From the ground up: understanding local response in crises
02
Introduction
Overview – From the ground up: understanding local response in crises

05
‘As local as possible, as international as necessary’: understanding capacity and complementarity in humanitarian response
05 Background and rationale
06 Project framework and methodology
07 Project activities
07 Project timeline and deliverables

08
The tip of the iceberg?
Understanding non-traditional sources of aid financing
08 Background and rationale
08 Project framework and methodology
09 Project activities
09 Project timeline and deliverables

10
Understanding the role of informal non-state sectors in protecting civilians
10 Background and rationale
10 Research framework and methodology
11 Project activities
11 Project timeline and deliverables

12
Dignity in displacement: from rhetoric to reality
12 Background and rationale
12 Project framework and methodology
13 Project activities
13 Project timeline and deliverables

14
Humanitarian Practice Network (HPN)

15
Policy engagement and representation

16
Academic engagement and learning
16 Disasters
16 Senior-Level Course on Conflict and Humanitarian Response (LSE) and Master’s Course (Center for Conflict and Humanitarian Studies, Doha Institute)

17
Public affairs and rapid response
18 Rapid response
18 Reprinting

19
HPG staff and Research Associates
19 HPG staff
20 HPG Research Associates

21
Annexes
Introduction

This is the thirteenth Integrated Programme (IP) of work proposed for funding by the Humanitarian Policy Group (HPG) at the Overseas Development Institute (ODI). The projects presented here constitute the core of HPG’s research work in 2017–19, combining policy-relevant research and engagement, humanitarian practice, academic engagement and a vigorous and extensive public affairs programme of events, conferences and media work. HPG’s overall aim is to inspire and inform principled humanitarian policy and practice and enhance the effectiveness of humanitarian action in saving lives and alleviating suffering.

The research agenda set out here is the result of a process of horizon-scanning, consultation and scoping research. While each Integrated Programme aims to build upon the strengths of previous years, they are also designed to capture the emerging concerns of humanitarian actors and respond to new trends. Adding to the expertise of the HPG team, consultations with our Advisory Group and discussions with HPG partners contributed to the selection of the new research topics. Preliminary literature reviews were used to shape outline proposals; as the projects progress, each will be developed into a full research framework.

Overview – From the ground up: understanding local assistance in crises

Achieving a more local, devolved response to humanitarian crises has risen up the policy agenda in recent years as one possible answer to the problems besetting international humanitarian response. Both the Secretary-General’s report for the World Humanitarian Summit and the resulting Grand Bargain call for responses that are ‘as local as possible, as international as necessary’, with greater commitments by the international humanitarian system to invest in the capacity of local organisations to work in complement with international counterparts. Proponents argue that a more local approach to assistance enhances flexibility and efficiency, is more responsive to contexts and needs and involves local aid actors and communities much more meaningfully in decisions affecting humanitarian programming. At the same time, however, there is little consensus around what a genuinely local response actually means, either in theory or in practice, and there are very few incentives to promote it within a system structurally and culturally inclined towards centralisation.

This set of proposals for HPG’s Integrated Programme of research for 2017–19 critically analyses key aspects of this debate. In doing so, it builds on – and deliberately inverts – research in the previous IP looking at the systemic, structural and architectural issues within international response under the rubric of ‘A new global humanitarianism’. In this IP we adopt a more ground-level view of important issues within the humanitarian sector, while also drawing out their systemic and strategic implications. As part of the research process, we will seek to partner with local researchers and research organisations and academic institutions, including designing parts of the research, testing assumptions and developing findings.

Capacity and financing are key areas of concern for a system struggling to cope with the range and scale of global crises. Our project “As local as possible, as international as necessary”: understanding capacity and complementarity in humanitarian response’ asks how the international humanitarian system can better connect with and invest in the capacity of local organisations in crisis response. By developing a picture of what capacity exists within the humanitarian system – and alongside this clarifying what key concepts such as ‘capacity’ and
‘complementarity’ mean in practice – the project will seek insights into how capacity is understood in the humanitarian sector; what capacity exists among local, national and international actors in specific contexts; and what incentives, power structures and relationships promote or inhibit better collaboration and complementarity.

Our second project – ‘The tip of the iceberg? Understanding non-traditional sources of aid financing’ – seeks to situate assistance from the formal humanitarian system within the wider range of resources available to crisis-affected people, including from family and friends, community and national organisations, local and national governments, faith communities and the private sector. By ‘decentring’ international assistance in this way, the project seeks to move beyond typical approaches to humanitarian financing and develop a more realistic understanding of the role of formal humanitarian assistance in the lives of crisis-affected people.

Drawing on both qualitative and quantitative methodologies, the project will generate empirical evidence on the levels and types of assistance people affected by crises receive and the efficiency and effectiveness of the channels – ‘official’ and ‘unofficial’ – through which assistance is transmitted, and develop a better understanding of how resources that do not pass through the formal system can be more accurately identified, with the aim of reducing duplication and enhancing complementarity. Building on our long-standing interest in protection of civilians, and in line with the local theme developed here, the third project – ‘Understanding the role of informal non-state actors in protecting civilians’ – explores the role of informal non-state actors in protection: how they define it and provide it (or not), how affected communities see their impact on protection, and the extent to which affected communities distinguish between formal and informal actors in terms of actual protection outcomes on the ground. Drawing on a range of data-gathering techniques and analytical approaches, the project will seek to help actors engaged in the ‘formal’ protection sphere, including national governments, peacekeepers and humanitarian organisations, to engage with entities whose point of reference may not necessarily be International Humanitarian Law (IHL), but whose role may be critical for the protection of civilians affected by conflict.

