

NOTE: All answers pertain to humanitarian aid only.

Impact on the national interest

1. What are the comparative advantages or disadvantages in these areas of the UK working through the EU, rather than working independently or through other international organisations?

- The European Commission (EC) does not have a direct operational capacity. Having the UK “working through” is assumed to mean provide its humanitarian funding and promote policies through the EC. In turn it is assumed that the UK would no longer retain direct implementation capacity or exclusive control over the policy and geographic orientations of its humanitarian aid budget and activities.
- Working through the EU on policy issues brings the advantage of EU-wide coherence and stronger leverage within the UN to support humanitarian action globally (given the volume of combined budgets).
- Given the volume of UK aid, the extensive DFID know-how, and the network of DFID experts across the globe, having the UK work through the EC would entail a significant shift in how EU donors support humanitarian action.
- In particular EU Member States and EC funding policies are very different. The UK supports and finances UN multilateral action with institutional funding. The EC on the contrary provides almost exclusively funding for specific projects, primarily for specific country operations. As such the EC is not in a position of supporting or influencing system-wide performance or global programmes. Having UK funding channeled through the EC would mean OCHA would no longer be able to provide global support services to the humanitarian community (e.g. related to programme cycle, communications, information management, advocacy, policy development, partnership development etc).

2. What is the impact of the current system of parallel competences on policy making and implementation in these areas, especially in terms of:

a) efficiency, effectiveness and value for money;

- Parallel competences have resulted in a variety of donorship policies. As noted above, UK support for UN multilateral action has enabled OCHA to deliver global programmes directly aiming at improving the efficiency, effectiveness, and value for money of the aid delivered by the humanitarian community. This would not have been impossible with EC funding.
- As noted above, UK supports agency-wide performance whereas the ECHO is focusing more on project performance.

b) transparency (including checks against fraud and corruption);

- The UK has worked through UN internal oversight and UN external audit bodies. These perform systematic reviews of UN programmes and projects. The EC has developed its own control mechanisms for EC funded activities (called verifications under the EC-UN FAFA Agreement). These are however not aimed at detecting fraud and corruption.

c) working with other international partner organisations (e.g. UN, World Bank etc.)?

- Working with the EU cannot replace working with the OCHA which is mandated to coordinate effective and principle humanitarian action globally. The EU, as a Regional Organization, could contribute to strengthen OCHA’s role and responsibilities in Natural

Disasters response (EU Civil Protection Mechanism as a EU MS coordination platform) and in Complex Emergency crises response.

Relationships between development cooperation/humanitarian aid and other policy areas

3. How far do EU development policies complement and reinforce policies in areas such as trade, security, stability, human rights, environment, climate change etc., and vice versa?

- EU Humanitarian Aid might be affected by the current EEAS strategy to design more an EU comprehensive approach where security and stability priorities will be aligned with humanitarian assistance.
- EU Humanitarian Aid and trade: EU is exploring ways to influence humanitarian negotiations through trade bargains (Pakistan, Sri Lanka ...)
- EU Council showed strong respect to humanitarian principles when it goes to independence to the military objectives (EUFOR Libya council resolution)

Future options and challenges

4. Bearing in mind the UK's policy objectives and international commitments, how might the UK benefit from the EU taking more or less action in these areas, or from more action being taken at the regional, national or international (e.g. UN, OECD, G20) level – either in addition or as an alternative to action at EU level?

- The UK's involvement in the humanitarian policy definition at EU level (COHAFA, etc...) is essential for maintaining the coherence of agendas between the EU and national UK policies.

5. Are there ways in which the EU could use its existing competence in these areas differently, or in which the competence could be divided differently, that would improve policy making and implementation, especially in terms of:

a) efficiency, effectiveness and value for money;

- Paragraph 6 of the Lisbon Treaty article 214 notes that "The Commission may take any useful initiative to promote coordination between actions of the Union and those of the Member States, in order to enhance the efficiency and complementarity of Union and national humanitarian aid measures." The EC could play a stronger role in supporting the complementarity of national aid budgets and in promoting EU Member States adherence to the EU Consensus on Humanitarian Aid.

b) transparency (including checks against fraud and corruption); and

- EC oversight bodies used to check aid funding tend to duplicate the work of UN oversight bodies, including of the UN external board of auditors (which EU Members States are members of). UN oversight bodies could instead be financed to look into EC funded activities.

c) working with other international partner organisations (e.g. UN, World Bank etc.)?

6. What future challenges or opportunities might the UK face in the areas of development cooperation and humanitarian aid, and what impact might these have on questions of competence and the national interest?

- The members of the humanitarian community, including donors, need to adapt and adjust their response strategies to take into consideration the increasing role and capacity of a larger

number of emergency response actors (especially regional organizations, well-funded charities and NGOs outside of the traditional humanitarian community). Building partnerships and inter-operable systems for preparedness and response is essential for ensuring effective and efficient humanitarian action.

- Politicization of aid remains an important concern. More partnerships need to be built to ensure a common understanding of and adherence to humanitarian principles.
- In the context of a finite resource environment, the Private Sector has the potential to bring more know-how and innovation in humanitarian response.
- As a regional organization, the EU institutions have a comparative advantage in that they appear as less representative of specific national interest and can facilitate dialogue “among peers” with other regional organizations (AU, ASEAN etc..).

General

7. Are there any general points on competence you wish to make which are not captured above?