



EuronAid

Newsletter

Relief and Rehabilitation Network

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Editorial

In this, the penultimate issue of the RRN Newsletter before we embark on a new three-year phase (October 1996-October 1999) supported by new donors, it is very encouraging to report on the positive responses we have received to the members' questionnaire sent with the February 1996 mailing (see Feedback section). Your comments have reinforced our enthusiasm and conviction that the sharing of experience and lessons learned between personnel engaged in the provision of relief and rehabilitation assistance is of critical importance in raising the standards and effectiveness of humanitarian aid programmes. The cornerstone of RRN publications, Good Practice Reviews, have been particularly well received. *Good Practice Review 3* on General Food Distribution in Emergencies was mailed in February 1996, offering a comprehensive review of agency practice in the field and documenting the extensive personal experience of the two authors in this key area of humanitarian assistance. The forthcoming *Good Practice Review 4*, to be mailed at the beginning of July, looks at the different methods of estimating and counting populations used by humanitarian agencies, including the often fraught question of registration, with a view to equipping agency personnel with basic principles to be applied in the field.

The Rwanda Report

This RRN mailing follows shortly after the publication of the Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda, widely recognised as a unique and ground-breaking report. *Network Paper 16* outlines the main findings and recommendations of Study III of the Evaluation which focused on the humanitarian assistance to Rwanda and its effects between April 1994 and December 1995 (Studies I, II and IV focused respectively on the historical background, the build-up to the genocide and war and the repatriation and rehabilitation phases). The Joint Evaluation represents an unprecedented collaborative study of a major humanitarian operation supported by a significant number and variety of organisations and agencies. Some of the most important issues highlighted by the Rwanda experience were: lack of policy coherence, donor funding and preparedness measures, early-warning and contingency planning, coordination, the role of military forces in humanitarian operations, improving NGO performance and accountability.

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Editorial (continued)

Study III was undertaken by a 17-member team, based at the ODI in London, and led by John Borton, founder and former Coordinator of the RRN.

The full Rwanda Report (comprising all four studies and the Synthesis Report) is available from ODI's Publications Department at a cost of :

£30.00 for the UK
£33.00 for other parts of the world

(Inclusive of post and packing)

Follow-up

Here, we offer a brief résumé of recent initiatives resulting from the Evaluation. At this stage, it is difficult to gauge the impact of the Evaluation's recommendations on the international relief system as a whole, but in the two months since its publication in March 1996, it has been discussed in numerous fora and some of its findings are being acted upon at a number of levels. Discussions have ranged from specially convened meetings of national NGOs in various donor countries and academic conferences to the High Level Council of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) and the UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee. At a special meeting of Emergency Aid services of eight donor organisations - from Denmark, Finland, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the UK - in Copenhagen on 7-8 May, issues of accountability, standards, monitoring and reporting; early-warning and preparedness; and coordination, raised by Study III, were discussed. In order to monitor and report on actions resulting from such meetings, a ten person Follow-Up Network has been formed, comprising representatives from the Evaluation Studies themselves, and members of the Management Group and Steering Committee that were set up to oversee the Evaluation. It is proposed that this group will report to a specially convened meeting of the Joint Evaluation Steering Committee to be held towards the end of 1996.

Accountability, Standards, Monitoring and Reporting

Debates on standards and codes of conduct in the provision of humanitarian assistance are not new. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and NGOs in Disaster Relief Code of Conduct, published in 1994 (*Network Paper 7*), and today supported by 77 signatory agencies, marked an important step in the setting, attainment and maintenance of

standards. Further initiatives are underway within the Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response (SCHR), ECHO and in other fora to develop codes and standards. There is both a need for coordination of such initiatives at the international level and for more detailed technically-based codes to be developed, before agencies can judge their performance in relation to established standards and donors can begin to use them in screening funding proposals and selecting high quality implementing agencies. One such initiative, *People in Aid*, reported in the News section of this issue, is currently drawing up a draft Code of Best Practice for the recruitment, training and support of aid workers, based on one of the principal recommendations of the recent report, Room for Improvement (*Network Paper 10*). Although originally conceived as a UK and Ireland initiative, recent discussions with US and UN agencies have revealed their interest in following developments in the Code and one UN agency has indicated its intention to use the Code, once endorsed, as a basis for selecting UK/Irish partner agencies.

The Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda also highlighted fundamental issues of NGO accountability, to both donors and beneficiaries. Regarding the former, steps are being taken, as part of the follow-up process, to develop a 'core' set of indicators and questions to be included in the monitoring and reporting requirements made of implementing partners. The lack of standardisation in reporting during the Rwanda crisis added significantly to the difficulties of evaluating performance (see *Network Paper 15* on Cost Effectiveness Analysis).

Network Paper 14, a Critique of Psycho-social Trauma Projects, together with the article on *Refugees in South Kivu* featured in this Newsletter, offer another perspective on humanitarian agency accountability - that of consultation with, and responsibility to, beneficiaries. Derek Summerfield, a psychiatrist at the Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture, questions the usefulness of 'western' models of psychosocial care for those who witness and experience conflict and atrocities in developing countries. He advocates an approach based on the strength of relationships forged with those needing assistance and projects drawn up according to the priorities of users, which do not challenge their own cultural frameworks and interpretations. Danielle de Lame, one of the anthropologists contributing to Study III of the Rwanda Evaluation, writing in the Articles section of this issue on her experience in the Rwandan refugee camps in eastern Zaire, offers a reminder of the sophisticated social and power structures within camp populations. Failure on the part of agencies distributing food and healthcare to look beyond what may appear to be a homogenous group and recognise differences in need and access to information - not just between adults and children, or men and women, but more subtle distinctions between educated and

peasant women for example - can lead to the delivery of inappropriate assistance. Both contributors argue that understanding the historical and social contexts giving rise to conflict and complexity of relationships within refugee populations are an essential and intrinsic part of any aid programme.

Early Warning and Preparedness

The Rwanda Evaluation revealed that, in the period leading up to the Goma influx, there was no integrated mechanism for gathering and analysing information which might provide advance warning of large population displacement. Without such a mechanism, donors will continue to be reluctant to invest in preparedness measures. The Rwanda follow-up process identified two critical factors in ensuring that such a breakdown in the flow of information does not occur again: credibility of information and preparation of reliable probability estimates. Such gathering and collation of information on situations prevailing in different areas during emergency operations are an integral part of the coordination process as well as providing warning of population displacements.

Two articles appearing in this Newsletter offer practical information and details on how agencies can improve the quality and accessibility of such early warning and preparedness information. Alistair Hallam, who has recently been assisting the RRN editorial team, explores the adoption of technical processes in site planning and the management of information in emergency operations. In the first article, he considers the advantages of *satellite imaging* as a tool for locating sites which meet the basic access, water and strategic requirements of camp planners. In the second, drawing on the experience of Ian Attfield at the Integrated Operations Centre in Rwanda, he looks at the possibilities of standardising and sharing agency information via *geographical information systems* (GIS), which can be distributed via the Internet or email. Recognising that there are still a number of obstacles to be overcome in the distribution of agency information in this way - not least the need for agencies to become more open with their data - the fact that an agency can prepare a report or dataset and post it on the system, so that it can be immediately accessed by others, may help to avoid major duplication of effort and improve the timeliness and appropriateness of response.

Coordination

The Joint Evaluation found major problems associated with the number of NGOs present and the scope of UN agency mandates. Issues of coordination have not only plagued agencies operating in Rwanda and neighbouring countries; donors are looking at their own role in ensuring that responses address the entire cycle of conflict and peace and do not set up systems for the distribution of humanitarian aid which leave an

administrative vacuum on departure, in turn aggravating the rehabilitation process. In the News section of this issue, we report on an EU initiative taking place in the context of the wider debate amongst donors, UN agencies and NGOs, on the so-called "relief-development continuum". (See RRN Newsletters of September 1994 and April 1995 for articles on the 'continuum' and for a related discussion on aid policy in transition). For its part, the European Commission is looking at the current split between humanitarian (ECHO) and development (DGVIII) departments, procedures and budgets. The news item on page 16 looks at the Commission's recent communication which makes a number of recommendations for establishing a more holistic approach to linking relief and development, but suggests that without practical NGO involvement, such good intentions will not result in a realistic programme of action.

A potentially very valuable tool for the coordination and rapid dissemination of agency information, the Internet, and in particular the WorldWide Web, offers relief agencies and individuals the opportunity to improve their awareness and knowledge of natural disasters and complex emergencies around the world. *Network Paper 13*, published and sent to members in February 1996, provides both a guide and directory to an extensive range of existing 'sites', offering up to date, local information on conflict, natural disasters and refugee situations, and agency responses to them. The directory now forms part of the RRN's 'Home Page', located on the WorldWide Web at:

<http://www.oneworld.org/odi/rrn/index.html>

This site will enable anyone with access to the Web to link to over 300 sites, including news updates, sitreps, agency home pages, educational and research organisations, and southern-based providers of Internet services. There is less and less excuse for pleas of ignorance.

The Role of Military Forces in Humanitarian Operations

The Rwanda Evaluation found military contingents to have played a significant role in humanitarian operations inside Rwanda and in eastern Zaire in the provision of relief assistance. However, the experience has raised questions about the predictability, effectiveness, high cost and ability of these contingents to participate in such operations. The question of military involvement demands more in-depth research, but the issue of *Service Packages* is considered in this Newsletter. Recognising the urgent need for considerable additional management and implementation capacity in Goma in particular, UNHCR requested donor governments to provide "self-contained service packages". Under the terms of these 'packages', donors were to take full responsibility for

specific activities such as airport services, road servicing, sanitation, etc through the deployment of national civil defence teams, military contingents or civil disaster response teams. This Newsletter article, drawing on the experience of the Rwanda Evaluation and discussions with some of those involved in developing this 'Service Package' concept in UNHCR and its partner agencies, finds a number of problems in such deployment, not least in terms of coordination for UNHCR and from which budget such interventions would be funded.

A somewhat different account of the role of the military is provided by Koenraad van Brabant, an RRN member based in Sri Lanka, who describes recent first-hand

experience of working with Sri Lankan government forces. The article (see Feedback Section) looks at the difficulties facing humanitarian agencies caught in the midst of a civil war where relief operations, and hence agency personnel, are regarded with suspicion and their neutrality repeatedly called into question. In this case, the military makes abundant use of its powers to restrict the supply of certain goods to rebel-held areas on the basis that they may be used by Tamil Tigers. Koenraad does not pretend to offer a solution to the problem, but gives examples of the ways in which he and colleagues seek to get around the restrictions. It is an experience that will be familiar to many relief agency personnel who have worked in on-going conflict situations.

Feedback

RRN Questionnaire

Thank you for responding

With the RRN in its third year of operation and in anticipation of new funding sources for our second three year phase (Phase II) beginning in October 1996, the RRN team felt it was an appropriate moment to gauge members' views of the RRN, in terms of publication content, style and how well we reach our primary objectives.

We will be undertaking a more thorough analysis of members' responses over the summer and will report more fully in the September/October issue of the Newsletter. To date, we have received nearly 50 completed forms from our Anglophone membership and 3 from the Francophone membership (due to its later mailing date). This represents well over 15% of members, which, according to commercial polling organisations, is more than acceptable for use as a representative sample of your views. But a few more wouldn't hurt!

Thank you to those of you who have taken the trouble to return your completed questionnaire - the overall response has been remarkably positive and has imbued the RRN team with great enthusiasm to keep going. However, if you would still like your views known and haven't yet completed and returned the form, it is not too late! If you need a further copy of the questionnaire please contact Nathalie Shellard here at ODI.

In response to our request in the September 1995 Newsletter for feedback on members' experiences of working with the military, Koenraad van Brabant, one of the first RRN contributors (see Network Paper 4 on the Political Economy of Relief and Rehabilitation in the Somali Region 5, Eastern Ethiopia) offers here a brief first-hand account of his experiences in Sri Lanka. The article looks at the difficulties facing humanitarian agencies caught in the midst of a civil war where relief operations, and hence agency personnel, are regarded with suspicion and their neutrality repeatedly called into question. Although written in December 1995, much of the experience still holds true. A brief update of the political situation is given at the end of the article.

Member's Contribution

Banned, Restricted or Sensitive: Working with the Military in Sri Lanka

by Koenraad van Brabant

In July 1995, the Sri Lankan Government forces launched a first offensive on the Jaffna peninsula in an attempt to regain the initiative in ongoing hostilities between the Government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). The offensive, followed by a series of smaller ones, was aimed at changing the theatre of war from the East to the North. The second major offensive started in early October and was successfully sustained. In December 1995, at the time of writing, street fighting was taking place in Jaffna town which was poised to fall (and has since fallen) into Government hands. There followed an exodus of as many as 400,000

Tamils from the North to the eastern part of the Jaffna peninsula, still under LTTE control, and increasingly South of the Jaffna lagoon into the LTTE-controlled agricultural area known as the Vanni region.

Until November 1995, ICRC, the UN and a number of mostly international NGOs (INGOs), had found it extremely difficult to provide material relief assistance beyond stocks prepositioned in the LTTE-controlled areas in the North. The main reason was the interpretation by the military on the ground of restrictions on certain items, some of which were the obvious object of security considerations such as explosives, remote control devices, telescopes, binoculars, barbed wire and wirecutters, penlight batteries (to make detonators), cement (to build bunkers) or urea-fertilizer (urea can be used to make explosives). In practice, however, agencies found that every possible relief item had become the object of scrutiny by lower-ranking officers at crossing points from Government- to LTTE-controlled areas in the North. Such items included towels, aluminium cooking utensils, plastic sheeting, woven mats, clothes, and buckets. Although not officially restricted, there were always bureaucratic and/or logistical problems why such items could not be allowed through or only in insignificantly small quantities.

Rather more worrying was that increasingly, even the Commissioner General of Essential Services (CGES) was having problems getting supplies of food, kerosene and medicine approved by the military on the ground.

This *de facto* control over supplies to the North was facilitated by the existence of only two routes: by ICRC escorted ship from Trincomalee (Government held) to Point Pedro (LTTE held) on the Jaffna peninsula, and by road at the crossing point north of Vavuniya town, where the two front lines meet. Despite following the procedure required to obtain permits for carrying 'restricted' items - application to the CGES, and ultimate approval from the Ministry of Defence in Colombo - agencies presenting stamped and approved 'supplies requests' were by no means guaranteed that the Army and Navy would actually allow the goods to pass.

The situation was compounded by the imposition of 'local restrictions', the official status of which is unclear and of which agencies would not normally be notified. Whereas the official list of restricted items would be 'gazetted' as official Government policy, 'local restrictions' were issued by the Ministry of Defence which retains ultimate authority over any relief assistance. Additional items subject to such local restrictions included bicycles and their spare parts, empty gunny and polythene bags, tinned fish, cheese and fruit, small packets of biscuits, and boxes of matches, all of which could presumably be used by LTTE guerilla fighters. In summer 1995, the restrictions on urea-based fertilizer were extended to other 'straight' fertilizers, notably ammonium sulphate, potassium and phosphate-

based. The consequence was a significant decrease in land cultivated in the agricultural Vanni region, and in expected yield, at a time when over 150,000 displaced had already sought refuge in this region and more were expected.

Other 'sensitive' items restricted by the military included: coconut and vegetable oil (mixed with kerosene and on which all vehicles and motorbikes in the North function), soap (reportedly because of the glycerine it contains), blank stationary (because the LTTE prints propaganda on it), and Oral Rehydration Salts, due to their potassium content).

