



EuronAid

Newsletter

Relief and Rehabilitation Network

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Editorial

Some six years after the collapse of the Berlin Wall, international political and aid systems are struggling to redefine their roles. Major changes in the financing and organisation of the aid system are taking place in the post-Cold War era. Overall aid budgets are declining— at the same time the proportion of funds allocated to relief is rising. This change in financing reflects in part the growing number of complex emergencies and the trend for increasing international intervention, which themselves are raising new questions and challenges for relief and development agencies.

In this issue of the *Relief and Rehabilitation Network Newsletter* we explore three related themes concerning the organisation and management of aid responses in emergencies. How can aid agencies adjust to a context of instability? What is the relationship between relief and development assistance? What methods can be used to ensure the effectiveness of aid interventions in emergency contexts?

Network Paper 9 reports on the experience of an NGO consortium, ACORD, of working in four unstable countries: Angola, Mali, Sudan and Uganda. It argues that development is an essentially turbulent process, likely to generate conflict which may become violent. The issue for ACORD is therefore how to cope with, and adapt, to these unstable situations in a manner which protects the interests of the poor.

The paper details how the implementation of long-term development projects has been affected by instability and influenced by the large-scale relief programmes carried out around them. It makes a number of recommendations concerning NGO strategies in unstable situations relating to the design, management and financing of programmes. The paper argues that long-term programmes need to be judged against their ability to strengthen people's resilience in crises. NGOs can contribute to this process by providing material resources, but, more importantly, through participatory, community-based strategies which strengthen local institutions and enlist the skills of individuals.

It also addresses a number of familiar management dilemmas facing NGOs in unstable situations. When should agencies withdraw? What skills do staff – national and expatriate – need to cope in conflict situations? What provision should be made to protect national staff? How can communications be maintained between headquarters staff and projects isolated by conflict? Innovative suggestions are made to improve management and communications in unstable situations. Also highlighted are issues of project financing in turbulent environments.

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Editorial (continued)

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The ACORD paper highlights the important operational and conceptual reasons for rethinking the relationship between relief and development. An additional spur to the 'continuum' debate has been concern over relief and development financing. As discussed in the Newsletter (see page 4), the proportion of official development assistance allocated to relief continues to rise sharply, resulting in greater scrutiny of relief expenditures, and increasing concern to ensure their efficiency and efficacy. Historically, evaluation of relief interventions has been poor, and only rarely have the outcomes of relief programmes been assessed systematically.

The scale of the human catastrophe in Rwanda and the enormous costs of the international response have demanded a renewed emphasis on the evaluation of relief efforts. The Newsletter reports on a multi-donor evaluation of international intervention in Rwanda, and discusses the issues which need to be addressed in the search for improved accountability and efficiency in relief responses.

It has often been argued that the urgency of relief responses militates against detailed research and evaluation. This view is challenged by Patrick Ward and Martin Rimmer, authors of *Network Paper 8*. Building on

a study in northern Iraq, they discuss the role of formal survey methods in ensuring effective targeting of food aid in a chronic emergency. The need for quantitative socio-economic studies to complement qualitative, informal methods such as rapid participatory appraisal is emphasised, in order to gain valid and useful information about beneficiary groups. This paper provides an example of how such studies can be implemented at relatively low cost and in a short time period, and includes examples of questionnaires which could be used in other settings. The authors caution, however, that the results of such studies are useful only in so far as there are clear policy objectives against which to measure the success or failure of relief interventions. The lack of such clarity in contexts such as that of Iraq means that efficiency and effectiveness cannot be assessed only in relation to technical criteria – careful examination of policy aims is also required.

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The contributions to the network papers and the newsletter highlight a range of important challenges facing relief and development practitioners. The need for debate and exchange of information is more important than ever. We look forward to hearing your views and experiences on relief policy and practice.