The final project proposed here connects our extensive work on displacement with an analysis of what constitutes dignity in humanitarian assistance. ‘Dignity in displacement: from rhetoric to reality’ adopts a local lens to explore whether, and in what ways, humanitarian interventions really do uphold and further the dignity of displaced people. Starting with a preliminary survey of the concept of dignity in associated spheres, including human rights discourse and moral philosophy, the project will investigate if, and in what ways, dignity has been promoted – and undermined – in responses to displacement. By examining how responses have differed between international and local responders, the project will test the common assumption that greater funding to local actors will result in more dignified and equitable assistance. A gender lens will be applied to investigate whether or to what degree the concept of dignity is understood differently by men and women, and how responses might be calibrated to take this into account.

Throughout the IP cycle project researchers will share emerging findings in structured discussions designed to draw out common themes and issues, both in terms of substantive content and with regard to methodologies, case study selection and the practicalities of the research process. This ongoing collaboration and intellectual exchange across the four projects will inform a final synthesis paper highlighting shared concerns and ways forward, with a view to interrogating the discourse around a more local humanitarianism.

For many within an international system struggling to cope with ever-larger and more complex crises, achieving a more local form of aid holds out the prospect of squaring the circle between the objectives of humanitarian assistance and the resources available to meet them. As these projects suggest, achieving a capable and viable response that can effectively protect people in conflict and provide assistance with dignity will mean challenging some of the key assumptions and practices that for decades have underpinned and legitimised the international humanitarian system.
As in previous years, the research projects will be accompanied by extensive policy engagement and an energetic communications and public affairs programme, with tailored communications plans designed to ensure that research findings reach our key audiences in accessible and useable formats. HPG will continue to seek to further expand the team’s presence and outreach beyond Europe and North America and to diversify our programme of public events to include contributions from disaster- and conflict-affected countries and crisis capitals. It will further consolidate the Group’s reputation as an important source of expertise for journalists, editors and programmers and increase and expand our engagement with the international media. We will also continue to develop multimedia products, such as podcasts, online interviews and discussions. HPG researchers also participate extensively in external and overseas engagements, and as in previous years, funding is sought to enable this to continue. Funds are also sought to allow rapid engagement with current or emerging issues as they arise, and the production of Policy Briefs to guide policy-makers and practitioners in their responses to unfolding crises.

HPG will also continue its engagement with humanitarian practitioners through the publishing and events programmes of the Humanitarian Practice Network (HPN), a global forum for policy-makers, practitioners and others working in the humanitarian sector to share and disseminate information, analysis and experience. HPN publications – *Humanitarian Exchange* magazine, commissioned Network Papers on specific subjects and Good Practice Reviews – form the heart of HPN’s output. HPN also manages an active programme of public events in London and in other locations around the world.

HPG will also maintain its links with the global academic community through editorship of *Disasters* journal, and via the Senior-Level Course on Conflict and Humanitarian Response, taught in conjunction with the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), and our partnership with the Doha Institute in Qatar, where HPG staff teach a number of courses at the Center for Conflict and Humanitarian Studies.

### INTEGRATED PROGRAMME 2017–2019: SUMMARY BUDGET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research projects</th>
<th>Budget 17/18</th>
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‘As local as possible, as international as necessary’: understanding capacity and complementarity in humanitarian response

Background and rationale

Making the best use of all available humanitarian capacity has become more important in an era of larger, more inconsistent and more pernicious threats, greater donor and public demands on humanitarian organisations and the growing use of remote management of operations in insecure environments. Given the increasing number and diversity of humanitarian actors, a growing connection between humanitarian and development roles in longer-term disaster contexts, protracted armed conflicts and crises and calls by HPG and others to devolve power and decision-making to regional, national and local levels, there is a need to critically consider opportunities in the humanitarian sector for more effective complementarity, and to overcome factors that undermine the contribution local capacity and better complementarity can make to the humanitarian effort.

The importance of capacity and capacity strengthening\(^1\) for humanitarian preparedness and response has been recognised as a critical component of humanitarian action for more than two decades. It features in General Assembly Resolution 46/182 and, following the poor performance of the sector in Darfur, the Indian Ocean tsunami and the Haiti earthquake, it became central to the humanitarian reforms of 2005 and the ongoing Transformative Agenda. More recently, the importance of local capacity and collaboration and complementarity among local and international actors were central themes of the World Humanitarian Summit, with the Secretary-General’s report asserting that ‘international engagement should be based on trust and a good understanding of existing response capacity and critical gaps, to arrive at a clear assessment of comparative advantage and complementarity with national and local efforts’.

This rhetorical emphasis on capacity – whether for preparedness, response or risk reduction – has however not been matched by adequate attention to how humanitarian capacity is defined and understood by different people and in different contexts. There is also a limited picture of the capacity and skills that exist at different levels and in different contexts. Capacity strengthening, often seen as the single solution to what are perceived to be weaknesses outside of the formal humanitarian system, often falls short of expectations due to a lack of basic knowledge of where critical gaps and overlaps lie, how different capacities and skills can balance one another and a (false) assumption that ‘capacity-building’ and ‘partnership’ go hand in hand. In light of the Grand Bargain and the call to be ‘as local as possible, as international as necessary’, basic terms and concepts such as ‘capacity’, ‘localisation’ and ‘complementarity’ all require clarification.

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\(^1\) There is no agreed definition of ‘capacity strengthening’, and the terms ‘capacity-building’ and ‘capacity development’ are often used interchangeably. Articulating a clear definition of the term and what it means to different actors in the humanitarian sector will be an essential initial element of the proposed study.

\(^2\) Recognising that these categorisations too may have context-specific meanings and require defining in specific case study countries.
Project framework and methodology

In an effort to clarify these concepts and improve understanding of these terms and issues, HPG will conduct a two-year research project exploring the capacity of local, national and international actors to respond to humanitarian needs in different contexts. The project aims to generate insight into how capacity is understood by various stakeholders in the humanitarian sector; what capacity is needed versus what exists among local, national and international actors in specific contexts; and what incentives and power dynamics promote or inhibit better collaboration and complementarity.

