



RRN newsletter

All RRN materials are published in French and English.

RRN phase 2 1996-1999

In this Issue...

War risk insurance cover for aid workers

'One year on': follow-up monitoring of the Rwanda Evaluation

Security guidelines: no guarantee for improved security

Cooperation between humanitarian and human rights organisations

NGOs and Red Cross brief UN Security Council on Great Lakes region

You may have noticed some changes in the design of RRN publications. We hope you like them. It seems appropriate to usher in our second phase of operation with a revitalised style and draw your attention to some of the developments proposed over the coming three years. Rest assured that there is no change in our commitment to the exchange and dissemination of high quality publications in a format that is

practical and accessible to humanitarian agency personnel, both at HQ level and in the field.

This February 1997 mailing launches the second phase in the RRN's operation, supported by four new donors – DANIDA, ECHO, the Department of Foreign Affairs, Ireland, and ODA. Building on the results of the February 1996 members' survey and lessons learned over the past three years, a *Strategic Review* of RRN practice was undertaken throughout last year. The Review culminated in the first *Advisory Group* meeting on 31 January 1997, bringing together representatives of the four new donors, the Danish Refugee Council, Oxfam and UNICEF, to consider proposals to improve the relevance and reach of RRN material. The group endorsed the RRN strategy for the next three years.

This brief summary reflects the key thinking which emerged during this process and which will guide the development of the RRN over the coming years.

The principal *goal* of the RRN programme, during the coming three year phase, will be to improve aid policy and practice in protracted complex political emergencies. The *purpose, principal activities* and *target audience* are outlined in more detail on the back cover of this Newsletter. RRN publications will principally focus on humanitarian assistance in situations where conflict is a key feature, but will also cover the implications and impact of slow-onset, natural disasters in the context of complex political emergencies.

To continue to receive RRN publications **all existing and new members** must read the information on page 3 and complete and return the enclosed registration/order form on page 29.

Contents

Articles p4	News p9	Regional Focus p16	Training courses p21	Conferences p23	Publications p26
Registration/order form p29	Publications list p30	Abstracts p32			

ISSN: 1353 8713

© Overseas Development Institute, 1997.



Regional Outreach Initiative

A *Regional Outreach Initiative* will be implemented during this second phase and two individuals will be employed on a part-time basis to act as RRN Regional Representatives; one for the West Africa region and the other for the Horn and Great Lakes Region. Their role will be to advocate the value of institutional and individual learning within their area of operation, and promote RRN publications as a relevant resource. In recognition of the need to receive more contributions from the regions, the Representatives will identify individuals and organisations with which the RRN can establish ongoing contact and who will, over time, contribute written material to the RRN. The experience will be reviewed in March 1998 and, if successful, other regions may also be considered.

In light of our objectives, RRN policy will be to offer *free annual subscription* to a limited number of individuals actively engaged in humanitarian work in complex emergencies. New funding has made it possible for us to fund up to 1,500 free subscriptions. In order to target our priority audience, 'membership criteria' have been drawn up to enable the RRN team to judge applications in a consistent and appropriate manner. For detailed information on how to obtain RRN publications, see opposite page. New applicants will automatically be considered according to the new criteria. Existing members covered by the previous funding regime have until September 1997 to re-apply. **All memberships will lapse after this date.**

Publications

The distinctiveness of RRN publications lies in their focus on policy and practice in complex political crises, the accessible style and practical orientation, the range of formats and the conscious intent to encourage learning from experience across a broad geographical spread. In addition, all RRN material continues to be produced in both French and English to ensure that a significant proportion of the target readership is not excluded on language grounds.

The RRN will retain its existing three formats:

Newsletters provide a forum which

is conducive to the raising and airing of issues, brief reflection and comment, information sharing and debate. There will be three *Newsletters* per year, free on request.

Network Papers deal with generic studies of general relevance to the humanitarian aid community, eg. *Network Papers* 10 and 20 on management and support of aid personnel (see, for example 'The People in Aid Code of Best Practice') and *Network Paper* 19 ('Human Rights and International Legal Standards' also in this mailing) and topical case studies. Authors of case studies are encouraged to transcend the specificity of their context by highlighting policy dimensions of each situation.

Good Practice Reviews (GPRs) are to be central to the main purpose of the RRN. They represent more than 'technical manuals' although often treating technical policy areas such as water and sanitation issues, targeting, distribution etc. (see GPR 4 'Seed Provision during and after Emergencies') with the emphasis on policy requirements and implications of programmatic choices. Commissioned by the RRN team, GPRs typically have a lead author but are also the outcome of extensive peer review.

The RRN team solicits written material and experiences from members and readers. Authors of GPRs are remunerated and, in this second phase, honoraria are also available to authors of *Network Papers*.

Key issues

Over the coming three years, the RRN's written material will reflect its revised focus on protracted complex political crises. While publications continue to cover good practice in practical aspects of the delivery of assistance, such as food distribution or water and sanitation, the choice of subject, author, and the issues covered by RRN papers will be guided by one or more of four broad, overlapping themes: political/legal, strategic, programming and organisational.

Your experiences/lessons learned in humanitarian assistance programmes may be of relevance and interest to a wider audience.

While it is not possible to publish all material received from members, if you are interested in contributing a *Newsletter* article or *Network Paper* on a particular issue, or offering to act as a peer reviewer for GPRs, please contact the RRN team.

We are also interested in receiving information and contact details of conferences/training programmes/publications which the RRN might usefully publicise in the *Newsletter*.

Comments, constructive criticism and Letters to the Editor should be addressed to the RRN Coordinator.

HOW TO OBTAIN RRN PUBLICATIONS FOR 1997

Annual subscription to the RRN entitles members to three *RRN Newsletters*, 4-6 *RRN Network Papers* and two *RRN Good Practice Reviews* per year. There are a number of ways of accessing RRN material.

Annual Subscription

Due to new funding, we are in a position to reduce our annual subscription fee to £25.00 per person/per year for anyone wishing to become a member. For this fee, you will automatically receive RRN publications for one year. However, this does not entitle members to full sets or back copies, which are charged for separately (discount rate applies for more than 10 copies – see below).

Newsletter

Hard copies of the *RRN Newsletter*, featuring articles, news items, regional focus, conference reports and information on training courses and publications, are now available FREE to all on request, three times per year. Newsletters will also carry abstracts of new publications in the series, a full publications list and a registration/order form.

Individual Publications

Hard copies of the individual publications are available at a price of £5.00 each for *RRN Network Papers* and £10.00 each for *RRN Good Practice Reviews*. Discounts for bulk purchases (more than 10 copies) are offered: £3.50 for *RRN Network Papers* and £7.50 for *RRN Good Practice Reviews*. There is no charge for *RRN Newsletters*.

Electronic Distribution

Email: we are 'piloting' the use of email to distribute RRN publications free of charge. We aim to be in a position to guarantee a readable and accessible format by September 1997. Requests for receipt of publications in this way will need to state clearly the method by which text should be saved. Those wishing to receive their mailings by email are reminded that the cost and time associated with downloading publications - which may run to 50-60 pages – will be borne by them.

WorldWideWeb: the RRN Home Page can currently be accessed on <http://www.oneworld.org/odi/index.html>, featuring a directory offering direct access to over 300 sites relating to complex political emergencies and natural disasters. This RRN site will shortly be updated to include a copy of each Newsletter, abstracts of all RRN publications and a publications list and order form.

Teachers/training course organisers are encouraged to purchase full sets at discount rates (see above) and to make photocopies for their students where necessary.

Free membership

In order to reach those actively engaged in relief and rehabilitation programmes in complex political emergencies, and to widen our geographical spread, new funding has made it possible for us to offer up to 1,500 **free annual subscriptions**. In order to target this priority audience, 'membership criteria' have been drawn up to enable the RRN team to judge applications in a consistent and appropriate manner. These criteria will be used in assessing eligibility for free membership. To qualify for free membership, you will need to prove:

- an active involvement in relief or rehabilitation operations
- ongoing activities in countries/regions experiencing complex political emergencies. Decisions are based *roughly* on a list of those countries listed under the UN Consolidated Appeal, supplemented by countries/regions considered by the RRN team to fit the criteria.

We will be happy to offer a more detailed explanation of these criteria on request.

**A registration/order form, can be found on page 29
and details of how to pay on page 30.**

Membership/Renewal System

IMPORTANT: IF YOU WISH TO REMAIN ON THE MEMBERSHIP LIST, YOU MUST REMEMBER TO RETURN THE RENEWAL SLIP ATTACHED TO THE LAST NEWSLETTER OF EACH YEAR OR YOUR PLACE WILL AUTOMATICALLY BE TAKEN BY ANOTHER APPLICANT

To ensure that the limited number of free subscriptions continues to reach the most appropriate individuals/organisations in a range of countries/emergency situations, a system of annual renewal is necessary. An 'annual renewal tear-off slip' will be attached to the Nov/Dec Newsletter every year. Its purpose is three-fold: to ensure that we have your correct name, title and contact details on our mailing list; to 'weed out' the less motivated/interested; and to allow the RRN team to review its reach amongst its target audience in the light of changes in countries/regions experiencing complex political emergencies in particular. It may be necessary to consider a redistribution of FREE subscriptions - those falling outside the 'free category' as a result of the annual review will be offered membership on the basis of the £25.00 annual fee or individual copies at the standard prices.

Evaluation

The RRN team recommends including evaluation in the design of any programme and is committed to seeing its own performance evaluated on an annual basis, to determine the relevance and reach of its publications, by means of the annual renewal system (see above box) and questionnaire. Towards the end of the three-year period, the RRN team would also welcome an independent evaluation.

Evaluating the RRN's impact on learning and on policy and practice is a complex exercise. Individual and institutional learning draw on many other sources and are subject to a variety of factors outside the RRN's control. Comments from members/readers as to the ways they use RRN material will be greatly valued in addition to the annual questionnaire. The RRN team also plans to look more closely at institutional information processes and obstacles to learning, which, it is hoped, will offer further insights into the impact of the RRN materials.

Advisory group

Recognising the value of external views and the involvement of a range of stakeholders in its development, the RRN has initiated regular meetings of its Advisory Group. The Advisory Group provides advice, feedback and suggestions on the general concept and direction of the RRN and priorities for analysis and publications. Members of the Advisory Group attend and contribute primarily in their personal capacity as humanitarian professionals rather than as representatives of their respective organisations. Members are drawn from across the spectrum of the humanitarian community, to enable the RRN to draw on their knowledge of the needs, interests and priorities of the different sectors with which they are associated eg. NGO, UN etc.

While advice and guidance are welcomed, the RRN prides itself on its editorial independence and role as a neutral forum.

Articles

War-risk insurance cover for aid workers

by Alistair Hallam

The recent assassinations of six ICRC workers in Chechnya, and three Medicos Mundi workers in Rwanda (see Regional Focus section) has brought home the dangers involved in working in conflict situations. With the end of the Cold War, the increase in the number of conflicts and the greater willingness of relief agencies to work in conflict zones has led to a situation where relief workers regularly find themselves in dangerous situations, at risk from land-mines, armed bandits, cross-fire and now, it seems, from politically-motivated assassinations, designed to cause a withdrawal of aid from a particular region.

A number of agencies have developed security guidelines to try to minimise the possibilities of their employees being injured in the field (See the article by Koenraad van Brabant on page ??). However, even where these are well-developed, accidents inevitably occur. A few years ago, as reported in the very first edition of the RRN Newsletter, a staff member of a US NGO was seriously injured, losing a leg in a land mine incident in Somalia. The costs of repatriating the worker, and the subsequent medical bills, totalled more than one million US dollars. The high costs resulting from such incidents mean that aid agencies have to ensure that they plan for such eventualities, if they are to provide the best for their personnel whilst simultaneously protecting their finances.

Though rapid and unsystematic, a quick review of the situation

amongst relief organisations in the UK has revealed that no common policy exists regarding the provision of insurance cover for overseas workers. Some organisations not only have no special coverage for war risk, but have no accident insurance at all, one of the rationales being that in an average year, the costs of the premiums would be greater than the costs of any medical treatment required. For smaller organisations, however, the cost implications of a single accident could be prohibitive, and leave the injured employee and their family without any support.

...no common policy exists regarding the provision of insurance cover for overseas workers.

Over the last few years, there have been a number of cases where, following injury or death, agencies have refused or been unable to compensate employees or their families. Last year, for instance, a British aid worker in Kenya was abducted and killed. His agency had no insurance and made only a modest ex-gratia payment to his widow, who has two small children to bring up. Despite having worked for the agency for four years, the deceased had no pension, and his widow, on return to the UK, was unable to access state benefits for six months because of the length of time she had been overseas.

Some of the larger organisations that do not take out insurance make provision for compensation claims. However, not all accidents may be covered. The UK ODA only provides cover on overseas trips for accidents that occur while employees are working. This means that someone on mission, hit by a car while on their way to a restaurant for dinner, would not be covered.

While there may be an implicit understanding that the organisation would still pay for repatriation and medical costs

Organisations which only cover for 'work-related' injuries, interpret this as meaning that accidents that occur after 5pm, or during weekends, will not be covered, regardless of whether the employee is working or not.

in such situations, there is no guarantee of this happening. Furthermore, it is not clear what compensation would be due if an employee was permanently disabled as a result of such an accident. Other organisations which only cover for 'work-related' injuries, interpret this as meaning that accidents that occur after 5pm, or during weekends, will not be covered, regardless of whether the employee is working or not. As a result of these ineffectual provisions, some employees take out their own insurance. However, it appears that many do not, and are therefore not covered for a number of possible eventualities.

Where agencies do have insurance policies, the cover they offer varies widely. Rather alarmingly, there is also a considerable degree of confusion as to the exact terms of coverage, in particular where acts of war are a factor. In some policies, it appears that the war exclusion clause refers only to war between the five major powers, and that therefore a standard policy is likely

to be sufficient for those agencies working in relief, where conflict is either intra-state or involving minor powers. Of additional concern is the fact that an existing life insurance policy (to cover for a mortgage, for example) may be invalidated if the holder travels to a war zone. Thus, the family of an aid worker killed in the field could lose their home.

An existing life insurance policy (to cover for a mortgage, for example) may be invalidated if the holder travels to a war zone...and the family of an aid worker killed in the field could lose their home.