A serious blow came in early November 1995, when two Catholic Tamil priests were arrested in Vavuniya for carrying banned copper wire and motorcycle spare parts. As they were also carrying over £10,000 in cash, cash too became identified as a 'sensitive item'. The national press then started a campaign all but accusing NGOs and the Catholic Church of financing the LTTE. Since then, though there is no official policy in this regard, agencies must justify requests to the Ministry of Defence to carry cash to LTTE controlled areas. Without cash, it is impossible to keep projects and relief assistance operating, given that banks are no longer functioning.

UN/NGO approaches to the Ministry of Defence, even up to the level of the Secretary of State for Defence, did not lead to any noticeable changes. For example, in previous years, the Ministry of Defence had advised humanitarian agencies, for their own security, to have radios, and by the end of last year several had base and mobile stations in LTTE-controlled areas. Yet throughout 1995, no requests from INGOs or the UN for additional radios were approved, even for those agencies already in possession of radios. Similarly, the Ministry of Defence refused the ICRC the necessary approval to increase the surgical capacity of the Jaffna Teaching Hospital and in Trincomalee hospital by deploying expatriates.

This extremely cautious approach by the Government clearly had some justification. There is no doubt that the LTTE broke the cessation of hostilities agreement and withdrew from the peace talks. Nor is there any question that the fighting capability of the LTTE and its terrorist attacks in Colombo justify very tight security measures by the Government or that the displacement of the Jaffna population plays a part in the military and political strategy of the LTTE. The proclaimed purpose of the Government offensive is to liberate the Tamils from the grip of the LTTE so that peace can be restored and a political solution to the problem negotiated.

Humanitarian agencies are thus operating in a complex emergency situation where they have to tread very carefully through a political minefield. The difficulty of keeping humanitarian and political and military objectives separate was illustrated in November 1995 by the vicious press attacks on NGOs working in the North.

Although the Government intervened to pacify the press, a climate of suspicion has since grown up towards NGOs, whose impartiality is now questioned.

But some progress, at least for international NGOs, has been made. Fortunately, the concern expressed by Boutros-Boutros Ghali in early November over a potential humanitarian crisis, while provoking much anger in the Government, broke the deadlock in the movement of relief supplies that had characterised previous months. On Presidential orders, the Government has since mounted a relief operation and is open to offers of assistance from the UN and NGOs. Moreover, the appointment of a 'Coordinating Focal Point' to facilitate and oversee implementation, was a great step forward. Although many items remain banned, 'restricted' or 'sensitive', there has been a marked improvement in the cooperation of the military both in Colombo and on the ground.

More importantly, in the Eastern districts of the country there are no clearly demarcated transit points between Government and LTTE controlled areas. However, in order to concentrate its forces in the North, the government has withdrawn most of its troops to the major urban centres and along the main roads, and much of the hinterland has again come under LTTE control. Humanitarian agencies are therefore subject to less tight regulation of movement of staff and supplies than in the North, though they inform the local military in advance. Although national NGOs working in LTTE-controlled areas are kept under much closer surveillance than their international counterparts, by and large, relations with the military are as good as can be expected, (although it still does not provide valuable information about mined areas or other security issues).

The challenge for humanitarian agency personnel on the ground is to develop good personal contacts, a difficult task when key military can be rotated every six months. Relationships become particularly problematic when humanitarian agency staff observe that the military, contrary to official policy, impose unnecessary restrictions and conditions on people - notably Tamils living in LTTE-controlled areas - coming to claim their Government entitlements. More worrying is the decisive role taken by the military in the East in organising the resettlement of displaced people, often against their wishes. Such action contrasts directly with Government guidelines that insist on voluntary resettlement. More sensitive still are those cases where humanitarian agencies witness, or are told of alleged human rights abuses. Although a 'Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Involuntary Removal and Disappearances of Certain Persons' was set up to investigate such complaints all over the country, including in the East, individuals allegedly involved in past human rights abuses, often committed on Government orders, now hold senior rank in the police and military. It is particularly difficult to bring such people to task at a time when a war is being

fought, and when the support of the United National Party, (in power at the time of many of the human rights abuses, and now in opposition), is needed for the acceptance of the 'devolution package', itself hoped to provide a political solution to the ethnic conflict.

Officially, there is no history of army intervention in national politics in Sri Lanka. Unofficially, however, it is clear that the military have their own view of how the current war should be fought and automatically assume that the LTTE will siphon off any relief assistance that goes to the population in its areas. At the same time, the Government is intent on winning the hearts and minds of the Tamil civilians, aware that a 'military solution' to the grievances of the Tamil minority would exclude any durable political solution. The dilemmas for combining the military necessities with the humanitarian and political objectives are huge. Unfortunately, a key test of reconciliation in Sri Lanka, the proportional representation of the minorities in the Sinhala-dominated forces and the use of both national languages in the forces, are not even being talked about.

The territory gained during the Government's offensive in the Jaffna area in December remains in Government hands, and more significantly perhaps for the Tamil Tigers, many of the civilians from Jaffna town who fled to Tiger held territory are now returning to their homes. Although it may not be as many as the Government quoted 250,000, many are indeed returning. This willingness to exchange Tamil administration for that of the Government marks a significant victory for the Government and President Kumaratunga's attempt to find a political solution to the war. However, it would be foolish to underestimate the continued military threat posed by the Tamil Tigers or their considerable ability to continue to wage guerilla warfare for a long time to come.

Map of Sri Lanka

Articles

'Service Packages'

The Role of Military Contingents in Emergencies

On 14 July 1994, approximately 850,000 Rwandans poured into the Zairian town of Goma. UNHCR, charged with coordinating assistance to these refugees, found itself overwhelmed by the enormity of the task. Camps had to be set-up, water generation, storage and distribution systems installed, access roads constructed, latrines dug and hospitals built, in an area where much of the terrain was of hard volcanic rock. Although contingency stocks did exist - built up by organisations which had been working in the area prior to the influx, such as ICRC, OXFAM and MSF-Holland, these were insufficient to meet the enormous initial demands. Plastic sheeting, water tankers, rehydration fluids, vehicles, radios, and many other items were needed immediately, with air transport the only viable option.

Recognising the urgent need for considerable additional management and implementation capacity in Goma, UNHCR requested donor governments to provide "self-contained service packages". Donors, through the deployment of civil defence teams, military contingents, or civil disaster response teams, were to take full responsibility for the management and implementation of specific activities, in contrast to the established procedure whereby donors supplied funds to UNHCR, which then arranged a contractual relationship with an implementing partner. Eight 'Government Service Packages' (GSPs) were initially specified: airport services; logistics base services; road servicing and road security; site preparation; provision of domestic fuel; sanitation facilities; water management; and management of an airhead.

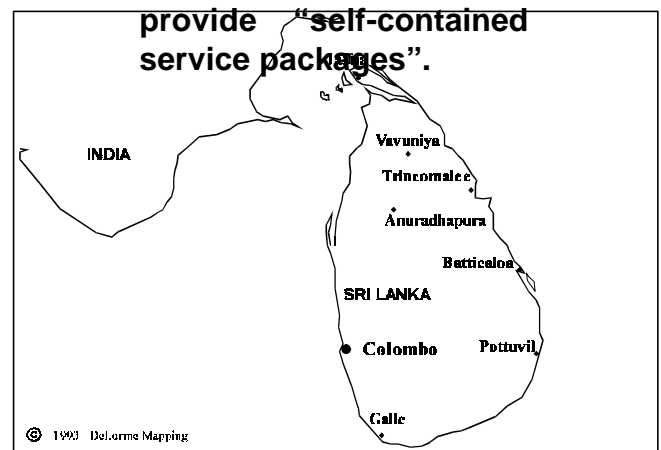
The concept of GSPs, although assembled in response to the overwhelming needs in Goma, represented an evolution of the stand-by agreement model, in which an organisation's personnel and resources could be called upon at short notice, but would be managed by UNHCR, and expenditures recorded in UNHCR's accounts. Stand-by agreements, first made with the Swedish Rescue Board in 1991, were used successfully during the response to the Kurdish crisis, and again in Sarajevo, where military assets were used in the airlift.

The response to the Ngara influx at the end of April 1994 can be seen as a transitional case in the development of

the 'service package' concept. EMERCOM (of the Russian Federation) deployed a fleet of six-wheel-drive trucks to Ngara under a stand-by agreement developed earlier in the year; the UK ODA provided a self-contained team of logistics specialists to manage cargo handling at the Mwanza airhead; and the US provided a strategic airlift capability.

Although most of the immediate needs in Goma were eventually met, many of the packages involved military contingents and teams from more than one country working together, rather than single country teams as envisaged in the initial request. For example, GTZ, the Swedish Rescue Board, MSF-France, IRC, OXFAM and Concern all worked in the sanitation sector, which represented just one package. Similarly, the water management package was effectively undertaken by a combination of at least a dozen NGOs, military contingents, UN agencies, civil defence organisations and donor teams. Considerable additional capacity was obtained, but the fact that a number of organisations were involved within the same packages substantially increased the coordination burden upon UNHCR, and created confusion that may have reduced the effectiveness of the response.

Recognising the urgent need for considerable additional capacity in Goma, UNHCR requested donor governments to provide "self-contained service packages".



Following the experiences in Goma, and in the hope of benefiting from donors' apparent willingness to provide military assets for use in humanitarian operations, UNHCR initiated a process of further consideration and development of the GSP model. As part of this process, a series of meetings were convened in Geneva to discuss

the GSP model with donors and NGOs. At the first meeting in April 1995, UNHCR presented a concept paper highlighting some of the problems that had emerged from the Goma experience, for example the number of organisations involved in some of the individual packages reflected the fact that they were unrealistically large; the requests lacked technical and professional specifications; deployment was slow and staggered; the failure to define needs, implementation procedures and coordination mechanisms allowed the 'push' of material offered to override the 'pull' of material actually required in the field; vertical coordination between UNHCR and the governments involved was never sufficiently established at the Geneva level; and the coordination of different governments involved in different activities presented daunting challenges.

The Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda, which evaluated the use of 'service packages', found that there were a number of important problems not discussed in UNHCR's concept paper. Firstly, the provision of direct in-kind assistance by governments transfers responsibility for the funding of the activity to the government providing the service. NGOs that traditionally rely upon UNHCR for funding are placed at a disadvantage, unless they can ensure that they are part of the 'service package' provided by their governments. In addition, there are potential difficulties in marrying the inputs of military contingents with those of NGOs carrying out the same activities, and ensuring that the military do not install systems for the provision of water, sanitation or health services that cannot be operated cost-effectively by NGOs when the military pull out.

The Rwanda Evaluation also found that the deployment of civil defence teams or military contingents appeared to be significantly more expensive than the financing of NGOs to undertake comparable activities. Such expenditures were seen by some as purely additional to what would otherwise have been received from the donor government concerned and, from this point of view, the high costs were not a major issue. Yet, though it is true that in the case of Goma, UNHCR would never have received comparable amounts in cash to undertake the same activities, a proportion of the costs of the military involvement have subsequently been recorded and reported as a humanitarian contribution. Indeed, some donors have an understanding with the military that additional costs incurred by them when responding to humanitarian crises will be met from aid budgets. Recourse to 'service packages' can, therefore, affect the volume of funds available for other relief activities.

Many of the packages involved military contingents and teams from more than one country.

The UNHCR-led discussion on GSPs has been taking place within the context of a broader international process - the Military and Civil Defence Assets (MCDA) Project, set up in 1991 in response to UN General Assembly Resolution 46/182. The Resolution requested the Department for Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) to develop appropriate arrangements with interested Governments and inter-governmental and non-governmental organisations to ensure rapid access to their emergency relief capacities. In early 1995, as part of the MCDA Project, a task force was set-up under the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (comprising the heads of the UN agencies) to develop a common framework to ensure the most efficient use of donor governments' military and civil assets, whether in technological (eg Chernobyl), natural or refugee disasters. Operating guidelines issued by the task force emphasise that:

- the decision to request and accept the assets must be made by humanitarian organisations, not political authorities, and be based solely on humanitarian criteria;
- the assets should be requested only where there are no comparable civilian alternatives and when there is a critical need;
- the humanitarian operation using the assets must retain its civilian nature and character;
- countries providing the resources should ensure that they respect the code of conduct and principles of the requesting humanitarian organisation;
- the large-scale involvement of military personnel in the direct delivery of humanitarian assistance should be avoided, particularly for victims of conflict or political actions.

These are intended to reassure NGOs working in conflict situations, where UN Peace-Keeping forces might also be present, that the deployment of donor assets (namely the military) would not compromise the neutrality and impartiality of humanitarian missions and that use of military resources would be exceptional and only considered as a last resort.

On 20 and 21 March of 1996, UNHCR convened a meeting in Geneva to present preliminary conclusions of their consultations on GSPs. The consultations have led to a widening of the debate to include other emergency response mechanisms and, it seems, a greater awareness of the problems associated with the use of military contingents, not least the extremely high cost of such interventions. Most of the response mechanisms developed by interested governments since the

consultations began can, in fact, be activated within the framework of a normal response, using standard implementing and funding arrangements, and do not involve the use of the military. For example, UNHCR's agreement with the Norwegians on health and shelter packages involves a combination of private enterprise, NGO and government sectors, while the German response involves use of the German Red Cross or GTZ. The International Federation of the Red Cross have been developing their own Emergency Response Modules, first tested earlier this year in Nigeria, in response to a meningitis epidemic. All these 'packages' can be paid for by UNHCR in the standard way.

Only the Dutch Government's 'service package' involves 'automatic' use of their military, for air operations, and a small health unit. The US are prepared to use military assets, but only where they would not be in any danger. The US Government might then use civilian aircraft if requested to assist in an airlift.

Although NGOs do not feature largely in the GSPs prepared so far, UNHCR have been keen to reassure them that their capabilities are not being overlooked. They are currently in the process of compiling a new database of emergency response capacity, and have sent out questionnaires to gather information on the extent of NGO financial, human and material resources.

UNHCR propose that a clear distinction be maintained between military involvement in humanitarian operations and military involvement in UN peace-keeping activities.

Where recourse to the military does prove necessary, the lesson learnt from the Great Lakes deployments is that the mission must be clearly defined both in scope and duration and be self-contained in terms of mobilisation and operation (collaboration between governments being welcomed where packages are too large for a single government). As a result of the experiences in Goma, UNHCR have been developing smaller, more rigorously detailed 'service packages'. When deployed, GSPs would be recorded as extra-budgetary donations in-kind. UNHCR have indicated, however, that they would not wish to accept highly expensive military contributions, even where these were 'free', if governments were registering the cost as a contribution.

UNHCR propose that no use be made of military assets for the security of a refugee operation, as this should remain the state responsibility of the host country. However, although respect for the sovereignty of the country in which they are operating may mean that no other recommendation is politically acceptable, there

does appear to be a need for a stronger policy position on the issue of refugee security. The camps in Goma were characterised by extremely high levels of violence - following the cholera and dysentery epidemics, violent death was one of the main causes of mortality. Despite the presence in Goma of well-armed, highly-trained third-country military contingents, agency personnel had to depart the camps at night for fear of attack. Health posts were left unattended, and patient care suffered considerably as a result. It took over nine months for a host country solution to be found - a contingent of Zairian élite guards, funded by UNHCR.

To avoid relief workers being considered as non-neutral actors within a wider international political/military response to conflict, and hence as potential targets for belligerent parties, UNHCR propose that a clear distinction be maintained between military involvement in humanitarian operations, and military involvement in UN peace-keeping activities. No indication is given, however, as to how this is to be achieved.

