

***ACTIONAID
INTERNATIONAL***

***Human Security in
Conflict and
Emergencies***

***STRATEGIC PLAN
2005-2010***

Human Security in Conflict and Emergencies

Strategic Plan 2005-2010

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SECTION ONE

Setting the Scene

1.1 An Introduction

'Human Security in conflict and emergencies' has been adopted for the first time as a core theme of ActionAid International's work in the new international strategy *Rights to End Poverty*. This is evidence of recognition within the organisation of the need to make a more concerted response to violent conflict and emergency situations. *Rights to End Poverty* provides an institutional and global analysis setting clear priorities and direction for ActionAid over the next five years.

This plan provides a strategic framework describing how ActionAid works to mitigate the causes and effects of emergencies and conflict for poor and excluded people. It also identifies key priorities and opportunities to fight the long-term causes of poverty and exclusion. This plan draws from *Rights to End Poverty* and our work is consistent with its rights and empowerment approach.

ActionAid is committed to improving the security of poor people facing conflict or disaster and so within the new strategic period will be working within a Human Security framework. We will develop strategies to respond to immediate needs, shield people from hazards, enable them to improve resilience to difficult conditions, build their capacity to cope and to exert pressures on power holders.

We focus on the inescapable reality experienced by poor people be they in natural disasters, conflict or post conflict environments.

This strategic plan brings our work on conflict and emergencies together within the concept of *Human Security*.

Human Security

From the perspective of a poor woman in the Congo, life is full of threats to security beginning with violence within the family and extending to the risk of catastrophic illness, loss of livelihood, natural disaster, human rights abuse by military forces, HIV/AIDS and the destruction caused by war. She does not necessarily distinguish between these notions yet they are all crucial to her security.

The Human Security concept, developed originally by the UN, puts poor people at the centre of perceptions and analysis and focuses on all the issues that *they* cite as important. It is *their* security, rather than national or global security, that is the subject of attention, and their security is expressed as an aspect of their state of mind. It is a concept that recognises that poor people are vulnerable to a constant series of threats and risks focussing on a need to retain a minimum quality of life that was defined as *Freedom from Fear, Freedom from Want and Freedom to take action on one's own behalf*¹. Human security comprises a set of conditions in which human beings are allowed to function at their optimum potential, with acceptable living standards and a sense of well being, contributing to overall human development.

For poor people, the core of the Human Security approach lies in their empowerment and their protection.

ActionAid International endorses the UN Human Security concept as outlined in '*Human Security Now*'²

¹ Commission on Human Security 'Human Security Now' (2003)

² As above

1.2 Context and Trends

DISASTERS

Over the last decade the number and impact of both natural and man-made disasters have increased, affecting mostly underdeveloped countries. In 2003 alone, 254 million people were affected by natural disasters³. In December 2004, the Indian Ocean Tsunami caused one of the most devastating natural disasters in modern history⁴ and triggered an equally unprecedented worldwide response, the world's biggest aid operation⁵.

Disaster situations impact most intensely on poor people. It is the poor and excluded who have the least capacity to cope and recover from the effects of such disasters. It is the poor and excluded who do not have adequate security and protection in order to defend their rights to a dignified life. Access to basic needs such as food, water, shelter and health is often denied and livelihoods are destroyed. It is the poor and excluded who are exposed to more risk with a lack of commitment and capacity from governments and institutions to protect them.

However, different groups are more vulnerable than others based on gender, ethnicity or disability, for example. Women and girls are affected differently to men and have different recovery patterns. It is women and girls who are in many cases denied opportunities and rights, often having less access to any available assistance.

RISK REDUCTION AND CLIMATE CHANGE

There is growing recognition of the need for disaster risk reduction, but governments seldom treat this as a priority. There are increasing opportunities to influence governments and international institutions to take disaster mitigation and preparedness more seriously with the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action⁶. The experience of Hurricane Katrina in the US in 2005 may galvanise governments to consider risk reduction more seriously.

The implications of climate change are a core cause of disasters all over the world. Analysts are expressing a more serious concern about the devastating effects of global warming on the livelihoods of the most vulnerable people. In recent years, hydro-meteorological disasters are becoming more common, exacerbated by environmental degradation. Floods and storms are the most recurrent events affecting the highest number of people every year. However, it is drought and its main consequence, famine, which has been proved the deadliest disaster with the most debilitating impact.

CONFLICT

In 2002, of the 20 countries with the lowest scores on the human development index, 16 were in conflict or just emerging from it⁷. Conflicts represent a threatening context for those whose rights to protection and assistance have been denied and ignored. Almost without exception the world's worst human rights abuses and humanitarian crises take place during conflict.

Living on the edges of society or in societies in which the rule of law and the social fabric has broken down, violence is part of the lives of poor people. They are vulnerable to violent threats precisely because they are poor and relatively unprotected. Conflict can exacerbate the vulnerability of women and girls in particular and increases their exposure to risks such as HIV/AIDS, trafficking, and the threat of sexual violence.

Unequal power relations often create conflicts. Processes monopolised by governments and institutions often do not allow the poor and the excluded to gain power. Unequal power distribution

³ ISDR 2003

⁴ Mid-Term Review of the Flash Appeal 2005 for Indian Ocean Earthquake – Tsunami, Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP), United Nations 2005.

⁵ www.alertnet.org/thefacts

⁶ Hyogo Framework for Action developed at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters 2005-2015 www.isdr.org/wcdr

⁷ World Disasters Report 2004

accentuates the disparity among poor and excluded people, intensifying grievance and resistance, and can lead to violent conflict. Those who profit from the violent conflict often seek the continuation of such disruption thus fuelling further grievance.

The erosion of the state and governance issues also causes conflict. When a state fails to fulfil its responsibilities as protector of and provider to its people, it tries to exert control more vigorously to be able to maintain its position.

The nature of war and its impact has also changed. Wars have become increasingly biased against civilians. In the First World War, 5% of casualties were civilians, in the Second World War this had risen to 50% but in the 1990s, over 32 conflicts demonstrated a 90% casualty rate of civilians⁸.

Conflicts while mostly intra-state or across regions, are influenced by other forces internationally. Often the engagement of other countries and trans-national corporations fuel or prolong conflicts either out of self-interest or inadvertently. Alternatively they can have a positive effect. Once a conflict is underway, the solutions are seldom found only within that country, be it in terms of financial support, opportunities or pressure for peace, allowing trade in diamonds, drugs or arms or the recognition of belligerents. All are international factors that influence in some form.

A new type of organised violence has been emerging which is a mixture of war, organised crime and massive violations of human rights. These wars are fought for political goals using tactics of terror and destabilisation causing huge displacement⁹. These wars are both global and local, public and private. Combatants are crossing borders to fight and war is increasingly seen as a livelihood alternative.

In addition, there is an interface between conflict and natural disasters. Territorial conflict can be caused by the loss of land to desertification due to climate change or caused by the migration of people living on coastal areas threatened as sea levels increase. Natural disasters can also exacerbate existing ethnic conflict for example in Sri Lanka following the tsunami.

UN & PEACEKEEPING

40% of post-conflict countries quickly slip back into conflict¹⁰. UN sanctioned peacekeeping operations play an important role with conflict increasingly being linked to international issues and power. Responses are channelled through the UN by means of political engagement and peacekeeping forces. There is an increasing focus and commitment to regional peacekeepers, notably through the African Union. A trend is emerging for integrated missions combining the military and humanitarian mandates, an approach that undermines rather than promotes humanitarian space.

A significant challenge ahead is to improve the quality of UN peacekeepers by increasing numbers and financial resources, improving training, establishing clear mandates known to all and ensuring accountability for delivering and not abusing these mandates. The proposed UN Peace-building Commission would hopefully give more coherence and legitimacy to international peace building and peacekeeping.

GEOPOLITICS

The post-Cold War era saw an acceleration of intra-state conflicts mainly along identity, ideology and resource lines. Post 9/11, the polarization of groups along ethno-religious lines has been accentuated, transcending national boundaries. The protracted conflict in West Asia and the US-led war in Iraq emerge as major landmarks in the international context relating to conflict. The problems of Palestine are a central grievance throughout the Muslim world. In the case of the Iraq War, the major powers adopted a policy of pre-emptive self-defence, redefining the justifiable use of international violence as agreed in the UN Charter. In both cases International Humanitarian Law has been undermined and has resulted in a situation where it is particularly hard to distinguish between combatants and civilians.

⁸ Unnikrishnan 2003 'Wars are killing the dream of health for all' (Peoples Health Movement)

⁹ Mary Kaldor, 'New and Old Wars'

¹⁰ Speech by Hilary Benn, UK Secretary of State for International Development, December 2004, on the Reform of the International Humanitarian System, ODI

This creates serious concerns about how human rights of unprotected people will be addressed in future interventions.