We will aim to challenge assumptions surrounding capacity (that it flows primarily from international to local actors, for example, or the tendency to define capacity in a narrow technical sense) and identify opportunities for more effective partnerships. We do not assume that local capacity is always the most appropriate tool in every circumstance, but we do proceed from the belief that its potential is not being fully realised to enhance the overall aid effort.

The central questions guiding this research are:

- How can capacity and complementarity be better understood and applied to support more efficient and effective humanitarian response?
- What are the opportunities for and obstacles to harnessing the capacity of and forging more effective complementarity among local, national, regional and international actors responding to humanitarian crises?

Additional research questions include:

- Establishing what is meant by capacity and complementarity:
  - How are capacity and complementarity within the humanitarian sector understood by different stakeholders (affected people, local, national and international humanitarian actors)? Are gaps in capacity understood as a primarily technical issue, and if so why?
  - Is capacity understood differently in different crisis contexts (i.e. disasters, conflicts, protracted/refugee crises)?
- Exploring needs and barriers
  - What capacities do different organisations have (local, national, international)? What do they lack and what do they privilege?
  - Who defines/assesses levels of/gaps in capacity, and how have different understandings of and approaches to capacity helped or hindered the effective use of existing capacity or fostered complementarity?
- Analysing trust, power and incentives
  - What types of capacity gaps (or perceived gaps) get addressed? Which do not? Why?
  - What is the role of trust, power and incentives in the way capacity is defined and complementarity designed in a particular context?
- Considering opportunities for more effective complementarity
  - What are current approaches to complementarity (including different models of partnership and capacity strengthening)? How efficient are they at ensuring that existing capacity in a given context benefits affected communities?
  - What are the obstacles to greater complementarity (power relations, trust, incentives etc.)?
  - Where are the opportunities for better complementarity and engagement between national, local and international actors (at the individual, organisational and system/network level)?

In answering these questions, HPG will consider the factors that support local capacity, including non-humanitarian capacity (governance, institutions, infrastructure, the private sector). It will apply a political economy lens to these questions to ensure that issues of governance and power are considered.

Project activities

HPG will carry out this programme of research using a case study approach to explore what capacities exist, and identify opportunities for better complementarity in different contexts. Two or three case studies will be conducted. One will consider a protracted refugee crisis, and the others will be selected to reflect a range of crisis contexts (i.e. disaster, conflict) and response types (i.e. material assistance, protection, health responses). Research
methods will involve a desk review of the literature, global and local surveys and interviews with a range of actors (government, private sector, NGOs, CBOs, affected people, UN agencies, etc.), as well as focus group discussions where relevant.

The qualitative data will be supplemented with quantitative data generated by a survey. The survey, to be conducted in the first part of the study in partnership with another research and/or polling organisation, will aim to capture how different stakeholders (affected people, local, national and international humanitarian actors) understand capacity.

Partnership is a critical element of this project and its methodology. HPG will use the opportunity this research presents to partner with one or more universities or think tanks in crisis-affected countries and encourage collaboration through research development, implementation and dissemination, mentorships, events and post-research reflection and learning. We hope that one case study will be led by local research partners.

Research outputs will include an initial think piece, based on a review of existing literature, to outline the main assumptions and define the project’s approach. This will be followed by two/three working papers, one for each case study, as well as a final report and policy brief reflecting on the policy implications of the findings across the case studies. The project will also produce more frequent, communications-friendly outputs (in the form of blogs or articles) to reflect the perspectives of researchers and stakeholders.

**Project timeline and deliverables**

This project will take place between April 2017 and March 2019. It will include the following phases:

- **Phase 1** (April 2017–August 2017). This initial phase will involve a survey to assess how capacity in the humanitarian sector is understood by different stakeholders. It will also include a desk review of pertinent literature. Initial results from the survey and the desk review will inform the publication of a first think piece. This phase will also concentrate on finalising the case study choices and forming local partnerships to support fieldwork in phase 2.

- **Phase 2** (September 2017–September 2018). This phase will see the continuation of the global survey as well as the start of fieldwork for case studies, including replicating the global survey in the case study contexts. The case study working papers will be completed and published, and blogs and articles will reflect on the research process and findings.

- **Phase 3** (September 2018–March 2019). Upon completion of the case studies, researchers will begin to analyse findings across the case studies (as well as the ‘Tip of the Iceberg’ findings: see the following project proposal) and consider implications for the humanitarian sector, to inform the final report and policy brief setting out the implications for assessing capacity, supporting complementarity and fostering effective partnership in the humanitarian sector.
The tip of the iceberg? Understanding non-traditional sources of aid financing

Background and rationale

People affected by crisis receive help from a range of sources other than the international assistance system. In Nepal, for instance, local volunteer responses were widely reported after the earthquake in 2015, while recent HPG research has highlighted the critical role played by diaspora organisations in delivering assistance inside Syria (as well as how disconnected they are from the international aid architecture). Such sources can include family and friends (locally and in the diaspora), community and national organisations, local and national governments, non-DAC donor countries, faith-based charity, including zakat, philanthropy and the local, national and international private sector. Indeed, it is almost certainly the case that international humanitarian assistance is not the most significant factor in the support people in crisis receive; according to the 2016 Global Humanitarian Assistance report, for example, remittances for the top 20 humanitarian assistance-receiving countries have tripled since 2000, totalling almost $70 billion in 2014, making remittances the largest form of international financial inflows to these countries.