Donors have strongly emphasised that good coordination amongst UN agencies and GSP providers is essential, to ensure complementarity between the initiatives of different agencies and prevent duplication. They have stressed the need for a single focal point within the UN system, to avoid a situation arising where several agencies submit competing requests for assets. The Military and Civil Defence Unit (MCDU), recently established within DHA as the operational arm of the MCDA Project, will be this focal point. The unit would maintain up-to-date information on all military and civil defence emergency response capacities. This system would ensure that details of GSPs developed for UNHCR would be accessible to other agencies, who could then request a particular package to meet their own needs.

The consultative process appears to have led to an understanding that, for refugee emergencies, military contingents should only be used in very exceptional circumstances. However, should there be a major crisis in the near future, featured on the television screens of the world, governments will come under considerable pressure to 'do something', and whether they will be able to resist the temptation to 'fly the flag' and send in the military remains to be seen.

Refugees in South Kivu, Zaire

by Danielle de Lame

Danielle de Lame, an RRN Member, was one of the anthropologists contributing to the Rwanda Evaluation. In this article, based on her experience of Rwandese camps in eastern Zaire, she describes life in the camps

from a refugee, and in particular, a woman's perspective. The article offers a reminder of the complexity and dynamic nature of social and power structures within many refugee camps and their impact on certain fundamental needs as access to food and information. It considers the problems experienced by women refugees, in particular those from modest backgrounds, to feed in to the decision-making processes which affect them and the lives of their families; the majority have little or no access to information and therefore no recourse against arbitrary decisions.

The experience of the Rwandese refugees in South Kivu is one of evolving cultures, shaped by the particular social and economic contexts of the different camps. In July 1995, when I was with the refugees in South Kivu, a year had passed since the blue plastic sheetings had first taken over the landscape. The number of refugees per camp varies from around one thousand to 50,000, giving a total of some 300,000 refugees throughout this part of Zaire. By mid-1995, the emergency had taken hold with no end in sight and most refugees were resigned to an indefinite stay.

It was in this perspective that communities began to re-organise themselves accordingly - some on the basis of kinship existing prior to their flight, some regrouped by humanitarian agencies moving people to pre-prepared sites. To some extent, the refugee communities evolved through new forms of interaction with humanitarian agencies, the local population and representatives of the Zairian authorities. But for many, behind the official organisation of food and fuelwood distribution, the former social and economic divisions and political power games had simply re-established themselves, the location of the twenty or so sites, some of them chosen by the refugees themselves, offering clear illustrations of such cleavages.

Behind the official organisation of food and fuelwood distribution, the former social and economic divisions and political power games had simply re-established themselves.

In my experience, the 'northern' image of a refugee camp has little in common with the bustle and apparent wealth of a site like Kashusha, for example, with its car park, money-changers, restaurants, market, import/export office and two-storey brothel. The Zairians do business there, as do the rich refugees. In the event of an attack, a cordon of plastic sheetings surrounds and protects the centre; sentries control arrivals and the movements of the camp's inhabitants. Yet, the climate is very different in a camp like Kalehe, where poor people who had

remained in the towns were brought and where many of the women saw my visit as a unique opportunity to make their voices heard, in the absence of educated women in the camp.

Serious economic inequalities and hence unequal access to modern culture have accompanied Rwandese refugees and women, in particular, into exile. For a privileged minority, life in the camps means business as usual, even if the location has changed. As before, this minority jealously guards its privileges, though to obtain the various advantages which even life in the camps can provide, now demands a political loyalty above suspicion. For these élites, the camps provide the opportunity to do business and carry on illegal trading in goods, which may involve aid (such as elaborate patchwork quilts intended for orphans) or food rations, enabling educated women in particular to take advantage of humanitarian agencies' bias in their favour. In terms of access to employment, 'charm' also has its advantages (although for some privileged women, their status actually contributed to their suffering: for example, since her flight from Rwanda, one woman has never been able to reunite her children who were on holiday when the genocide started). But the vast majority goes on living in poverty, without even the consolation of familiarity and contact with their land and neighbours. Food and fuelwood distribution and the need to obtain adequate food rations, earn money, and plan for the future (however uncertain it may be) will be experienced very differently depending on a refugee's position in the camp's social structure.

Peasant women have virtually no other option than to cultivate the fields of Zairian farmers, sometimes walking for more than two hours to earn \$0.33 for a day's agricultural work. They are often paid in kind, with a bunch of bananas or tubers similar to those traditionally eaten in their own country. Additional responsibilities include caring for children, taking the sick to the dispensary, queuing for rations and cooking. Such responsibilities as keeping up the nutritional content of their families' food intake affects women on two counts (as a result of the courage of the refugees and Zairian solidarity, nutritional status has remained satisfactory despite food rations sometimes reduced by half (Report on Health and Nutritional Co-ordination from UNHCR - Bukavu, 20 May, 1995): as a vulnerable group caring for children and as agricultural workers responsible for daily food supplies. Such problems are compounded by a lack of communication between peasant women in the camps and the humanitarian agencies delivering the assistance. For example, while some humanitarian organisations are aware of a nutritional problem affecting elderly people, and especially women, in some cases they have wrongly assessed the cause, putting it down to the hardness of the maize which they therefore think should be milled. They are unaware of the custom, still very much alive in the countryside, for the elderly and unproductive members of a community to leave food for the youngest and especially young men in order to maintain the lineage,

and allowing themselves to die.

Most communication between refugees and humanitarian agencies is through educated women, therefore mostly from the élite.

Such a lack of understanding illustrates the difficulties peasant women have in communicating with the élite and hence with humanitarian workers. Most communication between refugees and humanitarian agencies is through educated women, therefore mostly from the élite. Some of these women, who were previously involved in social solidarity action, have re-organised and are acting as intermediaries between humanitarian agencies and illiterate peasant women. For example, a small group of women from the "Women's Network for Rural Development" has formed and obtained funds to set up workshops and organise a nursery for the children of women working in the fields of Zairian farmers, as well as promoting socio-cultural activities in the camp. Although, as before, such solidarity is based on unequal relationships, peasant women are now just a few tents away and such material deprivation may help bring the two groups closer together.

Differences in wealth can also be seen simply in the space available for and surrounding the shelters. Simple folk have plastic sheetings covering an area of some 12-16 square metres, divided into two rooms by an earthen partition. In one room, six people of different ages and sex may be piled together on one mat under a single blanket. The better-off use their money and intimidation of census-takers to accumulate shelters and negotiate for more space. Although individual conditions are less harsh in the minority of 'rich' neighbourhoods, known as "Kyiovu" after a wealthy neighbourhood in the centre of Kigali, there is a serious lack of privacy for everyone, which is particularly painful in light of Rwandese cultural habits: typical Rwandese dwellings tend to be well spread out, opening onto a courtyard; control of one's emotions is very much the rule - for example, in the presence of a stranger to the family, the only outward sign of intimacy, even between married couples, would be shaking hands almost at arm's length. According to one woman from the élite who drew my attention to the problem, overcrowding in the tents and proximity to neighbouring 'dwellings' - in some camps tents are almost touching - inhibit "any expression of emotion, whether positive or negative". Partners have to go elsewhere to settle their disputes and then wait for the children's absence to make up on the mat... Such customs have to be overcome if the aggressiveness or tenderness so much a part of the dramatic circumstances of the camps may be expressed.

Despite evidence of differences in wealth and status, and unequal access to high levels of education, paid work and

an urban life-style, all women share a lack of status except in association with a man. Until 1992, no Rwandese women could inherit land in the countryside and all still share the same need for masculine protection, particularly in the towns. Such feelings of inferiority are constantly reinforced by a macho culture coupled with contempt for the poor. Whether from well-off or peasant backgrounds, women have to submit to this male supremacy, an inequality further reinforced by the political apparatus behind official structures and leadership elections carried out by secret ballot.

Subject to this three-fold constraint of money shortages, subjection to men and inequalities in the power structure, peasant women inevitably suffer more than others from intimidation relating to their gender. Such intimidation affects chances for survival in a number of ways. Food and fuelwood rations can be snatched away during the journey back to the shelter. If distribution is indirect through neighbourhood leaders, women may not be as well served. According to the élite, if men do the queuing, they are likely to trade a proportion of the rations to satisfy their own wants. Humanitarian agencies therefore considered directing all food distribution through women. After speaking to several peasant women, however, I became concerned that agencies were simply following humanitarian fashions based on the perceptions of élite women, in situations which peasant women considered uncommon and which involved additional work for them. Mothers separated from their children also found themselves in a particularly difficult position. Most camps for unaccompanied children were closed last summer as a result of the policy of family placement. However, a few 'orphanages' remained in some camps, despite instructions from UNHCR because they provided an opportunity for the powerful elements within the camp to receive external aid from distant donors, unaware of the indirect effects of their assistance. It was very difficult, even for officials of organisations responsible for family reunion, to get access to these 'orphanages'. When a mother finally located her children, she was put under pressure by the unofficial beneficiaries not to collect them. In some cases, those in charge of such 'orphanages' refused to allow children to return to parents who had been located in Rwanda, on the pretext that their fate would be uncertain. Intimidation was also directed at preventing refugees from going back. For instance, internal networks in the camp would put about the rumour that anyone wanting to go to UNHCR in Bukavu would have to join a group and, therefore, register on a list held by the unofficial camp sentries, all loyal to the intimidators.

... women from modest backgrounds are doubly excluded. I found no echo of what they told me in the way humanitarian agencies acted.

The violence which has affected all Rwandese in one way or another killed mainly men. Feelings of sadness and loss are intense amongst refugee families, particularly affecting women who have survived the death of their husband or partner and those who have lost one or several children. Alone with their children, they find it more difficult to face up to all the obligations they must fulfil in order to survive, the emotional shock and the onset of depression. Macho ideology tends to favour men on their own, who can easily find a new partner amongst the young girls, rather than widows in charge of children. Convinced of their need for protection and brought up with no other prospect than to be mothers and cultivate their husband's fields, many of the latter agree to unions during their flight (known as "turquoise weddings") or in the camps. Disappointed to find that marriage makes little difference to their situation, "they tend to be flighty" according to one woman, who immediately corrected herself saying, "the men soon tire of them once they become pregnant and exhausted". In a situation characterised by shortages, hopes of improvement can give rise to short-lived liaisons.

Refugee women, who depend entirely on the political will of the powerful, expressed to me that their greatest desire was "to go home". But this request carries with it serious political implications and very few dare to voice their desire. For the moment, the fundamental problem for Rwandese women is one of communicating their needs. Traditionally, silence is the prerogative of women. Submission to leaders is also a cardinal virtue. This means that women from modest backgrounds are doubly excluded. I found no echo of what they told me in the way humanitarian agencies acted.

The two articles that follow explore the adoption of technological processes to improve relief management systems. The first considers the use of state-of-the-art Internet technology to improve the management and availability of field-level information, while the second looks at the use of satellite imaging as part of the camp planning process.

Geographical Information

Systems...

... and Management of Humanitarian Programmes

Many of the hundreds of reports written, nutrition surveys carried out and evaluations undertaken by NGOs and UN agencies are never released into the public domain, despite the often critical need for information during the course of a humanitarian programme. Those that are released are often of limited use because data has been collected and presented in response to individual agency requirements rather than the broader needs of all of those involved.

A number of reasons help to explain why the sharing of information is so limited: relief operations often take place in rapidly-changing environments, with information quickly becoming out-of-date; poor road, rail and air links may make it difficult for agencies to meet to swap information; there is often no single body with the mandate and capacity to manage information flows in the field; and postal systems may be weak or non-existent. Competition between agencies may also be a factor. Recent technological improvements, such as easier access to Internet and local E-Mail systems suggest, however, that much more can now be done to overcome some of these constraints.

A number of NGOs and agencies already make use of the Internet system, to cut the cost of sending reports between the field and headquarters, and to access extensive worldwide sources of information (*see RRN Network Paper 13 - "Getting On-Line in Emergencies: A Guide and Directory to the Internet for Agencies involved in Relief and Rehabilitation"*). However, very few humanitarian organisations seem fully aware of the considerable potential of modern forms of communication. In recognition of this, DeLorme Mapping - a US-based commercial company, selling computer software, including a detailed digital world atlas - has set up Response.Net, a non-profit subsidiary, in the belief that the appropriate use of technology can be a significant tool for humanitarian organisations.

Response.Net is currently developing a low-cost mechanism for the coordination of humanitarian assistance, involving the setting up of an 'open' geographical information system (GIS) in the field of operations, that can be freely accessed by humanitarian organisations to provide timely, accurate and reliable information. State of the art Internet technology, and a digital map system are both fundamental parts of this mechanism, so that any region of the world can be brought on-screen and then overlaid with information from a geographical database. Response.Net is offering

its maps, software and expertise, without charge, to humanitarian organisations, to improve the coordination of relief operations, and to give its parent company practical experience of operating international 'open systems' that may benefit non-related commercial endeavours.

A GIS is a database in which data can be processed and then presented geographically, in map form. The use of such information systems in the management of humanitarian operations is nothing new: GIS were established in former Yugoslavia, for example, and in Mozambique during the peace process of 1992-94. However, the maps and the software available from Response.Net considerably enhance the potential usefulness of a GIS.

State of the art Internet technology, and a digital map system are both fundamental parts of this mechanism, so that any region of the world can be brought on screen and then overlaid with information from a geographical database.

In Mozambique, the GIS was managed by a single organisation - DHA/UNOHAC - which collected data from UN agencies and NGOs working in the country and then presented it in map form. At a glance, it was possible to see, from the shading used to locate imbalances in the number of NGOs working in health; food deficits or surpluses; shortages of seeds; high rates of malnutrition; mined roads; etc. Although useful as an accompaniment to the planning process, the time taken to enter new information into the database, publish and distribute the findings, meant that the system was always out-of-date. In addition, the information was not sufficiently disaggregated, presented at district-level only. Significant differences in rain-fall, harvests, population density, access to health-posts etc, could occur within a district, as well as between districts. It proved impossible to improve both the timeliness of the data and the level of detail, however, for more detail meant considerably more time spent collecting and then processing the data.

The Response.Net approach, where information is provided and then made available through the Internet, or through a locally-created E-Mail system, means that as soon as an agency has prepared a report or dataset and posted it on the system, it can be immediately accessed by any other agency in the field. Considerable problems remain to be overcome, but, before considering these, we present an edited account of the experience of Ian Attfield (now with the Emergency Unit for Ethiopia) of developing a GIS for managing and disseminating information on the humanitarian relief effort inside Rwanda.

The Rwanda GIS was established within the Integrated Operations Centre (IOC) - a joint UN/Rwandan Government body, set-up originally to coordinate the return of internally displaced persons (IDPs) to their places of origin.

“ Soon after my arrival, in April 1995, the IDP camps were shut down by the army and the IOC consigned to history, its tasks superseded by the Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Unit (HACU) of the Ministry of Rehabilitation.

The IOC/HACU database was developed and run using Microsoft Access software, incorporating maps prepared using XMAP - a Geographic Information System provided by Response.Net. The information entered into the Rwanda GIS was collected primarily from NGOs and international agencies operating within the country, the former being generally much more cooperative regarding the sharing of information! A core fact sheet was prepared for each of the approximately 200 organisations present, combining information on the organisation with basic details of the projects in which they were involved, namely the types of activity undertaken, and their geographical location (prefecture or commune).

Important regional information was also compiled into commune profiles (Rwanda is divided into 145 administrative communes) listing demographic and general data regarding agriculture, infrastructure damage, security and humanitarian activity. This data was gathered from diverse sources such as agency surveys and reports from field officers working in the appropriate commune.