Under the auspices of the ‘War on Terror’¹¹, rich countries have no hesitation in allocating their resources to reinforce their own security agendas. Thus aid flows have become distorted. The space for neutrality and so for neutral humanitarian space is closing. Aid agencies have been associated with the political objectives of Western countries and have become targets themselves.

The ‘War on Terror’ set goals of destroying all “terrorist” organisations (implying non-state political organisations) and the governments that supported them. It is a US-declared war, but in stating that every nation is “with us or with the terrorists”, the US has co-opted the actions of other countries. While non-state terrorism has directly affected relatively few people so far, the ‘War on Terror’ has had much more widespread impact¹².

HIV/AIDS

HIV/AIDS is a huge threat having killed 2.3 million people in sub-Saharan Africa alone in 2004, while an estimated 3.1 million became infected. This brings the total number of people living with HIV/AIDS in the sub-region to more than 25 million¹³.

HIV/AIDS is deepening people’s vulnerability and making it harder for many to grow sufficient food. The disease progresses much more quickly when people lack a proper diet. People have more dependants as a result of HIV/AIDS and their dependents face additional burdens when they are alive, and increased vulnerability as well as trauma when they die. HIV/AIDS is more likely to spread when there is displacement of populations during disasters and conflict due to sexual violence or lack of sufficient health services.

People living with HIV/AIDS often need emergency food aid as they are more likely to be unable to plant sufficient food and succumb to illness as a result of poor nutrition. Additionally without such nutrition, Anti- Retro Virals (ARVs) will not work to their maximum effect

HUMANITARIAN SYSTEM

Humanitarian action is an increasingly big business, but, despite the sums of money involved and the profound consequences of our actions for vulnerable people, the international system is not working well. We look to the UN to lead the international response, but without reform, the UN is at risk of losing credibility. Emergency response is still very distorted from the pattern of real need. With a 24/7 news culture, the media is the main conductor of information. The international media report only on major crises, and the whim of circumstance can dictate whether people’s needs are met or not. Resources are allocated according to political priority, or as a result of media pressure.

Now donor conditionality is creeping into humanitarian funding, setting conditions in the donors’ interest on aid that will save people’s lives. The amount of money for humanitarian assistance has risen dramatically over the past year, yet the increase reflects mainly aid that has been channelled to Afghanistan and Iraq¹⁴. Prior to that, between 1990 and 2000, official humanitarian aid increased in real terms, from \$2.1 billion to \$5.9 billion¹⁵

Emergency aid is still predominantly driven and delivered from outside the affected countries. The process of emergency relief tends to be short sighted and profoundly disempowering. Often this short-term thinking has consequences for longer-term development. Seldom does the emergency response

¹¹ In July 2005 the US administration signalled that the term ‘War on Terror’ is to be phased out in favour of the phrase ‘Global Struggle Against Violent Extremism’ with the idea that the long-term struggle is as much an ideological battle as a military mission.

¹² Roger Yates ‘War on Terror’ Core Analysis 2004

¹³ UNAIDS/WHO Report, December 2004

¹⁴ OECD Report, March 2005

¹⁵ HPG Report 12, ‘Uncertain power: the changing role of official donors in humanitarian action’ December 2002

help to build the capacity locally so that poor people end up less vulnerable. In spite of this, we are seeing increasing commitment to linking relief, rehabilitation and development.

The amount of food aid being delivered around the world is also growing. Instead of using food aid to strengthen poor people's long-term food security, the short-term goal of food delivery has become paramount especially for the World Food Programme. As a result of food imports, local market viability is eroded, creating a spiral of enforced dependency.

ACTIONAID INTERNATIONAL

These are the trends that we face and the context in which ActionAid is working. These are the factors that determine how we must position ourselves and choose our approach. As an organisation at the cutting-edge of work linking relief, rehabilitation and development, our approach brings a long-term perspective to the core of all our responses.

Emergencies and conflict situations can be times of opportunity for us; times when we can actively challenge political, economical and social structures which have been proved to fail in protecting the basic rights of the most vulnerable groups. Our presence may contribute to the support of poor and excluded people, help them to gain power progressively on the basis of a deeper knowledge and understanding of their potential to demand their rights in order to influence policies and practices in times of conflict and emergencies.

SECTION TWO

Strategic Direction

ActionAid has identified an overarching goal and five inter-related objectives to address the causes, dynamics and consequences of conflict and emergencies.

2.1

OVERALL GOAL

People continue to exercise their rights and maintain a sense of security during conflict and emergencies

2.2

Objective 1:

To reduce the hazards that threaten poor people

Hazards are the primary cause of disasters. Hazards may be natural phenomena, such as earthquakes, cyclones or drought, or they may be man-made, such as violent conflict and political or economic collapse. Even natural hazards may be exacerbated by human activity, for example, flooding which increases as a result of climate change, the building of unplanned dams or land degradation.

Our objective is to contribute to reducing hazards and so reduce the frequency and severity of emergencies and the violence of conflict. That may be by local mobilisation of communities to prevent environmental damage that will increase the likelihood of flooding, or to promote action such as reforestation to reduce the chance of landslides. We will also carry out advocacy internationally to address some of the causes of hazards, primarily climate change.

Some conflicts are more violent than others, but we know that it is possible to reduce the extent of that violence on poor and excluded people. There are some areas, such as the favelas in Brazil, where poor people routinely experience terrible violence. We support any efforts that reduce the threat of violence.

Our work to reduce hazards will focus on Haiti, Southern Africa, South Asia and the UK¹⁶. The primary programmes to reduce violence are likely to include Afghanistan, the Great Lakes Region, Nepal, Nigeria and Uganda.

Our key priorities for action:

- I. To contribute to international campaigns for climate change reduction.
- II. To support civil society initiatives fighting against policies and practices that increase local and regional hazards. For example, we support the People’s River Commission¹⁷ and similar movements in South Asia.
- III. To support people to increase their power over the dynamics of conflict. Helping them to challenge forces, like the arms trade, which contribute to violence and to promote mechanisms, such as peace negotiations, which reduce violence.
- IV. To improve the security of women, particularly in post-conflict environments.

Outcomes

In five years time:

National and international policies will have changed to make countries better adapted to climate change.

Some people will face reduced risk as the hazards they face have been reduced by civil society action. We will have a body of relevant knowledge, gleaned from our support, to offer other organisations embarking on similar campaigns.

Similarly, some conflicts will be less violent, or resolved without violence as a result of pressure from communities and civil society. Some people will be alive who would otherwise have died. Other groups will be better able to succeed in similar work because of the knowledge and confidence that our support has generated.

<p>Objective 2: <i>To alleviate and address the causes of conflict</i></p>

Violent conflicts are a major obstacle to justice and dignity for poor and excluded people. Conflicts have devastating effects in terms of loss of life, loss of dignity, loss of access to basic services and other essentials. In many such contexts, people are forced to flee their homes resulting in unprecedented needs of populations in insecure areas often not allowing for the adequate provision of aid. Most often, the response to conflict starts only after its occurrence. Very little attention is paid to aspects of prevention in terms of identifying conflict trends and addressing the causes in time. There is often some sort of early warning but seemingly a lack of political will to act on such signs.

ActionAid will work on conflict transformation by advocating for and engaging with addressing the structural causes of conflict. These may include ineffective governance, exclusion, unequal access to productive resources and lack of access to justice.

We will not only focus on on-going conflict or post-conflict environments, but also on strengthening those countries where risks of conflict are growing. We will use post-conflict environments as the prime opportunity to address the causes of conflict and to engage women in governance processes.

The likely programmes to alleviate and address the causes of conflict include Great Lakes region, across West Africa region, Uganda and South Asia.

Our key priorities for action:

¹⁶ UK is in terms of policy and advocacy work.

¹⁷ People’s River Commission is a civil society advocacy platform in Bangladesh, India and Nepal bring people’s voice to lobby for improved river and flood management.

- I. To support the development of women’s leadership in pre and post conflict situations, particularly women’s involvement in peace processes.
- II. To support poor people to raise their security concerns with authorities and advocate for action to address those concerns.
- III. To promote initiatives for peace education in schools and among youth groups.
- IV. To support civil society involvement in justice and reconciliation mechanisms such as the Gacaca process¹⁸ in Rwanda.
- V. To support programmes in post-conflict environments, that involve communities in reducing the likelihood of conflict re-emerging, for example, the reintegration of ex-combatants.
- VI. To improve our analysis of conflict, we will build the capacity of our staff and partners to undertake conflict analysis in situations where violent conflict exists or there is a potential for such conflict.