While there is increasing pressure on the ‘traditional’ humanitarian community to be more efficient and transparent over its resource flows, the resources and services provided by ‘non-traditional’ actors, including from remittances and local responders, represent a considerable resource and a key asset for people affected by humanitarian crises. Currently, however, these ‘local’ and ‘unofficial’ sources of assistance are difficult to track and are typically not factored into international responses. Studies including those from Development Initiatives have estimated volumes of local, informal and non-traditional funding flows at global level, but there has been little analysis at the crisis level to develop a detailed understanding of the levels of resources and how they are received, what these resources are used for and how they complement – or may work at cross-purposes to – formal international flows as reported to the OECD’s Development Assistance Committee and OCHA’s Financial Tracking Service.

The result of this lack of information, and the disconnect between formal and informal sources of assistance, is potentially duplicative aid, undermining the humanitarian aim of providing impartial needs-based assistance. By developing a much more fine-grained understanding of how people in crisis experience different sources of aid, including but not limited to international assistance, the study will point to ways in which the international system can better recognise and incorporate non-traditional flows into its planning, and non-traditional actors can better understand and engage with other sources of assistance.

Project framework and methodology

Building on the findings of the 2015–17 IP, which analysed how the architecture of the humanitarian system helps and hinders crisis response, and in conjunction with other elements of the 2017–19 IP that will focus on local humanitarian action, this research will address the following research question: ‘What assistance reaches communities in crisis and through what channels?’ This will be examined through the following sub-questions:

- What levels of unofficial funding reach households in different crises?
- How does this funding flow? What flows directly? Through which channels? How large are these flows compared to the formal system?
- How does the nature of the crisis affect the volume

3 And in tension with a rights-based approach to assistance, which is seen as less impartial and non-neutral.
and process of receiving aid?
• What is the process of receiving this aid beyond the family level: how do communities decide how to allocate and use these resources?
• Are ‘unofficial’ sources and channels more or less efficient, effective and appropriate than ‘international’ or ‘official’ aid from the perspective of recipients? Is this considered ‘aid’ in the same way that ‘official’ relief is? Do these networks provide any added social value, in the form of personal relationships, trust and the spread of knowledge?
• What are the implications for the formal system – how can resources not channelled through the formal system be better identified in order to avoid duplication and enhance complementarity?

The research approach will use quantitative data collection to try to put a figure on and classify different sources of aid for selected communities within a response, alongside qualitative approaches to understand what part these different sources of assistance play in affected people’s lives.

We will build relationships with local research partners in two case study contexts, a protracted crisis (e.g. the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Central African Republic (CAR), Yemen, Somalia), and a natural disaster-prone country (e.g. Nepal, the Philippines, Indonesia). We will build on existing research partnerships where feasible, and include elements of research mentoring.

The research will develop detailed field relationships with affected communities through these local partners, and will aim to use a standardised methodology across the different contexts.

Project activities

The initial phase will involve a desk-based review of recent and ongoing academic and policy literature relating to the humanitarian financing chain, what aid reaches people in need and how they use different types of aid. The literature review will seek to identify what has already been researched at global and local level, and what gaps it would be most useful to fill. The methodology will be developed in detail and research partners identified.

The second phase of the research will use a case study approach to look at what aid reaches affected households from different sources, and how this aid fits into their strategies for coping with crisis. Household surveys will build a detailed quantitative picture of the sources and levels of assistance used by selected communities, cross-referenced with relevant data, for instance from national surveys and money transfer operators, if/where accessible. Semi-structured household interviews and perception surveys will then deepen qualitative understanding of how different aid sources meet people’s needs. These will use elements of household economy approaches to understand livelihoods, and anthropological and participatory research techniques to develop an in-depth understanding of people’s experience of the full range of assistance they receive.

Qualitative interviews with organisations responding in the community and at national level will also be undertaken to put the household data in context and triangulate findings.

Following the case studies, a final working paper and policy brief will synthesise the findings of both phases of the project, with a view to highlighting the opportunities and practical implications for humanitarian action. Roundtables will be held in case study countries to discuss preliminary findings. A final roundtable presenting overall findings and recommendations will be convened in either London or one of the field locations.

Project timeline and deliverables

The project will take place between April 2017 and March 2019, and include the following phases:

• **Phase 1** (April–September 2017): refining and developing the research framework and methodology, involving identification and engagement of research partners and review of relevant literature and policy debates.
• **Phase 2** (September 2017–August 2018): conduct case study research with crisis-affected communities through research partners.
• **Phase 3** (September 2018–March 2019): synthesise and analyse data from communities; convene a final roundtable; prepare and disseminate the methods paper and final synthesis report.
Understanding the role of informal non-state actors in protecting civilians

Background and rationale

Communities affected by conflict are not passive in the face of threats to their safety and security: they take action to protect themselves, their families and other community members, and look to political, military and other actors – including those operating in the informal sphere, such as tribal networks, faith-based groups and youth groups. There is currently a dearth of research on how these informal non-state actors define and conceptualise the norms and rules governing their behaviour as ‘protectors’ of civilians in armed conflict and their relationships with the wider community, and the degree to which these actors themselves abide by these norms or expect others to do so. Little is known about whether these norms are different from or not perceived as being part of those laid down by international law (international humanitarian law, human rights law and refugee law).

While there are studies that look at, for example, the role played by armed non-state actors or the engagement between tribes and governments, traditional mediation strategies and peacekeeping through local networks and faith-based organisations, this work is limited in scope and there is limited systematic and in-depth analysis on how these structures engage in protection, what kind of rules and codes they use, how they enforce them within their communities and how these actors, structures and codes interact with the formal humanitarian system. Do informal actors have stronger bargaining capacities with those posing a protection threat than formal actors within a humanitarian crisis, and thus better access to affected people? What are the costs and benefits of protection by informal actors as compared to formal ones?

