and workshops with DEC agencies: prior to the fieldwork, meetings were held at DEC agency headquarters.<sup>5</sup> Joint meetings were then held with DEC agencies during the preparatory visit and fieldwork in each country, to clarify the purpose of the evaluation and to finalise logistical arrangements. These meetings provided opportunities for agency staff to identify issues which they thought the team should take into account.<sup>6</sup> Four workshops with DEC agency staff were also held:

Workshop 1: held in London prior to the fieldwork, to update DEC agency staff on the progress of the evaluation and to feedback and discuss issues which had come up during headquarters visits and the preparatory visit to the field.

Workshop 2: held in Pristina at the end of the fieldwork, to review the strengths and weaknesses of the emergency response and issues arising from the fieldwork with DEC agency staff.

Workshop 3: held in London after the fieldwork, to present the draft report to DEC agency staff.

Workshop 4: held in London with senior DEC agency staff and DEC Secretariat staff to discuss feedback from the agencies on the draft report and key issues arising.

Peer reviewers: a peer review team of regional and humanitarian experts briefed the evaluation team on regional and thematic issues at a workshop prior to the fieldwork. A second workshop was held after the fieldwork for discussion and comments on the draft report.

---

<sup>4</sup> The evaluation database includes over 2,500 documents, including those inherited from the DEC Lesson Learning report.

<sup>5</sup> Time limitations for these preparatory visits meant that three initial HQ meetings were by telephone and the preparatory field visit was to Albania, Kosovo and Macedonia only.

<sup>6</sup> Time constraints meant that these meetings were not held in Bosnia, Montenegro and Serbia.