Outcomes

In five years time:

Some of the causes of conflicts in areas where we work will be addressed and resolved. The injustice and insecurity faced by excluded groups will not remain hidden until conflict breaks out; they will voice their concerns and see them addressed peacefully. Where there is a threat of conflict, peace education will reduce the number of young people supporting violence. In areas emerging from conflict, justice and reconciliation mechanisms will involve civil society especially representing poor and excluded groups. Ex-combatants will be living within communities and no longer contributing to violence.

Women will have a stronger role in peace processes and in post-conflict recovery in the areas where we have worked. The capacity of their organisations in terms of contacts, knowledge and skills will allow them to assert their priorities.

ActionAid will have a tried and tested method of conflict analysis with a cadre of staff and partners experienced in its use.

Objective 3:

To build people’s resilience to conflict and emergencies

Poor and excluded people are generally much more vulnerable than others and have limited access to the resources, services and protection they need to realise their rights. Vulnerability is a combination of many factors that differ for individuals, communities and particular groups of people in different contexts. ActionAid will support vulnerable groups to withstand emergencies and conflict. We will build their capacity to play a proactive and positive role in reducing the risks of emergencies and conflict. By increasing their capacity, we will make people less vulnerable.

Our key priorities for action:

- I. To help poor families to increase their resilience against emergencies, for example, by building or diversifying their assets or strengthening their houses and stabilising their land.
- II. To help poor communities be more prepared, for example by working with schools to teach them what to do and where to go in the event of a disaster.
- III. To support people in using their own voice to highlight their vulnerability and call for the means to address their specific needs in emergencies and conflict.

¹⁸ The Gacaca process is a traditional mechanism that was adopted alongside the regular court to judge the 120,000 people accused of war crimes during the genocide. In the Gacaca system, the local population act as witness, judge and party to the trials.

- IV.** To continue to build the capacity of our staff and partners in Participatory Vulnerability Analysis (PVA – see appendix 1) to improve programme design and our analysis of the links between vulnerability and poverty and to generate evidence for our policy work.

Outcomes

In five years time:

People in communities where we work will be more resilient in the face of conflict and emergencies. Families will have more diverse assets to rely on and will live in safer houses. Schools, and the communities they serve, will be better prepared for emergencies and uphold cultures of safety. People will be ready to heed early warning signals and know what to do when a crisis occurs. Participatory Vulnerability Analysis will be a routine part of ActionAid programme design.

Objective 4:

To generate pressure on governments, armed opposition groups and institutions to uphold their responsibility to protect people in conflict and emergencies

People's rights and security in emergencies and conflict should be protected by local and national governments, and by regional or international institutions such as the United Nations. If the whole spectrum of organisations is working effectively and in accordance with International Humanitarian Law, people will be much less vulnerable. Two factors are critical, the political will for effective action and sufficient capacity to exercise that will. This is clearly the case in a few countries where emergencies have been effectively addressed by governments. However, most poor people are not adequately protected and some are excluded from any protection that in turn can exacerbate or indeed cause conflict.

We will address all levels of institution with particular emphasis on governments.

Our key priorities for action:

- I.** To mobilise poor people to call for greater accountability and transparency in governance in addressing conflict and disasters, for example, the People's Tribunal on the Tsunami.
- II.** To advocate for governments to adopt policies to protect the rights of internally displaced people.
- III.** To support the implementation of the Hyogo Framework through research, advocacy and active engagement in networks and events with particular focus on adaptation to climate change.
- IV.** To monitor actions and policies of governments, armed opposition and institutions and advocate for improvement or offer support where their performance does not meet acceptable standards for example aid tracking on the tsunami response to fight corruption.
- V.** To bring the views of poor people to influence international players including donors, regional institutions and the UN, to engage in conflicts to bring an end to violence and a just resolution to the conflict.

Outcomes

In five years time:

Governments and institutions will be better at protecting people in conflict and disasters in countries we are targeting for this work. Their clear policies and transparent resource allocation will allow people to hold them accountable for their performance.

Governments will be following policies to offer internally displaced people the same protection as refugees, so that they receive basic services and protection from violence.

Countries will face less risk as governments make progress to fulfil their commitments to the Hyogo Framework for Action. Donors and international institutions will align their policies to support the

Framework. The international humanitarian system will be working effectively to get aid to people when they need it.

When dealing with conflict, the international community, whether as governments or international institutions will be more effective. Aid will not exacerbate conflict; peacekeeping missions will address the security priorities of poor people and most particularly, of women.

Objective 5:
To assure poor people access to appropriate assistance and basic services in conflict and emergencies

With all the work to reduce hazards, violent conflict and vulnerability, we recognise that emergencies will still occur. When they do, poor and excluded people should be assured of appropriate assistance, not just to survive, but also to recover and be stronger.

We will respond to emergencies and conflict situations, directly or with partners, designing programmes that are consistent with our strengths and values, and appropriate to the local situation. We view emergencies as times of change and so of opportunity. We will try to capitalise on the opportunity by implementing emergency and conflict programmes which bring about the changes we are seeking in order to end poverty. For example, when local committees are formed to manage emergency assistance we will take the opportunity to empower women by encouraging them to play a leading role.

In addition to our own response, we will support efforts to promote adequate and appropriate response by others. We will carry out direct advocacy or support communities to call on donors to allocate adequate resources. We will seek to influence the prevailing norms of the emergency relief community to be more responsive and respectful of the needs of poor and excluded people.

Our key priorities for action:

- I. To respond to emergencies in the countries where ActionAid is present and in new countries using the experience and contacts on the ground backed by expertise on programme design, for example, the emergency response in Niger in 2005. Our programmes will focus on helping people restore livelihoods, overcome the mental stress, and claim their rightful share of available assistance.
- II. To continue to implement the tsunami response programme initiated in December 2004 and draw institutional learning and best practice from the response to feed into future emergency programming.
- III. To promote participation of women and the most vulnerable groups in the identification of needs and in decision-making processes for the provision of assistance in conflict and emergencies.
- IV. To develop and promote good practice on HIV/AIDS in conflict and emergencies for example by supporting AIDS Care Organisations to prepare and respond to emergencies in Southern Africa. We will also promote appropriate assistance and protect the rights of people living with HIV/AIDS, particularly with regard to access to healthcare.
- V. To provide aid based on local production and promote protection from damaging import practices, for example, by challenging the excessive use of imported food aid and promoting local purchase of food aid.
- VI. To protect the rights of displaced people, for example, the maintenance of services during conflict situations especially education and health.
- VII. To build ActionAid's capacity to respond to emergencies and conflict in the most appropriate way. This will involve building up deployable human resources across the organisation with the right skills at various levels, making sure that our policies and procedures enable us to respond in a timely and efficient way, for example, to enable us to expand our capacity and experience on psychosocial needs.

Outcomes

In five years time:

People will be surviving and recovering from emergencies with ActionAid assistance in countries where we work now, but also in countries where we have no established presence. ActionAid will be involved in most major emergency operations with recognisable programmes to help people restore livelihoods, overcome the mental stress, and claim their rightful share of available assistance. Our programmes will consistently succeed in addressing the needs and involvement of women. The lessons from the tsunami programme will be informing work elsewhere.

People living with HIV/AIDS will have better access to care and medical assistance during emergencies, and programmes will support them to make the most of their capacity for recovery while addressing their particular vulnerabilities.

Emergency aid, particularly food aid, will be less damaging to local economies. After emergencies and conflict, local contractors and suppliers will have a greater role, providing more jobs and opportunity in affected communities.

ActionAid will have a cadre of trained people who will be available to be deployed to emergencies from their normal work in country programmes. Every country will have a minimum capacity to assess and manage emergency work and to protect the security of staff.

2.3 Scope

Where do we respond to disasters?

- ActionAid undertakes emergencies and conflict work anywhere where we have something to add to the situation in line with our core mandate. This will mainly be in countries where ActionAid already works and across the borders from our existing presence.
- We will work in new areas in partnership with organisations that have an existing presence there.
- We recognise the potential of supporting a response in a new area more as an act of solidarity rather than a desire for strategic presence. In this instance there would be no implication for resource allocation and would be a matter of touching a crisis without actually running a programme.
- In exceptional circumstances we may speak out about crises even if we do not have a presence based on an informed analysis of the situation.
- We may also engage if the relevant region is seeking a link with the country affected for strategic reasons.
- We would expect to learn from engagement in a new place that will improve our performance in responses elsewhere.