Feedback

Extracts from a letter by Koenraad Van Brabant, OXFAM Sri Lanka

'I find the [Relief and Rehabilitation Network] Newsletter an excellent initiative. With an increase in "emergencies", often of a political nature, there is an

urgent demand for learning from experience and for reflecting on how to deal with these. There are other fora for theoretical reflection, and I welcome a Newsletter which can find and keep a balance between inputs from reflection and from field practice.'

‘[Articles] such as those on the campaign to ban mines or on the relief-development continuum are very valuable. However, to what degree can they/do you intend to retain them as your initiative? Is it the purpose that other than editorial staff start contributing articles to the Newsletter? Inevitably the scope of your knowledge (although admirably vast!), and the time to do some additional research, are limited.’

‘I find the Update section interesting and would expect several other field-based people to feel the same. Many international staff have worked in different countries and are often deprived of information once they have left, but would, I’m sure, like to keep in touch somewhat. Particularly if you have access to information about countries/areas that are not well covered in the international press such as the *Guardian Weekly* or the *Economist*, I think there is a place for updates.’

‘However, it would be ideal if, over time, thematic links could be established between work done in different countries, eg. reconciliation work in countries A, F and P, resettlement of internally displaced in countries H and L, research on the special needs of female-headed households (husbands and fathers killed or disappeared in conflicts) in countries M and Y, etc. Where there are well-functioning NGO and/or UN consortia, perhaps you can invite them to tell you what they currently see as the four most important strategic priorities related to relief and rehabilitation in their country of operations?’

Editor’s response: We welcome unsolicited articles from readers on themes which they consider to be important and of interest to other Network members, or providing material for the update section (thank you to those who have already sent in such material). With respect to thematic links between countries there is indeed scope for us to do this in the future, and we would welcome the views of other network members as to topics and countries which could be used in this respect. Once again, we would like to emphasise the networking focus of the RRN. The Network is a space open to ideas, articles and news – get scribbling!

Comments on Network Paper 5 (*Advancing Preventive Diplomacy in a Post-Cold War Era: Suggested Roles for Governments and NGOs* by Kumar Rupesinghe) from Richard Covington, Program Officer at Project Concern International.

‘Please receive warm applause for the excellent content and presentation of your Network Paper 5. I found the material very timely and your ideas representative of the thought process that our leaders should be following. I agree that non-military roles in conflict prevention should be an increasing focus of government agencies and NGOs. The points about targeting aid (particularly for economic development) for areas of potential conflict

were very important and something often overlooked. I was a bit troubled, however, by the suggestion that 10% of development assistance budgets be targeted for conflict prevention. With aid budgets shrinking, which portion would you suggest cutting in order to create the savings required to cover new initiatives? I am not sufficiently familiar with all governments budgets, but I imagine they are following the USAID example of ‘right-sizing’ with staff lay-offs and program reductions. It may be unrealistic to assume that 10% could be allocated. On the same subject, how did you select 10% as the target figure?’

‘With regard to the small NGO perspective, the financial restrictions of developing new endeavours are even more acute. Personal income in the US is increasing at a lower rate than the number of non-profit organisations competing for the same donor dollars. Moreover, the US Government is displaying a new policy towards increased cuts in foreign development assistance. For a small NGO to work in the conflict prevention area would require unavailable resources. It would not be easy to generate new private donations for a conflict yet to occur. Can you imagine a donor letter saying something like, “please help us to prevent a disaster in Mexico”, when there is not yet an ongoing violent conflict (the Chiapas indigenous issues come to mind as an example of the potential for increasing internal conflict). I doubt it would generate great appeal, but I could be wrong.’

‘With private monies remaining constant, or shrinking, NGOs must rely on government agencies or multilateral organisations for funding. This brings us back to my first point. Where will the money come from? I have no easy answer (if I did, I would not be working here), and must reinforce your point about Cold War savings. Countries must find a means to tap into these savings by having some of the ‘retraining’ funds allocated for your suggested training of trainers and the establishment of civilian peacekeepers. Perhaps military leaders trained in conflict resolution would hold more credibility in situations of conflict and be better able to prevent violence than a group of government representatives who faint when they see blood?’