Much of the information in the database was included as free text, entered under general sectoral headings, such as health, water and sanitation, etc. Attempts to keep updated records on emergency stocks were abandoned due to the impossibility of collecting the required information on a regular basis.

Initially, print-outs were provided containing information on projects and communes, the telephone contact list always being one of the most popular. In addition, XMAP was used to display data such as refugee camp locations, its graphic output used in handouts and reports. However what made the database useful and popular was that an updated version was distributed monthly on diskette, with interactive software 'embedded' in the database, so that users with only a standard desk-top computer running MS Windows - a requirement met by most operational organisations - could undertake certain operations as if they had sophisticated database software themselves. Without such an approach, users would have required more powerful computers, expensive database software and expertise in managing databases to carry out the same operations.

A simple-to-use Windows interface was developed to allow users to view and print required information. Maps that had been prepared using XMAP were embedded into the database so that users could also view and print these. As XMAP requires a CD-ROM for operation this provided a service beyond the reach of most NGO's.

A local E-Mail system was set up, the server (a computer dedicated to communicating with others, that receives and transfers E-Mails and computer files) provided by the NGO Mission Aviation Fellowship. NGOs, with just a computer and modem, could access a 'bulletin board', and receive electronically updated reports from the database, for example on the daily numbers of returnees from the refugee camps. Considerable problems were encountered in operating this service: an intermittent power supply and a backup generator broken for 3 months; telephones cut off for weeks at a time and a poorly trained and bureaucratic ministry staff. At one point, for fear that it would not be returned, a Ministry official refused to let a broken computer be taken from the building to be repaired for free at the UN workshop, despite the fact that the computer had been donated by the UN in the first place. Ironically, the official's fear was not misplaced, as the computer's VDU eventually 'disappeared' from the UN workshop, never to be seen again!

The Ministry of Rehabilitation sometimes found itself in conflict with some of the NGOs with which it worked. The negative effects of such conflicts were mitigated to some extent, however, by the existence of the database within HACU: NGOs appreciated the useful information service it provided. The database acted as a central point of contact to answer one-off questions on a multitude of topics, including unrelated technical queries such as computer virus clearance techniques.

The database was used in internal assessments of ongoing projects and the location of future ones, pinpointing, for example, areas not covered by an NGO health programme. The tasks of information officers were also facilitated by the provision of information that could be directly passed on to donors and head office or pasted into reports that were being independently written. Copies of the database have been passed on to agencies to provide reference sources and Response.Net have placed reports from the database onto the Web for global consumption.

The value of information services is always difficult to quantify; the strategy used here of low cost collation and distribution of existing data provided a useful, time saving service that helped organisations make informed decisions about a difficult, volatile region of the world."

One of the factors limiting the usefulness of the Rwanda GIS was that many of the reports provided by NGOs and

agencies were in textual form. If these were posted onto the system as they were, NGOs needing information on malnutrition rates in a particular commune, for example, would first have to search through a huge quantity of unrelated text. The alternative, however, would involve someone in the IOC/HACU laboriously going through each report, sorting all the information sectorally and geographically. Given staffing constraints, the information would have been out-of-date by the time it was processed. Ideally, when GIS are set-up, agencies and local government need to be involved from the very beginning to ensure that the service is capable of meeting their needs. Commercial companies do exist (eg GISL: contact gisl@gisl.co.uk) that can help set-up the initial data collection systems, analyse information received and then incorporate it into a GIS.

Response.Net are currently supporting SCF-US in the development of the AzerWeb, in Baku, Azerbaijan. This initiative, funded by DHA, is similar in many respects to the Rwanda GIS, involving the setting-up of an E-Mail system and a bulletin board. Information is sorted by sector - health, nutrition, water and sanitation, etc. - with the system managed by SCF-US, but accessible to all. A detailed digital map of the country is also provided, on which bridges, warehouses, refugee camps and other features can be superimposed. A user can 'click' on an icon and bring on screen information on the capacity of a warehouse, the number of refugees in a camp, the state of a bridge, etc. Similarly, where sufficiently detailed maps were available, a user could 'click' on a town and access a street map, showing individual houses. This could be used to prepare an evacuation strategy in case of conflict. Agencies in the field can obtain the maps either through the local E-Mail system, via Internet or on diskette.

Response.Net seems to offer an extremely valuable service. It does, however, require that humanitarian organisations are open with their information, and more 'technology-ready' than they are at present. They need to adapt their own reporting procedures for the common good: presenting textual and data information separately, in a standardised geographical and sectoral format.

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Satellite Imaging

A Useful Tool for Camp Planners?

To respond effectively to a major crisis, agency

personnel managing relief operations need detailed knowledge of the area in which they are working. Logisticians need to know where the roads are, what state they are in and whether they are passable in the rains. Information on the location and carrying capacity of rivers is also needed, to determine whether they can be used for transporting supplies to those inaccessible by road. Camp planners need to know where there is flat land, easily reached by road, with good drainage and nearby water and fuelwood supplies. The terrain should be suitable for the building of latrines and access roads.

Where refugees are fleeing conflict in their country, camps should be away from border areas, so that they cannot be used as cover by belligerent elements, or be a target for attack. To avoid environmental damage, they should be self-supporting in terms of access to fuelwood, and should not be placed close to existing settlements, where competition for natural resources may lead to conflict.

The importance of such issues to camp dwellers, local inhabitants and relief agencies cannot be underestimated. When over 2 million people fled Rwanda in 1994, relief agencies and the governments of neighbouring countries were caught largely unawares. Although potential sites for camps had been identified in Eastern Zaire, most refugees ended up settling spontaneously. As a result, camps were established in areas which were unsuitable, with serious consequences: thousands died of dehydration on the long walk between the Rwanda-Zaire border at Goma, and Katala camp, some 50 kilometres away with no access to water en route; two hundred thousand refugees settled at Kibumba, close to the Rwandan border, in an area with no local supply of water - millions of dollars have subsequently been spent in tankering water to this camp; the areas around Benaco camp in Ngara have been almost totally stripped of forest cover, and the host population has suffered considerably as a result.

It is rare that a humanitarian agency will find itself operating in an area where no information on local conditions is available: government departments may be able to provide maps; traders will know about the state of the roads; and farmers will know about the terrain and rainfall. Such local information is likely to be invaluable. In addition, other humanitarian organisations may already have worked in the area, and have conducted surveys and written reports. Information that does exist, however, may either not be readily available, or be in a form that does not allow for easy analysis, particularly if time is short. (The availability of new Internet technology and appropriate software can improve the management of field-level information, and is discussed in the article on geographical information systems (GIS), elsewhere in this newsletter).

There are also situations where data collection is particularly difficult: where population flows are

occurring over a wide area, an agency may simply not have the financial and human resources necessary to undertake visits to investigate local conditions; conflict in the area may make travel too dangerous; reliable maps may be unavailable, either because they have not been up-dated since colonial times, or because their distribution is restricted due to local military sensitivities.

Where the available maps do not provide the detail required, satellite imaging can be a useful complement. Skilled analysts can identify flat areas and flood plains, distinguish forest from scrub and brush, predict soil types in semi-arid areas, locate areas of higher population density and identify major infrastructure.

In some cases, fairly detailed maps can be obtained outside the region, or even through the Internet. Response.Net, a non-profit subsidiary of DeLorme Mapping (see the article on GIS for contact details) can provide digitised maps of any region in the world free of charge to humanitarian organisations. These maps are of enormous potential value to the managers of relief operations. The scale of the maps available varies from region to region, however, and may not always be sufficient for the needs of site planners or water engineers, who need detailed information on gradient, terrain, geology, vegetation and water sources. (Although XMAP, the software mapping package available (on CD) from Response.Net, includes information on elevation at 3 metre intervals. Using two CDS simultaneously, in a 'CD Jukebox' it is possible to work out the gradient of a particular site.)

Where the available maps do not provide the detail required, satellite imaging can be a useful complement. Skilled analysts can identify flat areas and flood plains, distinguish forest from scrub and brush, predict soil types in semi-arid areas, locate areas of higher population density and identify major infrastructure. The process can, however, be fairly expensive. While low resolution satellite images are generally obtainable free of charge, these are inadequate for many purposes, and high resolution images are required. Ten year old high-resolution images can be obtained relatively cheaply (for example, 180km x 180km images can be obtained for US \$1,500 from US-based Landsat), but, at current rates, up-to-date images cost approximately US \$3,300 for a 60km x 60km image. In areas of high interest, other agencies may already have purchased such images, and so they can be obtained at lower cost.

As well as the expense involved, the process can take some time. Up-to-date high-resolution images require the satellite to be over the area of interest, and cloud cover at a minimum (although radar data can still be useful for

certain purposes). Satellites pass over non-strategic parts of the world on average only every 16 days. To arrange for a high-resolution picture can, therefore, take a number of weeks. (Weather satellite photographs are available on a daily basis, but are of low resolution.)

Commercial satellite images are available either on CD-Rom in digital form or as photographic hard copy. The latter gives a sharper picture but the advantage of using a digitised format is that the image can easily be processed, copied many times and distributed by telephone links between agencies, and between agency HQ and field staff.

A number of humanitarian agencies have already gained experience of using satellite technology. During the early stages of the Great Lakes crisis, OXFAM UK commissioned a hydrogeologist to undertake a desk-study involving satellite images and geological maps. This enabled them to locate water sources (as well as other landmarks). This work was then followed up by work in the field. UNHCR were also interested in using satellite images to monitor the use of fuelwood resources around Ngara, but were unable to find the necessary funding.

To effectively manage humanitarian programmes, agency personnel need up-to-date, reliable sources of information. As part of a wider information-gathering strategy, satellite imaging may have a useful role to play, particularly where access to reliable maps is restricted, or where conflict makes terrestrial work dangerous. Timing considerations suggest, however, that the process is likely to be too slow for crises where events are unfolding rapidly. While aerial data gathering may be an alternative in such emergencies, particularly where large population flows are occurring over a wide area, the most valuable use of satellite data would seem to be found in early-warning and preparedness systems, set-up well in advance of any crisis. At relatively low-cost, this technology could be used to identify the most likely sites for refugee camps, allowing field staff to then discriminate between the sites selected on the basis of more traditional terrestrially-based information gathering processes.

News

People in Aid

Promoting Best Practice in the Management and Support of International Aid Personnel

As emergency aid budgets rise as a proportion of total oda, and more NGOs are active in more complex emergencies than ever before, debates on NGO accountability to both donors and beneficiaries and best practice in the provision of humanitarian assistance have begun to bear fruit. In 1994, the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief was published (*RRN Network Paper 7*) to which a total of 77 agencies worldwide have

now signed up.

A more recent development, explicitly linking the quality of human resources management and the quality and effectiveness of aid programmes, is the **People in Aid** project, the result of a joint initiative between the British Red Cross, International Health Exchange, RedR and Save the Children Fund (UK). In 1994, funded by the ODA, the four agencies commissioned a report into the working experience of expatriate staff and managers employed in relief and development programmes overseas. The report was published within the Relief and Rehabilitation Network as *Network Paper 10*, entitled "Room for Improvement", and was the subject of a high-profile launch at a meeting of forty aid agencies in London, September 1995. The report highlighted a number of major shortcomings in current practices of recruitment, selection and training within aid agencies. The report, together with the establishment of an eleven-member Steering Committee representing several major UK NGOs, Registers, ODA and ODI, has resulted in the recruitment of a full-time *Interagency Coordinator*, a much increased awareness among agencies of the issue of best practice and an expressed desire to share information and raise standards. Following on from the recommendations in "Room for Improvement", the Interagency Coordinator and expanded eleven-member steering group - **People in Aid** - are now undertaking a further one-year project funded by ODA. The project's objectives are:

- To develop a Code of Best Practice for aid agencies on the recruitment, management and support of expatriate aid personnel
- To work with members of the international aid community to advocate adoption of a Code of Best Practice
- In support of the Code, to establish an information resource on personnel management, training, and employment issues relevant to the international aid community
- To make recommendations on future initiatives by **People in Aid**, including best practice in the management and support of host country aid personnel

A draft of the Code is currently being drawn up, to be presented to the Steering Group in mid-May. Once the Steering Group has endorsed the draft, it will be discussed at a wider meeting of NGOs to be held in August this year, to be followed in October by a workshop discussion on the setting up of a professional body.

The Interagency Coordinator, Sara Davidson, has just returned from the US where she took the proposals to NGOs at the Interaction network's AGM. She found there to be great interest in the initiative amongst both US and European agencies attending the Washington meeting, as well as from the US disaster relief donor -

OFDA, UNDP and UNICEF. Once the People in Aid Code is agreed, UNICEF plan to include signature of the Code as part of the pre-contract assessment process for potential UK-based NGO implementing partners.

☞ Further information on the People in Aid initiative can be obtained from Sara Davidson, Interagency Coordinator. Tel/fax: +44 171 235 0895.

Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development

The Debate Continues...

At the time of going to press, the European Commission (EC) was on the point of releasing a communication to the Council of Ministers and the European Parliament on *Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development*. This communication is the product of a year's work by an internal EC working group, consisting of representatives of the different Directorates General for External Relations (DG I and DG VIII) and the European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO).

The working group has organised a series of workshops on the linking of relief, rehabilitation and development over the last eight months. The first was held in October 1995 with independent experts in the field, and a further two were held in February 1996, one with NGO and one with official Member State representatives. A questionnaire was also sent to the aid departments of Member States, eliciting information on current practice and policy regarding links between relief, rehabilitation and development.

The questionnaire revealed that, for almost every Member State, humanitarian aid (relief) issues and development issues are dealt with in different departments, following different procedures and relying upon different budget sources. Within the Commission, a similar institutional split exists: long-term development cooperation relationships with developing countries are negotiated under the framework of agreements such as the Lomé Convention, principally by DG VIII, while humanitarian operations are managed by ECHO, using quite different criteria. The EU initiative is taking place in a context of a much wider debate amongst donors, UN agencies and NGOs on the so-called 'relief-development continuum', in which it is increasingly recognised that this institutional split is unhelpful, and indeed, has had a negative influence on the way the nature of 'aid' is conceptualised. (*RRN Newsletter of September 1994 for an article on the continuum, and the Newsletter of April 1995 for a related discussion on aid policy in transition.*)

The communication calls for a more coordinated

approach to relief, rehabilitation and development, recognising, however, that for 'complex emergencies' - chronic crises involving armed conflict - this will be a major challenge, requiring in-depth country analyses that look at structural root-causes of conflict, and lead to the development of responses that address the entire cycle of conflict and peace. In the absence of a coordinated approach, relief activities can result in undesirable long-term effects. For example, international relief agencies which set up their own systems to distribute humanitarian aid may leave an administrative vacuum on departure which can make rehabilitation very difficult. The communication recommends that:

- global policy frameworks should be prepared for each country and region which draw together economic, social (including gender) and political factors in development, the ultimate goal being to reach a situation of 'structural stability' - a situation involving sustainable economic development, democracy and respect for human rights, viable political structures, healthy social and environmental conditions, with the capacity to manage change without resort to violent conflict;
- conflict prevention should be an intrinsic element of these global policy frameworks;
- political analysis capacity must be enhanced, in order to focus on structural root causes of conflict, identify potential trouble spots and translate analysis into timely political actions at the level of the Union;
- risk and vulnerability to natural and man-made disasters should be taken into consideration during macroeconomic planning and economic reform programmes.