Our work in communities and internationally will focus on a limited number of countries which identify Human Security as one of their strategic priorities. For our conflict work, these are countries or regions in conflict or emerging from conflict, primarily: Great Lakes, West Africa, Uganda, parts of India and Nepal. For natural disasters we will focus on the countries or regions that are highly vulnerable to disasters for example South Asia, Southern Africa and Haiti.

Despite this focus on specific countries, we recognise that countries not treating Human Security as a strategic priority will need to respond to emergencies and conflict. In this case we will support as necessary with the international team and staff with experience from other countries.

In the event of a disaster, the international team and the country offices concerned will re-prioritise in order to deliver an effective response.

As is evident in this strategic plan we will increase the amount of work we do with people affected by conflict. We will build on our experience in psychosocial programmes and livelihood recovery as a

core component of our long term approach to emergency response.. We will use our distinctive competence to raise and address HIV/AIDS and food aid issues in emergencies. In treating emergencies as opportunities to initiate positive change, we will particularly focus on the empowerment and protection of women.

2.4 Overall Vision for Five Years

People across the world will consider ActionAid an effective and significant agency working in conflict and emergencies particularly managing emergency recovery programmes. We will be regularly receiving emergency funds from donor agencies. Our work on conflict will be well respected and will benefit from international funding.

We will have a leading role among NGOs in contributing to disaster risk reduction efforts in the international system and in countries where we are working.

We will have a larger team operating smoothly and mobilising efficiently in emergencies. The team will have different and complementary skills for both field and policy work.

We will be frequent commentators on human security in the international media. Our web site will have up to date pictures and information about our work.

We will have a strong portfolio of policy briefs on emergency and conflict issues backed by extensive contacts across the world, especially with the leading players in the south.

We will be getting a steady stream of income for our work from a regular giving system earmarked for such work. We will substantially offset our demands on general funds by charging out costs and claiming overheads from appeals and official funded projects.

Our systems and procedures will allow rapid scale up of support to emergencies, including deployment of staff, rapid recruitment and allocation of funds.

By 2010 we will be able to make long-term decisions about the status and governance of Human Security in Conflict and Emergencies within ActionAid International.

SECTION THREE

How we work

3.1 Our approach

ActionAid's strategy on Human Security takes a rights-based approach to emergencies and conflict work. This approach emphasises respecting, promoting, protecting and fulfilling the rights of poor and excluded people. We will direct attention to the responsibilities of the state and other powerful institutions to protect and empower poor and excluded people. We will work together with partners and alliances to hold states, governments and institutions accountable for the enhancement of human security.

We apply a rights-based approach¹⁹ by emphasising empowerment and proactive participation of poor and excluded people in the design and implementation of our programmes. We provide basic assistance to people based on their needs and capacity, not on their identity, gender or beliefs.

¹⁹ DEC Independent Evaluation of the Tsunami Response October 2005 stated '*the absence of ActionAid from Indonesia is felt in a general lack of advocacy and rights-based work*'.

Our approach promotes long-term sustainable solutions through the integration of humanitarian work and ongoing development work. Development interventions must be orientated to the reduction of vulnerability, incorporating actions of prevention, mitigation and preparation for emergencies. Communities will be better able to respond, more resilient and have a stronger capacity to recover, thus building long-term sustainable structures for human security.

Our approach encompasses preparedness, response and recovery. Our strength lies in rooting our responses on local knowledge, taking the opportunities available to reinforce the long-term struggle for poverty eradication, conflict prevention, ending violence, enhancing social and economic post-conflict reconstruction and peace-building. We have a particular focus in our responses on livelihood recovery and psychosocial needs.

A long-term perspective

ActionAid's approach does not necessarily imply our long-term presence or even long-term intervention. For us, it is important to understand and address:

- The causes and patterns of vulnerability
- The close relationship between poverty, vulnerability and denial of rights
- Those factors which enhance people's resilience and capacity to cope
- The extent of protection for poor and excluded people by their governments and by the international community

Poor people's lack of access to and control over basic resources, for example, land, adequate shelter and information, undermines their capacity to cope. Our work particularly addresses people's concerns for the sustainability of their livelihoods as well as their immediate needs.

Addressing the causes

ActionAid's approach seeks to tackle the causes of emergencies and conflict, the underlying problems associated with the behaviour, policies and practices of governments and institutions. We seek to address these by enhancing understanding and mobilising people to raise their voices. We work with communities and civil society to promote positive action at local, national and international levels.

Addressing immediate needs

We believe the humanitarian imperative comes first. We provide appropriate assistance to save lives and ensure that poor and excluded people access their immediate needs during emergencies. Delivering services is not an end in itself. We do so in a manner that not only satisfies immediate needs but also empowers communities to claim their rights and promotes structural changes in the long-term that protect the right to live with dignity.

Participation and empowerment

We promote the right of poor and excluded people to participate in and influence the decisions that affect them in the planning as well as the implementation of the responses. We support the processes of empowerment of the individuals and vulnerable groups with whom we work so that they may ensure that all actors, particularly the state as the primary duty-bearer, are transparent, accountable and effective.

Reinforcing local capacities

We recognise the significant role poor and excluded members of society can play in undertaking vulnerability analysis and risk assessments in order to develop in-depth understanding of the underlying causes, dynamics and consequences of emergencies and conflict. We believe that the individuals, families and communities with whom we work have capability to confront and to overcome the impact of crises, so our programmes are designed to reinforce local capacities and resilience. At the same time, our approach seeks to increase the capacity of people and institutions responsible for emergency preparedness and response.

Emphasising the rights of women

Women and men have differing vulnerabilities to crises as well as different capacities and coping

strategies. Women and girls caught up in violent conflict often experience systematic and deliberate targeting and violation of their rights. Women and girls live in fear of sexual violence and physical harm. Emergency and conflict situations provide an opportunity to redress gender inequalities and to build on the capacities of women, by upholding women's rights and access to resources.

ActionAid puts particular emphasis on understanding the dynamics of power, inequality and discrimination. We work to challenge and change this power imbalance and strengthen women and girls' power in terms of self worth and knowledge. We offer support focused on the particular needs of women and girls and promote their right of access to available assistance and control over the means in which it is delivered. We emphasize the need to strengthen local capacities, especially women's leadership roles in emergencies, conflict prevention and peace-building, and to help them create alliances with other civil society organisations to claim their rights, demand protection from violence and provide support and care for traumatised individuals. They will be empowered to play significant and meaningful roles in conflict prevention work and peace building.

Partnerships

Our grassroots experience recognises the importance of local knowledge. In order to deliver our emergencies and conflict programmes, we will work in partnership with local civil society organisations. In the process we will build on their capacity in order to respond appropriately.

International dimension

While the consequences of emergencies and conflict are felt locally, our experience has taught us that there are international dimensions to both causes and consequences of emergencies and conflict situations. We will include an international dimension to our situation analysis and draw on relevant experience and knowledge from all the countries where we work and the long-term partnerships with communities and grassroots organisations. We will mobilise moral and material support wherever we can, and advocate internationally for action appropriate to particular emergencies.

As an international organization with global reach and influence, we will utilize findings from conflict and vulnerability analyses to build alliances and create advocacy networks to call on international organizations such as the UN Security Council, African Union and other regional bodies such as SADC²⁰, ECOWAS²¹, IGAD²², SAARC²³ and ASEAN²⁴ to hold states and governments accountable, as well as armed factions to uphold International Humanitarian Law and respect human rights of affected communities in conflict.

3.2 Key allies, networks, institutions and potential partners at international level

- a) **Architecture of the humanitarian system:** There is a significant infrastructure of influential organisations serving the sector, most of which remain in the north. We will always prefer to support emerging organisations in the south. However, due to our core presence in London particularly in policy, we will continue to support or join if they add particular value to ActionAid. These include continued relationships with the DEC²⁵, ICVA²⁶ and VOICE²⁷.

²⁰ Southern Africa Development Community

²¹ Economic Community of West African States

²² Intergovernmental Authority on Development

²³ South Asia Association for Regional Co-operation

²⁴ South East Asian Nations

²⁵ Disasters Emergencies Committee: Umbrella organisation of the 13 leading UK NGOs to launch appeals to the British public in the event of large-scale disasters.

²⁶ International Council for Voluntary Agencies: Network of organisations focussing on the longer-term aspects of humanitarian work.

²⁷ Voluntary Organisation in Cooperation in Emergencies: network of European NGOs active in humanitarian aid worldwide. VOICE is the main NGO interlocutor with the EU for humanitarian affairs, including emergency aid, relief, rehabilitation and disaster preparedness.