This project takes as its subject of study groups of non-state actors, and more specifically unarmed non-state actors that are organised to some degree and whose existence predates a particular conflict. The research will seek to identify who these informal actors are in a given context, and shed light on their understanding of protection and how they can contribute to – or undermine – protection outcomes for civilians in conflict. It will investigate how informal non-state actors (excluding armed groups or de facto authorities) define protection, the assets (social, economic and cultural capital) they use and how they engage among themselves as well as with other institutionalised actors/entities; how affected communities perceive the outcome and impact of informal non-state actors’ role in protection; and the degree to which affected communities make a distinction between formal and informal actors when it comes to protection outcomes. The aim is to assist actors engaged in ‘formal’ protection activities, including national governments, peacekeepers and humanitarian organisations, in deciding how to engage with entities whose point of reference may not necessarily be IHL, but whose role may be critical for the protection of civilians affected by conflict.

Research framework and methodology

This project will focus on the following overall research questions:

- What are the contributions, positive or negative, of informal local non-state actors to the protection of civilians in conflict?
- Where are the opportunities for formal humanitarian actors to work with informal local non-state actors to contribute to the protection of civilians in conflict specifically, and adherence to IHL more broadly (even if understood through local customs and norms)?

The project will examine the following sub-research questions:

- In a given context, who are these informal local non-state actors and how has the crisis affected them?
• What roles do they assume in designing and upholding local rules and mechanisms in times of war? What contributions do such rules make to the protection of civilians? What contributions might these actors make to the internationally recognised protection framework?
• How do local non-state actors conceptualise protection? What are their motivations when seeking to enhance or undermine the protection of affected communities?
• How do these informal local non-state actors interact with communities affected by conflict? What are the protection outcomes of their actions?
• What role does identity (social, religious, ethnic, gender) play in determining protection outcomes for different groups?
• What are the implications of the role of informal local non-state actors for humanitarian organisations, and how do or should the two interact?

Different data-gathering techniques and analytical approaches will be employed to cover the range of issues highlighted above. Because of the centrality of connections and networks to the informal space, Social Network Analysis will be used to identify key informal non-state actors, how they connect to one another and how they are connected to formal actors. In-depth interviews with informal non-state actors and affected communities will probe how different actors perceive one another, and the degree of closeness or distance between them. A review of grey and published literature will be conducted to triangulate the analysis and validate our conclusions, alongside participant observation in the field, where feasible. Given the range of organisations working on related issues in this area, the project will also consider setting up a steering group to inform the research.

Project activities

The project will begin with a review of relevant literature to refine research questions and discuss the issue on a conceptual level. In order to test the conceptual understanding and definition of the term ‘informal non-state actor’, a first pilot study will be conducted and findings discussed with a sounding board before proceeding with the second phase of the research, which will involve field-based case studies based on qualitative interviews with informal actors and other relevant stakeholders. Potential case studies include Iraq, Nigeria, Libya, Afghanistan, Latin America (of interest in relation to urban violence), the Lake Chad region, South Sudan and Yemen. These studies will seek to map networks of informal non-state actors and determine how they link with one another, where their engagement and efforts meet those of front-line humanitarian actors and where they reinforce or block them.

Findings will be disseminated through one local-level roundtable and sustained engagement in each of these contexts throughout the life of the project. In addition to working papers documenting the key findings of the case studies, we will produce a lessons learned analysis of the methodology and a final working paper and policy brief on the role of informal actors in protection and as it relates to IHL and human rights. A second policy brief will focus on effective responses and innovations that have or can improve protection outcomes for civilians in conflict. A final roundtable will bring together policy-makers, practitioners and informal actors to discuss policy and operational implications of the research findings.

Project timeline and deliverables

This project will take place between April 2017 and March 2019. It will include the following phases:

• Phase 1 (April 2017–August 2017): in this phase the project team will carry out a review of relevant literature and a pilot study testing conceptual understandings of the term ‘informal state actor’.
• Phase 2 (August 2017–July 2018). The case study phase, documented in two/three working papers, alongside a local-level roundtable and ongoing engagement.
• Phase 3 (July 2018–March 2019). The concluding phase of work will see the production of a methodology review, a final report and two policy briefs, and a roundtable to discuss the key findings and implications of the research.

4 Social Network Analysis (SNA) allows researchers to document, represent and analyse relationship patterns between different actors in a given context. Community/local organisation and response within a conflict setting is largely dependent on the existence of networks, and SNA can help inform our understanding of the structures of those networks, how they operate (their informal rules) and modes of engagement between them.
Dignity in displacement: from rhetoric to reality

Background and rationale

Dignity is a key concept in humanitarian action. The right to a life with dignity constitutes the first principle of the Sphere Project’s Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response, and the concept of dignity is referred to frequently as an outcome in humanitarian documents across all programme sectors. Dignity also featured in the Secretary-General’s Report for the World Humanitarian Summit, which stated that ‘preserving the humanity and dignity of affected people in all circumstances must drive our individual and collective action’.

However, there is a dearth of literature analysing whether humanitarian interventions really do uphold and further – or indeed detract from – the dignity of crisis-affected people: a preliminary survey of past humanitarian responses suggests numerous cases where international humanitarian programming has in fact undermined dignity. This is particularly apparent in responses to displacement. Despite international norms and agreements such as the recently signed New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, there are various cases where displaced people’s dignity has clearly been undermined, from the housing of refugees in camps to the conditions faced by refugees arriving in Europe.

This project aims to investigate if, and in what ways, dignity has historically been promoted in responses to displacement. In doing so, it will also explore how responses have differed between international and local responders, interrogating an assumption within the expanding discourse around the ‘localisation’ of aid that greater funding to local actors will position dignity more centrally within humanitarian response. The study aims to showcase different examples of the ways dignity has been achieved or not in displacement contexts, and draw out key lessons from both local and international responses. A gender lens will be applied to investigate whether or to what degree the concept of dignity is understood differently by men and women, and how responses might be calibrated to take this into account.