‘Your document paints a detailed picture of the need for more conflict prevention and resolution funds, as well as the need for a new approach amongst international diplomats – do not wait for the dam to break before you fix the crack. I only hope that your paper will be read and understood by those who are lucky enough to participate in relevant negotiations’.

The author of Network Paper 5, Kumar Rupesinghe, Secretary-General of International Alert, replied:

‘When you asked me about the 10% to be allocated to prevention, I must say that this percentage was derived from a guestimate as to the sum totals of development

assistance and an assessment of what may be the amounts necessary to refocus on prevention. Part of the figure is derived from the increasing amount of money which is being allocated from development assistance to humanitarian assistance. You will agree that over the years within the OECD countries a large percentage of aid funds has been channelled into humanitarian assistance, but if you challenge me on how I arrived at the 10%, I would say that I have no answer. The idea of presenting a round figure was to provoke discussion and create a climate whereby agencies would be able to focus more on the debate rather than the actual percentage concerned.'

'I do agree with you regarding the role of NGOs and the limited resources allocated to their work. It is one of the reasons why I am advocating an increasing role for NGOs in the field of conflict prevention and conflict resolution.'

One of the ways in which we can obtain more resources is to argue that it is cost-effective and more efficient if governments allocate a certain sum of money to NGOs. This is a similar argument to the one I am providing for humanitarian agencies – that they too are thinking about allocating a certain percentage of money for those NGOs concerned with conflict prevention'.

News Items

The Future of Aid: The DAC's View

In February, the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development published its annual report. In addition to providing a comprehensive review of the distribution and allocation of the major donors' development finance, it also promotes a new development paradigm to guide aid expenditures into the next century. In view of the importance of the DAC, and its direct relevance to agencies working in the relief and rehabilitation field, we summarise these financing and policy trends and assess their implications for future policy and practice.

Human Security and Sustainable Development: A New Aid Paradigm?

The DAC report identifies instability, and related migration, as a major impediment to sustainable development. It argues that rather than seeing relief responses as being in competition with longer term development responses, there is a need to see both in relation to their relative contribution to human security. To what extent can and do both relief and development interventions enable people to become more resilient to environmental, economic and political shocks and threats? This is the key question asked by the human security approach developed by UNDP, and subsequently promoted by OECD.

This approach challenges the historical divisions which have separated relief from development activities, and raises an explicit role for aid in conflict prevention and management. A rethinking of security is therefore taking

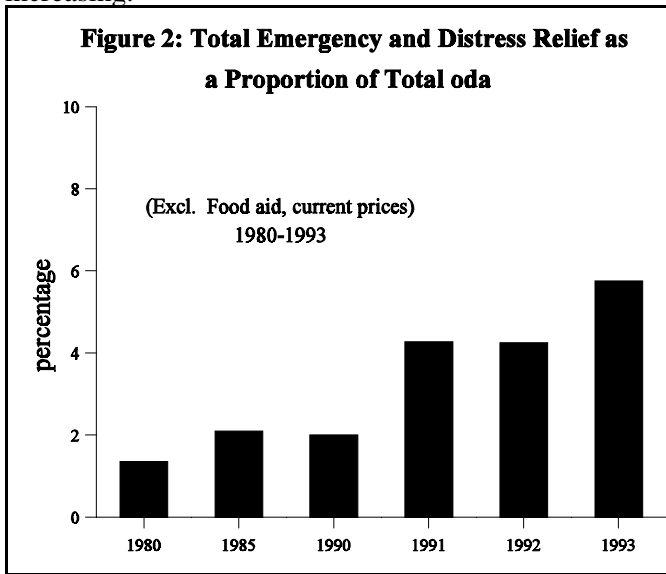
place: no longer is the primary concern about relative military advantage, but attention is now being focused on addressing the underlying causes of conflict, including poverty, inequality, environmental degradation and ethnic tension. In the post-Cold War era, the report argues, new space has been opened to develop consensus between donor and recipient countries on the goals of development. This consensus, it suggests, is embodied in the concept of sustainable development, which can be achieved by promoting increased human security.