The communication is a timely and welcome document, its content reflecting much of the current debate on the issue of relief-development linkages. Its call for a more holistic donor response to crises through the development of global policy frameworks and enhanced political analysis is encouraging.

There are, however, a number of areas where the communication is rather weak. In particular, despite a short section on the rebuilding of civil society, there is barely any mention of the 'beneficiaries' of aid, whether at a personal or community level, or at the level of developing country governments. The communication is very much an agenda for donors which, while important, is not likely to be effective if the populations concerned are not intimately involved in the development and implementation of programmes.

It is, at present, difficult to avoid regarding the communication as a long 'wish list', full of good intentions, but without a clear strategy as to how these will be translated into action. By sharing their practical experiences of linking relief, rehabilitation and development, NGOs will be crucial in translating the rhetoric of linking relief and development into a practical programme of action.

Useful references:

- Mark Duffield, "Complex Emergencies in a Crisis of Developmentalism", *IDS Bulletin* 25 (3).
 Aid Under Fire, published by DHA, ODI, ODA and ActionAid (1993).
 Joanna Macrae with A Zwi and V. Forsythe, "Aid Policy in Transition: A Preliminary Analysis of 'Post'-Conflict Rehabilitation of the Health Sector", *Journal of International Development* Volume 7, No 4 669-684 (1995).

Japanese NGOs in Relief

... a Growing Sector

A 1993 survey of development NGOs in 13 OECD member states characterised the Japanese NGO movement as 'small, young and fragile' in comparison with its counterparts in other countries. Historically, growth in the NGO sector was restricted by factors such as the limited tradition of philanthropy beyond the Buddhist tradition of charity; the strong role of government and private companies in the provision of services often associated with the voluntary sector in other rich countries; and the lack of facilitation of tax-deductible charitable giving within the taxation system. However, the NGO sector in Japan is growing and becoming increasingly active. A number of factors are contributing to this process.

For development NGOs, an important funding innovation has been the 'Voluntary Deposit for International Aid' scheme introduced in 1990 by the Ministry of Post and Telecommunications. Under the scheme, holders of post office savings accounts (a widely used form of banking in Japan) could opt to contribute 20% of the after-tax interest earnings to a special fund for development NGOs. Grant applications are solicited once a year from NGOs and advice on grants is sought from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the NGO umbrella organisation JANIC (Japanese NGO Centre for International Cooperation). NGOs are also increasingly benefitting from the support of the Japanese Aid Programme through subsidies and matching grant programmes, though such support is still well below the levels seen in other rich countries. Latest DAC figures (1995) show that overseas development assistance (oda) provided by Japan stands at \$13.24 billion, more than the UK and US contributions combined. This figure represents 0.29% of the country's GDP, which, although a comparatively small proportion of GDP, ranking below most Western European countries, Australia and Canada, nonetheless makes Japan the largest overall donor country.

Japanese official emergency aid has traditionally been

channelled through UN agencies and the large and well-established Japanese Red Cross Society. Japanese NGOs first participated in international relief efforts in the operations in Thailand and Cambodia in 1979, which led to the formation of several new NGOs. However, it was not until the operations in support of Kurds in Northern Iraq, Iran and Turkey in 1991, and the Bangladesh Cyclone operation at the same time, that Japanese NGOs benefitted directly from Japanese oda funds. Whilst some of the Japanese NGOs involved in the provision of relief assistance are the Japanese components of the large international NGOs such as CARE, World Vision and MSF, there are several indigenous NGOs involved in the provision of relief assistance, including the Association of Medical Doctors for Asia (AMDA), Association to Aid the Refugees (AAR), Japanese International Volunteer Center (JVC) and a host of smaller organisations working in single countries and many student organisations.

The largest and fastest growing of the indigenous Japanese NGOs specialising in the provision of relief assistance is the Association of Medical Doctors of Asia (AMDA). The organisation was formally constituted in 1984 but has its origins in the experience of a Japanese doctor attempting to provide assistance during the Thai-Cambodia operations five years earlier. The Association now includes 16 country 'chapters', with 900 members working for improvement in health-related areas in African and Asian countries. In addition, a number of medical missions carry out operations in other countries with relief needs, such as Somalia, the former Yugoslavia, Mozambique and Rwanda. When an emergency occurs, a group is formed consisting of doctors from AMDA country 'chapters' and is sent to the affected area. Because many of these doctors have experienced similar emergency situations and provided the same types of care in their own countries, their assistance in humanitarian operations is particularly valuable.

Although this type of federal structure is not unique in the international relief community, what is unusual is the fact that Thai or Philippino doctors may work in medical relief activities in Tanzania or Somalia - a 'South-South' transfer of experience and expertise as opposed to the more common 'North-South' transfers of technical assistance.

Within Japan itself, the increasing number of foreign residents in Tokyo led AMDA to set up the International Medical Information Centre in 1991. According to the Ministry of Justice, there are nearly 1.3 million registered foreign residents in Japan, and the number of illegal aliens is estimated at about 300,000. The Information Centre, subsidised by city governments and Osaka Prefectural, offers telephone consultations on the Japanese healthcare system in eight languages.

☞ For more information about AMDA, contact: AMDA International Secretariat (HQ), 310-1 Narazu, Okayama City, 701-12 Japan. Tel: + 81 86 284 7730, Fax: + 81 86 284 6758

☞ For more information about Japanese NGOs see: Smillie, I & Hemich, H (1993). *Non-Governmental Organisations and Governments: Stakeholders for Development*. OECD, Paris. 1993. The annual DAC (Development Assistance Committee) Report. OECD, Paris.

or contact: JANIC (Japanese NGO Center for International Cooperation, Saito Building 5 F, 9-1 Kanda-Nishiki-cho 2-chome, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 101, Japan. Tel: +81 3 3294 5370. Fax: +81 3 3294 5398

Madrid Summit

Update...

On 14 December last year, officials and representatives of international humanitarian organisations, European and US NGOs, ECHO and USAID, met in Madrid on the invitation of Commissioner for Humanitarian Affairs, Emma Bonino. The aim of the meeting was to formulate a declaration of commitment and joint appeal to be communicated to Heads of Government and the press. (The full text of the declaration was published in the VOICE newsletter Vol.2.20, dated December 31). What was particularly important was the presence of all major actors in the field of humanitarian relief from both Europe and the US at the same table.

As part of the transatlantic cooperation programme launched by the summit, Ms Bonino and Mr Brian Atwood of USAID undertook a joint mission to the Great Lakes region in an attempt to jointly assess the peace efforts needed. Despite evident attempts to develop a joint strategy in the region, it took considerable time and effort before a joint press statement could be agreed. However, on a more positive note, the summit has resulted in a number of areas of agreement: on the regular exchange of information between the EU and US humanitarian relief agencies and discussions on the adoption of similar future strategies towards NGOs - at the Interaction General Assembly in Washington on 27-28 April, the EU Commission representative extended an open invitation to US NGOs to sign up to the Framework Partnership Agreement with ECHO. As a gesture of goodwill, but not an indication to US NGOs that they can expect the same funding as EU NGOs, ECHO recently agreed 28m ecu for US NGOs for emergency work during 1996.

EU Member States have been more cautious about

attempts at improved relations between the EU and US/UN partners, claiming relations with European government departments have been overlooked in the discussions.

World Food Summit

Forthcoming Conference

The World Food Summit, scheduled to take place in Rome from 13 to 17 November 1996, convening Heads of State and Government, will seek to "renew the commitment of world leaders at the highest level to the eradication of hunger and malnutrition and the achievement of lasting food security for all". It is anticipated that governments, international institutions

and all sectors of civil society from around the world will participate in this forum to address all aspects of food security and the root causes of hunger and malnutrition. A number of activities and meetings have been scheduled in advance of the November meeting including consultations with governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations and the private sector.

☞ A list of the preparatory meetings, resolutions or statements of support adopted and a full information note on the Summit are available from Michele Millanès, World Food Summit Secretariat, Italy.

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Integrated Regional Information Network (DHA)

The Integrated Regional Information Network is a new unit of the UN Department of Humanitarian Affairs, formed to promote information exchange within the humanitarian community of the Great Lakes region of Africa. The Network will manage a dynamic and up-to-date 'feed' of relevant information to and from NGOs, national authorities, UN agencies, donors, human rights organisations, political parties, regional institutions, academia and the media.

New material will be gathered in the region by a team of information officers working with the UN Resident Coordinators' offices. IRIN's updates, analyses and alerts will cover the range of issues which affect humanitarian work in the region, from a regional perspective.

☞ To obtain more information on the IRIN, please contact Pat Banks, Coordinator or Ben Parker, Deputy Coordinator, IRIN, PO Box 30218, Nairobi, Kenya. Tel: +254 2 441125 or 444206. Fax: +254 2 448816 or 583043. Email: irin@dha.unon.org.

Update



Africa

Angola... While 1995 finished with heightened tensions in Angola, especially in the northern area around one of the main oil hubs, Soyo, 1996 began with a joint Government-UNITA announcement that a new timetable for the Lusaka Protocol had been agreed. By July of this year, prisoners of war should be liberated

and UNITA soldiers quartered. A fourth encounter between President Eduardo dos Santos and the leader of UNITA, Jonas Malheiro Savimbi, took place on 1 March in Libreville.

Several positive developments took place during the first quarter of the year: first, the UN Security Council extended the mandate of the Angola Verification Mission on 8 February for a further three months, at a cost of about US\$1million per day. On 8 May, UNAVEM III was extended for a further two months,

until 11 July, one month less than the previous mandate, in a bid to increase pressure on UNITA to comply with the Lusaka protocol; second, the international community has shown significant interest in Angola. Several important delegations, including the US Ambassador to the UN, the USAID Administrator, the Portuguese President, the French Secretary for State Cooperation, and an EU Commissioner visited Angola to reinforce the peace process; third, in a dash to meet the 8 May deadline for the quartering of some 30,000 of its troops, UNITA moved thousands into official UN quartering areas - in particular to Londuimbali, Negage, Quibaxe, and Vila Nova. Concerns have since been expressed as to the young age and level of weaponry of the quartered soldiers; fourth, WFP continued the gradual rehabilitation of roads and bridges, in conjunction with SwedRelief. This work has been enhanced in conjunction with mine awareness, survey, clearing and training. WFP now relies on road transport for about 60% of its total deliveries, up from 25% of the total in 1994; fifth, humanitarian organisations continue to expand their programmes throughout the country and the emphasis is moving from relief to recovery. The donor response to a recently launched DHA appeal has been encouraging, although donors have yet to disburse most of the commitments pledged last September for the National Rehabilitation Programme. One particularly positive indicator is UNICEF's continued promotion of joint Government-UNITA health assessments and programmes throughout key areas of Angola.

Despite these positive indicators, concerns still prevail that Angola's leaders have yet to find the road to lasting peace. Savimbi broadcast a speech in mid-March in which he stated that demobilisation of his army would result in loss of power and that this was unacceptable. Further, while UNITA has accepted the offer of one of the three vice-presidencies, Savimbi has not said that he will take the post. Tensions within the Government have grown; concerns of an impending military *coup d'état* to overthrow the Government abound in the capital, Luanda, and on 25 April, its delegation in the Joint Commission, established under the Lusaka Protocol to oversee the implementation of the peace agreement, withdrew without citing any reason. However, more optimistically, on 21 May, the Government and UNITA completed negotiations on the important issue of integration of UNITA military into the Angolan national army. It remains to be seen how many this will involve and what will happen to those not selected (there is some speculation that the Government wishes to place them in a new Fourth Branch to help with the reconstruction of the country), this is a positive step in the reconciliation process. Striking a more negative note, however, are concerns over the government attitude to the establishment of an impartial news source. This represents an extremely important factor in the Angolan peace process, yet the government continues to prevent the UN from establishing its own radio station (as was done in Cambodia) agreed as part of the Lusaka

Protocol. Hence Angolans continue to rely on UNITA's *Vorgan* radio or the Government's own *radio nacional*. The Government's offer limited the UN to 2-4 hours of broadcasting time, on Government radio. The UN has not accepted the offer. Third, both parties continue to import arms on a large scale. The US National Security Council believes that UNITA's revenues from diamond mining in 1995 exceeded US\$350million, more than it ever received in one year from South Africa or the US combined. Lastly, freedom of movement for Angolans has yet to be allowed or respected by either side. One million internally displaced people and 300,000 Angolans in neighbouring countries continue to delay their return as they cannot move freely nor do not believe it to be safe. A tragic indicator of the continuing insecurity and banditry were the deaths of one British aid worker, Chris Seward and two UN peacekeepers at the beginning of April.

At the beginning of the year, emergency assistance was still being provided to 1.4million internally displaced people, although it is anticipated that the number of beneficiaries would decrease to one million by May.

Between 27-29 March this year, 100 people from Africa, Europe and North America met in Bonn, Germany to discuss Angola's progress since the signing of the Lusaka Protocol in November 1994. While representation at the conference of political parties, NGOs, the business community, journalists and academics was very good, the Angolan government was conspicuous by its absence, despite being invited.

☞ For a more information on the conference and its findings, contact: Teresa Sande/Johanna Götz at Medico, Germany. Tel: +49 69 94438-0. Fax: +49 69 436002.

Liberia... Some of the worst fighting for three years between Liberia's seven warring rebel factions and coalition forces broke out in the first week of April, displacing an estimated 50-60,000 civilians and sending between 15,000 and 20,000 to take shelter in the US Embassy compound in the southernmost part of Monrovia, the country's capital. It was the first time during the conflict that Mamba Point district, where the Embassy is situated, had come under attack. Tension has been building since January this year, when conflict between Ulimo J and Ecomog erupted following a dispute over control of diamond mines in Tubmanburg. It did not take much for fierce fighting to break out following the attempted arrest of warlord Roosevelt Johnson on murder charges at the beginning of April. Rival factions went on the rampage throughout the capital, burning homes and killing at random. For the first time, UN compounds and vehicles came under attack, suffering widespread looting. Only the American Embassy escaped; hence the huge influx of civilians seeking shelter from the fighting. Most diplomats and aid workers were evacuated to Freetown, Sierra Leone

and Dakar, Senegal leaving only core staff.

Since the beginning of the Civil War that began in December 1989, leaving what is widely believed to be well over 150,000 dead, and after six years of killing and looting, there are an estimated 305,800 Liberian refugees in Côte d'Ivoire, 410,000 in Guinea, 15,000 in Ghana, 4,000 in Nigeria and 4,700 in Sierra Leone (UNHCR). It is estimated that a further 1 million Liberians are displaced within Liberia.

At the beginning of March, before the current outbreak of fighting, a UNHCR appeal called for \$60 million to finance its voluntary repatriation programme over the next 18 months to cover transportation, food and plastic sheeting, jerry cans, tools and livelihood projects. Since the signing of the peace agreement in August last year, approximately 30,000 refugees are estimated to have returned voluntarily from border regions, most arriving in the early months of 1996. Continued fighting has hampered access for both UNHCR and relief agencies and the recent fierce clashes will only aggravate the situation - WFP's first convoy following the outbreak of violence in Monrovia, sent during the second week of April at the peak of the emergency, was looted despite the presence of an ECOMOG escort. An emergency situation prevails, at least in Monrovia, where there is little water or food and the priority is now to establish some stability and halt further large movements of people. The situation improved slightly towards the end of April, with evidence of gradual movement from hiding places and WFP convoys have been able to get some food through, at least to West Point and Mamba Point. Food stocks are adequate for the coming months, the key constraint being one of movement of food due to insecurity and the fact that most forms of transport have been stolen - the capacity of most agencies has therefore been severely reduced. With the fighting over, epidemics pose the greatest threat, and with little access to clean drinking water, hundreds of suspected cholera cases are coming to light. At the time of writing, only limited information was available for outlying areas.