- b) **Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change:** We will continue our engagement with the Institute of Development Studies and ProVention²⁸ as well as UK based networks on Climate Change and Development, which bring together environmental and development organisations, as well as the Disaster Risk Reduction working group. As a member of the Inter-Agency Taskforce on Disaster Reduction we will strengthen our engagement with ISDR²⁹. With an increasing focus on both disaster risk reduction and adaptation to climate change we would expect to engage with more environmental organisations particularly in the south through specific country programmes who will be working closely with us in this area.
- c) **Conflict:** In Europe we will look to form a partnership with the Christian Michaelson Institute in Norway for research and possible funding for our work on conflict. We will engage with Crisis Action³⁰ and European Peace-building Liaison Office³¹. We will also continue to engage in the country specific UK working groups and networks on Afghanistan³² and Nepal, supported by the country programme concerned.

As our work on violent conflict develops, we will establish relationships with some parts of the global peace movement, particularly women's peace networks. We will develop our engagement over time, concentrating on those who contribute to our legitimacy. We will also generate the space for others in the movements to influence our thinking and positions.

Through our work on conflict in particular countries we will seek to develop relations with civil and political human rights organisations

- d) **United Nations:** With an international component focussing on global governance for building peace, we will develop a better working knowledge of the United Nations particularly the Security Council, Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Department of Political Affairs, Human Security Unit in OCHA and the new Peace-building Commission. Our distinction for these relationships will be the quality of our participatory work at the cutting edge of approaches to human security. We will also continue our partnership with ISDR³³.
- e) **European Donors:** We will continue to seek funding and influence policies and practice focussing primarily on the European Union and Department for International Development (DfID).
- f) **World Social Forum:** WSF already has a significant segment on peace, conflict and security. As our work with communities evolves, we will take this experience and positions to the Forum. We will give the chance for poor people affected by conflict to voice their opinions and share their experience. We intend to particularly focus efforts towards to the WSF in Nairobi in 2007

ActionAid is a signatory to the NGO Red Cross Code of Conduct (see Appendix 2) & supports the principles of People in Aid code and Sphere.

²⁸ The ProVention Consortium is a global coalition of governments, international organizations, academic institutions, the private sector and civil society organizations dedicated to increasing the safety of vulnerable communities and to reducing the impact of disasters in developing countries.

²⁹ International Strategy on Disaster Reduction www.isdr.org. ISDR aims at building disaster resilient communities by promoting increased awareness of the importance of disaster reduction as an integral component of sustainable development

³⁰ Crisis Action in the UK conducts campaigns on behalf of a group of NGOs to influence the UK government action on specific conflicts.

³¹ EPLO is based in Brussels and acts as a link between NGOs working on conflict and the organs of the European Union.

³² BAAG: British Agencies Afghanistan Group: network to provide information on the situation in Afghanistan for international aid agencies working in the country.

³³ See note 27

3.3 Policy and advocacy

ActionAid will address the causes of emergencies and conflict situations by raising issues of policy and practice. We will advocate for improvements in policies and practice to achieve the objectives of this strategic plan. Our advocacy positions will be informed by the perspectives and opinions of poor and excluded people with whom we work. We will use our international structure and identity to address the international dimensions of emergencies and conflict situations. We shall use our analysis to influence the understanding and application of this body of knowledge. We will bring in voices of the south into international debates, even working to shift the debates to the south.

During the strategic plan period we will prioritise the following four areas for policy and advocacy work drawing experience for each from the ground. An advocacy strategy will be developed for each area that will contain process and outcome indicators:

- I. Food aid
- II. Disaster Risk Reduction (with a focus on adaptation to climate change)
- III. Conflict Policy
- IV. Appropriate Assistance

We will promote our view of appropriate assistance, that being:

- ❖ *To take account of peoples rights and dignity*
- ❖ *To provide sufficient quality and quantity of timely assistance*
- ❖ *To use contextual analysis to inform programme design*
- ❖ *To link emergencies to development work*
- ❖ *To build on local capacity to cope and recover*
- ❖ *To recognise and use the opportunities that the emergency presents*
- ❖ *To assist livelihoods as well as life-saving*
- ❖ *To encourage the people affected to take part in decisions and management of assistance*

People-Centred Advocacy:

Poor and excluded people or those affected by emergencies and conflict are central to bringing about change. Our approach will bring people to the centre stage to advance human security; it will support and amplify poor people's demands for protection and promotion of their rights in emergencies

In our responses we will:

- Organise and mobilise women, youth and civil society organizations to take a stand
- Empower people to understand and challenge the people and powers that oppress them and drive the conflict
- Critically engage with governments nationally and internationally
- Respond with appropriate assistance and push to maintain services
- Engage in research and analysis
- Propose solutions and alternatives as well as to exposing injustice and the abuse of peoples' rights

3.4 Tools for Analysis

Good contextual analysis is the pre-requisite for any rights-based work on emergencies and conflict situations. Our strategy is to include an analysis of conflicts, hazards and vulnerability into the poverty analysis that informs all ActionAid programmes, whether in policy or operations. We will also systematically analyse the opportunities presented by emergencies and by other programmes for improved emergency mitigation.

Our analysis of emergency and conflict situations will include:

- The gender implications
- The economic, social, political and environmental context
- What rights people have, what rights are being denied, and to whom they are denied

- Levels of vulnerability and or resilience
- Interests of power holders

To aid our analysis we will use:

a. Participatory Vulnerability Analysis (*See appendix 1*): We have been developing Participatory Vulnerability Analysis (PVA) over the last five years. We will continue to use PVA to promote understanding and action in communities, and inform the analysis of decision makers with the insights from community level analysis.

b. Conflict analysis: No country programme can function in a conflict without in-depth analysis of power dynamics. This analysis must inform programme design whether pre-conflict, during conflict or in post-conflict situations. We will refine and develop the existing framework for ActionAid’s conflict analysis.

c. Rights analysis: A rights-based analysis considers people affected by emergencies as citizens with rights and responsibilities. People have a right to protection, to human security and to assistance based on their needs (*See appendix 3*).

Our analysis will identify the responsibilities of people and institutions at all levels (individuals, families, local and national governments, regional bodies and international actors), and their capacities to uphold such responsibilities.

3.5 Thematic Links

During the strategic plan period, we will focus on common initiatives where there is overlap with the other five priority themes outlined in *Rights to End Poverty*. A link person within the International Emergencies and Conflict Team has been identified with each of the five themes.

Women’s Rights

Women and girls are particularly at risk during natural disasters and conflict. We will continue to treat an emergency as an opportunity for positive change to empower women by giving them power in the processes of recovery and helping them to develop new skills.

As a result of common work with the Women’s Rights theme, we hope to see the following outcomes:

- Women will be more secure particularly in post-conflict environments. (*Objective 1; priority IV*)
- Women’s leadership will be strengthened before, during and after conflict, particularly in peace-building processes. (*Objective 2; priority I.*)

The Right to Education

During conflict and emergencies, when people are displaced, normal schooling conditions are severely disrupted or impossible. Maintaining some sort of education system or establishing a temporary set-up, can help children who have been traumatised by the disaster, return to some sort of normality.

As a result of our work with the Education theme, we hope to see the following outcomes:

- In places where we are working, schools will be a safe environment, they will be better prepared for an emergency, being centres of risk reduction activities and playing a greater role in psychosocial recovery. (*Objective 3; priority II*)
- With better peace education programmes, young people, both in school and outside, are contributing to a culture of peace. (*Objective 2; priority III*)
- People will have better access to education during low-level conflict and following a disaster. (*Objective 5; priority VI*)

The Right to Food

The root cause of food insecurity and hunger lies in the denial of rights and unequal access and control over natural resources such as land, water, seeds and other farm inputs. This is exacerbated during

natural disasters and conflict. The livelihoods of local communities are compromised and often destroyed, thus undermining people's capacity to cope, survive and recover.

As a result of our work with the Food theme, we hope to see the following outcomes:

- Where there are food aid programmes, they are less damaging and will not undermine the local economy. (*Objective 5; priority V*)
- People will have more resilient livelihoods in areas where we have worked and there will be policies in place that promote resilient livelihoods as a way of adapting to climate change. (*Objective 1; priority I/Objective 3; priority I*)

The Right to life and dignity in the face of HIV/AIDS

HIV/AIDS is increasingly being seen as a security issue in the sense that it challenges human security and poses a threat socially, politically, economically and militarily – or the most conventional notion of security. Throughout disasters, access to appropriate health services is essential. HIV/AIDS is most likely to spread during displacement of populations during disasters and conflict.