A small number of UK NGOs contacted did have special war-risk coverage for named individuals who

were likely to be travelling frequently to high-risk countries. Provided trips to the field were for

periods of less than one month, the agency did not need to contact the insurance company each time the named individuals were travelling. The coverage cost approximately £2,500 per annum per named individual. However, even where cover appears to be adequate, complications can arise. In the Somalia incident mentioned above, the NGO concerned had war risk insurance but, due to a loophole in the cover, the insurance company refused to pay. They argued that, as the individual was working at the time of the incident, the claim should have been dealt with by US Worker's Compensation Insurance, which covers injuries sustained while working. However, the latter did not include cover for war risk. Since then, InterAction, the US NGO umbrella organisation, have developed a scheme for providing war risk coverage to US NGOs, though they report that very few agencies have taken advantage of

the scheme.

Another complicating factor is that insurance companies may try

and shift responsibility by claiming that security guidelines were not adequate, and unnecessarily exposed staff to risk, or that security guidelines were not being enforced properly. It is extremely important that relief workers understand the extent of their coverage, for other-

wise they may find that they have inadvertently behaved ‘irresponsibly’ while carrying out what they considered to be essential duties. For instance, if injured while travelling at night, or being out after curfew, even if they have not broken agency guidelines, the insurance company may refuse to pay, and may then have to sue their agency for compensation. In certain countries, there is a high level of risk associated with all attempts to deliver assistance, and it is a matter of some debate as to what exactly comprises ‘irresponsible’ behaviour.

It is also important to be aware that insurance claims may not be met where it can be shown that the injured employee had been acting under the influence of alcohol or drugs. In addition, many insurers will not cover people for HIV-related costs. This has potentially serious implications for those working in countries where there is a high risk of contracting the virus, and where local health facilities may not have the capacity to screen blood used during transfusions. An aid worker infected as a result of receiving unscreened blood may find it impossible to arrange life insurance from then onwards. Some individuals have been refused standard life insurance on the basis that their work involved an excessive degree of risk. Some UK insurance companies differentiate between an agency’s European staff and their non-European and national staff, and will only provide cover to the former.

The complexities of the insurance world mean that, at the very least, employees should be fully briefed, before leaving their own countries, as to the extent of their coverage

and details of any exclusions. Agencies need to be sure that they have a clear and transparent policy concerning the health and safety of their overseas employees. They should strongly encourage prospective employees, particularly those with dependants, to arrange adequate pension arrangements, and to

Some individuals have been refused standard life insurance on the basis that their work involved an excessive degree of risk.

make sure that existing life insurance policies are not invalidated by travel to a

particular region of the world. Younger aid workers may be less concerned about insurance or pension cover, but if they are permanently disabled for life, they may find that state benefits are far from adequate. Where agencies have chosen not to take out comprehensive insurance, they need to demonstrate that they have made provision for meeting eventualities.

Principle 7, of the People in Aid Code of Best Practice in the Management and Support of Aid Personnel (published as Network Paper 19 and distributed in this February mailing) recommends that insurance provision procedures are regularly reviewed and information to staff updated, and that field staff and families accompanying them receive oral and written briefing on country or regional security, emergency evacuation procedures and insurance arrangements *before* the assignment begins. ODA, UNICEF and others have indicated that funding may become conditional on agencies agreeing to adhere to such practice.

Security guidelines: no guarantee for improved security

by Koenraad Van Brabant

The proliferation of armed conflicts and of private aid agencies working

in them, whether for humanitarian or for competitive reasons, puts an increasing number of staff at serious risk. Although good statistics are lacking, it appears that a rapidly increasing number of national and international agency staff are being killed or injured through acts of war and violence. This article looks at the production and use of security guidelines – a tool commonly used by agencies to try and reduce the level of risk in the field – and concludes that current practice is wanting.

Perhaps the primary reason why security guidelines are often ineffective, is that they are, by their nature, fairly rigid, whereas the environment in which many humanitarian programmes takes place is extremely complex. Understanding the dynamics of the conflict can be a significant achievement in itself, but reducing risk will often depend upon an agency’s skills in diplomacy, public relations and political positioning. For agencies are not only at risk of being caught in the crossfire of a conflict – the resources they control can also make them the direct targets of bandits and looters, as well as of local power brokers who may view them as rivals. In addition, the high profile of humanitarian organisations, and the fact that aid is often used as an important instrument of foreign policy, can mean that international aid agencies become the object of politically-motivated hostage-taking and terrorist attacks. The most recent murder of six ICRC staff in Chechnya tragically illustrates this development.

Detailed, inter-agency analysis of security incidents would improve the overall level of understanding for all agencies. Currently, this is not standard practice, nor a standard recommendation in security guidelines. Even where security is regularly reviewed at inter-agency

meetings, the reporting of incidents is not necessarily accompanied by an analysis of their political significance. Aid agencies should systematically conduct formal inquiries into security incidents and disseminate the results within and between agencies. Agencies should also discuss with others any changes to their procedures. For example, under certain circumstances, where agency offices or vehicles risk becoming deliberately targeted, some NGOs may remove logos and office signboards. This has security implications for agencies individually but possibly also collectively. It is important that there is an opportunity for the humanitarian agencies to discuss such policy changes.

...the high profile of humanitarian organisations, and the fact that aid is often used as an important instrument of foreign policy, can mean that international aid agencies become the object of politically-motivated hostage-taking and terrorist attacks.

Another problem with security guidelines, is that they are only as good as the person who produces them. Frequently, project managers or country representatives are asked to produce or review security guidelines, yet may not be qualified to do so. Sometimes, but not always, there may be a designated manager in headquarters whose duty is to check that security guidelines have been produced and reviewed. The personal experience of the author is of arriving at a new posting and receiving security guidelines that did not mention mines or ambushes, despite both being a real risk, or of witnessing well-intentioned managers draw up elaborate plans around the least

likely scenario, while overlooking the major risks. It is relatively easy to declare an area a 'no-go zone' and to impose a curfew on staff movements outside the compound at night. The difficulty lies in the 'grey' areas, where risk exists but is not continuous or acute. Assessing risk and determining risk reduction behaviour is a skill that few staff may have, particularly those without professional military training.

When recruiting, the majority of agencies do not consciously look for security-assessment skills, nor is training generally offered in such an area. Sometimes it might be possible to hire a national staff member with such skills, although the programme manager will still need to have the capacity to assess an applicant's skills and performance. There is a wider organisational responsibility here, that is being obscured by a delegation of authority that may be appropriate in principle, but not in practice.

Security guidelines in themselves are an administrative document. As such they become a reference in case of disagreement but do not actively reduce risk. Security professionals, military and other, receive training, while institutions in many countries, under health and safety regulations, are required to regularly practice safety procedures. Yet, surprisingly enough, aid agencies working in conflict, generally do not organise any practical security training and drill for staff.

While some agencies have organised driver training and first aid courses, very few have a radio technician permanently in the field

or train their staff in basic radio techniques and radio repairs. Hardly any organise exercises, for example on how to act in an ambush, what to do when you suspect

It is relatively easy to declare an area a 'no-go zone' and to impose a curfew on staff movements outside the compound at night. The difficulty lies in the 'grey' areas, where risk exists but is not continuous or acute.

you might be in a mine-field, or how to make a simple dugout or basic bunker. There are generally no simulation

exercises on how to constitute a convoy or how to evacuate a post or position. Along the same lines, managers are also expected to help staff cope with the stress that inevitably accompanies a high-risk posting, yet are not trained in how to do so. If lucky they are given a leaflet with '10 ways to reduce stress' – another example of the mistaken belief that practical problems can be addressed merely by producing paper.

Too often, pre-assignment briefings on security-related issues are vague and inadequate. For example, it seems that few senior field managers know what insurance cover the organisation provides its staff in a high-risk area (see article on war-risk insurance on page 4). This is not normally addressed in briefings and seldom made clear in personnel manuals. Another important area is the limits of an organisation's responsibility towards national staff and their families. For national staff, agency policy can be an important element of their risk assessment and, if there is trouble, will influence their choice of action. It is unacceptable for organisations to leave such matters to the 'discretion' of country representatives.

What the above reveals is that, while there is currently much debate about the role of aid in conflict, and a corresponding increase in under-

standing of the issues, in practice, agencies lack the necessary professional skills to handle security matters, and have only limited institutional learning and training mechanisms to improve this situation. Short-term funding, stagnant or shrinking budgets, short-term contracts that hinder career development and the retaining of experienced staff, and competing priority areas for professionalisation and training, all work against a rapid and effective improvement of security management in the field. However, as recent events in Rwanda, Chechnya and elsewhere demonstrate, there is a real need for agencies to invest in acquiring the appropriate security skills. It is hoped that a commitment to the Code of Best Practice in the Management and Support of Aid Personnel (see Network Paper 19) will lead to a genuine improvement in security management on the ground.

No longer an option but a necessity: cooperation between humanitarian and human rights organisations

by Ed Schenkenberg van Mierop¹

On 9 February 1996, Médecins sans Frontières (MSF) hosted a conference of 200 humanitarian workers and human rights specialists in Amsterdam, to discuss opportunities and mechanisms for cooperation. The meeting was a success. The attendance of large numbers of staff from both types of organisations proved that they share a belief that humanitarian and human rights organisations have a common aim; namely to alleviate human suffering and restore and ensure respect for human dignity. It was widely recognised that humanitarian and human rights concerns are inextricably linked. The Conference identified areas where contacts between

the humanitarian and human rights world should be enhanced: the collecting, sharing and passing on of information, lobbying, campaigning and training. The Conference considered the issue of humanitarian or human rights NGOs providing information or giving testimonies to the two ad-hoc international criminal tribunals, and concluded that the relationship between both them and the Tribunals needed to be explored further.

After the genocide in Rwanda in 1994, many NGOs felt that it was time to convert what were essentially common concerns into effective action. Eventually, this led to the idea within MSF to hold a conference on cooperation between humanitarian and human rights organisations. During the Cold War, humanitarian and human rights organisations developed separately, each protective of its own agenda. Yet, this dichotomy cannot be maintained any longer. Humanitarian and human rights NGOs have a common responsibility in defining new strategies so as to better mobilise public opinion and generate political will for international action.

Humanitarian and human rights NGOs have a common responsibility in defining new strategies so as to better mobilise public opinion and generate political will for international action.

The will or (moral) duty to speak out against gross and massive human rights violations witnessed by humanitarian staff in the course of their duties has always been hotly debated. Some claim that maintaining good relations with authorities to achieve and maintain access is in

contradiction with denouncing those authorities for committing atrocities. Others have indicated that there can be no international 'silent witnesses'. A rather simple solution which bypasses this inherent tension in combining humanitarian assistance with human rights advocacy is to disseminate the information through a third party that does not

reveal its source.

This third party can be a United Nations human rights mechanism such as a country or thematic rapporteur or a human rights NGO.

Many humanitarian staff are unaware that their mundane daily routine may provide useful indicators for those collecting human rights information.

It is only recently that UN human rights mechanisms and human rights NGOs have shown interest in addressing gross and massive human rights violations in conflict areas on a more permanent basis. Both the UN and organisations such as Amnesty International have set up field operations in Rwanda. In a number of instances, MSF has acted as a 'pathfinder' for the human rights monitors of the UN human rights field operation for Rwanda. This 'pathfinding' role is a rather low-risk exercise in which the humanitarian organisation gives out a 'hidden' signal in order to draw the fact-finding attention of the monitors. In other areas, MSF has had contact with UN human rights rapporteurs who had no, or only limited access to places where MSF maintained a presence.

Many humanitarian staff are unaware that their mundane daily routine may provide useful indicators for those collecting human rights information. The information that such staff are normally able to provide tends to be of a predominantly humanitarian and medical nature, rather than what is usually perceived to be 'genuine' human rights information. Yet keeping

statistics of war trauma among civilians may reveal patterns of large scale indiscriminate attacks that can be qualified as grave breaches of humanitarian law.

For human rights and humanitarian organisations to cooperate effectively, transparency is needed. Too often, MSF staff have been interviewed by a human rights mission without knowing what is being done with their information.

If the human rights organisation decides to produce an external report which is, *inter alia*, based on information from humanitarian organisations, the recommendations made by the report should be shared beforehand with the humanitarian organisations concerned.

Training is another field for the exchange of views and experiences. Today, every relief worker needs training in human rights and humanitarian law (see also Network Paper 19 by James Darcy). The larger humanitarian organisations may be able to employ in-house specialists to this end. However, smaller organisations may contract human rights staff for this training. If a humanitarian organisation wishes to be more alert to human rights violations and take a more pro-active role in searching for information, such training should involve interviewing and recording techniques. Through these means, humanitarian organisations will be able to be more systematic in the collection of stories of sometimes gravely traumatised refugees who have fled a war zone, and ensure that valuable information does not get lost.

Human rights and humanitarian organisations should also consider whether to establish mechanisms to discuss the human rights impact of

assistance programmes. Clearly, humanitarian assistance should be sensitive to the human rights of the target population. However, humanitarian organisations have frequently been confronted with requests of governments to assist a population in a way that actually facilitates human rights violations. For example, how should a humanitarian organisation react to a request of a government to deliver aid in

...cooperation between humanitarian and human rights organisations is no longer merely an option, but a necessity.

camps set up to force a population to leave a certain area. Improvement of the humanitarian conditions for the population and the fact of an international presence should be weighed against the forced displacement of the population. This is not a dilemma that can be solved by humanitarian organisations alone.

With this in mind, cooperation between humanitarian and human rights organisations is no longer merely an option, but a necessity. If we look at the present state of the world's populations in danger, our common responsibility overrides questions over mandates or fear of the loss of identities. The key is to mutually reinforce each other by using our comparative advantages of humanitarian access and human rights knowledge and expertise.

¹ Ed Schenkenberg van Mierop is a policy advisor on humanitarian affairs at MSF - Amsterdam

News

'One year on': follow-up monitoring of the Rwanda Evaluation

JEFF Sets the Trend.....What happens to evaluations of humanitarian aid programmes once the final versions have been completed? Who is responsible for ensuring that the recommendations are given proper consideration and the outcomes recorded?

For most evaluations the answer to these questions is clear – responsibility for follow-up rests solely with the commissioning organisation. The commissioning organisation

Whilst some commissioning organisations may decide to implement the recommendations and modify their structures and procedures accordingly (or request their partner organisations to do so), others, if they so wish, may decide to 'bury' the report and take no heed of the recommendations.

determines how the recommendations are responded to and, in many organisations, actually chooses who it informs about the evaluation and its findings. Whilst some commissioning organisations may decide to implement the recommendations and modify their structures and procedures accordingly (or request their partner organisations to do so), others, if they so wish, may decide to 'bury' the report and take no heed of the recommendations.