Overall Trends in Official Development Assistance (oda)

This new aid paradigm is being promoted at a time when overall oda is declining. Figure 1 shows total oda between 1980 and 1993. An absolute decline in resources of approximately US\$5 billion was noted in 1993/4 in

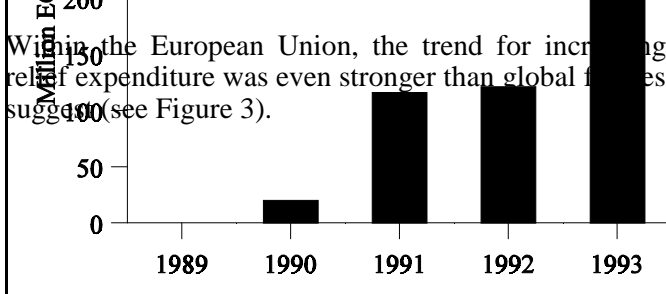
comparison with the previous year. The relative share of the aid budget allocated to relief is rising (see Figure 2).

Measuring relief expenditures remains difficult, and Figure 2 needs to be interpreted with some caution, since definitions of relief expenditure remain inconsistent. It is important to emphasise that the increase in relief expenditure has been financed largely through contingency funds and has not impacted necessarily on the overall availability of development finance. However, given the increase in the volume of relief aid, pressures to ensure its effectiveness and efficiency are rightly increasing.



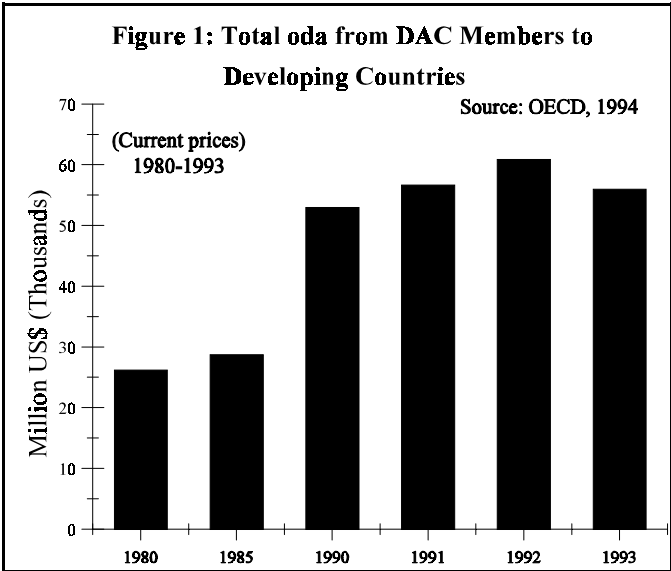
The volume of food aid for relief operations has also increased over the same period, rising from less than 1 million tons in 1979/80 to almost 4.5 million tons in

1992/3. The share of UN resources allocated to emergency and refugee operations rose from 25% in 1988 to 45% in 1992. Furthermore, the shift toward emergencies and increasingly protracted refugee operations has been even more marked. In 1986 UNDP allocated 75% of its resources to development activities, the remainder supported relief and refugee operations. In 1993, more than 85% of its resources went to humanitarian emergencies and refugee needs.



Within the European Union, the trend for increasing relief expenditure was even stronger than global figures suggest (see Figure 3).

While different sources confirm a strong trend for dramatic increases in the volume of humanitarian aid, what remains less clear is whether this has been fuelled primarily by increasing need or by other factors. The need for emergency assistance has been increasing: the number of people affected by both natural and man-made disasters rose from an estimated 44 million in 1985 to over 175 million in 1993. But other factors such as the need for donors to secure political visibility and to be seen to respond to media pressure for action in specific emergencies, also seem to be important in determining shifts in the allocation of international aid. It is important to emphasise that despite the considerable growth in relief budgets, this has not corresponded to the increase in the numbers of people affected by natural and man-made disasters. Thus, the increase in the proportion of aid allocated to relief should not be seen primarily as being at the cost of development assistance. Instead of seeing competition between relief and development budgets, it will be important to identify means of reducing the growing deficit in overall overseas aid. This will be



particularly important in the light of sweeping aid cuts and foreign policy shifts in the USA and other major donor countries.