Project framework and methodology

The research will be guided by three main questions:

- How has the concept of dignity been understood within the humanitarian sector?
  - What is the history of the concept of ‘dignity’, from moral philosophy to human rights discourses and the humanitarian literature, and how has its use changed or evolved over time?
  - How does its conceptualisation within the sector contrast and compare with how local people and communities perceive it? Does this differ between men and women?
  - How did and does its meaning and use differ across different humanitarian sectors (for example between food security and cash programming) and between geographical and cultural contexts? Can any common understanding of the term be isolated?
  - How does the concept of dignity interact or conflict with other common humanitarian concepts, for example humanitarian principles?

- How far, and in what ways, have international responses to displacement promoted dignity during programme implementation?
  - How have aid programmes that have aspired, among other goals, to promote dignity in displacement attempted to put this aim into practice? What strategies have been used and where have they been successful?
  - What factors influence whether programming has succeeded in promoting dignity? What are the impacts, for example, of factors like gender,
wealth, social class and cultural expectations?
– Where international aid programming has undermined dignity, why and how has this happened?
– What do aid recipients say about what has worked and what hasn’t?

• How far, and in what ways, have locally-led responses to displacement promoted dignity during programme implementation?
– What have been the limits of locally led humanitarian action in terms of promoting dignity? Are there ways in which local action has undermined dignity?
– How does locally-led humanitarian action compare to internationally led action in terms of its contribution to promoting or undermining dignity in displacement?
• What are the implications of the findings of this study for programme design and implementation?

Project activities

The project will begin with a desk-based literature review examining the history and use of the concept of dignity in the humanitarian sector over time. This paper will explore changes in the use of the term and how the concept has been understood at different times, across cultures, and in various sectors, and how it has been put into practice or undermined in international humanitarian action. The paper will consider global historical case studies – drawing on some of the literature gathered through HPG’s project on ‘A Global History of Humanitarian Action’ – as well as contemporary case studies, for example cash programming in Somalia and Pakistan, and differences in the understanding of the concept of dignity in middle-income contexts such as Syria.

The goal of this review will be to set the context for the second part of the project, which will use a field-based case-study approach to look at whether and how dignity has been promoted in displacement. The case studies will aim to present a detailed picture of how dignity has featured in these contexts, and highlight examples of good and bad practice, as well as innovative programming, which can be used to inform future displacement responses. Two or three case studies will be selected; potential candidates include the innovative, locally led response to the humanitarian and displacement crisis in South Kordofan in Sudan; refugee camps on the Thai–Burma border and differences between local and international responses; the various responses to the refugee crisis in Europe; the Kenyan refugee response in Dadaab; and responses in urban settings. We will aim to undertake the case studies in cooperation with local research partners.

Following the case studies, a final report will synthesise the findings of both phases of the project, highlighting key lessons and practical implications for humanitarian action going forward. Roundtables will be held in case study countries to discuss preliminary findings. A final roundtable discussing overall findings and recommendations will be convened, either in London or in one of the field locations.

Project timeline and deliverables

The project will take place between April 2017 and March 2019. It will include the following phases:

• Phase 1 (April 2017–August 2017): This initial phase will include an expansive survey of the concept of dignity in moral philosophy, human rights discourse and the humanitarian sector to date, involving a desk-based review of policy documents and historical and contemporary case studies. This phase will aim to establish the origins and evolution of the term dignity, and how it has played out in international humanitarian programming.

• Phase 2 (September 2017–September 2018): This will be the field-based case study element of the project. We plan to conduct two or three case studies, which will each look at the place of dignity within responses to displacement.

• Phase 3 (September 2018–March 2019): The concluding phase will bring together key findings from the project and draw out lessons from both the historical review and the practical case study examples. We aim to provide recommendations as to how these lessons can best be harnessed to ensure the promotion of dignity, within global humanitarian action as a whole, but also more specifically in displacement scenarios.
HPN is a global forum for policy-makers, practitioners and others working in the humanitarian sector to share and disseminate information, analysis and experience. Its specialised publications – Humanitarian Exchange magazine, Network Papers and Good Practice Reviews (GPRs) – aim to contribute to improving the performance of humanitarian action by encouraging and facilitating knowledge sharing and contributing to individual and institutional learning. HPN is valued for its objectivity, analysis, accessibility and relevance; its print and online activities provide an important resource to support improved practice and learning in the sector.

To maximise efficiency and minimise costs, HPN is run by an experienced but part-time team consisting of a dedicated HPN Coordinator supported by HPG’s Managing Editor and the communications team.

To build on the strength of HPN’s membership and add value to the network, over the next IP cycle HPN will:

- Encourage increased member engagement with the network, including opportunities for debate at targeted events and online. During 2017–19 we plan to undertake a stakeholder survey which will give members an opportunity to provide feedback on the relevance and quality of HPN’s publications and events.

- Continue to increase and diversify network membership. Activities will include promoting the network during visits to the field and at key global events and regional conferences. Partnerships with regional and sector-wide networks, academic and training institutions and online information/media groups will also be strengthened and new partnerships forged. HPN will follow closely the development of the Network for Empowered Aid Response (NEAR), a new network of Southern-based NGOs launched at the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit, identifying opportunities to engage with and support them. HPN will also proactively encourage volunteer groups and networks responding to the needs of refugees and vulnerable migrants in Europe to join HPN and to use its resources.

- Continue to explore and expand the use of media techniques – such as online streaming, webinars, whiteboard videos and infographics – to ensure that HPN’s analysis and learning reaches members in formats that meet their preferences and needs.