For an unprecedented, system-wide evaluation commissioned by a 37-organisation Steering Committee -

such as the Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda – responsibility for follow-up is bound to involve greater ambiguity. The Synthesis report of the Joint Evaluation contained no fewer than 64 individual recommendations addressed to different parts of the international community – including the Security Council, heads of UN agencies, donor organisations, NGOs and media organisations. In late 1995, the Steering Committee for the Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda agreed that it would reconvene one year after publication of the Evaluation, to review the impact of the Study. At that time however, it was unclear what mechanism (if any) would be used to monitor the follow-up to the Study and prepare a ‘one year on’ report to the Steering Committee. Sida took the initiative in establishing a group to undertake this role and in May 1996 the ‘Joint Evaluation Follow-up Monitoring and Facilitation Network’ (JEFF) was formed. In mid-February 1997, just as we were going to press, the Steering Committee met to consider a draft version of the ‘one year on’ report prepared by JEFF.

JEFF was made up of 11 individuals based in 7 countries who were representative of the four Study Teams of the Joint Evaluation, the Management Group, and the types of organisation which comprised the Steering Committee. Finance and capacity support was provided to JEFF by CIDA, Danida, Sida and USAID, and ODI served as the ‘hub’ of the network. JEFF members participated in meetings where the Joint Evaluation was discussed and, in addition, attempted to monitor the outcome of those meetings and processes in which they were not able to participate. Documentation from these meetings

was collected and held centrally by ODI. Members of the Steering Committee were also requested to prepare reports on follow-up within their organisations.

For the purposes of preparing the ‘one year on’ report to the Steering Committee, each of the 64 recommendations was accorded a ‘response status’ category. The ‘A’ category denoted those recommendations that had not been formally discussed by the organisations to

..it is hoped that JEFF has demonstrated the value of mechanisms designed to monitor the follow-up to large, system-wide, evaluations of the international community’s response to complex emergencies

which they had been addressed. Those recommendations that were formally discussed but rejected were accorded a ‘B’. Those that had not resulted in resolution or action fell into category ‘C’, and those that had resulted in resolution or action, ‘D’. Because many recommendations had multiple addressees, there was a problem of categorising those recommendations which had been discussed and acted upon by some but not others and a number of recommendations had to be accorded a dual category status.

The draft ‘one year on’ report prepared by JEFF concluded that the Joint Evaluation has had a substantial impact. Considerable debate has been provoked and, in a number of areas of policy and practice, significant progress has been achieved. According to the categorisation system used, more than half of the recommendations had seen some resolution or action. Follow-up on recommenda-

tions addressed to the Security Council and the UN Secretariat was found to have been very limited; but with the arrival of a new UN Secretary General and recent evidence that the Security Council is more open to the perspectives of the humanitarian community (see article below), the prospects for follow up in these areas over the coming weeks has been improved.

Whatever the eventual impact of the Joint Evaluation, it is hoped that JEFF has demonstrated the value of mechanisms designed to monitor the follow-up to large, system-wide, evaluations of the interna-

tional community’s response to complex emergencies. The practice of undertaking automatic ‘one year on’ reviews of major evaluations is not widespread, even within many bilateral and multilateral aid organisations and it is hoped that the JEFF experience will encourage a trend in this direction. Though lessons can be learnt from the way JEFF functioned, the experience will be useful in the design of future follow-up monitoring mechanisms.

Within a system as complicated and as densely populated by organisations as the international community’s system for responding to complex emergencies, it is only too easy for individual organisations to avoid

...it is only too easy for individual organisations to avoid giving proper consideration to those recommendations addressed to them,...well-informed scrutiny and the ability to place information in the public domain is a critical component of accountability.

giving proper consideration to those recommendations addressed to them, or to reform proposals involving them which have been prepared after substantial and careful study by external reviewers and researchers. As shown by the various ‘Watch’

organisations, well-informed scrutiny and the ability to place information in the public domain is a critical component of accountability. In the efforts to improve the functioning of the international community's humanitarian system, mechanisms such as JEFF will have an important role to play in maintaining the pressure necessary to keep the system improving.

Security Council invites unprecedented briefing by NGOs and the Red Cross on the Great Lakes Crisis

In an unprecedented meeting of NGOs and the Red Cross Movement with the UN Security Council on February 12th, CARE International, OXFAM International, Médecins Sans Frontières and the ICRC gave first hand accounts of the deteriorating situation in Rwanda, Burundi and Zaire.

Initiated by Chilean Ambassador Somavia in light of the worsening situation in the Great Lakes region, this historic

February briefing sought to highlight three challenges confronting the humanitarian community in its efforts to bring assistance to those in need, stressing the need for *political* solutions: the absence of adequate protection for refugees, displaced and civilians; lack of access by NGOs to the vulnerable; and the widening regional crisis and need for a regional solution. There is a danger that the Great Lakes conflict will spread to other countries in the region.

As one of the agencies present said: "Agencies cannot solve these problems with biscuits, vaccines and water. People will continue to die

and the war will continue to spread throughout the region unless the UN Security Council, Member States and regional leaders take decisive action."

The overwhelming message from the NGO and Red Cross representatives was to press home the need for a political solution to the problem – as the Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda urged one year ago, humanitarian assistance cannot substitute for political action. Where members of the Security Council failed to act in time to halt the genocide in 1994 – perhaps because, as one permanent member is known to have said "the information base upon which the Council takes decisions in this area is totally inadequate...a slender, tenuous database" – the same must not be allowed to happen in the face of the current escalation of conflict in the region.

"Agencies cannot solve these problems with biscuits, vaccines and water. People will continue to die and the war will continue to spread throughout the region unless the UN Security Council, Member States and regional leaders take decisive action."

A meeting with Kofi Annan, which he described as a 'milestone' in UN/NGO relations, gave some cause for optimism. Annan

expressed his commitment to a regional settlement, and intention to put pressure on all sides to join negotiations and a political process – he will insist that help with the Zairean elections will only be on the basis of agreement to participate in a regional conference, and told the meeting of his plans to create a series of country special representatives under Sahnoun to drive the process.

However, the meeting with UNSC members indicated the unlikelihood that exceptional diplomatic pressure will be brought to bear in support of such actions. While not unexpected, this reinforcement of existing fears

was disappointing in view of the size and complexity of the humanitarian crisis in that region. Some progress was made in highlighting situations of particular concern, such as that of Tingi Tingi (where it is estimated that 55% of under-fives have died), which met with an agreement by Akashi to raise the issue of extraordinary action with Mrs Ogata.

Launch of the Emergency Nutrition Network

There has been a growing awareness amongst agency personnel in the emergency food and nutrition sector that interventions are not always as appropriate, effective or efficient as they could be. High turnover of staff and failure of institutional memory often leads to a tendency to 're-invent the wheel'. Humanitarian emergencies are frequently associated with logistical and resource constraints which limit field level access to appropriate information at a critical time. Furthermore, experience demonstrates that, as emergencies unfold, new sets of issues and problems arise where existing knowledge or guidelines are often of little help in supporting fieldworkers trying to respond. The idea for the Emergency Nutrition Network (ENN) arose at an interagency meeting to address some of these issues.

The overall aim of the network is to improve the effectiveness of emergency food and nutrition interventions in emergencies

The network includes humanitarian agency personnel, academics and researchers working in the food and nutrition sector of emergencies. The overall aim of the network is to

improve the effectiveness of emergency food and nutrition interventions in emergencies, primarily through facilitating the exchange of field level experience and providing a mechanism by which field staff can be kept up to date with current research and evaluation findings. It is hoped that the ENN will play a part in increasing the level of consensus at field level on best operational practice.

The primary medium for this information exchange is a quarterly newsletter – ‘Field Exchange’ – which will contain short articles written by field personnel working in the food and nutrition sector of emergency response. These articles should highlight new approaches or specific difficulties and raise issues provoking debate or research. An article may describe a recurring problem or draw out lessons learnt e.g. adapting feeding programmes in insecure situations. Other articles may be reports of observed nutritional phenomena where there is a recognised need for more data and research e.g. the association of specific diets with Kwashiorkor.

The newsletter will also contain correspondence and dialogue on topical issues and events: readers may wish to comment on subjects such as a recent meeting or conference or the findings and operational relevance of an emergency programme evaluation. Listings of conferences, meetings courses and training workshops will also be included.

It is anticipated that, in the future, the network will promote initiatives aimed at addressing recurrent problems and issues facing field workers. The outcomes of these initiatives might include more up-to-date guidelines, good practice reviews, and the ability to provide appropriate technical support to field staff.

The Emergency Nutrition Network is currently funded by the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs, MSF International, Concern Worldwide, ODA, ACF, Oxfam, CIDA, UNICEF, SCF (UK), UNHCR, WFP, WHO, and IFRC. Partnership in the network is not dependent on funding or any other financial contributions

If you want more information about the ENN and would like to receive ‘Field Exchange’; if you have research findings or relevant experiences you would like to share or wish to highlight a specific problem or issue contact: Fiona O’Reilly, Emergency Nutrition Network, Department of Community Health & General Practice, Trinity College 199 Pearse Street, Dublin 2, Ireland. Tel: +353 (0)1 6082676 / 6081087 Fax: +353 (0)1 6705384 Email: foreilly@tcd.ie

The Ottawa Conference on Anti-Personnel Mines

From 3-5 October 1996, the Canadian Government hosted a meeting in Ottawa of States committed to the total elimination of anti-personnel mines (APMs). Of those countries present, 48 agreed the ‘Ottawa Declaration’ calling for “the earliest possible conclusion of a legally binding international agreement to ban anti-personnel mines”. Canada challenged the participants to return to Ottawa in December 1997 to sign a global ban treaty to be implemented by the year 2000.

Participants at Ottawa also agreed to support a Canadian-US proposed resolution to the UN General Assembly to “pursue vigorously an effective legally-binding international agreement to ban use, stockpiling, production and transfer of anti-personnel landmines with a view to completing the negotiation

as soon as possible”. The resolution passed the First Committee stage on 13 November 1996 with a vote of 141 to 0, ten countries abstaining.

A number of countries have been lobbying to have the APM issue dealt with by the UN Conference on Disarmament, the same negotiating body that has worked on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty. Around 50 states are members and agreement is made by consensus. Some commentators have interpreted this as a means by which those countries opposed to a ban will undermine the Ottawa initiative, because the need for consensus results only in agreements that satisfy the least cooperative member. One state can effectively stall the entire process.

Another threat to a global ban comes from the definition of APMs used in the revised Protocol II of the Inhumane Weapons Convention, in which APMs are classified by their ‘primary’ design, not by their effect. This may allow manufacturers and exporters to claim that their devices are not primarily anti-personnel landmines, and herald the development and deployment of new hybrid dual-purpose APMs.

On 1 October, the Council of Ministers of the EU adopted a new common EU position. This was announced in Ottawa and includes: a moratorium on the export of all APMs to all destinations; an appeal for national bans or restrictions complementary to those contained in the Inhumane Weapons Convention; and a pledge of a further 7 million ECU (approximately 5.6 million pounds) for mine clearance.

ReliefWeb delivers the goods

Over the last year, DHA has been

developing ReliefWeb, a global information service available through the Internet that is designed to strengthen the international community's ability to respond to humanitarian emergencies. The site is easily accessed by those with computer, browser software and a modem, and provides extensive, up-to-date information on issues relating to complex emergencies and natural disasters. The site is well-designed and easy to use, even for the techno-phobic.

At the time of going to press, information was available on 21 'emergencies' – twelve complex emergencies, and nine natural disasters. There is also currently a special page on the Great Lakes crisis, up-dated twice a day. The bulk of information comes in the form of reports from agencies in the field: NGOs, the ICRC, UN agencies and press agencies. As long as the reports satisfy certain basic criteria (the most general being that they must relate to an official UN emergency and come from a registered organisation), determined by an Information Working Group made up of partner organisations and consortiums, they are posted up.

The information officers at ReliefWeb do not edit the reports or make any judgement as to the quality of the information contained. They feel that the priority is to ensure that the information is widely available, rather than worry about how it is written or presented. Each document posted on ReliefWeb is clearly sourced and dated, the submitting organisation taking full responsibility for its content. Users are then encouraged to compare and contrast information, and decide for themselves which are the most reliable sources of information. For this reason, documents from individuals are not published. ReliefWeb seeks to publish information from as wide an array of

sources as possible, to present a broader picture of the situation, and to reduce the chances of any overall political bias in the reporting.

In the future, the aim is to have reports presented in a more standardised format. It is anticipated that, over time, as users compare each other's submissions, a consensus on the most suitable format will emerge (ReliefWeb/DHA are, however, working on the standardisation of situation reports within the UN system.) It is also hoped that NGOs will start to develop their own web sites, so that ReliefWeb, rather than assemble agency reports itself, will provide direct access to the source of the information.

Information on the website is updated at least once a day. However, updates are dependent upon the submission of reports, which can mean that the most recent information on a particular region can be a week old. A bulletin page reports on new and significant developments. ReliefWeb also includes a series of very useful maps on areas affected by emergencies, and contains a financial tracking database.

ReliefWeb is also developing Regional Information Centres (RICs) – systems located in or near long-term emergency regions to encourage the exchange of information between the humanitarian community at a more operational level. The pilot RICs are located in the Great Lakes, Azerbaijan and Sierra Leone (see RRN newsletter 5 for a discussion of such Geographical Information Systems). The Integrated Regional Information Network (IRIN), the RIC for the

Great Lakes, was set up before ReliefWeb as a DHA initiative. ReliefWeb is working closely with IRIN to develop a more tailored approach to information collection and dissemination, which involves IRIN staff seeking out information from their contacts. In contrast, the RIC in Azerbaijan (AzerWeb) is more of a bulletin board type of system where local agencies decide what information they would like to share among themselves. There are

about 15-20 NGOs actively participating in this at the moment, although this number is expected to rise considerably in the near future.

The RIC in Sierra Leone will be a combination of the other two styles.

ReliefWeb also offers early-warning alerts through the monitoring of key events, and links to other websites, commodities tracking, registers of experts, search and rescue and national emergency relief services.

