

UN Reform: the humanitarian equation

Adele Harmer
Research Fellow
Humanitarian Policy Group
Overseas Development Institute



The international 'system'

- **Governance is a challenge**
 - not one system but many
- **Humanitarian spending has increased markedly**
 - responses are uneven
- **Concentration of donors**

Key trends in relation to UN agencies

- Concerns re UN agency performance
- A lack of trust in the system
 - perceived decline in multilateral spending
- Increasing influence of donor governments
- Inadequate strategic planning and weak capacity for coordination

Unpacking the trends

- **Bilateralisation – a real problem?**
- **Globally, the UN share is not declining significantly**
 - earmarking was increasing
- **Issues of capacity to plan, prioritise and deliver remained critical**

Key 'reform' initiatives

- Good humanitarian donorship
 - opportunities for the UN
- Reform of the IASC
- Transitions work and the UN in post-conflict operations
- Humanitarian partnerships

Future issues..

- **G77 – a new humanitarian dialogue**
- **Integrated missions here to stay?**
 - **Independence question**
- **Increased engagement of development actors in traditionally ‘humanitarian’ settings**

Future issues..

- Raising the 'security' bar for operational responses
- Reassertion of US role in international security and the 'global war on terror'

Overseas Development Institute

111 Westminster Bridge Road
London SE1 7JD
Tel: 020 7922 0300
Fax: 020 7922 0399
Email: hpgadmin@odi.org.uk
Website: www.odi.org.uk