As a result of our work with the HIV/AIDS theme, we hope to see the following outcomes:

- People living with HIV/AIDS will have access to healthcare and appropriate assistance to cope and recover from the emergency. (*Objective 5; priority IV*)
- Women and girls will be less vulnerable to contracting HIV/AIDS during and after a conflict. (*Objective 1; priority IV*)

The Right to Just and Democratic Governance

Bad governance, corruption, inequality and unaddressed structural factors contribute to countries' susceptibility to violent conflicts and lack of disaster preparedness. Human security should be the concern of all states.

As a result of our work with the Governance theme, we hope to see the following outcomes:

- International governance at the UN level will be more effective for risk reduction and conflict management and resolution. (*Objective 4; priority III-V*)
- We will see civil society holding governments to account for their performance in risk reduction and emergency response. (*Objective 4; priority I*)

SECTION FOUR Making it happen

4.1 Conflict and Emergency Management

International Emergencies and Conflict Team (IECT)

At the heart of the *Human Security in conflict and emergencies* theme lies the International Emergencies and Conflict Team. The team is a central resource providing a service to country programmes to improve the quality and scale of our emergencies and conflict work, implementing an international policy programme and contributing to ActionAid's profile and brand.

The team consists of a core team coordinating policy, fundraising and communications (five posts), supporting five (to increase to six) Emergencies and Conflict Advisors who are based across Africa, Asia and the Americas regions. The team model is one based on advisors who can add value to country programmes. They are a multi-disciplinary team able to support and build capacity of country programmes with a particular focus on programme design in both conflict and emergencies situations.

In 2005 took on a Senior Conflict Advisor to build capacity throughout the organisation to work effectively on conflict. She will advise country and international programmes on what to do; and will develop conceptual thinking and positioning, to establish the conflict analysis methodology and promote our profile among donors. Initially this will be a long-term consultancy leading into a full-time person in 2007.

In 2006 we will employ a new person to supplement the demands of management of the team and to build the capacity and effectiveness of the advisory team³⁴.

Further plans include contributing to a New York-based post to maintain a focus on, and link into the UN towards from 2007 and subsequently throughout the plan period. We also anticipate a full-time donor funded post on Disaster Risk Reduction and the Hyogo Framework from 2006.

The *International Emergencies and Conflict Team* makes the following core contributions within the Human Security theme and towards achieving the overall goal of ActionAid International:

Fieldwork in countries

- Mobilising immediate support to country programmes to respond to a disaster situation.
- Providing on-going support with specific knowledge on disasters, conflict, vulnerability and risk reduction.
- Promoting and supporting long –term emergency and conflict work including internal advocacy for disaster preparedness
- Keeping an eye on new countries where ActionAid may respond to an emergency or conflict.

Policy work

- Maintaining a good level of policy awareness and implementing an international policy programme informed by work in the field.
- Assisting country programmes with positioning in sensitive situations.
- Keeping a watching brief on global conflict issues, the ‘War on Terror’, climate change, risk reduction and food aid.
- Contributing to ActionAid internal policies appropriate for emergency and conflict work
- Supporting regional initiatives.

Conceptual thinking

- Developing thinking in our approaches keeping ActionAid at the cutting edge of emergencies and conflict work. This includes keeping a brief on emerging issues and risks both internal and external. Developing thinking is done through the core team and the international emergencies advisors located in regions across Africa, Asia and the Americas working with programmes on the ground.
- Responsibility for developing the strategic plan for the Human Security theme.

Identity

- Raising ActionAid’s profile through presence in the media.
- Being a key part of the brand that is appealing to supporters.

Fundraising

- Act as the direct link between fieldwork and fundraisers to raise funds by speaking to donors, and sharing ideas.
- Submit fundraising proposals
- Help country programmes and regions to raise money for emergencies and conflict work
- Participate in DEC (Disasters Emergency Committee) appeals.
- Maintaining key partnerships some of which may lead to funding e.g. DEC

³⁴ This post is outside of the normal budget. In light of the multiple DEC appeals, we will be using the additional provision of DEC funds for overheads to support the employment of this person.

Country Programmes

The responsibility and accountability for implementing emergencies and conflict programmes lies with country programmes but the whole organisation has a responsibility to support responses. The International Secretariat has a responsibility to challenge country programmes and affiliates if the responses are inappropriate to the needs.

Those countries that identify the *Human Security in conflict and emergencies* theme as a priority will allocate a person or team dedicated to this work. There should be a key link person to IECT who will know what support is available and what to do in an emergency. They will have a leading role if an emergency or conflict does occur. If nobody else is appointed, the country director becomes de facto, the link person.

Emergencies can happen anywhere, so every country should have a basic contingency plan for emergencies.

An emergencies and conflict network exists consisting of key staff in country programmes working on or interested in emergencies and conflict. The network contributes to the implementation of this strategic plan but also to mainstream emergencies work into development programmes, to promote policy work, to enhance synergies in conceptual analysis and to share knowledge, skills and resources.

Scaling-up for emergency response

One of the early lessons from the tsunami response is how we are not quick enough at scaling up our emergencies response. We plan to do three things to improve this:

1. Use a cadre of people trained and experienced in emergencies deployed from different country programmes.
2. More use and quicker recruitment of people working on international or local contracts.
3. More money in the emergencies contingencies fund to initiate an emergencies programme quickly.

Conflict

Conflict environments are very expensive to operate in and in order to attract donor funding, we need to show some effective operations already underway.

We have learned to date that it is a challenge to allocate the capital necessary to establish programmes in conflict and post-conflict environments. We were only able to establish a programme in Afghanistan for example, which is an especially well funded country, by spending over £200,000 to get started.

In order to establish programmes in conflict countries we need to have a team and some money ready to allocate.

As we increase our work in conflict environments we will prepare ourselves better. Responding to conflicts require different skills to natural disaster responses. We will ensure that we prepare personnel properly and have the appropriate skills due to the higher risks. We will ensure we have good political and conflict analysis and we will bring in the new security policies (see below 'Staff security').

Capacity-building

In order to maintain a growing level of expertise in this sector, we will have a rolling programme of training and skills exchange. The Emergencies and Conflict Advisors will be able to run short training programmes for particular countries and sub-regions, but additionally, we plan the following:

- **Training:** To build up a cadre of people in ActionAid able to be deployed at short notice to respond to emergency situations. This is a great opportunity for staff to get experience and to learn. We plan to design and implement a *post-emergencies training* for staff that have some practical experience in a crisis. The trained staff will have more confidence to take key operational roles in the first three months of emergency response.
- An **international training event** for conflict work will also be held every two years on a theme of current importance for ActionAid.

- **Exchange visits:** There is a desperate need to share good practice of work on conflict and emergencies across ActionAid. We will experiment with exchange visits, where members of staff swap jobs for several months at a time. Equally, when countries are carrying out a PVA or conflict analysis, staff from other countries will be encouraged to take part in order to learn about the process.
- We will encourage **peer reviews and involvement in assessments** as opportunities to share experience.

Staff Security

Increasing work on conflict and in conflict areas necessitates an increasing commitment to security procedures throughout ActionAid. A new security policy with complementing security procedures will be in place by the end of 2005. IECT will work with the Organisational Effectiveness Directorate with technical advice where necessary.

Other management units in ActionAid

When a disaster occurs, we have to move quickly in terms of mobilising staff, money, and other logistical issues. Therefore in the event of a disaster we will be relying on support and process primarily from the following management functions:

- a) **Human Resources:** processes of recruitment must be accelerated therefore systems are needed to mobilise other ActionAid staff to support a response.
- b) **Finance:** for rapid and flexible processes to disperse funds.
- c) **Marketing:** to reach our supporters with information and consider a supporter appeal where appropriate.
- d) **Communications:** to assist with establishing information systems and developing key messages.
- e) **International Directors (and Board of Trustees):** for rapid due process available for approval to ensure quick and effective response.

4.2 Communications Plan

Excellent communications are essential to effective work on emergencies and conflict and towards implementation of our strategic plan. Times of disaster are an opportunity to raise the profile of ActionAid and also to raise the other longer-term issues of prevention and recovery.

With Human Security adopted as a new theme within the organisation and a new team and structure in place, we see the strategic plan period as an opportunity. We are therefore committed to strengthening our communications work both internally (particularly with the shift to thematic working) and externally, to communicate our messages clearly, to improve shared learning and to profile our work.

We learned significantly about how we can improve our communications work from the Indian Ocean Tsunami response. Considerable amounts of information were generated in the field and channelling this information and tailoring it for a variety of target audiences be it for fundraising, policy, media work or shared learning, increased our understanding of different audiences and how to communicate with them.

The Human Security theme contributes considerably to the ActionAid brand being attractive to supporters.