ReliefWeb offers a truly valuable service to the international relief community, demonstrated by the fact that currently between 4,000 and 7,000 people visit the site everyday. Ultimately, however, its impact will be determined, to a large degree, by the quality and range of reports that it receives. It is important, therefore, that humanitarian agencies support this initiative, by sending in reports, working together to improve the quality of such reports, and contributing to the development of ReliefWeb.

For more information, contact Andrew Andrea, Information Manager, ReliefWeb, DHA (Tel:+41 22 917 2232.) Email: Andrew.Andrea@dha.unicc.org

ReliefWeb is also developing Regional Information Centres (RICs) – systems located in or near long-term emergency regions to encourage the exchange of information between the humanitarian community at a more operational level.

or access the webpage directly on (<http://www.unicc.org/relief>, or <http://www.reliefweb.int>).

The RRN is currently updating its own webpage. Users who have recently visited the site will have found that certain links with other pages no longer work. As reported elsewhere in this Newsletter, the RRN is being restructured, and changes to the webpage have waited until this process was finished. We apologise for any inconvenience! During the year, we will also be re-issuing Network Paper 13: 'Getting On-Line in Emergencies: A Guide and Directory to the Internet for Agencies involved in Relief and Rehabilitation', to take into account recent developments on the Web.

1997 review of PARinAC and partnership document: status report

Partnership in Action (PARinAC) is a joint UNHCR-NGO initiative to develop a more constructive and concrete partnership between UNHCR and NGOs. In June 1994, following a year-long series of consultations and regional meetings around the world, involving UNHCR and NGO partners, more than 250 participants from over 100 countries met in Oslo to develop a 'Plan of Action'. This plan represented a synthesis of the hundreds of proposals which had emerged from the regional meetings on the five agenda items of protection, internally displaced persons, emergency preparedness and response, the relief to development continuum, and NGO-UNHCR partnership.

Since the Oslo meeting, there have

been a number of PARinAC initiatives, including regional meetings of NGO-UNHCR PARinAC focal points, development of the partnership programme management handbook and briefings on protection issues. These have served to demonstrate the inter-dependency of UNHCR and NGOs in all aspects of refugee work. UNHCR, through a series of questionnaires to Country Representatives, NGO implementing partners and others, is now seeking to review all 134 recommendations in the Oslo Plan of Action, review the changes in HCR/NGO relationships that have resulted from PARinAC, assess its achievements, and consider future priorities and activities. Preliminary findings of the review process indicate that PARinAC appears to have become more a vehicle for small agencies or national agencies in poor countries, than for large international agencies, helping to raise the profile, awareness and standing of national NGOs where PARinAC has been actively followed up. A substantive report will be prepared for the June meeting of the Standing Committee of UNHCR's Executive Committee.

As a follow-up to PARinAC, UNHCR is considering producing a Partnership Document, which would

...PARinAC appears to have become more a vehicle for small agencies or national agencies in poor countries, than for large international agencies, helping to raise the profile, awareness and standing of national NGOs...

be signed by all implementing partners. The aim of the document would be to set out the pre-conditions for working with UNHCR, elaborate a code of conduct (based on the Red Cross/NGO Code), include reference to expected or desired performance standards, as well as guidelines on specific issues, for example, work with children and women, environ-

ment, health and others. Many of the issues to be included are covered by the various recommendations in the Oslo Plan of Action. As soon as there is an agreed outline and strategy, UNHCR plan to share the concept with NGOs to ensure full discussion prior to any finalisation.

The InterAction 'NGO Field Cooperation Protocol'

Following the influx of Rwandan refugees into Goma in mid-1996, hundreds of relief agencies rushed in to offer assistance. While some performed extremely well, many did not. The numbers of NGOs involved in the response led to considerable difficulties in coordinating activities. Many of those present felt that the experience of Goma revealed major weaknesses in the international humanitarian system, amongst which was the lack of an adequate coordinating mechanism for disaster relief agencies in the field: NGOs competed for staff and premises; rents and salaries were pushed up; local government structures were affected by the loss of staff to better-paid jobs in the NGO sector; agencies fought over turf, competed to run media-friendly projects such as unaccompanied children's centres, and, local NGOs, some of whom had been present for decades, were marginalised.

As a result of experiences during the Great Lakes crisis, different groups of NGOs have organised themselves to try and develop new ways of working, and to improve standards across the board. In September last year, after a lengthy consultation process, a number of US NGOs involved in disaster relief, working together under the auspices of InterAction – the US NGO umbrella group – published a protocol for NGO cooperation in the field. The signatories, which include virtually

all the major relief NGOs in the US, agreed that, to enhance performance and accountability, they would instruct their field representatives engaged in disaster response to “consult with other NGO representatives similarly engaged to try to reach consensus” in dealing with a range of issues: establishing a forum for coordination; relations with local authorities – on registration, taxation, policy advice and training for host authorities, and respect for local protocols; local employment practices – wage and benefit levels, conditions of service, training, and political involvement of local staff; leasing, contracting and procurement practices; media relations – criticisms of other agencies, clustering at media focal points, and local media; security arrangements – hostage policy, housing, communications, evacuation and convoy procedures; relations with indigenous NGOs – training, funding and involvement in project design and implementation; NGO-military relations; NGO-UN relations; sectoral and geographic division of labour; information sharing; and, adoption of socio-economic programme approaches.

The US agencies involved do not consider the Protocol as competing with the Red Cross/NGO Code of Conduct – largely developed in Europe, but as complementary: where the Protocol focuses on *practice* in the field, the Code is more concerned with the *principles* of humanitarian action. They are keen to see others involved in the initiative, and have invited European NGOs to sign up, and to suggest amendments to the Protocol. No European NGOs have yet signed up,

however, and a number appear to be rather bemused by the Protocol, feeling that it lacks substance. It is only two pages long, with just one line on each issue – and could be mistaken for the contents page of a larger document, rather than a piece of work that stands alone. Furthermore, it is essentially non-binding, in the sense that agencies only have to *try* to reach consensus, and there

...the Protocol is intended to be a first step in improving coordination in the field: the fact that agencies have agreed to consult and cooperate is important in itself. The Protocol...is not designed to be prescriptive – developing guidelines on good practice will be a longer-term, more iterative process.

is no discussion of any mechanism for monitoring and enforcement.

InterAction responds that the Protocol is intended to be a first step in improving coordination in the field: the

fact that agencies have agreed to consult and cooperate is important in itself. The Protocol, they argue, is not designed to be prescriptive – developing guidelines on good practice will be a longer-term, more iterative process. Indeed, InterAction was planning to develop detailed performance standards as a complementary initiative to the Protocol, but are now working alongside the Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response (SCHR) based in Geneva, to produce one set of standards for the entire humanitarian community.

Initial experience with the Red Cross/NGO Code of Conduct which, unlike the Protocol, is very prescriptive, has been mixed. While it has generated interesting debates about neutrality and impartiality, it has not necessarily led to joint practical problem solving in the field, or been particularly helpful in encouraging the kind of constructive inter-agency debate that took place in Liberia (see Newsletter 6). This suggests that the InterAction ap-

proach may have its advantages, as it simply asks agency representatives to meet regularly and adopt an agenda that promotes inter-agency coordination on those issues that, on past experience, need the most attention.

Ultimately, experience of using the protocol in the field will reveal whether it is of value. To this end, InterAction is planning to send out teams to discover whether field-based staff are aware of the Protocol, and to monitor its implementation for information gathering purposes.

Those NGOs interested in learning more about the protocol should contact Jim Bishop at InterAction (jbishop@interaction.org, tel: ** 1 202 667 8227, fax: ** 1 202 667 8236)

Regional focus

Overview of Events in the Great Lakes Region During 1996

Prior to the events of late 1996 the Rwandan refugee situation had altered little; nearly 1.8 million Rwandan refugees still resided in neighbouring countries and the prospects for their voluntary return seemed slight. Several attempts had been made by the Zairean authorities to 'encourage' repatriation by preventing movement and trade into and out of camps and by the rounding up of groups within the camps and their forcible placement onto buses. In August 1995, for instance, such operations achieved the repatriation of approximately 15,000 refugees. However, the use of force was opposed, principally by UNHCR, and the overall impact on the numbers repatriating was not substantial.

In North and South Kivu there was increasing hostility towards the Tutsi Banyarwanda by the 'autochtones' (people of Zairean origin) and the Hutu refugees in the camps. First in the Masisi area of North Kivu and subsequently in the Rutshuru area, fighting led to hundreds of deaths and large-scale population displacement. The Government of Rwanda perceived the violence against these Tutsi as 'a second genocide'.

In Rwanda itself, central and eastern areas of the country enjoyed comparatively secure and stable conditions, though killings of survivors of the Genocide did take place. The west of the country was much less secure. Here a cycle of attacks (killings, ambushes, placing of

mines, etc.) by Hutu militia operating principally from Zaire and security operations (and reprisals) by the Rwandan Government army (RPA) produced high levels of insecurity. At the Roundtable meeting in Geneva in June 1996, the US representative identified the Interahamwe and the FAR (the army of the previous regime) – operating from camps in Zaire – as the principal source of insecurity in the region and signalled a desire for a more concerted effort to overcome the stalemate.

In Burundi, the situation was more volatile and the levels of violence much higher. In March 1996 the Security Council shied away from sanctioning the deployment of a UN force to protect relief workers and signal the resolve of the international community. A series of high-level visits to the country were undertaken by prominent US and EU officials. Strenuous mediation efforts by former President Nyerere of Tanzania appeared to be achieving real, though fragile, progress in June 1996, when the

President and Prime Minister both agreed a statement in Arusha. At the same time, the long-awaited report of the UN Commission of Inquiry into the October 1993 assassination of President Ndadaye was presented to members of the Security Council. Press reports of the leaked contents featured the name of former President Pierre Buyoya. On 25 July, following a

'creeping coup', former President Buyoya asserted military control over the country. The governments of the region were robust in their denunciation of the coup and signalled their determination to see compliance with the Arusha Statement by agreeing to impose a total economic blockade on Burundi until Major Buyoya returned the country to constitutional rule.

The uprising by the Banyamulenge in South Kivu, the formation of the Allied Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire (ADFL) including Banyarwanda and other anti-Mobutu groups in North Kivu, and the rapidity of their military victories, took the international community by surprise. The extent to which the ADFL's strategy of taking the key towns in eastern Zaire conformed to the objectives of the Government of Rwanda (by forcing the displacement of the refugees from the camps around Uvira, Bukavu and then Goma either deep into Zaire or back into Rwanda) led many observers to conclude that the ADFL were supported by the Government of

Rwanda. However, such links continue to be stoutly denied by Kigali. Whatever the truth, the result was a massive humanitarian crisis as relief agencies were forced to withdraw expatriate personnel and

Whatever the truth, the result was a massive humanitarian crisis as relief agencies were forced to withdraw expatriate personnel and most refugees were forced to move away from the camps and their sources of clean water, shelter and food rations.

most refugees were forced to move away from the camps and their sources of clean water, shelter and food rations. Until the start of the military aerial reconnaissance flights by the US and British airforces, information on the location of the refugees was minimal.

Agencies whose expatriate personnel had been evacuated from the

camps with the advent of the fighting were unable to obtain access to the affected population as a result of a varying combination of insecurity and the ADFL policy of preventing access. In addition to the broad concern among the agencies at the health implications of the (apparent) lack of access to food and safe water, some agencies also suspected the ADFL of substantial human rights abuse. These concerns led to calls for a multinational force (MNF) to intervene, which were quickly supported by the French and Spanish Governments and the European Commission, but the

response from many other key states was cautious. Concerned at the delay, the Canadian Government

offered to lead such a force and this resulted in the proposal finally receiving support from the USA, the UK and others. Reconnaissance teams and preparatory were deployed to the region by several Governments and the US and British airforces were tasked with the vital aerial reconnaissance role.

Agreement on the precise mandate of the MNF was not reached until 13 November when it was finally decided that it would not include disarming the militia present among the refugees. In a move that may well have been prompted by the realisation that the militia would not be tackled by the MNF and that their position might be frozen or even strengthened by the MNF, the ADFL (allegedly supported by the RPF) confronted the FAR and Interahamwe forces to the west of Mugunga camp on 14 November and forced them westwards and thus away from the approximately 500,000 refugees congregated in and around Mugunga camp. Either

because they had “been freed from the control of the FAR/ Interahamwe” or because of the threat of attack from ADFL forces if they moved westwards, this massive group of refugees headed back into Rwanda.

Aid agencies which had built up capacity to intervene in North Kivu were able to respond promptly and worked with the Government of Rwanda in assisting movement further back into Rwanda and providing shelter and basic needs assistance. Even though a very substantial number of refugees

remained unaccounted for in eastern Zaire (a much disputed figure ranging

from 100,000 to 600,000), the massive repatriation from Mugunga saw a waning of support for the MNF and proposals to scale down the intervention. These proposals were further scaled down in the face of ADFL opposition to an intervention. Eventually, even the proposal to airdrop relief supplies by the MNF to groups of refugees on the ground was discontinued. The Canadian Government formally wound-up the MNF structure at the end of December.

The conflict in eastern Zaire continues, and ADFL forces presently dominate most of North and South Kivu. However, the capacity of the ADFL’s logistics systems to cope with further advances westwards appears limited. The Zairean Army has heavily reinforced Kisangani and there are reports of support being provided by mercenaries and foreign troops. A counter-attack is apparently underway at the time of writing. At present approximately 250,000 Rwandan refugees are

settled in the new camps. In addition, tens of thousands of Zairians have been displaced by the fighting. Several agencies, including UNICEF, WFP, ICRC, ACF and LWF, are being allowed access to these populations by the Zairian authorities though relief efforts are considerably hampered by restrictions and logistical difficulties. UNHCR is attempting to negotiate mechanisms for the voluntary repatriation of the refugees. The fate of the ‘missing 350,000’ (the approximate figure implied by subtracting from the initial refugee population in eastern Zaire the numbers who repatriated and those in the new camps) is not known. Some observers explain the discrepancy in terms of inflated initial estimates of the refugee population in the original camps around Goma and Bukavu, whilst others explain it in terms of population dispersal in densely forested areas and high mortality rates resulting from the forced displacement.

Following the mass repatriation from Mugunga camp in mid-November the situation of the 600,000 refugees in Tanzania was brought into sharper focus. Pressure on them to repatriate was increased by a declaration from the Government of Tanzania that all Rwandan refugees should repatriate by the end of the year. Whilst a significant proportion indicated a desire to repatriate following the events of mid-November, others were unwilling. In mid-December, during operations to encourage and facilitate repatriation, a large group attempted to move further into Tanzania but were prevented from doing so by the Tanzanian Army. Following these events, all but a small number returned to Rwanda during the last two weeks of 1996.