The main challenge is now one of reconciliation. There is a feeling amongst many Liberians that although Taylor has undoubtedly been involved in atrocities during the war, the comparative stability and economic progress made under his control of 'greater Liberia' (everything outside Monrovia) merited greater support from the UN, US and Ecomog. (The US has promised \$30m for training and assistance to Ecomog if it takes on a more neutral role). The proliferation of warlords, and partisan nature of Nigerian-dominated Ecomog forces, working to destabilise Taylor's grip on the country has made it much more difficult to resolve the conflict. A situation which looked to be stabilising and offering chances for reconstruction has slipped back to one of emergency and this breakdown of the peace process will have reversed much of the progress made since the signing of the peace Agreement in August last year. The

recent ceasefire accepted on 6 May does not seem to be holding, with sporadic shooting, shelling and burning continuing.

Somalia... One senior UN official recently described the situation facing Somalia: "we're caught between the emergency budget (because) we're not quite bad enough and the development budget (because) we're not quite good enough", adding "Somalia is not really in the rehabilitation phase - there's too much instability". The Security Council President, John Weston publicly acknowledged the need to continue assistance to the country and supports plans to open a UN political office for Somalia in Nairobi to monitor developments and establish contact with major factions.

Insecurity continues, with militias of General Aideed and Osman Atto fighting for control of most strategic parts of Mogadishu and surrounding areas. The main port in Mogadishu remains closed since the pull-out of UNOSOM one year ago. With the closure of the port, aid agencies are unable to get supplies in-country fast enough and malnutrition rates are growing.

National reconciliation is a long way off, despite last August's meeting between 12 Somali factions and Farah Aideed's pledge to hold free and fair elections within 3 years, and the potential for a return to full-scale civil war remains a serious threat according to UN sources. However, while an internally recognised national government does not appear to be an option at present, conditions vary greatly within the country: local peace conferences have been held by elders in many districts and in 68 out of 77 (April 1996), district councils have been set up, many of which are functioning as local governments. While it is true to say there is no national government in Somalia, many of these councils represent effective government and constitute a practical counterpart for international agencies and NGOs offering assistance to Somali people.

Great Lakes Region

Burundi... During the early months of 1996, the security situation improved slightly in the capital Bujumbura, but deteriorated in the countryside, complicating the UN's plan to repatriate 1,000 Hutu refugees a day from the camps in Zaire. However, towards the end of April, conflict escalated throughout the country, forcing relief agencies to suspend many of their operations.

High levels of violence and looting continue, but more worrying are reports of students from both Tutsi and Hutu backgrounds leaving classes to join extremist militia. With the government and judicial structures in near chaos, nothing is being done to bring those who commit atrocities to justice.

In January this year, Boutros-Boutros Ghali called for UN troops to be sent to Burundi to protect aid workers, but support from the Security Council has not yet been forthcoming. However, UN Under Secretary General Goulding confirmed that, despite strong reservations from the Burundi Government, the UN was still attempting to develop a humanitarian force of about 25,000 soldiers from African countries.

Widespread insecurity and a serious incident between Hutu militia and the army led to virtually all international aid staff being evacuated in December from Ngozi in the north, and to the movement of between 12-16,000 Rwandan Hutu refugees to camps in Tanzania. A further 15,000 displaced were reported to have left Ntamba camp in late January. In early April, the Tripartite Commission on the Repatriation of Rwandan Refugees in Burundi (involving UNHCR and the Governments of Burundi and Rwanda) recommended closing the northern camp of Rukuramigabo and transferring the inhabitants to other camps in Ngozi. With more than 150,000 internally displaced people, the situation for relief agencies is grave, and aid workers fear further massive movements of people into Zaire and Tanzania.

Implementation of relief programmes have been severely constrained with main highways cut and ambushes a regular occurrence. Many roads are now closed to vehicles without military escort - on 27 March, a UN convoy was attacked and half its supplies looted. Relief agencies have been forced to evacuate particularly dangerous areas, leading to shortages of food and limited access to healthcare. More worrying, deaths from cholera have been reported.

Security incidents are also reported in central and southern parts of the country, compounding problems of crop failure due to storm damage and the ubiquitous problems of land cultivation due to mines. WFP moved staff from Gitega province after a grenade attack on staff and UN/NGO activity has all but ceased in Citiboke and Bubanza where civilians are leaving in droves. Food distribution is now down to local administration and a curfew has been imposed. Heavy fighting has displaced an estimated 80,000 persons over the past weeks in Gitega, Karuzi, Muramvya and Makamba. The Ministry of Reinsertion and Reinstallation of Displaced and Repatriated Persons convened two emergency meetings with humanitarian agencies in the first week of April to arrange for the pooling of resources to assist them.

Periodic border closures between Burundi and Zaire since December 1995 have led WFP to abandon routes to Uvira through Bujumbura forcing them to send supplies via Uvira port. As a result of the insecurity plaguing the transportation system, discussions are currently underway about stockpiling goods outside Burundi.

Rwanda... The first weeks of April were dominated by mourning, in remembrance of those who died during the 1994 genocide and civil war. But the main problems facing the Rwanda Government two years on are those of repatriating nearly 1.8m Rwandans living as refugees in neighbouring countries, and bringing the perpetrators of the genocide to justice.

In an attempt to reassure Hutu refugees outside the country's borders, the Rwanda Government has promised to bring the killers to justice. However, it is now holding 67,000 people in over-crowded prisons, many in appalling conditions, as tribunals are hampered by a lack of funding and under-qualified staff. Many of the judiciary were killed during the genocide and their replacements are either only recently trained or are undergoing training. Intimidation of prosecutors further aggravates the problem - a prosecutor and his colleague were shot dead in Gisenyi earlier in the year.

Many of the planners and leaders of the genocide are currently in comfortable exile in Kenya and Brussels. Extremist newspapers are openly on sale in Nairobi, and as the international tribunal proceeds painfully slowly, rich exiles renew their Kenyan tourist visas with impunity. Although the Zairian government now allows Rwandan Government officials into the camps to encourage refugees to return home, camp leaders continue to intimidate them into staying - particularly the intellectuals or former government officials - even going as far as killing Hutus inside Rwanda who never fled. Rwandan Government forces attacked Lake Kivu island in November 1995 to attempt to eradicate a hard core of these intimidators. No-one has yet been tried under the international tribunal. Although 10 have been indicted, all are outside the country and only two are actually in custody.

The Zairian contingent continues to operate within the camps, funded by UNHCR. All supplementary and therapeutic feeding programmes ceased in March except in Kibumba camp. NGOs have been instructed to replace all staff with Zairians and any international personnel will be deported. Since the beginning of the year, Zairian authorities have agreed to 'encourage' voluntary repatriation by restricting refugees' search for food, firewood and work, severing all but essential services, and closing bars and shops. Despite these activities, the number of refugees returning actually fell to its lowest level in March this year.

Refugees, if they return, fear being arrested on charges - often fabricated - of participating in the genocide. The Rwandan Government's sentencing policy has not helped encourage them to return: death for planners and leaders and a minimum of 10 years for others involved, conditional upon naming accomplices.

Within Rwanda, the Government is making considerable

efforts to reassure those outside that it is safe to return - instituting a policy of execution of any Rwandan army soldier found shooting civilians. UN observers have estimated that there are over 60 killings per month by Tutsi soldiers. Although the RPF in exile was a very disciplined force, the army has since trebled in size to 50,000 and many of those who have joined recently saw families and friends killed by Hutus. International peace-keeping troops left Rwanda in March and UNAMIR was scheduled to withdraw completely by 19 April 1996 to be replaced by the United Nations Office in Rwanda (UNOR) whose mandate is still under discussion. In December, the Government ordered 38 NGOs, many of them French, to cease their activities. Of the 110 agencies that remain, it is clear that the Government would like to see 60 leave immediately. A primary concern to those agencies asked to leave is what is to become of their equipment - while most would gladly leave their vehicles and other supplies to remaining aid operations, there are fears that they will be appropriated by government officials or simply stolen.

The situation in the West is still unstable and international relief agencies have been restricting movement of staff in particularly high risk areas. Following a shooting incident involving an MSF vehicle in Cyangugu prefecture, in which one person was shot dead and three were injured, and a mine explosion on a much-used road, agencies have stepped up security measures. Fighting in the Masisi region of Zaire has caused a reported 5-8,000 Zairian Tutsis to flee to Rwanda, currently awaiting asylum in Nkamira transit centre.

Between 16-19 March, the Great Lakes Summit meeting took place in Tunis between the Presidents of Rwanda, Burundi, Zaire, Tanzania and Uganda, presided by Jimmy Carter. Amongst the most important agreements reached were the following: Zaire to allow Rwandan officials into its camps to persuade the refugees to go home. Tanzania to help weed out those Hutus seen to be intimidating refugees; all outsiders to hand over people indicted by the Rwanda tribunal and a general commitment to seek to reduce conflict in Burundi. The next meeting is scheduled to take place in Atlanta, USA in May.

The UN's Sharyar Khan reportedly said that what Rwanda needs is a Marshall Plan. However, the International community has so far only made available one quarter of the \$638m requested by the Rwandan Government.



Asia

Afghanistan... In September 1995, the Taliban

captured Herat, Afghanistan's second city, thereby significantly altering the balance of power within the country. They subsequently threatened to attack the capital if President Rabbani did not stand down. The threat of major conflict in Kabul led to the withdrawal of many NGO and UN staff.

Rabbani accused Pakistan of helping the Taliban, and strong anti-Pakistan sentiment was evident in the capital. A large crowd of demonstrators attacked the Pakistan embassy in Kabul, the day after the fall of Herat, killing one of its staff members and inflicting heavy damage on the building.

In October, the Taliban occupied hills overlooking the south of the capital, leading to refugee flows from the southern suburbs to the centre of the city. Since the capture of these hills there have been regular rocket attacks in the capital, with numerous casualties. The SRSG conducted a round of talks with all sides in an attempt to avoid a full-scale battle for the capital.

As a result of the fighting close to the city, and the virtual blockade of Kabul, prices of basic commodities have risen significantly, increasing the vulnerability of many of the city's population. ICRC has been involved in flying in food supplies for up to 160,000 individuals, while WFP managed to bring in a convoy of 18 trucks in February. Tens of thousands of people have, nonetheless, fled the capital. Flooding in at least seven provinces since the second half of April is hampering relief efforts, although the full impact of the damage cannot yet be accurately estimated.

Iran has been continuing in its efforts to accelerate the return of refugees to Afghanistan, although the fighting in Herat province disrupted the repatriation process.

A UN appeal for \$124 million was launched on 9 October 1995, of which only \$27 million had been received by 7 February 1996. Funding for relief activities remains difficult to secure - only 65% of the previous year's target of \$106 million was raised.

Discussions have been taking place between various groups within the country, in an attempt to create alliances. The most significant development in this regard has been the recent emergence of a new alliance between Rabbani and Hekmatyar's Hisb-e-Islami, only weeks after the latter had appeared to be joining forces with other opposition groups.

Talks between Iran and Pakistan have also been held to try to reduce the tension arising from the belief in Teheran that the Taliban were being supported by the US and Pakistan to counter Iranian influence in the region. Iran does not appear to have been satisfied by Pakistan's assurances that it was not involved in the conflict, and it is reported that they are now openly supporting Rabbani.



Europe

Chechnya... In the last week of April, Dzhokhar Dudayev, the Chechen separatist leader, was killed in a rocket attack near the village of Rochni Chu. He has been replaced by Zelimkhan Yandarbaev, who, despite his refusal to contemplate peace talks with Moscow and calling for a jihad against Russia, lacks the support of former fighters on the rebel side who have expressed their concern at his lack of authority. However, divisions between the more likely leaders Maskhadov, the chief of staff and Basaev, the leading Chechen field commander as to Dudaev's replacement (Maskhadov appears to back Yandarbaev while Basaev seems impatient to take over himself) may further damage separatist unity. It is unclear yet as to how the change in leadership will affect the situation on the ground - the Moscow-backed Chechen government leader, Zavgayev seems hopeful that growing tension amongst the Chechen rebels will direct conflict away from Russian forces - an outcome which would suit Boris Yeltsin, whose popularity in the run up to this summer's elections could do with the boost which a negotiated settlement to the conflict would bring.

President Yeltsin's announcement on 31 March of a new peace plan to include an immediate unilateral ceasefire by federal forces; preparations for elections to a Chechen parliament; a gradual withdrawal of federal forces; negotiations to reach agreement on the status of Chechnya; consideration by the State Duma of an amnesty for Chechen fighters and a financial package for reconstruction of Chechnya did not lead to a full ceasefire and hostilities continued on both sides, particularly around Sernovodsk in western Chechnya with significant casualties. As this Newsletter goes to print, top Russian and Chechen field commanders are scheduled to meet to discuss how to implement an accord reached by their political leaders on ending the 18 month war. As with the March agreement, the three-point accord agreed to by separatist leader Yandarbaev

and Yeltsin includes a ceasefire, an exchange of prisoners and further talks on Russian troop withdrawal in return for rebel disarmament. Curiously, it does not include discussion of full independence for Chechnya. It is now in Russia's interest (and Yeltsin's electoral fortunes) to ensure that the military commanders stop shooting and bombing, even if the divided separatists do not. There have again been casualties on both sides since the accord. Since March, more than 10,000 people have fled the area, heading for Ingushetia, southern Chechnya or towards Grozny. But the capacity for these areas to support the displaced are limited and Grozny in particular offers little security.

Whereas in mid 1995, large numbers of displaced persons were returning to their homes and villages, worryingly, civilians are increasingly joining the ranks of the displaced in Ingushetia (60,000), and Dahestan (40,000). On 17 April, the UN released its 1996 Consolidated Appeal for Chechnya, requesting US\$13m as opposed to US\$25 in 1995 for the 92,000 displaced persons in greatest need out of a total displaced population of 147,000. A number of international agencies are involved in coordinating assistance, but access to besieged populations is extremely difficult in some parts and the situation is hazardous for aid workers - on 19 March, a Medair construction worker and interpreter were killed in North Ossetia, in March and early April, ICRC workers were kidnapped only to be released immediately and most recently, ICRC trucks were hijacked.

Sources for Update Section:

ACC/SCN Refugee Nutrition Information Systems
 Africa Confidential
 Angola Peace Monitor
 British Agencies Afghan Group
 Crosslines
 DHA-Geneva Situation Reports
 The Economist
 Horn of Africa Bulletin
 RRN Members
 WFP Weekly Reports
 Various British Newspaper Articles

Training Courses

**Disaster Management Course, Faringdon,
 Oxfordshire, UK, 23 July-29 August 1996**
 Organised by the Cranfield Disaster Preparedness Centre

and the Oxford Centre for Disaster Studies, this course is aimed at those with disaster management responsibilities, but who may have a limited knowledge of theory and

practice. Integrated with the disaster management content of the course is instruction on wider management skills such as presentations, project formulation and organisational development networking. A significant proportion of the course will be devoted to building and practising a wide range of training skills.

☞ For further information and application forms, contact Siân Chubbs, Disaster Preparedness Centre, Cranfield University, RMCS, Shrivenham, Swindon, Wiltshire SN6 8LA, UK. Tel: +44 1793 785 287. Fax: +44 1793 782 179.