During 2017–19 potential topics for Humanitarian Exchange include the humanitarian consequences of non-conventional violence in Central America, the humanitarian response in northern Nigeria, humanitarian action in urban contexts, and humanitarian responses to the crises in Ukraine and Libya. Future Network Paper topics we are interested in exploring with potential authors include disability and emergencies, electronic cash transfers and financial inclusion, the findings and implications for humanitarian practice of a three-year multi-country research programme on the nutritional impact and cost-effectiveness of cash- and voucher-based food assistance programmes, consolidating the findings from a range of research on the use of social protection for addressing humanitarian crises, and work on enabling and supporting local humanitarian response, being undertaken by the Local to Global initiative. HPN and ALNAP have agreed to work together on a new GPR on humanitarian practice in urban areas. While we will undertake fundraising for this separately, we will use seed money from the IP to develop proposals and identify potential partners.

The HPN website (www.odihpn.org), which was revamped in 2016, provides an archive of HPN publications, a new microsite for GPR 9 on Disaster Risk Reduction and other key documents and reports. HPN also maintains links with other humanitarian websites, including Alertnet and Reliefweb, and we will continue to use e-alerts and social media to notify members of new publications, products and events.
HPG’s international influence is reflected in the range of its policy advice and engagement, providing expertise to governments, foreign affairs departments, policy-makers, parliamentary committees, NGOs and international multilateral organisations. HPG’s expertise has been sought on a wide range of issues, including cash programming, the private sector in humanitarian assistance and migration and displacement, and we regularly provide advice, analysis and guidance on a range of humanitarian crises in which the group has particular expertise, including Syria, Yemen, CAR, Ukraine and Sudan and South Sudan.

During the 2017–2019 IP, HPG will develop a programme of policy engagement to further disseminate ongoing research on key issues within the sector. Follow-up work relating to the World Humanitarian Summit and the Grand Bargain will include continued policy engagement on issues related to the governance, architecture and leadership of the international humanitarian system, as well as support to the Regional Organisations Humanitarian Action Network (ROHAN) and ongoing engagement with issues around cash programming. Following the two refugee summits during 2016, we will continue our work on issues around migration and forced displacement as part of a wider cross-institute research agenda within ODI. We will also maintain our links with ‘emerging’ humanitarian actors, including the Gulf States (including through our involvement with the Doha Institute in Qatar); business and the private sector (through membership of the Global Council on the Future of the Humanitarian System at the World Economic Forum (WEF)); and private philanthropy. We will also continue to engage with research organisations and actors outside of the established humanitarian system, including institutions in the South.

As in previous years, the cost of the annual Advisory Group meeting will also be included in this budget instead of splitting it among the different projects in the Integrated Programme.
Disasters journal constitutes one of HPG’s most important links with the international academic community. The journal has continued to perform strongly: in 2015–16 it was accessed by almost 10,000 institutions worldwide, a 14% increase over the previous year. The journal’s impact factor, which reflects the number of citations in relation to recent articles, rose substantially (from 0.742 in 2014 to 1.080 in 2015).

During 2015–16 the journal published four regular quarterly issues, a special issue entitled ‘Aid in the Archives: Academic Histories for a Practitioner Audience’ (co-edited with the University of Manchester’s Humanitarian and Conflict Response Institute and the Humanitarian Innovation Fund) and an online issue on disaster recovery.

Senior-Level Course on Conflict and Humanitarian Response (LSE) and Master’s Course (Center for Conflict and Humanitarian Studies, Doha Institute)

HPG, in partnership with the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), teaches an annual Senior-Level Course on Conflict and Humanitarian Response in London. Designed for mid-career and senior professionals, the course aims to facilitate learning and guided reflection on crucial issues around the political, strategic and operational challenges facing humanitarian action in conflict. Participants include NGO country directors, senior UN and donor staff, experienced consultants and former military personnel. HPG researchers also teach several courses as part of a Master’s programme run by the Center for Conflict and Humanitarian Studies at the Doha Institute in Qatar.
HPG’s public affairs strategy aims to influence debates on a range of humanitarian issues by communicating research and analysis to policy-makers, practitioners, the media and the general public. Our public affairs work seeks to proactively shape the debate through targeted dissemination of our research findings and by responding to key humanitarian issues and events as they emerge. The key components of this engagement are our events programme, innovative communications tools and engagement with specialist and global media.

We run a vibrant and diverse programme of events, well-attended in person and online, available in recordings and covered by national, regional and international media. The Group’s research projects for the next stage of the IP (elaborated above) will form the core of the events programme, and will feature HPG researchers and other engaging speakers, including policy-makers, practitioners and leading figures from the humanitarian sector. Events will be produced to the highest standards and will be chaired by professional broadcasters, foreign affairs correspondents and experts from the sector. They will seek to set the agenda on key humanitarian topics or respond to urgent debates within the sector. In line with wider ODI policy, we will where possible ensure a gender balance on all events panels.

The events programme will also feature the well-established input of HPN. HPN events will be designed to improve the performance of humanitarian action by encouraging and facilitating knowledge-sharing and contributing to individual and institutional learning. They will feature extensive participation from practitioners in the field through online engagement tools such as online streaming, video-conferencing and live-tweeting.

Where appropriate, events will be conducted under the Chatham House rule to provide opportunities for candid discussion and reflection. Examples from the 2015–17 IP cycle include a series of conferences organised with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) ahead of the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul; a roundtable discussion on Libyan detention centres; and an event series on Syria co-convened with the Refugee Studies Centre at Oxford University and the Council for British Research in the Levant on the international, regional and local dimensions of the Syria crisis and post-conflict reconstruction.

HPG researchers also participate extensively in external and overseas events and other engagements. In the 2015–16 financial year, HPG contributed to 57 events in 17 countries. This involved providing expertise to policy-makers, as well as delivering lectures, seminars and talks and attending symposia, workshops and conferences. Where possible, we attempt to recover expenses from the organisers of the events in question, but the costs of attending – and crucial investments in exploratory meetings and discussions around new and emerging issues – often cannot be recouped. This requires that we set aside a modest budget for this purpose.