The influx of 1.1 million returnees during a period of 6 weeks has placed enormous demands upon the

The fate of the ‘missing 350,000’ (the approximate figure implied by subtracting from the initial refugee population in eastern Zaire the numbers who repatriated and those in the new camps) is not known.

Government of Rwanda, which has given top priority to their successful re-integration. The international community has given, and continues to give, substantial support to these efforts, providing and committing substantial resources for assistance to a range of needs including additional food aid, housing, agricultural rehabilitation and human rights monitors. The success of the reintegration programmes are critical to Rwanda's future. The returnees will most probably have included substantial numbers of Hutus involved in carrying out the genocide and a larger number who are opposed to the Government of Rwanda. The commitment by the Government to bring those involved in planning and carrying out the 1994 Genocide will place additional burdens upon the already critically overburdened prison and justice systems. The capacity of the Government to maintain security in the country will probably also come under strain. The recent killing of three Spanish aid workers in Ruhengeri, allegedly by Hutu extremists, may be a pointer to future forms of insecurity.

In Burundi the situation appears to have worsened since late 1996. The international focus on events in eastern Zaire diverted attention from the activities of the Burundian authorities who have been engaged in regrouping populations, purportedly for their own security, but focusing solely on Hutus. Details of substantial human rights abuses by all parties to the conflict received little attention. The displacement of the refugees from the camps in South Kivu resulted in the return of some 80,000 Burundian refugees, but this has been into the highly insecure western areas of Burundi. The routing of Hutu opposition party (CNDD) bases in South Kivu by the ADFL has forced CNDD to relocate inside Burundi, and levels of violence have increased still

further. The activities of humanitarian agencies remain largely confined to Bujumbura, their activities hampered by the non-arrival of key items, whose exemption from sanctions was agreed in late 1996. Burundi's future prospects are unclear.

LIBERIA

Philippa Atkinson

The process of disarmament, instigated on November 22nd 1996 as part of the Abuja II accord, has continued throughout the last two months. Progress has been slow with less than 8000 fighters having handed in their weapons so far, out of an estimated total of 60000. The number and quality of weapons surrendered has also been low, and many observers continue to doubt the commitment of faction leaders to the disarmament exercise. Little effort has been made either to ensure the security of the disarmed fighters, plans for demobilisation and resettlement hampered by a lack of funding, particularly in transportation, or to tackle the crucial issue of security for the faction leaders. This latter has contributed to the current situation of "virtual disarmament", where all leaders pay lip service to the process while, in practice, maintaining their own militias at the high levels perceived necessary. The original deadline for disarmament of January 31st may have to be extended.

While security in parts of the country has improved since last year, fighting continues between ULIMO-J and K in diamond-rich western Liberia, and between NPFL and LPC forces in the south-east of the country, from where timber is

illicitly exported. At least five out of the thirteen counties remain inaccessible to the international community, including Ecomog – the Nigerian-led peace-keeping force. Humanitarian access has increased, but agency staff have been subject to high levels of harassment in the western counties, where incidents of hostage-taking and threats to personnel are common. Civilians in the area also suffer continued harassment by fighters. Attempts by the humanitarian community to deal with such incidents through negotiation with faction leaders have met with some success, and the recent assignment of a human rights monitor to assist UNOMIL may also help. The existing mechanism of the violations committee, however, has proved relatively ineffectual and, in inaccessible counties, the war continues.

In spite of these unresolved issues, ECOWAS – the Economic Community of West African States – and the major aid donors, the EU and the US, are committed to the present Abuja II agreement, with elections

This latter has contributed to the current situation of "virtual disarmament", where all leaders pay lip service to the process while, in practice, maintaining their own militias at the high levels perceived necessary.

time-tabled for May, and reconstruction and rehabilitation activities are being expanded accordingly. UNOPS, funded primarily by USAID and the EU, have started programmes of labour-intensive, community-based micro-projects, designed to

promote infrastructural rehabilitation as well as the reintegration of former combatants. Local NGOs are increasingly participating in all humanitarian activities as implementing partners. The international NGOs remain committed to their joint policy of minimal capital inputs, minimising the negative effects of assistance, and advocacy, for which a strategy is currently

being developed at head office level.

The increasing co-ordination of the policies of the humanitarian community in Liberia is encouraging. Aid is increasingly being targeted effectively, and being used to actively support local groups and communities. However, there is a danger that, as last year, the humanitarian community may be lulled into a false sense of security.

The international NGOs remain committed to their joint policy of minimal capital inputs, minimising the negative effects of assistance

More resources are required to implement the demobilisation and resettlement process, and more attention must be given to the political sphere, including advocacy and justice. Although there has been some discussion of the possibility of sanctions, including the setting up an international war crimes tribunal, the fundamental issues of continuing human rights abuses and exploitation of Liberia's natural resources by the factions have yet to be tackled effectively.

SUDAN

Peter Verney

In mid-January, a combined force of northern and southern Sudanese rebels opened a 500km eastern front to the civil war and seized two key garrison towns in northern Sudan. The forces advanced on the Roseires hydro-electric dam on the Blue Nile at Damazin, which supplies Khartoum with 80 per cent of its electricity. Former Prime Minister Sadiq al-Mahdi, who escaped from house arrest in Khartoum in December,

joined opposition politicians calling for an uprising against the National Islamic Front regime.

President al-Bashir accuses the United Nations and the United States of financing the operation - the latter gave US \$20m to neighbouring Eritrea, Ethiopia and Uganda last November. Speaking of 'Eritrean and Tigrayan aggressors' more than rebels, Khartoum is attempting a mass mobilisation of civilian militias to augment its overstretched and potentially recalcitrant armed forces - while detaining hundreds of opponents. On 14 January, Gaspar Biro, UN Special Rapporteur on human rights, was expelled from Sudan on the pretext that the government could not guarantee his safety. In Khartoum, rumours abound that the Iraqi government may be prepared to supply chemical weapons to the Sudanese Government. The Sudanese Government has denied opposition claims that Iran has supplied troops, tanks, guns and chemical weapons.

The World Organisation Against Torture (OCMT/SOS-Torture) repeated its grave concern for hundreds of children aged 7-16, "arbitrarily detained in squalid conditions at the al-Huda Camp, in the desert 2.5 hours from Khartoum". Despite statements by the Sudanese authorities and UNICEF in September 1996 that the camp was to close, it remains open and "mass arrest sweeps" of children in Khartoum continue.

The build-up of Sudanese government troops in Blue Nile province in response to the rebel advance, and the bombing of the area by Sudan's air force, has pushed thousands of refugees into Ethiopia near Asosa; malnutrition and disease are rife.

Conditions are also worsening in rebel-held parts of the Nuba Moun-

tains, beyond the reach of the UN's Operation Lifeline Sudan because of Khartoum's objections. Hopes of a cross-border supply operation from Ethiopia into the Ingessana Hills and Nuba Mountains have been dashed.

In the south of the country, Kerubino Kuanyin's "SPLA-Bahr al-Ghazal", now aligned with Khartoum, claims to have driven John Garang's SPLA-Mainstream from northern Bahr al-Ghazal state in December, capturing an airport and seizing food that an aid organisation had "delivered to SPLA-Mainstream". NGO staff nearby were temporarily evacuated; Kerubino had only just released several aid agency hostages. Growing insecurity in northern Bahr al-Ghazal and its effect on relief operations will be discussed by UN/NGOs in Nairobi in January. In mid-December 1996, the 'International Peace Caravan' visiting New Cush, in SPLA territory, witnessed the bombing of a civilian village by the Sudanese Air Force.

Northern Uganda and Eastern Equatoria reported increased violence from the Lord's Resistance Army, which is assisted by Khartoum. A build-up of SPLA-Mainstream forces on the Ugandan border may herald a new offensive in the south.

Northern Darfur, in the west of the country, announced a 96,000 tonne shortfall in grain production - more than half its total requirement - after poor rains. The state governor reported that one billion Sudanese pounds (US\$687,000) have been allocated to buy grain, and charitable organisations were seeking to assist low-income groups.

Finance minister Abd al-Wahab Osman accused (presumably indigent) charitable organisations of black marketeering and cancelled

their tax and customs exemptions on 22 December 1996.

AFGHANISTAN

Peter Marsden

Having taken Kabul at the end of September, the Taleban then moved north and captured the towns and villages which lay between Kabul and the Salang Pass. These were quickly retaken by opposition forces, aided by insurrection from within the population.

Following a stalemate during which the Taleban and the opposition forces were locked into immovable positions north of Kabul, the Taleban again moved north at the end of December and have, over the succeeding weeks, managed to recover the lost ground.

The opposition forces have blocked the Salang Pass by blowing up part of the mountainside and a bridge. The Taleban have moved west into central Afghanistan and may attempt to cross the Hindu Kush through one of a number of other routes, all of which are virtually impassable under winter conditions.

To avoid the insurrections which plagued their earlier offensive, the Taleban have virtually emptied the captured towns and villages of their populations and sent them south to Kabul. 98,000 people have entered the capital since UNHCR started to monitor movements on 2 January 1997. Most are near destitution and it has been necessary for UNHCR, WFP and ICRC to provide relief assistance. Their arrival has placed further strains on a city which is already heavily dependent on relief distributions.

Rampant inflation throughout Afghanistan is making it increasingly difficult for families to survive. More than 40,000 have

travelled to Pakistan since the beginning of October, in response to the economic situation. UNHCR and WFP are registering new arrivals at Nasirbagh camp near Peshawar. Many more would make the journey if they had the wherewithal to cover the cost of transport.

THE CAUCASUS

Moira Reddick

The sporadic amount of international and media attention that has been paid to the North Caucasus region during the last five years has been almost exclusively focused upon the war in Chechnya. While this war has been the most significant destabilising factor in the region, reactivated historical disputes over land and borders in the other republics have also caused problems, leading to major population flows both within and between states. Such displacement has exacerbated existing demographic and economic pressures, sparking more conflict, which has, in turn, led to further displacement. Many individuals in this region have now experienced double or triple displacement, and, as a consequence, have become

increasingly vulnerable. With such a shifting population, any attempt to establish reliable demographic data proves

futile and, at worst, can be regarded as a political gesture designed to validate the claims of different administrations. Unfortunately this lack of information affects the efforts of agencies to assess needs and their consequent ability to respond effectively.

Since the cease-fire was agreed in September 1996 there has been no

major fighting inside Chechnya. However, the environment in the North Caucasus has continued to be extremely fluid and uncertain. This uncertainty increased towards the end of 1996 in reaction to the belief of many that the cease-fire would not hold and that provocations would occur either in Chechnya itself or within the neighbouring Republics with the aim of preventing the Presidential elections. Despite uncertainties surrounding the election itself – procedures and eligibility for voting and international validation of the election were still in doubt in the week leading up to the first ballot – elections were held at the end of January, and at the time of writing, results remain unchallenged. Maskhadov, Russia's preferred candidate, appears to have gained an outright victory, by obtaining more than 51% of the vote, obviating the need for a second ballot if the results stand. The election itself was seemingly carried out without violence or obvious rigging, but a final statement on the results will not be forthcoming until the middle of February. A potentially interesting development in the fortunes of the region and one which will not have

There have been many security incidents involving humanitarian organisations but, by far the worst was the murder of six ICRC workers at the hospital of Novy Atagi...the result of these brutal murders was the withdrawal of all international humanitarian personnel from Chechnya and the reduction or complete suspension of all humanitarian activities.

been received warmly in Russian government circles, came with the announcement by Maskhadov, shortly after the results became known, that he wished to see international recognition of Chechnya. It remains to be seen what impact this change of government will have on this unstable area.

For the international aid community,

Chechnya is a highly uncertain environment. In addition to being exposed to the dangers faced on a day-to-day basis by the local population, they also face being targeted by kidnappers motivated by political and financial gain. There have been many security incidents involving humanitarian organisations but, by far the worst was the murder of six ICRC workers at the hospital of Novy Atagi, seventeen kilometres south west of Grozny on 17 December 1996. At the time of writing, no arrests had been made. Although many rumours have circulated as to the cause of these murders, and there has been much speculation as to whether the motivation was local, national or ideological, the authorities have made no definitive statement. Many have maintained that this was a deliberate act aimed at forcing the withdrawal of humanitarian organisations from Chechnya and thereby suspending the supply of aid which was assisting to normalise the situation and create an environment in which elections could take place.

Regardless of such theories, the result of these brutal murders was (and continues to be at the time of writing), the withdrawal of all international humanitarian personnel from Chechnya and the reduction or complete suspension of all humanitarian activities. Although many of the agencies are attempting to implement reduced programmes in essential services, such as water supply in Grozny and the supply of medicines to clinics throughout the country, concern is being expressed about the consequences of this situation for the population. In the case of many agencies (such as the ICRC), the suspension of humanitarian activities has been extended throughout the North Caucasus, affecting both the displaced and host populations of Dagestan, Ingushetia and North Ossetia as well as the population of Chechnya itself.

This is only the latest in a series of suspensions of activities and withdrawal of personnel in response to threats or outright attacks upon humanitarian aid personnel or local populations. The awareness by agencies that withdrawal could take place at any moment has hindered effective planning of activities and prevented continuity of approach. The additional dilemma that agencies have faced in this region is whether to assist certain vulnerable populations in case this assistance may be perceived by some as being politically motivated and thus provoke conflict.

In such a highly politicised environment, where international humanitarian aid, administered by neutral agencies, is a new and for some, alien concept, there is a need to establish understanding and respect for agencies and their work. Without such an understanding, ensuring the safety of agency personnel as well as the safety and well-being of vulnerable populations in the region will remain difficult.

Training courses

Training of Trainers in Disaster Management and Protection St Anne's College, University of Oxford, UK, 1-12 September 1997

Organised by the Oxford Centre for Disaster Studies (OCDS), the course will include: 1. Training needs assessment and design of training materials; 2. Individual and group dynamics; 3. Organising and preparing effective presentations; 4. Design and Management of Training; 5. Developing teams and running meetings; 6. Developing

facilitators and management skills; 7. Community based training using PRA techniques; 8. IT training in Disaster Management Information Systems; 9. Gender aspects of training; 10. Evaluation of training effectiveness.