Our key communications priorities:

- Develop a communications plan for the *Human Security in conflict and emergencies* theme and to work with the International Communications function in order to deliver our plan.
- Develop more innovative ways to communicate our strategic plan within the organisation and outside to profile what we do and to use effective communication to improve our learning. We anticipate much more imaginative use of mass communication methods including press, radio and TV, in delivering our programmes.
- Disseminate information quickly and effectively during emergencies based on accurate information from the field and an analysis with an international perspective.

- Document on film and in print ActionAid's experiences in conflict and emergencies to preserve institutional memory, for shared learning purposes and for the external media.
- Continue to work closely with the press teams and build on our links with southern-based media, engaging both reactively during emergencies and conflict, but also seeking out opportunities proactively, to gain coverage not only in the press but also in publications relevant to the sector.
- Produce research, position papers and statements as part of our policy and advocacy work primarily on our four policy priority areas (outlined in section 3.2) but also for other reactive policy work.
- Use professional photographers to capture images of our work so that we have a good collection of pictures illustrating all the main points in the strategic plan.
- Ensure the website and intranet are up-to-date with eye catching and current information about our work on emergencies and conflict, including images, policy research and case studies.
- Continue to feedback to supporters on how their money was spent so as to thank them and motivate them to continue supporting our work.

4.3 Research

We will embark on research to deepen our understanding of the structural and underlying causes of conflict and emergencies. During the plan period we expect to carry out research on; the effectiveness of disaster risk reduction, adaptation to climate change, international engagement in conflict, the impact of food aid on communities, and appropriate assistance in conflict and emergencies. All our research will include a focus on understanding better how the dynamics of conflict and emergencies impact on, and are influenced by women; and secondly, understanding the coping and survival mechanisms of poor and excluded people caught up in conflict and emergencies.

From 2006 our partnership with the Christian Michaelson Institute in Norway will be an early starting point to explore research possibilities on conflict, especially across several countries and regions. We will seek to work with other academic institutions to generate high quality participatory research. Our research will be distinguished by the degree of participation it involves and the findings will be used for advocacy and improving programme design.

4.4. Learning

The International Emergencies and Conflict Team is able to draw on experiences from its emergencies advisors based in the field across Africa, Asia and the Americas and the emergencies and conflict network which has a range of experience and expertise. The sharing of experiences and lessons is an important part of IECT's work in contributing to improved knowledge and skills and carrying lessons from one place to another. We continue to learn from experiences of other actors in the sector as well as using our broad knowledge base, notably grassroots level knowledge and understanding of the effectiveness of different approaches to inform decisions and policies at a global level. At the same time, it seeks to create the space for local level autonomy that is informed by the experiences of others who face or have faced similar challenges during conflict and emergencies.

In particular, we will document learning from emergencies responses in new countries for ActionAid for example Niger, as well as the response to the tsunami caused by the Indian Ocean earthquake for which new processes and structures were set up, due to the enormous scale of response. This learning will assist future responses internationally and allow us to improve the quality of every programme.

We will use the tsunami programme, a well-resourced and large programme, as a platform to develop conceptual thinking, learning and methodology notably on livelihood and psychosocial responses.

4.5 Monitoring and Evaluation

IECT will develop inclusive monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, to check progress in delivering the strategic in line with the ALPS (Accountability, Learning and Planning System) framework. This will involve the development of indicators.

We will conduct an international review of our work on *human security in conflict and emergencies* in 2007 (see appendix 4). The findings will allow us to develop further our distinctive good practice, to raise our profile with donors and to inform decisions around the future of the conflict and emergencies function in ActionAid.

To establish a baseline for this review, in 2005/6 we will compile a report mapping all our human security work for people caught up in conflict and emergencies. Whenever a country working on human security in conflict and emergencies conducts a review, IECT will be able to assist with designing the study to be consistent with the strategic plan, and to find suitable international or peer reviewers.

We will encourage peer reviews of our emergencies and conflict programmes both as a monitoring tool but also an opportunity for learning and sharing practice. We will carry out evaluations of major programmes, notably multi-country programmes for example the tsunami response programme.

We will continue to build on our expertise in downward accountability, placing ActionAid at the cutting edge of putting downward accountability into practice and ensuring our reporting back to communities is an integral part of all our responses.³⁵

SECTION FIVE Resources

5.1 International Budget in GB£s*

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Grants to other organisations	29,000	31,000	30,000	30,000	30,000
Staff costs	337,000	419,000	429,000	430,000	443,000
Travel	94,000	119,000	109,000	120,000	120,000
Office & Service	120,000	81,000	77,000	80,000	80,000
Emergency Contingency Fund	150,000	350,000	500,000	750,000	1,000,000
Conflict Fund	-	300,000	500,000	750,000	1,000,000
Unrestricted	540,000	567,000	597,000	627,000	658,000
Restricted	203,000	838,000	1,175,000	1,533,000	2,015,000
Overall total	743,000	1,406,000	1,772,000	2,160,000	2,673,000

³⁵ DEC Independent Evaluation of the Tsunami Response October 2005 stated: '*Perhaps the most complete and strategic approach to accountability was by ActionAid, which has put in place mechanisms for enhanced accountability to beneficiaries and the community in the form of social audit and community reviews. It may be observed that ActionAid is also very much focused on rights and advocacy and hence it may give greater priority to accountability than other agencies*'.

* *The 2009 and 2010 allocations are only indicative at the time of writing based on a 5% increase of unrestricted funds.*

5.2 Country Programme Level Budgeting:

Additionally country programmes should make a minimum investment that may include:

1) Participatory Vulnerability Analysis

2) Policy: Countries taking *human security* as a strategic priority should budget to work on some or all of our four priority policy issues (food aid/disaster reduction/conflict/appropriate response). Suggestions for budgeting are for: understanding/researching the issues, policy and practice analysis, advocacy, mobilising civil society, for participation in international meetings, and the collection of case studies.

3) Emergency response and capacity: funds to send staff to post emergency training programme and other training (e.g. on security/contingency planning)

4) Conflict, (including pre- and post- conflict countries):

- o Budget for support to carry out of conflict analysis. This is essential and fundamental to work in any conflict prone environment.
- o Budget for security management. Depending on need, this could be training, equipment, or preparing a country security plan.
- o Budget for working/programming on conflict (i.e. addressing the causes and dynamics of conflict, not just the consequences), including civil society involvement in peace and DDR processes.

5.3 Emergencies Contingency Fund and Conflict Fund

Over the strategic plan period we are seeking to increase the existing emergencies contingency fund reaching £1 million by 2010. This fund is for rapid response in the event of a disaster.

Additionally we will seek to set-up a ‘conflict fund’. Conflict environments are very expensive to operate in and in order to attract donor funding, we need to show some effective operations already underway for example in Zimbabwe and DRC.

We will working with the fundraising function for both funds to explore a regular giving product to be used either for rapid response to a disaster or to establish or adapt programme in conflict or post-conflict environments. A proportion of these funds would be used to offset the core IECT costs. See point one below.

5.4 Fundraising

IECT’s main strategy for fundraising is to facilitate income for other parts of the organisation. We mainly work with country programmes to raise money for their emergencies and conflict work and with marketing functions to raise money on the back of our work rather than accumulate income-funded projects to our team. Investment into this is high and very time consuming and it is a significant element of both the Emergencies Advisors and the core team’s work.

Our fundraising priorities over the strategic plan period are outlined below:

- I.** Work with the International and UK fundraising teams on an earmarked funding product for Human Security with an unconfirmed target to raise £3 million by 2010.
- II.** Cultivate and maintain two to three major donors who will support our Human Security work.
- III.** Work with some countries, for example Greece, to use emergencies as a way in to public fundraising initiatives.
- IV.** Make an annual submission to DfID’s new Conflict and Humanitarian Fund. We expect that over the five-year strategic plan period, we will have a successful bid on each of cross-thematic initiatives.

- V.** Continue to engage with the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC), influencing them and participating in appeals, which take place on average every eight months. During the plan period we will continue to spend £23 million raised by the DEC Indian Ocean Tsunami appeal.
- VI.** Target new markets, including Norway, specifically for money for conflict research through Christian Michaelson Institute and Japan which has a strong focus on Human Security.
- VII.** Continue to seek funds from ECHO for our emergencies response work and DIPECHO for disaster preparedness work on the ground.
- VIII.** With high core support costs for the emergencies and conflict function, we will seek to offset as much of those costs as possible by charging out to individual projects and maximising the overhead element. This may be for proposals submitted by country programmes, for example, to ECHO. Funds received in from the DEC have a 5% levy for UK management costs which go directly in to general fund. We estimate that with these charge-out costs, up to £200,000 per year may be off-set based on the estimated one DEC appeal a year and subsequent levy, charge out costs on ECHO, DIPECHO projects and the annual submission to DfID. We will work with IPD to optimise how we can best cover these support costs and systematise doing so across the organisation.
- IX.** Seek funding for capacity building on emergencies response and conflict work.
- X.** We recognise we are unlikely to secure significant funds for purely policy projects but there will be a policy element attached to other projects that are submitted. Our experience has shown this is also the case with the Participatory Vulnerability Analysis work; it will form a core part of projects submitted, but will not be a project in itself. Our work around the Hyogo Framework for Disaster Reduction consists of policy work as well as work on the ground.