Another key element of HPG’s public affairs strategy is its work with the media, which has featured prominently in the UK and international press throughout the previous IP cycle, with over 400 media hits in the 2015–16 financial year. The Group makes significant media contributions, including broadcast interviews, blogs, commentaries, op-eds, articles and discussions in the national and international press. HPG’s experts have featured in major international outlets such as Al Jazeera, the BBC and the New York Times. We will continue to consolidate the Group’s reputation as an important source of expertise for journalists, editors and programme-makers.

Bespoke communications plans tailored for each IP project will help ensure that we are targeting our key stakeholders with research findings and policy recommendations conveyed in accessible and diverse
formats. We have also continued to explore new and dynamic communications media, such as infographics and videos, and these channels will become a much more integral part of communications plans, along with other engaging and visually striking products such as photo essays, animations, web-based publications and interactive data visualisations. We will also seek to integrate communications elements into field trips, providing opportunities to source communications content.

**Rapid response**

As in previous years, we propose to allocate funds to allow rapid engagement with topical or developing issues as they arise. Typically this involves the production of a crisis brief on a particular topic or crisis context. In producing these briefings HPG covers issues and developments where we feel our particular expertise allows us to make a significant analytical contribution. This allows HPG to help shape the debate and influence thinking amongst the general public to promote deeper understanding of the complexities of these humanitarian crises.

HPG also has an important convening role within the sector, providing a protected space for frank and open discussion of live crises as they unfold. These roundtables provide a rare opportunity for donors, policy-makers and practitioners to share their views in a private, confidential forum governed by the Chatham House rule. Reflecting the value of these events within the sector, HPG has been asked to convene further roundtables where appropriate, in London and potentially in locations close to the crisis under discussion. To control costs we will where appropriate seek to use video conferencing technology.

**Reprinting**

HPG seeks to reduce waste by limiting the number of copies of its publications produced in the first printing. The reprinting budget enables us to lower the overall amount of printing by covering the costs of reprinting additional reports as needed. These funds are also used to cover the costs of carrying out design work on new formats. Over the next IP cycle we plan to review our printing policy with a view to increasing flexibility and cost-efficiency.
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Annexes

Annex 1

‘As local as possible, as international as necessary’: understanding capacity and complementarity in humanitarian response

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Annex 2

The tip of the iceberg? Understanding non-traditional sources of aid financing

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## Annex 4

### Dignity in displacement: from rhetoric to reality

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Integrated Programme Proposal 2017–2019
Annex 5

Synthesis paper

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**HPG Team: travel and subsistence**

| Flights                         | 0           | 600          | 0           | 3           | 600          | 1800        |
| Accommodation and subsistence   | 0           | 250          | 0           | 6           | 250          | 1500        |
| Ground travel                   | 0           | 75           | 0           | 8           | 75           | 600         |
| **Travel and subsistence costs** | £0          |              |             |             |              | **£3,900**  |

**Meetings/roundtables**

| Roundtable                      | 0           | 250          | 0           | 8           | 250          | 2000        |
| Roundtable                      | 0           | 200          | 0           | 1           | 200          | 200         |
| **Meetings totals**             | £0          |              |             |             |              | **£2,200**  |

**Publications and communications**

| HPG Report                      | 0           | 800          | 0           | 1           | 800          | 800         |
| HPG Policy Brief                | 0           | 300          | 0           | 1           | 300          | 300         |
| Animations                      | 0           | 3000         | 0           | 1           | 3000         | 3000        |
| Infographics                    | 0           | 3000         | 0           | 1           | 3000         | 3000        |
| **Publications and communications costs total** | £0 |              |             |             |              | **£7,100**  |

**Project costs/miscellaneous**

| Communications and project costs | 0           | 200          | 0           | 1           | 200          | 200         |
| Documentation costs              | 0           | 200          | 0           | 1           | 200          | 200         |
| **Project costs/miscellaneous total** | £0          |              |             |             |              | **£400**    |
| **Grand total**                  | **£39,898** |              |             |             |              | **£160,272** |
## Annex 6

### Humanitarian Practice Network (HPN)

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Annex 7

Policy engagement and representation

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Internal research costs total: £172,595, £179,788, £352,383

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Travel and subsistence total: £28,088, £28,088, £56,175

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Publications and communications costs total: £3,150, £3,150, £6,300

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Meetings total: £24,350, £24,350, £48,700

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Project costs/miscellaneous total: £735, £735, £1,470

Grand total: £234,718, £241,910, £476,628
### Annex 8

#### Public affairs and rapid response

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## Annex 9

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<tr>
<td>Steve Scott</td>
<td>Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade</td>
<td>Assistant Secretary, Humanitarian Response Branch</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sorcha O’Callaghan</td>
<td>British Red Cross Society</td>
<td>Head of Humanitarian Policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heather Jeffrey</td>
<td>Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs, Development and Trade</td>
<td>Director-General, International Humanitarian Assistance Directorate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dennis McNamara</td>
<td>Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue</td>
<td>Senior Humanitarian Adviser</td>
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<td>Thomas Thomsen</td>
<td>Danish Ministry of Foreign</td>
<td>Chief Advisor, Humanitarian Section</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nicolas Lamadé</td>
<td>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)</td>
<td>Senior Manager, Security, Reconstruction and Peace</td>
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<td>Hans van den Hoogen</td>
<td>Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs</td>
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<td>Henrike Trautmann</td>
<td>European Commission Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO)</td>
<td>Head of Unit, Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection</td>
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<td>Global Resilience Partnership</td>
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<td>Hany El-Banna</td>
<td>Humanitarian Forum</td>
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<td>Humanitarian Assistance Specialist (Emergency relief and DRR)/Second Secretary</td>
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<td>Vicki Hawkins</td>
<td>Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) UK</td>
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*As at December 2016*