The course will be of particular interest to: National Disaster Co-ordinators (in developing training policies); senior staff in Government, Military, Police, Civil Defence and NGOs (in organising training materials and programmes); and training staff (responsible for conducting training and staff development)

Cost: £2,629 (including tuition, site visits, and accommodation within St Anne's College and full board). To ensure a place, a £250 deposit must be received *no later than 31 March 1997*.

For further information contact:
The Course Administrator,
OCDS, PO Box 137, Oxford OX4
1UE England, Tel: +44 (0)1865
202772; fax: +44 (0)1865 202848;
E-mail 100612.1153@
compuserve.com

Short Study on Health in Conflict Situations

London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, UK, 28 April - 28 May 1997 (part-time)

Aims to enable participants to examine issues of health policy and practical issues in populations affected by conflict. The unit comprises five broad blocks:

- (i) The origins of conflict, its impact on health and health systems, and humanitarian assistance;
- (ii) Technical issues: health and nutrition assessment, health and nutrition interventions;
- (iii) Human resources: international, national: needs, training, management, coordination;

- (iv) Project design, monitoring and evaluation of humanitarian assistance;
- (v) General issues: gender and conflict; mental health; landmines; post-conflict rehabilitation.

For participants involved in policy formulation at the national/international level, and/or those who plan to work on the design, delivery and evaluation of health care programmes for populations affected by conflict. Previous experience in conflict settings is not essential. Cost: £925.

Further details, and an application form, are available from Registry, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Keppel St., London WC1E 7HT, Tel:+44 (0)171 927 2239 fax: +44 (0)171 323 0638 email: registry@lshtm.ac.uk.

**One-year MA in Post-war Recovery Studies
Institute of Advanced Architectural Studies, Post-war Reconstruction and Development Unit (PRDU), University of York, 1997-1998**

An opportunity for humanitarian aid workers, development practitioners and peace-keepers working in war-torn countries to develop professional, multi-disciplinary skills required to plan, manage and implement relief and recovery programmes that have sustainable, positive effects on war-torn nations. The course draws on the wide experience of the core staff and a range of internationally renowned organisations and individuals. Recent experiences and case studies feed into the course which combines structured academic learning with practical field experience.

For further information contact: Dr Sultan Barakat, Institute of Advanced Architectural Studies,

Post-war Reconstruction and Development Unit (PRDU), The University of York, The King's Manor, York YO1 2EP. Tel: +44 (0)1904 433959 Fax: +44 (0)1904 433949 Email: iaas1@york.ac.uk

International Diploma Course in Health Emergency Preparedness and Crisis Management Linkping, Sweden, June 1997.

Designed to cover a wide range of technical issues related to vulnerability reduction and major emergency preparedness crisis management techniques, and procedures in the aftermath of major emergencies. The focus of the course is on action and capacity building at the national and local levels. For 25 health professionals with relevant experience in emergency management.

Cost of tuition:US\$3,000 (accommodation and transport costs within Linkping will be communicated at a later stage. Each participant or sponsoring agency will be responsible for travel costs to and from Linkping). Applications to be submitted through the Regional offices of WHO to WHO/HQ, Division of Emergency and Humanitarian Action, by 30 March 1997.

For further information please contact: Emergency Preparedness Programme, Division of Emergency and Humanitarian Action World Health Organisation, 20 Avenue Appia, CH-1211 Geneva 27, Switzerland, Tel: +41 (0)22 791 2754 fax: +41 (0)22 791 4844 email: koobp@who.ch.

**The Civilian Personnel of Peace-Keeping/Humanitarian Operations and Election Monitoring Missions: Volunteers, Officers, Observers
Pisa, Italy, 30 June - 19 July 1997**
Organised in cooperation with:
Istituto Affari Internazionali

(Rome), Centro Militare di Studi Strategici (Rome), Centro Internazionale di Ricerca, Formazione e Documentazione sulla OSCE (Perugia), Croce Rossa Italiana (Rome), and under the patronage of: Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, European Commission (Office for Italy), United Nations (Information Centre for Italy). For up to 40 participants. Applicants must have a university degree in any field and an excellent knowledge of the English language.

Cost: 1,500,000 Lira (around US\$1,000) (includes registration, tuition, reference materials and lunch on class days. Some scholarships will be provided).

For further information contact: Professor Andrea de Guttry, Director, Training Programme: The Civilian Personnel of Peace-keeping/Humanitarian Operations and Election Monitoring Missions: Volunteers, Officers, Observers, Scuola Superiore di Studi Universitari e di Perfezionamento S. Anna, via Carducci, 40-56127 PISA, Italy. Tel:+39 (0)50 883312 (Tuesday and Thursday 10am-1pm) Fax:+39 (0)50 883210 Email: pkocorso@sssup1.ssup.it

INTRAC (International NGO Training and Research Centre) courses, Oxford, UK

INTRAC is running a range of courses in 1997, from one day seminars for Programme Officers to five day courses for managers and practitioners. The following are some of the courses available:

- *Managing a Participative Monitoring and Evaluation Process* (23-27 June 1997)
- *Financial Management for non-Financial Managers* (15-17 July 1997)
- *Working in Long-Term*

Conflict: Managing the Organisational Challenge (5-10 October 1997)

- *Organisational Assessment of Southern NGOs* (23-28 November 1997)

For more information about these courses and other INTRAC services, contact: Martina Hunt at INTRAC, PO Box 563, Oxford OX2 6RZ, UK Tel: +44 (0)1865 201851 Fax: +44 (0)1865 201852 Email: intrac@gn.apc.org

British Red Cross Summer School on International Humanitarian Law (IHL), Trinity Hall, Cambridge, UK, 11-14 July 1997

This will be an intensive course covering the theory and the practical implementation of IHL, with specialist speakers from universities and the armed forces, and from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). For suitably qualified people, such as students and scholars of international law and international relations, politics and peace studies, and members of the armed forces and practising lawyers. Cost: £160 for residents and £95 for non-residents.

For further information, please contact Michael Meyer, Head of International Law, British Red Cross, 9 Grosvenor Crescent, London SW1X 7EJ, Tel: +44 (0)171 235 5454 Fax: +44 (0)171 245 6315

Refugee Studies Programme Short Courses, Oxford, UK:

- *The Law of Refugee Status* (7-8 June 1997)

Led by Professor James Hathaway, aims to give participants the opportunity to grapple with difficult issues of application of the legal norms in the context of factual scenarios based on actual refugee claims. Questions to be addressed include the standard of proof in refugee claims; the use of interna-

tional human rights law to inform refugee determination; the extent of a state's duty to protect its citizens; the violation of socio-economic human rights as the basis for a refugee claim; and the determination of claims grounded in generalised circumstances. Cost: £100 (excluding accommodation)

- *1997 International Summer School* (1-25 July 1997)

Aims to provide those who work with refugees and other forced migrants with a wider understanding of the interlocking institutional framework that dominates their world and the world of those who have been uprooted. For senior and middle managers who are involved with assistance and policy-making for forced migrants. Participants are expected to include host government officials, intergovernmental, and non-governmental agency personnel engaged in policy-making, management and implementation of assistance. Cost: £1,950 for the four-week course including 26 days bed and breakfast accommodation from 30 June 1997.

For further information contact The Coordinator, Education Unit, Refugee Studies Programme, Queen Elizabeth House, 21 St Giles, Oxford OX 1A, UK. Tel: +44 (0)1865 270722 Fax: +44 (0)1865 270721 Email: rspedu@ermine.ox.ac.uk WWW site: <http://www.qeh.ox.ac.uk/rsp/>

VOICE and ECHO, took place in Dublin, Ireland, and was attended by government officials, donor representatives, academics and about 40 NGOs. The meeting was chaired by Niels Dabelstein, Danida, and opened by Santiago Gomez-Reino, the out-going Director of ECHO. Joan Burton the Irish Minister of State at the Department of Foreign Affairs also made an address.

During the first day, three papers were presented, with the aim of setting the context for current ethical debates and outlining key legal principles and moral issues confronting relief workers and aid policy makers. The second day began with a panel session which focused on the ICRC/ NGO Code of Conduct, and what practical measures NGOs could take to respond more systematically to the complex ethical challenges they face daily in their work. Participants then worked in groups to discuss particular case studies.

A number of key issues emerged from the Forum. Firstly, politicians continue to see humanitarian aid as a substitute for political action. NGOs should not accept this and should demand political action whenever appropriate. Secondly, humanitarian aid is given under rules different from those guiding development aid. The impact on development should, therefore, always be considered by those involved in the provision of humanitarian aid. Thirdly, humanitarian aid cannot be politically neutral and impartial, and may be sustaining unjust or inhumane systems. Fourthly, NGOs subscribe to different ethical standards, so while each organisation may be able to decide on a course of action when confronted with ethical dilemmas, a group of NGOs may not. Fifthly, while the Red Cross/NGO Code of Conduct provides an ethical frame-

Conferences

REPORTS

Forum on Ethics In Humanitarian Aid

On the 9th and 10th December, 1996, a Forum on Ethics in Humanitarian Aid, jointly organised by

work for relief agencies, it has yet to be operationalised. It needs to be transformed into guidelines which define the role of each organisation and provide a framework for the decision maker on the ground when s/he has to make choices. Finally, there is a need for performance standards, including those related to the rights of victims. Such standards will enable NGOs to be accountable to all the stakeholders: victims, staff, board, donor and the public.

Below, we publish an extract of the key presentation made by Joanna Macrae at the conference. A full version of this and her background paper is available from ODI. Those interested in obtaining copies of the other papers presented should contact Xavier Ortegat at VOICE (tel: +32 (0)2 732 7137; fax: +32 (0)2 732 1934; email: xortegat@clong.be)

The Origins of Unease: Setting the context of debates about humanitarian ethics

Today, journalists and independent critics argue that aid has become part of the problem of war and hunger, rather than the solution, and that it is neither an effective nor legitimate response to humanitarian crisis. Increasingly harsh and sophisticated criticisms of humanitarian aid no longer come exclusively from right-wing, isolationist politicians, but from diverse quarters in the South as well as the North.

The international relief system has undergone profound changes in recent years, and relief NGOs and their supporters (including the donors) need to look critically at their work in order to ensure that it is sufficiently robust – conceptually and in practice – to stave off anti-humanitarian sentiment. To some

extent, this has already started to happen. A number of initiatives to fill the moral vacuum are taking place, most importantly, perhaps, the development of the Red Cross/NGO Codes of Conduct for relief agencies.

The debates about the ethics of humanitarian action revolve around three key dimensions: Meaning, Mandates and Money.

Meaning

A significant feature of recent debates about humanitarianism has been a new uncertainty in the language used: i.e. the term ‘famine’ is now being replaced by ‘complex political emergency’; the word ‘war’ is replaced with euphemisms such as ‘anarchy’ or ‘conflict’. The shift of language is indicative of profound challenges to the way in which the world is viewed and analysed. Since the end of the Cold War it has become more acceptable to point to the political causes of humanitarian crises. Such political analysis leads inevitably to a realisation that relief is not apolitical, and cannot be delivered in conflict zones without engaging with belligerent parties.

Mandates

Confronting the political origins and implications of conflict-related emergencies raises the question of what relief agencies can legitimately claim to do. In the context of chronic, conflict-related emergencies, there is an increasing lack of clarity about who should be doing what. A blurring of mandates is presently taking place, with relief agencies often deciding whether or not to negotiate with different factions. The lack of clarity in the current international division of humanitarian labour means that it is often difficult to discern who – NGO, UN, civil and military – is responsible for what.

Money

An increase in relief budgets, and a corresponding decline in development expenditure is another reason why ethics is forcing itself on to the humanitarian agenda. As the bills continue to grow, so relief aid is under greater scrutiny. Much is talked about the contract culture, commercialisation of NGOs and the corruption of humanitarian principles: how much of this is justified by the facts is, however, much less clear.

In the midst of the complex moral dilemmas which characterise the work of humanitarian agencies, it can be hard to know which way to turn – whether to follow the humanitarian impulse, which locates ethical responsibility in human instinct, or to define humanitarian responsibility in absolute imperative terms. Both strategies have their weaknesses. The humanitarian imperative can be criticised for its rigidity and its lack of pragmatism, while the humanitarian impulse suffers from a more fundamental weakness, namely that it is impossible to define any set of principles which can apply universally to humanitarian responses.

Choosing between these philosophical traditions has important implications: it is the difference between a universal and relative set of humanitarian values; rights and obligations versus voluntarism; a narrow, specific interpretation of the humanitarian task compared with a broad and iterative one. The humanitarian imperative is amenable to legislation, the humanitarian impulse accords more with a *laissez-faire*, pluralist approach. While these choices are not new, they are particularly urgent now.

World Food Summit

The World Food Summit (WFS), held in Rome in November 1996,

under the auspices of the UN FAO, was the culmination of a 2½ year consultative process involving international agencies, national governments and NGOs. Substantively, the Summit has reaffirmed the commitment of the international community to the eradication of hunger and malnutrition through the Rome Declaration on world food security and an associated Plan of Action. These documents highlight the continued existence of hunger around the world and commit the international community to halving the number of undernourished people over a period of 20 years.

A number of media commentators presented the Summit as nothing more than a talking-shop, where delegates discussing hunger enjoyed expensive lunches. Although it is easy to be sceptical about the value of such large international conferences, there have been a number of impressive achievements in improving food security since the last global meeting on the issue held in 1974: the proportion of undernourished people has fallen substantially; world food production has outpaced population growth; and famine has been confined to conflict situations. However, there is a widespread perception that the efficiency and effectiveness of the institutional arrangements for tackling problems of food security are currently being compromised by the large number of actors involved: in the UN system alone, at least 36 bodies are directly and indirectly involved in food security and nutrition objectives.

The Plan of Action includes many references to the role of 'civil society'. In affirmation of this, the NGO Forum at the WFS, which consisted of 1,200 organisations from 80 countries, set out its own model for achieving food security. In contrast to the statements agreed

upon by governments, which regard globalisation of markets and the freeing of markets as largely positive, the NGOs were critical of the effects of both trade liberalisation and structural adjustment at a national level on the poor and food-insecure. The NGO Forum regarded hunger and malnutrition as fundamentally questions of justice. The Summit Plan, however, only committed the UN to exploring the legal ramifications of a universal right to food, which the US representative interpreted as an objective or aspiration and not a binding commitment of obligation.