Re-thinking Psycho-social Interventions, Refugee Studies Programme, UK, 16-20 September 1996

Led by Derek Summerfield [*author of the recent RRN Network Paper 14*], this course will be of interest to those who design, implement and fund programmes in the field of mental health. It will offer an opportunity to rethink the various approaches which have been taken in psycho-social interventions and will review such issues as 'cultural relativity' and the targeting of particular types of trauma. It will also present a social development framework, already familiar to the NGO world, as offering the best chance of supporting affected populations in developing locally-tailored, flexible and sustainable projects which assist people to rebuild their lives. The fee is £250 (excluding accommodation and meals).

☞ For further information and application forms, contact the Education Unit, Refugee Studies Programme, Queen Elizabeth House, 21 St Giles, Oxford OX1 3LA, UK. Tel: +44 1865 270 723. Fax: +44 1865 270 721. Email: rspnet@vax.oxford.ac.uk.

Nutrition in Emergencies, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, UK, 19-27 September 1996

The Centre for Human Nutrition is running this short course designed for nutritionists, public health specialists and emergency programme managers who intend to work in the nutrition sector during food emergencies. The broad aims of the course are to equip participants with the ability to conduct surveys which identify the need and target group for a nutritional intervention, to design the most appropriate type of feeding programme and to negotiate effectively with relevant relief agencies, government and beneficiary representatives.

☞ For more information and application forms, contact Mr Paul Shanley, Administrative Officer, Short Courses, Registry, LSHTM, Keppel Street, London WC1E 7HT, UK. Tel: +44 171 927 2074. Fax: +44 171 323 0638. Email: registry@lshtm.ac.uk.

BSc (Honours) Degree Course in International Disaster Engineering and Management, Coventry University, UK, 3 year course

Run in partnership with the Fire Service College, this course is intended to provide a combination of academic

and skills-based study so that graduates will develop technological and disaster management expertise, thus fitting them for employment in a wide variety of government, non-government and commercial organisations directly involved in disaster relief. The course covers areas of operational, managerial and strategic matters to enable students to deal with the mitigation, preparedness, relief, rehabilitation and rebuilding phases of a disaster.

BSc (Honours) Degree Course in Development and Health in Disaster Management, Coventry University, UK, 3 year course

This new course - approved by WHO and the UK ODA - was recently launched by Coventry University. The Development and Health in Disaster Management degree builds upon the success of the unique International Disaster Engineering and Management degree featured above. The new course, which begins in October 1996, aims to tackle what are known as the five phases of disaster: mitigation, preparedness, relief, rehabilitation and recovery.

☞ For further information on both these degrees, contact Les Moseley, Course Leader, School of The Built Environment, Coventry University, Priory Street, Coventry CV1 5FB, UK. Tel/fax: +44 1203 838 485.

Working in Long-term Conflict: Managing the Organisational Challenge, Oxford, UK, 11-16 November 1996

The aim of this INTRAC open training course is to increase the ability of senior NGO managers to think strategically about the development of their own capacity, and the capacity of partner organisations, to work in conflicts. The course will be facilitated by Hugo Slim and Jonathan Goodhand.

☞ For further information, contact Rick James, INTRAC, PO Box 563, Oxford OX2 6RZ, UK. Tel: +44 1865 201 851. Fax: +44 1865 201 852. Email: intrac@gn.apc.org.

Disaster Management Training Programme (DMTP)

Over the last five years, this course, organised by UNDHA/UNDP, has been implemented to address disaster-management issues - in particular with regard to preparedness, mitigation and response to natural and man-made disasters. DMTP activities include worldwide institution-building, networking between institutions and individuals, production and dissemination of training materials, research, training of trainers, workshops and concrete follow-up programmes to workshops.

The Complex Emergencies Training Initiative (CETI)

An inter-agency consultation on humanitarian training was held in June 1995 and led to the launching of this UN training programme. Later, and in parallel with the ECOSOC resolution 1995/96 which called for, *inter alia*, the "development of strategies for comprehensive staff

development, including inter-agency training modules”, the CETI meetings of September 1995 and January 1996 led to the development of an action matrix based on a joint assessment of needs in the area of training and agreement on priority setting. A revised draft of a new module on “Coordination among International Organisations in Complex Emergencies” will be reviewed by CETI members prior to the next consultation in June 1996.

☞ For further information both on DMTP and CETI, contact Nahla Haidar, UNHCR, Palais des Nations, 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland. Tel: +41 22 917 1234. Fax: +41 22 917 0023. Email: dhagva@dha.unhcr.org.

Conferences

Forthcoming Conferences

16th International Congress of Nutrition “From Nutrition Science to Nutrition Practice for Better Global Health”, Montréal, Canada, 27 July-1 August 1997

The goal of this congress, organised under the auspices of the International Union of Nutritional Sciences, is to explore the current edge of research in nutrition sciences and the relevance of this information in setting nutrition policy, providing the consumer with quality food products, and making recommendations for nutrition practices that will optimise health through the prevention and treatment of disease.

☞ For further information, contact: 16th International Congress of Nutrition, c/o Conference Services Office, National Research Council Canada, Ottawa, ON, Canada K1A 0R6. Tel: +1 613 993 7271. Fax: +1 613 993 7250. Email: confmail@aspm.lan.nrc.ca.

Reconstructing Livelihoods Towards a New Model of Resettlement, Oxford, UK, 9-13 September 1996

The Refugee Studies Programme is hosting its second international conference as part of its three year programme examining the reconstruction of livelihoods of people uprooted by wars, persecution and economic deprivation. The conference is designed to contribute towards the conceptualisation of more beneficial development models which would lead to better implementation of resettlement guidelines.

☞ For more details on the venue, costs and registration, contact Dr Christopher McDowell, Refugee Studies Programme, Queen Elizabeth House, University of Oxford, 21 St Giles, Oxford OX1 3LA, UK. Tel: +44 1865 270 436. Fax: +44 1865 270 721. Email: christopher.mcdowell@qeh.ox.ac.uk

WorldAid’96, Geneva, Switzerland, 30 September-4 October 1996

WorldAid’96 is the first global exhibition on relief and rehabilitation supplies. WorldAid is a not-for-profit organisation, supported by all UN and main humanitarian agencies. As of February, 153 commercial suppliers and over 50 agencies had booked space. A number of workshops and seminars will run parallel to the exhibition, bringing together representatives from the business community and humanitarian agencies to discuss different aspects of the provision of relief. Categories covered will be: shelter, telecommunications, water, food, sanitation, transport, medical supplies, power, mine searching, technical aids for disabled people and epidemic control.

According to CEO Odd Grann (former Secretary General of the Norwegian Red Cross) “WorldAid is a direct result of experiences in Bosnia, Rwanda and Somalia”.

☞ For further information, contact: WorldAid, 11 avenue de Joli-Mont, 1209 Geneva, Switzerland. Tel: +41 22 788 6728. Fax: +41 22 788 5978.

INDR Regional Workshop for the Mediterranean - Vulnerability Reduction and Sustainable Urban Development in the Mediterranean Region, Naples, Italy, 26-28 September 1996 (tentative dates)

Bringing together experts from countries in the Mediterranean region and representatives from international and European organisations, this event aims to draw together participating countries and institutions working towards vulnerability reduction. It aims to set in motion further action at all levels, including the European Union.

☞ For more information, contact Francesco Pisano,

Project Officer, IDNDR Secretariat, Palais des Nations, 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland. Tel: +41 22 798 5850. Fax: +41 22 733 8695. Email: Francesco.Pisano@dha.unicc.org.

Conference Reports

The International Landmines Conference, Phnom Penh, Cambodia, 4 June 1995

Sponsored by the Cambodia Campaign to Ban Landmines and the NGO Forum on Cambodia, this conference gathered more than 400 people from 42 different countries, including UN representatives, government officials, landmine victims and deminers who support the international ban on landmines. The conference aimed to accomplish a number of goals, including increased funding for demining efforts, planning and preparation to advocate a ban at the forthcoming United Nations Protocol review and the formation of new national and regional campaigns actively working towards the ban.

To date, 31 countries have called for an outright ban and 13, (Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Colombia, Germany, Ireland, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, the Philippines and Switzerland) have taken that step unilaterally. Britain's refusal to join in an outright ban shifted somewhat following America's recent decision to review its own policy. However, several countries continue to produce and sell mines and many governments and warlords are a long way from refusing to use them.

☞ A full set of Cambodia Landmines Conference Proceedings is available from the NGO Forum on Cambodia, PO Box 2295, Phnom Penh 3, Cambodia. Tel/fax: +855 23 60119. Email: NGOFORUM@Pactok.Peg.apc.org.

UN Peacekeeping in the 1990s, University of Limerick, UK, 17 June 1995

The conference brought together practitioners, policy-makers and academics in an attempt to map out the way forward for peacekeeping towards the end of the century. The overall theme of the conference was the question of how UN peacekeepers should be trained and prepared for new responsibilities in the post-Cold War era when political and ethnic tensions have inevitably complicated the notion of an impartial and efficient discharge of the peacekeeping function. Participants heard papers relating to the specific national experiences of Denmark, Ireland and India, while a final paper analysed the occasionally negative impact of peacekeeping missions on the host country. The conference marked an important milestone in the development of a two-year UNU-sponsored research project at the University of Limerick in cooperation with the University of Ulster.

☞ For further information, contact: Professor Eddie

Moxon-Browne, University of Limerick, Dean's Office, College of Humanities, Limerick, Republic of Ireland. Tel: +353 61 202286/202287. Fax: +353 61 338170.

Recycling and Sustainable Post-disaster Reconstruction, Post-war Reconstruction and Development Unit, University of York, UK, 3 July 1995

This one day workshop aimed to:

- review existing post-disaster reconstruction projects which have utilised recycled building materials
- articulate existing knowledge of the subject through discussion
- formulate a joint pilot project to illustrate the benefits of recycling materials in war-torn areas

The priority in post-disaster reconstruction is economic regeneration as a prelude to physical reconstruction. Therefore, the workshop was based on the assumption that use of recycled materials in post-disaster reconstruction enables the affected communities to save on costs of debris clearance, retain valuable resources and utilise employment opportunities offered by the recycling programmes.

☞ The summary and conclusions of this workshop are available on application to Gavin Ward, Post-war Reconstruction and Development Unit, The King's Manor, York YO1 2EP, UK.

Regional Mechanisms for Early Warning and Preventive Diplomacy in Africa, Addis Ababa, 9-11 October 1995

Jointly sponsored by International Alert and the Inter-Africa Group, the workshop brought together participants from the different sub-regions of Africa. Its main objectives were to:

- facilitate the establishment of focal points for early warning and preventive action among African-based NGOs
- support the ability and capacity of those NGOs to take decisive and effective action to prevent the outbreak of violent conflict in Africa
- build multi-sectoral alliances between different constituencies which are active in conflict prevention and resolution in Africa
- explore avenues by which an NGO early warning system can enhance the effectiveness of other inter-governmental early warning systems.

Steps are now being taken towards: the creation of a network of African NGOs to steer the operation of an early warning system; the definition of a common action plan and timetable for the next stages of the process; and an agreement on a clear division of labour for all actors.

☞ A report of the workshop can be obtained by contacting Comfort Lamptey, International Alert, 1 Glyn Street, London SE11 5HT, UK. Tel: +44 171 793 8383. Fax: +44 171 793 7975.

Towards Improved Shelter and Environment for

Refugees and Displaced Persons within Post-Yugoslavia Countries, University of Luton, UK, 9-11 October 1995

The aim of this workshop was to bring together academics, practitioners, policy makers and manufacturers, to discuss shelter programmes and policies and make recommendations for improved provision for refugees and displaced persons within the former Yugoslavia. Discussion was divided into three main areas:

- the level of shelter provision in war-torn, developed nations
- the potential for relief shelter provision to support post-war recovery and long-term development
- practical recommendations for improvement of a current praxis.

Following two days of discussion, the 40 international participants concluded the workshop by proposing a set of recommendations for improved provision of shelter.

☞ Proceedings and papers are available from Sue Ellis, The Research Centre, 24 Crawley Green Road, Luton, Bedfordshire LU1 3LF, UK.

Seminar on International Humanitarian Law for NGOs, Geneva, Switzerland, 10 October 1995

An estimated 50 people, representing some 30 NGOs, took part in this seminar organised by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the Graduate Institute of International Studies. The seminar gave an overview of international humanitarian law (IHL) applicable in situations of armed conflict and the relationship between IHL and human rights law. The seminar drew attention to the importance of consultations between the various organisations operating in the field. It also served as an opportunity to inform participants about the *Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief* [available from the RRN as Network Paper 7]. The day ended with an open discussion on "the role of NGOs in humanitarian cooperation". The seminar was the second of its kind to be held in Geneva; a third one is planned for the last quarter of 1996.

☞ Organisations interested in taking part should contact Carlo von Flüe, ICRC, International Division, 19 avenue de la Paix, 1202 Geneva, Switzerland. Tel: +41 22 734 60 01. Fax: +41 22 733 20 57.

Oxfam's Work in Conflict Situations, Birmingham, UK, 29 January-2 February 1996

This workshop provided the opportunity to take stock of Oxfam's work to date on the theme of conflict, to share some lessons learned, and to identify key areas for learning in the future. Participants identified some of the constraints which inhibit learning within and among programmes in conflict situations and selected the following key themes to direct future learning: Civil Society, Forced Migration, Human Rights, Staff Preparedness and Trauma, Coping Mechanisms and

Survival Strategies, and Impact Assessment. A working group was formed to take forward learning strategies on these issues in relation to conflict and conflict resolution.

☞ A full report can be obtained by contacting Kate Morrow, Oxfam, 274 Banbury Road, Oxford OX2 7DZ, UK. Tel: +4 1865 312 401. Fax: +44 1865 312 600. Email: kmorrow@oxfam.org.uk.

Conflict Prevention: a Challenge for the European Union, London, UK, 8 February 1996

Organised by Oxfam (UK & Ireland) and Saferworld, this seminar gathered over 80 foreign policy and development specialists to discuss Europe's conflict prevention capacity. The discussions focused on the opportunity presented by the Intergovernmental Conference to correct the shortcomings of EU external relations, as set out in the Maastricht Treaty. Delegates emphasised the need to coordinate economic, diplomatic and military policies to help alleviate instability in developing countries. A proactive approach would cut costs, not only in terms of emergency aid and post-conflict reconstruction, but would save the lives of many of those involved in conflict as well.

☞ A report of the seminar is available from Sarah Joseph, Saferworld, 34 Alfred Place, London, WC1E 6DP. Tel: +44 171 580 8886. Fax: +44 171 631 1444. Email: sworld@gn.apc.org.

The Safe Trust Conference on the (Red Cross) Code of Conduct, Oxford, UK, 22 March 1996

The recently established Support Action for Emergencies, known as The SAFE Trust, held a conference on the new Code of Conduct for International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief [available as RRN Network Paper 7]. Chaired by Baroness Caroline Cox, the keynote presentation was given by David Cook of Green College, Oxford, on "Christian Ethics: The Code and Disaster Assistance". His contribution provoked those present to ask questions particularly in relation to clauses 3 and 5 of the code. Other contributions were made by Mike Adamson of the British Red Cross, Sara Davidson of People in Aid, Marcus Thompson of Oxfam and Hugo Slim of CENDEP. The conference emphasised the necessity for operational NGOs not only to sign-up to the Code, but also to train both their home and overseas staff to observe it, or risk the inevitable loss of official recognition and funding support. Concern was expressed as to which body would police the Code with the minimum bureaucracy. The conference brought together Chief Executives and Emergency Officers from the growing number of Christian Relief and Development Organisations. According to the IFRC, this was the first conference anywhere in the world on the Code.