Appendices

Appendix One Participatory Vulnerability Analysis (PVA)

What is PVA?

- PVA is a systematic process that involves communities and other stakeholders in an in-depth examination of their vulnerability and at the same time empowers or motivates them to take appropriate actions.
- PVA aims to link development to disaster preparedness and response.
- PVA is flexible and uses participatory tools that field workers are already familiar with.

History of PVA

- ActionAid conducted a desk study that revealed that existing tools of analysing vulnerabilities did not match with AA's people centred advocacy approach.
- In 2000 a workshop was convened by ActionAid for stakeholders and staff from different locations to discuss vulnerability analysis further and agree a way forward.
- A series of studies were conducted in conjunction with Swansea University (Centre for Development Studies) in Bangladesh, India and Ghana.
- A field test of PVA was conducted in The Gambia (May 2003) out of which a Step-by-Step PVA guide was developed. *The Step-by-Step Guide to PVA can be found at:*
<http://www.actionaid.org.uk/wps/content/documents/PVA%20final.pdf>

What can PVA do?

PVA helps those who are vulnerable to break the complexity of their own vulnerability into manageable components, to a point where actions can be drawn to reduce it. PVA addresses cross cutting themes like HIV/AIDS and gender, providing an in-depth understanding of vulnerabilities that unveil the dynamics of power, inequality and discrimination between men and women, girls and boys. The analysis is a springboard for women's empowerment.

Underlying Principles

PVA is: people-centred, it promotes change; it's a good starting point for advocacy and is based on ActionAid's rights based approach.

The PVA Model

PVA is a multi-levelled and continuous action oriented process. Its success lies in the way it links the local level analysis with the national and international level advocacy and campaigns. Issues identified at the community and district level are taken to regional and national level for advocacy. Issue based fact finding studies are conducted to support advocacy and lobbying. National issues are then linked to international scenarios where they feed into the international advocacy campaigns.

PVA in practice

PVA has been applied in various contexts to date: drought, HIV/AIDS, conflict, floods and tsunami, in countries such as Bangladesh, Democratic Republic of Congo, Malawi, Nigeria, Pakistan, Uganda, India, Sierra Leone, The Gambia and Zimbabwe.

Examples of PVA applications include:

- In the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, PVA is being used to develop emergency preparedness plans from the community level to the central government level for all the islands. People affected by the tsunami will be taking measures that will reduce the effects of the disaster and generating plans that will guide their response if an emergency happens.
- In Democratic Republic of Congo PVA was used to analyse the root causes of the conflict, its consequences and what it is being done to stop violent conflict. For the first time, communities and local government had an opportunity to discuss issues of human rights protection, particularly for women and girls.

Appendix Two: The Red Cross NGO Code of Conduct

Principles of Conduct for The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Response Programmes to which ActionAid is a signatory.

<http://www.ifrc.org/publicat/conduct/code.asp>

- 1:** The Humanitarian imperative comes first
- 2:** Aid is given regardless of the race, creed or nationality of the recipients and without adverse distinction of any kind. Aid priorities are calculated on the basis of need alone
- 3:** Aid will not be used to further a particular political or religious standpoint
- 4:** We shall endeavour not to act as instruments of government foreign policy
- 5:** We shall respect culture and custom
- 6:** We shall attempt to build disaster response on local capacities
- 7:** Ways shall be found to involve programme beneficiaries in the management of relief aid
- 8:** Relief aid must strive to reduce future vulnerabilities to disaster as well as meeting basic needs
- 9:** We hold ourselves accountable to both those we seek to assist and those from whom we accept resources
- 10:** In our information, publicity and advertising activities, we shall recognise disaster victims as dignified humans, not hopeless objects

Appendix Three: ActionAid's Rights Analysis

ActionAid's Rights Analysis

A rights-based analysis considers people affected by emergencies and conflict as citizens with rights and responsibilities. People have a right to protection, to human security and to assistance based on their needs.

Analysis of the distribution of power will inform all the elements of our rights analysis. It will also identify where and how poor people affected by disasters can increase their share of power.

An analysis based on rights will identify those groups of people and social sectors whose rights are severely denied, and specifically who does and who does not have access to, and control over, basic resources and services. This often reflects discriminatory policies and practices, as in countries where women's lack of entitlements to land makes them more vulnerable to disasters. Ethnicity, gender, generation and disability become high priorities in emergencies.

We will look at how gender roles and relations and patterns of discrimination make women more vulnerable, while undermining their capacity to cope with the effects of emergencies and conflict. For example, we will analyse the dynamics of sexual violence and human trafficking so that they are addressed by emergency programming.

Our analysis will identify the responsibilities of people and institutions at all levels (individuals, families, local and national governments, regional bodies and international actors), and their capacities to uphold such responsibilities.

A sound analysis of the existing international, national and local legal and governance systems is central to ActionAid's approach, since they establish clear obligations on states and non-state actors to guarantee human security and poor people's assistance and protection.

We will examine how poor and excluded people affected by conflict and disasters can be actively involved in assessments, decision-making, and negotiation of their rights with other stakeholders.

A rights analysis addresses both the tensions and synergies between power, culture and rights.

Appendix Four: Monitoring and Evaluation

Theme	Type of Review	Frequency	Who will do it
IECT	Strategic Plans	5 years	IECT
	Operational Plans	3 years	IECT
	External reviews	2 and 5 years	External independent evaluators
	Peer Reviews	3 years	Peers
	Annual Participatory Reviews and Reflection	Yearly	IECT
	Appraisal of new programmes	Start of the programme	IECT

Appendix Five: Risk Analysis

Risks	Impact	Probability	Risk Owner	Actions
	High/Medium/Low	High/Medium/Low		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff security: as staff will intervene in conflict or conflict prone zones. Direct security threats in dangerous areas are a reality. 	M	L	CEO/Regional Director Head of Emergencies & Conflict Team	It is essential that country programmes get security guidelines and procedures. An ActionAid security policy is drafted and will be approved in Sept 2005 and training will follow
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grants management: Poorly managed emergencies programmes in one country damages our relationships with a donor (e.g. ECHO) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Misuse of funds 	M	H	IECT, CDs	Training and learning by doing. Recognition that donor-funded projects can be very “heavy” and require familiarity with procedures and reporting. Support from advisors costed into projects Working closely with internal audit and learning how to improve monitoring of emergency and conflict programmes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slow recruitment of staff for emergencies and conflict work and retention of emergency field staff 	M	M	Head of IECT, HR/OD CDs	Better HR/OD support and systems and well organised deployment. Recognition of job stress and inclusion of a welfare budget.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of learning and reflection: due to workload, bad time management, leadership caught up in details management, sudden emergency, etc 	M	M	Regional Directors, Head of IECT	Annual PRRP’s essential. Documentation of responses in new countries specifically to learn for future international responses. Review of theme work in 2007.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too many emergencies leads to overload, burnout of staff, 	H	H	Head of IECT	Strategic thinking on engagements with ability to say no rather than overstretching resources.

disruption to on-going work, diversion of resource and poor quality work				Work /life balance Not overstretching deployed resources. Employ more people if there is much demand. Ensure R+R between deployments
• Emergencies Advisors lack support from country and regional offices for effective fundraising	M	L	CDs/Head of IECT/IPD	Advisors to build relationships with country and regional offices and develop capacity where necessary.
• Lack of communications within the organisation will hinder IECT working effectively	M	M	All Emergencies and Conflict Team members	Minimum reporting and communications standards set within team. Weekly reports required for first month, communications by e-mail/msn/monthly teleconferences. Having a tracking system in place.
• Lack of conceptual clarity and synergy between programmes / Programmes do not coalesce around recognisable themes and as a result of the above, programme design does not contribute to high quality programming	M	M	Head of IECT	Build conceptual clarity and help programmes to develop themes Deployment of advisors, support and training. Lesson learning from elsewhere
• A core reliable supporter income is not supported organisationally	M	L	AAI but specifically Head of IECT and Fundraising department	Close collaboration between IECT and fundraising departments to establish how this can happen.