Although the WFS has undoubtedly served to bring food security back onto the international agenda, critics argue that all that has been achieved is a restatement of policies that every government can accept. There are few new proposals, no fresh aid was forthcoming and, as is the case with most UN conferences, the agreements reached are not binding. For a more detailed analysis of what the WFS achieved and what it failed to achieve, see the ODI Briefing Paper on 'Global Hunger and Food Security after the World Food Summit'.

MSF Symposium on Evaluations and Impact Studies of Humanitarian Relief Interventions

A symposium was held by *MSF* on November 28 and 29, 1996 in Amsterdam to consider the role and methodology of evaluations in relief work. Presentations offered perspectives from within and outside *MSF*, including an account by Niels Dabelstein, Head of Evaluation for *Danida*, of his experience as Chairman of the Steering Committee for the *Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda* and John Borton of the *Overseas Development Institute* of a framework for considering humanitarian aid evalu-

ation on the basis of six criteria: appropriateness, cost-effectiveness, impact, coverage, coherence and connectedness.

In addition, working groups considered several issues around the methodology of evaluations. Opinions ranged from the comprehensive approach of John Borton and the pragmatic approach of Jennifer Bryce. While it was agreed that for agencies providing humanitarian assistance the beneficiaries' perspective is important, opinions differed as to how to incorporate that perspective effectively.

More than simply reiterating the utility of evaluation in humanitarian interventions, the Symposium discussed the *structures* which are necessary to ensure effective evaluations. Creating a more positive attitude toward evaluation throughout an organisation can only enhance learning and accountability. Demystifying evaluation will make it more comprehensible and practical for all concerned.

Copies of the final report of the Symposium on Evaluations and Impact Studies of Humanitarian Interventions may be obtained from the Medical Department, *MSF-Holland*, Postbus 10014, 1001 EA Amsterdam, The Netherlands, Tel + 31 (0)20 520 8700 Fax + 31 (0)20 620 5170; e-mail: hq@amsterdam.msf.org

FORTHCOMING

Resolving National Conflicts: A Role For Third Parties?, Canterbury, UK, 21-27 September 1997

A British Council International Seminar directed by Professor A.J.R. Groom. The seminar aims to familiarise people with a range of literature related to international and intercommunal conflicts in the context of third party involvement

ranging from the UN to NGOs. The course will include a simulation exercise and reference to case studies. Of particular interest to diplomatic personnel, academics and journalists, multi-nationals, armed forces, NGOs, UN workers and others.

For further information contact: the Promotions Manager, (quoting seminar number 7034) at the International Seminars Department, The British Council, 1 Beaumont Place, Oxford OX1 2PJ, UK. Tel: +44 (0)1865 316636 Fax: +44 (0) 1865 557368 Email: International.Seminars@britcoun.org

Policies for the Prevention of Conflict: The Role of the International Community, Paris, France, 3-4 April 1997

Conference organised by the OECD Development Centre jointly with the Development Assistance Committee. Provisional agenda: A framework for analysis; The successes and failures of the response; Roles for external assistance.

For further information contact Hartmut Schneider, Principal Administrator, OECD Development Centre, OECD, 2 rue André Pascal, F-75775 Paris CEDEX 16, France. Tel: 00 33 1 4524 9630 Fax: 00 33 1 4524 7943 Email: hartmut.schneider@oecd.org

Weapons of War, Tools of Peace Symposium Series II, Boston, USA, 4-6 April 1997

The International Centre for Humanitarian Reporting with Boston University School of Journalism, CROSSLINES Global Report, Nielman Foundation of Harvard University, Northeastern University School of Journalism, and co-sponsored by BASICS (USAID), European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO), International Committee of the Red Cross, UNHCR, UNICEF, US Institute of

Peace, and the World Bank. Topics for discussion include: "Preventive Journalism" – a valid role for the media?; and Knee-jerk policy-making – are reporters to blame?. Of particular interest to editors, journalists, producers, relief professionals, human rights advocates, donors, government officials, students, educators and policy-makers.

For further information contact ICHR/US, 16A Grant Street, Cambridge, MA 02138, USA. Tel: +1 (0)617 491 4771 Fax: +1 (0)617 491 4689 Email: ICHR@aol.com

Publications

BRIDGE (briefings on development and gender), IDS, University of Sussex

"An innovative information analysis service specialising in gender and development issues" providing tailor-made briefings on request, presenting the findings of state-of-the-art research on gender issues, or reviewing operational experience, in a succinct and accessible format. Includes:

In brief papers (quarterly updates from BRIDGE, raising gender awareness among policy-makers and practitioners); for example, Issue 3: Conflict and development, and Issue 4: Integrating gender into emergency responses 4 X A4side, free subscription

Gender, emergencies and humanitarian assistance (Report commissioned by the WID desk, European Commission, Directorate General for Development), Bridget Byrne with Sally Baden, November 1995, 68pp, £8 plus postage and packing Gender, conflict and development Volumes 1: Overview & 2: Case Studies: Cambodia;

Rwanda; Kosovo; Algeria; Somalia; Guatemala and Eritrea by *Bridget Byrne, December 1995 (revised July 1996), Report No.34, ISSN 1359-1398, Vol 1 - pp65 £8 plus p+p, Vol 2 - pp148 £12 plus p+p*

Beyond the Emergency: Development within UN Peace Missions, a Special Issue of the Journal of International Peacekeeping, Volume 3, No. 2, edited by Jeremy Ginifer, FRANK CASS, London, ISSN 1353-3312.

The first Special Issue published by International Peacekeeping, focusing on the interface between development, relief and peacekeeping within UN missions, with particular reference to Africa. It poses the question of how sustainable development fits within the post-conflict 'space' of UN peace missions, and stresses the need to think long-term – beyond the emergency. A central proposition is that a greater developmental emphasis during UN missions, with an international community committed over the longer term to reform and the involvement of civil society in the search for solutions, may be more productive in terms of bringing about durable peace than the traditional diplomatic and military approach which largely seeks to avert and contain conflict. The eight papers in the Special Issue cover both conceptual and operational issues, using Angola, Mozambique, Namibia and Somalia as case studies. A final section looks at civil-military relations in peace support operations.

Stress Management in Emergency Situations, Frederik Olsson, in: Journal of International Peacekeeping, Volume 3, No. 3, 1996, Frank Cass, London, ISSN: 1353-3312, annual subscription £35 (\$45) individual, £105 (\$155) Institutions This short paper looks at stress management for those involved in peacekeeping operations. While it

is aimed principally at the military, and uses the experiences of combat in Bosnia as a case study of the effects of stress, it may also be of more general interest to NGOs whose work involves exposure to stress. The paper looks at the nature of stress, and its effects on behaviour, before proposing steps to be taken to mitigate and manage stress.

A Guide to Peace Support Operations, John Mackinlay (ed), *The Thomas J. Watson Jr. Institute for International Studies*, Brown University, Providence, USA.

This guide is designed for those involved in peace support operations in headquarters or the field, whether they be military or civilian, governmental, intergovernmental or non-governmental. The purpose of the guide is to promote a better understanding between the numerous civil and military organisations involved in peace support operations, and also between the different military contingents making up a peacekeeping force, many of which may have different approaches. The 15 sections in the Guide, written by those active in peace support operations, outline the characteristics, role, *modus operandi*, and limitations of all elements in the operational area. The guide is published in English, Russian and Spanish.

World in Crisis: the politics of survival at the end of the 20th century, *Médecins Sans Frontières*, Routledge, London and New York, 1997, ISBN: 0-415-15378-6, £10.99
Published as part of MSF's annual International Day for Populations in Danger, as an integral part of MSF's commitment to the independent provision of humanitarian aid to the victims of conflict and disaster around the world. The book seeks to draw the attention of the public to the difficulties, challenges and dilemmas of providing humanitarian aid to civilians, such as balancing the needs of civilians against the

negative consequences of assistance, particularly when aid is abused by conflicting parties to fuel the conflict, and how to choose between being a silent presence helping the victims or speaking out about human rights abuses and risking expulsion. The book concludes with reports on aid in the conflict zones of Liberia, Bosnia, Chechnya, Rwanda and Sudan.

Sovereignty as Responsibility: Conflict Management in Africa, Francis Deng, Sadikiel Kimaro, Terrence Lyons, Donald Rothchild and I. William Zartman, *Brookings Institution*, Washington DC, 1996, ISBN 0-8157-1827-4, 265pp, Hardback £33.50, Paperback £14.75

In internal conflicts in Africa, sovereign states have often failed to take responsibility for their own citizens' welfare and for the humanitarian consequences of conflict, leaving the victims with no protection or assistance. This book aims to show how that responsibility can be exercised by states over their own populations and by other states in assistance to fellow sovereigns.

The authors attempt to present a framework that should guide both national governments and the international community in discharging their respective responsibilities. They develop broad principles by examining identity as a potential source of conflict, governance as a matter of managing conflict, and economics as a policy field for conflict prevention.

Catalogue of Publications, Red Cross and Red Crescent Activities Humanitarian Law, *Henry Dunant Institute*, 114 Rue de Lausanne, 1202 Geneva, Switzerland, 1995
Red Cross and Red Crescent publications under the sections 'Organisation and Activities of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement', 'International Humanitarian Law', 'Humanitarian Actions

and Development', and 'Working Papers', dating from 1971.

List of quarterly accessions at the Refugee Studies Programme Documentation Centre Email rspdoc@vax.ox.ac.uk

The Refugee Studies Programme, based at Queen Elizabeth House in Oxford produce a quarterly list of new accessions to their Documentation Centre, and this can be obtained from Joanna Soedring on the above email address. Publications included in the July - September 1996 list include the following:

After Rwanda: the co-ordination of UN humanitarian assistance, Jim Whitman and David Pocock (eds) *Macmillan*, 1996, ISBN: 0-333-64588-X, pp253

Mental health of refugees, *WHO*, Geneva, 1996, ISBN: 92-4-154486-4, pp134

Refugees and other forcibly displaced people in Africa; a background paper for the IFRC's Pan-African Conference [French and English texts held] *Refugee Studies Programme*, Oxford, 1996, pp44

Study on the impact of armed conflicts on the nutritional situation of children, *FAO Food and Nutrition Division*, Jane MacAskill, Rome, 1996, pp60

War, exile, everyday life: cultural perspectives, *Renata Jambresic Kirin et al (eds)*, *Institute of Ethnology*, Zagreb, 1996, ISBN: 953-6020-07-6, pp304

Reducing Risk: participatory learning activities for disaster mitigation in Southern Africa, *Astrid von Kotze and Alisa Holloway*, *International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and Department of Adult and Community Education*, Natal University, distributed by *Oxfam Publishing*, 274 Banbury Road, Oxford OX2 7DZ, UK, 1996, ISBN: 0-85598-347-7, pp301, Price £14.95
This rather bulky book is a collec-

tion of participatory learning activities for people who work with at-risk communities, either in development or relief. A very clear, simple and practical manual covering both natural disasters and complex emergencies, its intended aim is to increase understanding about community risk and vulnerability as well as strengthen the training capacities of those involved in community-based disaster management.

The Public Health Consequences of Disasters, *Eric Noji (ed.)*, Oxford University Press, 1996, ISBN: 0-19-509570-7, pp468, Hardback US\$59.95

Illustrated with examples from recent research, this book summarises the most pertinent and useful information about the public health impact of natural and man-made disasters. It is divided into four sections, dealing with general concerns, geophysical events, weather-related problems and human-generated disasters. Chapter 15 on Famine and chapter 20 on Complex Emergencies will probably be of most interest to RRN readers.

The Policies of Mercy: UN Coordination in Afghanistan, Mozambique, and Rwanda, *Antonio Donini, Thomas J. Watson Jr*, Institute for International Studies, Occasional Paper 22, 1996

The author is a United Nations official who served in Afghanistan in Operation Salam during the 1980s and has served more recently on the staff of the UN Department of Humanitarian Affairs. The authors of the preface write that this volume “while focusing on the United Nations,...also accounts for interactions between the UN and the bevy of non-governmental organisations that are a regular feature of major emergencies these days... [and] offers an informed analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the coordination effort in the three major crises.”

Economie des Guerres Civiles (Civil War Economies); *edited/ compiled by François Jean and Jean-Christophe Rufin*, (Fondation pour les Etudes de Defense, 94 bis, avenue de Suffren, 75015 Paris, FRANCE), 1996, Hachette/Pluriel, 43 quai de grenelle, Paris ISBN: 2-01-278788-6, pp594, Paperback 98FF (£???)

This valuable contribution to francophone literature considers post-cold war causes of conflict and questions the over-emphasis placed on the superpower struggle. A series of chapters, contributed by well-known francophone commentators, and compiled and edited by its respected MSF editors, reflect experience across a wide range of recent and ongoing conflicts, from the Lebanon, Afghanistan, Kurdistan, Cambodia, Bosnia, Liberia, Mozambique, South Sudan and Peru/Colombia both Combatants. This book is divided into two sections: it first takes a look at the war economies of a number of conflicts, chosen to represent as wide a range of ‘types’ as possible, and each based around the same broad themes – economic indicators before the conflict erupted, strategic aims of the actors involved, and a chronology of the conflict; the second section is dedicated to an examination of one or more of the central themes – effects of an embargo, trafficking, effects of humanitarian aid etc.

Humanitaire, le dilemme by *Rony Brauman*, Les éditions Textuel, 1996, ISBN: 2-909317-17-X, pp106, Paperback 79FF (£)

This comparatively short book, looks at the development of humanitarian ideals/principles from the foundation of the Red Cross in 1864 to NGO practice today and concludes with a warning look at the dangers of over-professionalisation and politicisation of humanitarianism to the detriment of compassion and the moral independence of

NGOs. Rony Brauman, former President of MSF France, brings his own strong feelings about the need to keep the ‘humanitarian’ firmly within humanitarian aid, together with 12 years of experience at the head of one of France’s principal NGOs. For the author, this book was a moment to stand back from his experience of Rwanda, Ethiopia and Yugoslavia and consider the dilemmas facing humanitarian interventions today: redefinition of the status of ‘victim’ and the scope/ mandates of humanitarian agencies, the need to resist pressures to fall in with political/military agendas and yet to hold the discussion in a manner that is relevant and accessible to politicians and decision-makers.

Regrettably, it seems unlikely that an English translation will be available for either of these publications in the short-term.