☞ For further information, contact: Simon Kendall, The SAFE Trust, Cumbers, Liss, Hampshire GU33 7LL.

Tel: +44 1730 894555.

Launch of World Disasters Report, London, UK, 23 May 1996

The IFRC, in conjunction with the ODI and RRN, held a one day conference at ODI in London to launch the 1996 World Disasters Report. Departing from the structure of former launches, the day brought together representatives of the business, military and media sectors as well as humanitarian agency personnel. Opting for a provocative approach to the discussions, the meetings asked respectively: 'What's at stake when companies tackle crises alongside governments and aid agencies?'; 'Should soldiers get off the humanitarian front-line? Disasters, Peacekeeping and the New World Disorder'; 'Why does the media always get it wrong in disasters' and 'Whose disaster is it anyway?' The main focus of this year's report, in addition to updates and statistics on natural and 'complex' disasters around the world, is on agency standards and best practice: specifically, how to follow-up the broad principles enshrined in the IFRC and NGO Code of Conduct, to which 77 signatories, other than the eight founding agencies have now signed up and to which 144 governments have pledged their support.

Chaired by Peter Walker of the IFRC, more than 140 delegates participated in a lively debate, at the final plenary session, on issues such as the policing of such a Code of Conduct; establishing a professional body or Ombudsman to monitor agencies' compliance with its recommendations; donor involvement by withholding funds from organisations which refuse to sign up, or fail to uphold their commitments; inclusion of UN agencies in the debates and the specific content of such a Code.

Further information on the four meetings is available from Nick Cater or Peter Walker, IFRC Geneva, Switzerland. Tel: +41 22 73 4222. Fax: +41 22 733 0395.

Publications

Adaptable Livelihoods - Coping with Food Insecurity in the Malian Sahel, by Susanna Davies, MacMillan Press Ltd, Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 6XS, UK. ISBN 0-312-12682-4. Price: £45.00 hardback. This book explains how food and livelihood insecurity can be predicted in order to identify ways of mitigating the threat of famine. It concludes by outlining a simplified methodology for monitoring livelihood security, to be used as a basis for developing contingency plans and regional food security planning capacities and policies. This book includes a comprehensive list of references.

Burundi's Uprooted People - Caught in the Spiral of Violence, US Committee for Refugees, Issue Paper,

August 1995, The US Committee for Refugees, 1717 Massachusetts Ave., NW, Suite 701, Washington DC, 20036, USA. ISSN 0882-9282.

This paper does not seek to report on all aspects of Burundi's complex crisis. It aims to document how and why Burundi's crisis has forced hundreds and thousands of people to flee, to report the humanitarian and protection needs of Burundi's uprooted populations and to analyse Burundians' prospects for returning home safely. It also gives some background to the ethnic and socio-political factors contributing to the current serious situation in which more than 100 people are being killed every week and which has led to almost complete paralysis of government and to great difficulty for aid agencies to reach and supply the needy.

Conflict Resolution: A Review of Some Non-governmental Practices - 'A Cautionary Tale', *Studies on Emergencies and Disaster Relief Report 5* by Dr Eftihia Voutira and Shaun A Whishaw Brown, Nordiska Afrikainstitutet (Nordic Africa Institute), Uppsala, Sweden, 1995, ISBN 91-7106-374-9. Price: 60 Krona or US\$ 9.00.

This report reviews the literature and practice of UK NGOs in conflict resolution, conflict resolution training and preventive diplomacy. It incorporates information on such work outside the UK and has general implications for all organisations working in this field. It is not intended as a 'handbook' for donors to help them decide what interventions should be funded. Rather, it asks its readers to engage in a dialogue which the report aims to stimulate. The authors admit that, given more time, it would have been useful to take a comparative look at what NGOs say they do and what they actually do. As it is, the information is limited to what they say they do.

Economy at the Cross Roads - Famine and Food Security in Rural Ethiopia, by Getachew Diriba, CARE Ethiopia, PO Box 4710, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 1995. Price: Birr 60.00 (within Ethiopia) or US\$20.00 (overseas including postage).

This study, which is based on the author's 15 years of experience in Ethiopia, is the result of perceived policy failure in his country. It examines various food security issues, particularly in relation to the Ethiopian context. The author asks two questions in the context of long-term famine relief in his country: can Ethiopia itself and donor agencies afford to continue feeding 20% or more of the population with famine relief, every day, every year? and/or is famine relief, within the prevailing practices in Ethiopia, an efficient means and the only means of responding to food shortages?

Engineering in Emergencies - A Practical Guide for Relief Workers, by Jan Davis and Robert Lambert, Intermediate Technology Publications Ltd, 103-105 Southampton Row, London, WC1B 4HH, UK, 1995, ISBN 1-85339-222-7. Price: £16.95.

This accessible and practical book draws on the experience of a wide range of relief workers, notably RedR members, and treats in depth both 'hard' topics, including the provision of water, sanitation, and shelter, and 'softer' issues, such as the needs of refugees, managerial skills, and personal effectiveness. The text is cross-referenced and indexed, and is supported by illustrations, tables and checklists.

Field Guide on Rapid Nutritional Assessment in Emergencies, World Health Organization Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean 1995, PO Box 1517, Alexandria, Egypt, 1995, ISBN 92-9021-198-9. Price: US\$6.00.

This field guide is intended for all those who are faced with the need to make rapid but reliable estimates of the nutritional situation in an emergency as a basis for subsequent action. It provides a simple, step-by-step, procedure for carrying out a rapid survey of nutritional status, from the selection of the survey sample to the analysis and interpretation of results. The steps are easy to follow and the report claims they are based on sound scientific principles and yield reliable data for planning appropriate interventions.

Focus on Refugee Children - A Handbook for Training Field Refugee Workers in Social and Community Work, Eva Segerström, Rädda Barnen (Swedish Save the Children) 107 88 Stockholm, Sweden, 1995, ISBN 91-88726-20-7. Price: 190 Krona.

This handbook, written with practitioners clearly in mind, is based on experiences from Rädda Barnen's work with refugee communities, especially Afghan and Somali, and organised into a format applicable for training programmes, from the very earliest warning of an emergency to the operation of permanent refugee settlement. The first section gives an introductory background to social and community work theory aimed at desirable social change. The second part - the training material - is intended for use in workshop training by field refugee workers, where the participants are volunteers in the refugee community. Pictures are enclosed for use during the training programmes.

Guerre et santé publique - Manuel pour l'aide aux prises de décisions [War and Public Health - Manual for Assistance to Decision-making] by Dr Pierre Perrin, CICR, Geneva, Switzerland, 1995, ISBN 2-88145-072-5. Price: FFr 35.00.

This manual is intended for staff members and medical personnel responsible for humanitarian activities in situations of armed conflict. It deals with the serious health problems affecting displaced people and demonstrates, step-by-step, how a healthcare system meeting the essential needs of war victims can be set up. The public health tools most frequently used in conflict situations for evaluation, establishment of priorities, analysis of possible activities and their follow-up are assessed in light of the constraints encountered in the field. The problem of protection for war victims is also discussed in connection with certain aspects of international law, particularly those directly relating to health. Finally, the manual offers professional health workers a guide to the ethical problems that arise at each stage of humanitarian action. Currently only available in French, an English translation will be available shortly.

The Oxfam Poverty Report, Kevin Watkins, An Oxfam Publication, Oxfam, 274 Banbury Road, Oxford OX2 7DZ, UK, 1995, ISBN 0-85598-318-3. Price: £9.95.

This report draws on Oxfam's experience of working in over 70 countries, to examine the causes of poverty and conflict. It identifies the structural forces which deny people their basic rights, and gives a wide range of

examples of the ways in which men and women are bringing about positive change at every level, from the household to the international arena. This report is the result of collaborative work between Oxfams UK & Ireland, America, Canada and New Zealand. It covers the impact of war, structural adjustment, international trade, ecology, aid, debt and development on poverty and offers an 'Oxfam' agenda for change, including discussion of participation, opportunity, equity, peace and security and a sustainable (ecological) future. A full set of notes detailing relevant meetings and reports is also included.

The Reality of Aid 1995 - An Independent Review of International Aid, ICVA, EuroStep, ActionAid and Development Initiatives, Earthscan Publications Ltd, 120 Pentonville Road, London N1 9JN, UK, 1995, ISBN 1-85383-292-8. Price: £12.95.

This yearly report, resulting from the work jointly-undertaken by NGOs from 21 OECD countries, provides a detailed appraisal of current aid levels, recent changes in aid policy and the prospects for the future (many of the statistics are also available in the DAC report). It also includes an overview of current issues and a guide to the multilaterals and their accountability. In addition, the principal statistics are summarised by subject into easy-to-use tables and graphs. The Reality of Aid 1996 will be launched in June 1996.

The State of the World's Children 1996, UNICEF, Oxford University Press, Walton Street, Oxford OX2 7DZ, UK, ISBN 0-19-262747-3. Price: £5.95.

This UNICEF 50th anniversary report aims to fulfil three purposes: it proposes an agenda for the prevention and alleviation of the suffering of children in armed conflict; it reviews the work, efforts and progress of UNICEF in its first half-century; and it presents assembled statistical data for 1996. The report does not offer a particularly in-depth analysis, rather it gives some general recent facts about aid to children over the last 50 years, such as initiatives on children's rights.

The State of the World's Refugees - In Search of Solutions, UNHCR, Oxford University Press Inc, New York, USA. ISBN 0-19-828043-2, 1995. Price: £9.99 paperback.

The report, published every two years, provides an analysis of such major issues as: human rights, peace-keeping and demobilisation, linking relief with longer term assistance, asylum and immigration. UNHCR, well-placed to offer a review of such issues, also provides a set of statistical tables, graphs and maps, describing the state of the world's refugees. It also includes 25 case studies, examining key refugee situations around the world and showing how new approaches to the problem of human displacement are being put into practice.

The UN Department of Humanitarian Affairs in Angola: A Model for the Coordination of

Humanitarian Assistance?, *Studies on Emergencies and Disaster Relief Report 4* by Toby Lanzer, Nordiska Afrikainstitutet (Nordic Africa Institute), Uppsala, Sweden, 1996, ISBN 91-7106-385-4. Price: 60 Krona or US\$ 9.00.

This report describes the activities of the United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) in Angola from April 1993 to April 1995; it does not aim to evaluate them. It starts with the creation of DHA Angola and continues to describe how relations were established with the Government and UNITA. It covers the different ways in which main concepts, roles and responsibilities could be discussed and agreed to. It presents the day-to-day activities including crucial information exchange. It shows how DHA organised the preparation and launch of inter-agency appeals and promoted and monitored the safety of humanitarian agency personnel and, finally, how capacity-building became an important DHA strategy. It is a useful look at an organisation which, only recently established, has often had its role questioned, and although an uncritical account, offers an 'insider's' view of its operation. It represents the author's own views, rather than those of DHA.

The United Nations and Somalia 1992-1996, *The United Nations Blue Book Series, Volume III*, Department of Public Information, New York, USA, 1996, ISBN 92-1-100566-3. Available from HMSO books in the UK.

Price: £23.00

This is the eighth volume in the series which has covered the UN's work on Apartheid, Cambodia, Nuclear Non-Proliferation, El Salvador, Mozambique, the Advancement of Women and Human Rights. It documents four years of the UN's presence in Somalia and covers its peace-enforcement, as well as humanitarian role. It includes more than 100 documents relating to its work including, letters, press statements, resolutions, excerpts from interviews, reports, maps and tables.

Yugoslavia, the Former and the Future - Reflections by Scholars from the Region, by Payam Akhavan and Robert Howse, *The Brookings Institution, Washington D.C., USA, 1995, ISBN 0-8157-0253-1.*

Price: US\$ 14.95.

In this book, scholars from the former Yugoslavia explore the devastating disintegration of their homeland. The variety of viewpoints - of scholars from Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia and Slovenia - provides a much-needed dialogue on the combination of forces, events and personalities that led to the crisis and offers the opportunity to look ahead to a brighter future for the region. It covers a range of sectors contributing to the civil war, including historical, constitutional and economic. It is a useful tool, written in a readable and often personal style, for anyone who wants better understanding of what caused the breakup of Yugoslavia and the broader problems of nationalism and post-Cold War international struggles.

Finally...

Editorial Team... Laura Jackson, RRN Coordinator, continues to manage the RRN on a full-time basis, together with Nathalie Shellard, RRN Administrator. John Borton - founder and former RRN Coordinator - and Joanna Macrae, ODI Research Fellows, offer guidance and research input on a part-time basis. The current issue benefited from contributions and support by Alistair Hallam, ODI Research Associate and previously economist on the Joint Evaluation of Humanitarian Assistance to Rwanda.

The team would also like to thank Derek Summerfield, Koenraad van Brabant and Danielle de Lame for their contributions to this issue, and to Susanne Jaspars, Helen Young, Peter Gee, Mark Perkins and Luke Aris for their work on Good Practice Review 3 and Network Paper 13 which were mailed in February this year. A number of other members have been called upon for their advice and first-hand experience which have been used to keep the Update section as up-to-date and relevant as possible.

RRN on the Internet... For those with access to the Internet, the new RRN 'Home Page' can now be accessed on the WorldWide Web at: <http://www.oneworld.org/odi/rrn/index.html>. The site links to the directory - which formed a major part of Network Paper 13 - which in turn links to over 300 sites, including news updates, sitreps, agency home pages, educational and research organisations and southern based providers of Internet services. The site also includes a current list of organisations, based in over 50 countries which make up the RRN membership. New members can complete a form via the Home Page which can then be emailed direct to the RRN - no need for pens, print outs or stamps. In addition, we will shortly be posting a series of abstracts of all RRN publications to date on the Web to enable visitors to the site to become better informed about RRN literature and order individual publications.

Funding... As those of you who received the questionnaire mailed in February will know, the EuronAid grant, which has funded the Network's operation over the past two and a half years, expires in October this year. Since December, the RRN team has therefore been in the process of securing funding for the second phase of RRN operation (Phase II), to cover the period October 1996-1999. Depending on funding availability, a number of changes are proposed to build on the existing quality of publications by developing more formal links with representatives in those regions experiencing ongoing complex and natural disasters. It is also proposed that a number of modifications are made to encourage contributions from members and to increase the accessibility of publications through the design, content and production process. To date, we have made good progress in securing the necessary funding and a fuller report will be made in the September Newsletter.

Relief and Rehabilitation Network

The objective of the Relief and Rehabilitation Network (RRN) is to facilitate the exchange of professional information and experience between the personnel of NGOs and other agencies involved in the provision of relief and rehabilitation assistance. Members of the Network are either nominated by their agency or may apply on an individual basis. Each year, RRN members receive four mailings in either English or French comprising Newsletters, Network Papers and Good Practice Reviews. In addition, RRN members are able to obtain advice on technical and operational problems they are facing from the RRN staff in London. A modest charge is made for membership with rates varying in the case of agency-nominated members depending on the type of agency.

The RRN is operated by the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) in conjunction with the European Association of Non-Governmental Organisations for Food Aid and Emergency Relief (EuronAid). ODI is an independent non-governmental organisation, limited by guarantee and registered as a charity, which undertakes the study of development and humanitarian issues. It also encourages the exchange of information and experience of these issues to inform public debate and policy. EuronAid provides logistics and financing services to NGOs using European Commission food aid in their relief and development programmes. It has 27 member agencies and two with observer status. Its offices are located in the Hague.

For further information, contact:

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