Soldiers to the Rescue: Humanitarian lessons from Rwanda, *L. Minear and P. Guillot*, OECD, 1996, ISBN: 92-64-14917-1, pp200, £19.00

This study, carried out in collaboration with the Thomas J Watson Jr Institute for International Studies, forms part of the Development Centre’s work on cooperation between states and non-governmental organisations in developing countries. The study focuses on the “‘New Humanitarians’, ... military personnel sent to the aid of civilian populations’, presenting the two principal military interventions - the French Operation Turquoise and US Operation Support Hope in a generally positive light. Featuring maps of the Great Lakes Region, statistical information and bibliography on the role of the military in humanitarian assistance programmes.

RRN Registration/Order Form

PLEASE WRITE CLEARLY.

Surname:.....

Forenames:.....

Prof/Dr/Mr/Ms/etc:.....

Present Post:.....

Organisation:.....

Department:.....

Mailing Address:.....

.....

Country:.....

Telephone:.....

Fax:.....

E-mail:.....

Country of work:.....

In which language would you prefer to receive Network publications:

English French

Please indicate, by ticking the appropriate box below, whether you wish:

1. Full annual membership at £25.00*

2. Free annual subscription to the Newsletter only

3. Individual copies of RRN publications (indicate those publications you wish to purchase on the list overleaf and return to the RRN Administrator)*

4. Free access to RRN publications via e-mail [available from September 1997]

5. You may be eligible for free membership, in which case we will let you know (see explanation of criteria on page 3)

Type of organisation (please tick only one)

- 'Northern' NGO - Operational
- 'Northern' NGO - Funding agency
- 'Southern' NGO
- National agency/Government department
- UN Agency (eg. DHA, WFP, UNICEF)
- Red Cross Movement
- Independent Consultancy
- University/Research institution
- Library/Documentation centre/Publishing

Sector of work

- Logistics/transport/food aid
- Medicine/health
- Water/sanitation
- Nutrition
- Agriculture
- Natural/environmental sciences
- Anthropology/sociology
- Economics
- Civil engineering/architecture
- Others (Please specify)

.....

The details given on this form are kept on the RRN database, available only to RRN members. If you do not wish your name and organisation to appear on the RRN WWW site, please tick box

Return form to:

The RRN Administrator
Relief and Rehabilitation Network,
Overseas Development Institute,
Portland House, Stag Place
London SW1E 5DP, UK
Tel: +44 171 393 1674/47 Fax: +44 171 393 1699
E-mail: rrn@odi.org.uk

I have completed the registration form and enclose the appropriate remittance.

Signature.....

Date.....

* For details on how to pay, see overleaf

Annual Subscription Fees and Publications orders HOW TO PAY

1. in £ Sterling
2. by cheque made payable to *Overseas Development Institute*
3. by credit card (Mastercard/Visa/Access)

Please charge my Mastercard/Visa/Access Card No.....

Expiry date of card.....Signature.....

Your Full name.....

Credit Card Billing Address (if different to address given on Registration/Order form

required for card authorisation)

.....

Postage and packing is charged at 20% of order value, 25% for all overseas orders, and 35% for Far East and Australasia.

Publications List (as of February 1997)

Network Papers (£5.00 per copy excluding postage and packing)

- 1 *MSF-CIS (Celula Inter-Secções), Mozambique: A Data Collecting System Focused on Food Security and Population Movements* by Tine Dusauchoit (March 1994)
- 2 *Responding to the 1991/92 Drought in Zambia: The Programme to Prevent Malnutrition (PPM)* by Derrina Mukupo (March 1994)
- 3 *An Account of Relief Operations in Bosnia* by Mark Duffield (March 1994)
- 4 *Bad Borders Make Bad Neighbours - The Political Economy of Relief and Rehabilitation in the Somali Region 5, Eastern Ethiopia* by Koenraad Van Brabant (September 1994)
- 5 *Advancing Preventive Diplomacy in a Post-Cold War Era: Suggested Roles for Governments and NGOs* by Kumar Rupesinghe (September 1994)
- 6 *The Rwandan Refugee Crisis in Tanzania: Initial Successes and Failures in Food Assistance* by Susanne Jaspars (September 1994)
- 7 *Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief* (September 1994)
- 9 *Development in Conflict: The Experience of ACORD in Uganda, Sudan, Mali and Angola* by ACORD (April 1995)

- 10 ***Room for Improvement: the Management and Support of Relief Workers***
by Rebecca Macnair (September 1995)
- 11 ***Cash-for-Work and Food Insecurity in Koisha, Southern Ethiopia***
by Penny Jenden (September 1995)
- 12 ***Dilemmas of 'Post'-Conflict Transition: Lessons from the Health Sector***
by Joanna Macrae (September 1995)
- 13 ***Getting On-Line in Emergencies: A Guide and Directory to the Internet for Agencies involved in Relief and Rehabilitation*** by Luke Aris, Peter Gee and Mark Perkins (February 1996)
- 14 ***The Impact of War and Atrocity on Civilian Populations: Basic Principles for NGO Interventions and a Critique of Psychosocial Trauma Projects*** by Derek Summerfield (April 1996)
- 15 ***Cost-effectiveness Analysis: A Useful Tool for the Assessment and Evaluation of Relief Operations?***
by Alistair Hallam (April 1996)
- 16 ***The Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda: Study III Main Findings and Recommendations*** (June 1996)
- 17 ***Monetisation: Linkages to Food Security?***
by Jindra Cekan, Amy MacNeil and Steve Loegering (November 1996)
- 18 ***Beyond Working in Conflict: Understanding Conflict and Building Peace (The CODEP Workshop Report)***
by Jon Bennett and Mary Kayitesi Blewitt (November 1996)
- 19 ***Human Rights and International Legal Standards: What Do Relief Workers Need to Know?***
by James Darcy (February 1997)
- 20 ***People in Aid Code of Best Practice in the Management and Support of Aid Personnel*** (February 1997)

Good Practice Reviews (£10.00 per copy excluding postage and packing)

Water and Sanitation in Emergencies

by Andrew Chalinder (June 1994), Good Practice Review 1

Emergency Supplementary Feeding Programmes

by Jeremy Shoham (December 1994), Good Practice Review 2

General Food Distribution in Emergencies: from Nutritional Needs to Political Priorities

by Susanne Jaspars and Helen Young (January 1996), Good Practice Review 3

Seeds Provision During and After Emergencies

by the ODI Seeds and Biodiversity Programme (December 1996), Good Practice Review 4

Counting and Identification of Beneficiary Populations in Emergency Operations: Registration and its Alternatives

by John Telford (forthcoming)

FOR ABSTRACTS OF RECENT PAPERS SEE OVERLEAF

Good Practice Review 4 ISBN: 0-85003-235-0

‘Seed Provision during and after Emergencies’

by the ODI Seeds and Biodiversity Programme

The aim of this review is to bring readers up to date with the latest developments in knowledge and techniques and to stimulate discussion as to what constitutes ‘good practice’ in seed provision during and after emergencies. The emphasis is on providing practical information concisely and accessibly. The Review distinguishes between emergency seed provision (ESP) and longer-term seed capacity building relating to three broad phases of an ‘emergency’: an ‘acute’ phase, a ‘settling down’ period and a ‘rehabilitation’ phase. Written by the ODI Seeds and Biodiversity Programme, material was contributed and subsequently reviewed by 17 specialists with experience of emergency seeds programmes in over 20 different countries.

Network Paper 19 ISBN: 0-85003-346-2

‘Human Rights and Humanitarian Law: what relief workers need to know’

by James Darcy

“We all use the phrase human rights....But do we really understand the nature of human rights claims, and the basis on which they are founded?” James Darcy, writing in his personal capacity for the Relief and Rehabilitation Network, is Emergencies Coordinator for Asia for Oxfam UK/I, as well as being a UK-qualified lawyer.

The concept of human rights is increasingly being invoked in the context of humanitarian relief, often in reaction to the frustration of attempts to bring relief assistance to civilian populations caught up in armed conflict. This paper is written in the belief that for those engaged humanitarian work, it is essential to be familiar with the relevant human rights standards and the legal provisions which codify them. It is argued that humanitarian action can and should be rooted in human rights principles. But no agency which professes a commitment to human rights can afford to be ignorant of the relevant standards if it is to engage in more than empty rhetoric.

Network Paper 19 seeks to do three things: to sketch the basic moral and legal framework of human rights; to look at issues of responsibility, protection and enforcement in the light of international legal obligations and to relate this to the work of humanitarian agencies in their attempts to provide assistance and protection to communities affected by conflict and other disasters.

A wide view is taken of human rights law, so that international humanitarian law (the Geneva Conventions etc.) and refugee law are included under this heading. A related and subsidiary aim of the paper is to examine the role and mandate of two agencies concerned specifically with these areas of law: respectively, the ICRC and UNHCR, followed by a discussion of the connection between protection and assistance activities.

Network Paper 20 ISBN: 0-85003-336-5

'People in Aid Code of Best Practice in the Management and Support of Aid Personnel' by *People in Aid*

For agency staff to be able to meet high standards in the delivery of assistance, operating in frequently difficult and insecure conditions, they need appropriate management and support. *Room For Improvement* (Rebecca Macnair, *Network Paper 10*, Relief and Rehabilitation Network), published in 1995, underlined the need to ensure that agencies' philosophy of humane action and human welfare embraced workers as well as beneficiaries. The report concluded that for many expatriate field staff, occupational stress was not only a product of the danger and emotional impact of their work but that, in common with staff in other spheres, it was due to workload, management problems and the insecurity of short-term contracts.

In response to the recommendations of *Room For Improvement*, an 11-member steering group, supported by the Overseas Development Administration, began work in 1996 on the *People in Aid Code Of Best Practice in The Management And Support Of Aid Personnel*. The Code represents a three-fold commitment: to the quality and effectiveness of aid, to the effective management of aid personnel, and to the protection and well-being of those who work in difficult, dangerous, or life-threatening situations. It offers an important complement to existing initiatives to raise standards in the delivery of aid - the *Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief* (RRN Network Paper 7) and the Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response and InterAction forthcoming '*Beneficiaries' Charter*' which will set minimum entitlements to shelter, food, and healthcare for those affected by disaster.

The *Code* consists of a statement of principles, a set of indicators to enable implementation, accompanied by actual examples of good practice supplied by UK and Irish aid agencies and sources of further information. The Code is due to undergo testing by UK agencies, assisted by People in Aid, over a period of up to three years, leading to accreditation by means of an independent human resources auditor.

And Finally...

RRN Team Developments

The RRN forms part of a wider group within ODI focusing on research into and evaluation of humanitarian policy. The group, hitherto known as the Relief and Disasters Policy Programme recently changed its name to the **HUMANITARIAN POLICY PROGRAMME**. This reflects global trends in the nature of and responses to complex emergencies and a concomitant shift in the focus of the programme within ODI.

Laura Jackson, **RRN Coordinator** continues to manage the RRN on a full time basis, with responsibility for commissioning and editing publications and developments emanating from the recent strategic review. Laura was married in November last year, and has become Laura Gibbons.

The RRN welcomes Koenraad van Brabant as the latest addition to the team. Koenraad will take up his post as **Policy and Development Officer** in March 1997. He has experience in both relief and development programmes for Oxfam, SCF and AVISEN in Ethiopia, Afghanistan and Sri Lanka. One of the earliest RRN members and contributor of both a Network Paper and Newsletter articles, his writing ability together with his work for NGOs in the field will make him a valuable addition to the team. In particular, he will pursue his interest in developing the RRN as a resource for training programmes and research into institutional learning patterns.

Another very recent addition, (although it may be some years before he can be recruited to the RRN team) is Nathalie Shellard's son Marc. Nathalie, the **RRN Administrator**, currently on maternity leave, gave birth to Marc on 4 December 1996. She will be returning to the post in the late summer.

Sophie Peace joined the RRN in November as a **maternity cover for Nathalie** and has taken on the redesign, new plans for membership and regional outreach with great good humour and patience. She will be your first point of contact for questions regarding membership criteria.

John Borton, **Head of the Humanitarian Policy Programme** and Joanna Macrae, **Research Fellow**, continue to offer guidance and editorial support within the RRN and coordination with other research work. New developments within their research programme include: the setting up of the 'Accountability and Performance Network', intended to provide neutral space for donors, UN agencies and NGOs to carry forward the accountability and performance agenda in the humanitarian aid system; a review of findings and methodologies of humanitarian aid evaluations. Jo Macrae pursues her interest in the application of the concept of the 'relief-development continuum' in unstable situations, particularly through her work on rehabilitation of health systems in Cambodia.

Alistair Hallam was **guest editor** on this February edition of the Newsletter. After spending 10 years in the NGO sector in Africa, he recently worked as economist on the Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda, based at ODI, and is currently developing a programme of work with John Borton on establishing best practice on monitoring, reporting and evaluation.

To subscribe to the RRN, to order our publications
or for further information, please contact:

The Network Administrator
Relief and Rehabilitation Network
Overseas Development Institute
Portland House, Stag Place
London SW1E 5DP
United Kingdom
Tel: + 44 (0) 171 393 1674/47 Fax: + 44 (0) 171 393 1699
Email: rrn@odi.org.uk
Internet: <http://www.oneworld.org/odi/rrn/index.html>

RRN

Background

The Relief and Rehabilitation Network was conceived in 1992 and launched in 1994 as a mechanism for professional information exchange in the expanding field of humanitarian aid. The need for such a mechanism was identified in the course of research undertaken by the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) on the changing role of NGOs in relief and rehabilitation operations, and was developed in consultation with other Networks operated within ODI. Since April 1994, the RRN has produced publications in three different formats, in French and English: Good Practice Reviews, Network Papers and Newsletters. The RRN is now in its second three-year phase (1996-1999), supported by four new donors - DANIDA, ECHO, the Department of Foreign Affairs, Ireland and ODA. Over the three year phase, the RRN will seek to expand its reach and relevance amongst humanitarian agency personnel and to further promote good practice.

Objective

To improve aid policy and practice as it is applied in complex political emergencies.

Purpose

To contribute to individual and institutional learning by encouraging the exchange and dissemination of information relevant to the professional development of those engaged in the provision of humanitarian assistance.

Activities

To commission, publish and disseminate analysis and reflection on issues of good practice in policy and programming in humanitarian operations, primarily in the form of written publications, in both French and English.

Target audience

Individuals and organisations actively engaged in the provision of humanitarian assistance at national and international, field-based and head office level in the 'North' and 'South'.

The Relief and Rehabilitation Network is supported by:

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
DANIDA

ECHO

Department of Foreign Affairs, Ireland

ODA