Aid Policy in Transition

The DAC report raises a number of important issues which deserve further debate among relief and development practitioners.

The aid policy agenda is being extended at a time when the resource base is contracting. Relief budgets are being stretched to meet the competing demands of ever larger numbers of disaster-affected communities. At the same time, development agencies are being asked to extend their activities beyond the conventional spheres of social and economic intervention into an increasingly political

domain, including good governance and conflict management. The question emerges as to whether the aid system has both the mandate and the capacity to implement this new agenda.

Overcoming the resource constraints will depend in part upon increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of the aid response. As the DAC report comments, this will imply improving the linkages between relief and development, and a reexamination of the criteria used to guide these respective areas of aid policy. It is unclear whether the current rate of growth in humanitarian budgets can and will be sustained: it is likely, however, that the numbers of people in need of such relief will continue to rise. This suggests the need for careful consideration of the costs and benefits associated with relief expenditures, and the need to invest in preventive action.

The question remains whether the development system can adapt itself to the new demands of conflict management. Of concern in the DAC report is the assumption that there is a sufficient understanding of the nature of conflict, and that existing models of development are appropriate to prevent conflict. Many commentators are less convinced than the DAC appears to be on this question: indeed, it has been argued that development processes may actually increase conflict. It is unlikely, therefore, that simply carrying out more development will necessarily contribute to reducing conflict: there is a need to examine whether and how international assistance promotes or alleviates violent conflict.

Finally, there is a need for discussion and debate concerning the opportunities and threats posed by the changing financial environment of the aid system. The expansion of relief budgets is encouraging NGOs to grow rapidly, often increasing their dependency on official donor assistance to finance their expansion. Questions emerge as to the sustainability of this growth and its implications for NGO autonomy. From a donor perspective, overcoming the constraints imposed by budget lines which separate relief, rehabilitation and development will be an important challenge in order to encourage greater linkage and coherence.

For the aid system as a whole, the DAC report raises questions of mandate and capacity. How should the boundaries of political, military and humanitarian action be defined? To what extent can/should the aid system *per se* take on a role in conflict management? Finally, will it be able to fulfil this role in the context of declining resources?

The 1994 DAC report, *Development Cooperation*, is published by the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development in Paris. Additional information for this article was taken from an article by P. Webb: 'A Time of

Plenty, a World of Need: The Role of Food Aid in 2020', *2020 Brief*, International Food Policy Research Institute, February, 1995.

Accountability in Disaster Response: Assessing the Impact and Effectiveness of Relief Assistance

There are three powerful reasons why the effectiveness and impact of relief programmes should be regularly assessed. First, they are intended to save lives and reduce suffering and their effectiveness is therefore crucial to the affected population. Second, the international community spends hundreds of millions of dollars each year on the provision of relief assistance, and the costs are rising. Third, evaluations can, potentially at least, fulfil an important accountability function. In contrast to financial accountability mechanisms, which are now comparatively well developed within donor and implementing agencies, the mechanisms for ensuring accountability to the population being served are poorly developed.

Perhaps as recently as ten years ago a prevalent attitude among relief agencies was that assessments of the effectiveness and impact of relief programmes were unnecessary, if not unwelcome. When articulated, the sentiment was effectively 'Our motives were well-intentioned, we did our best under difficult circumstances, why should we now subject ourselves to a critical examination?'. Fortunately, such attitudes are now less prevalent.

However, the situation remains highly unsatisfactory. There are powerful factors which prevent or discourage the evaluation of relief programmes and which limit the ability of those evaluations which do take place to assess properly the effectiveness and impact of the assistance provided. Many of these factors stem from the nature of emergency programmes and the organisational, technical and methodological, political and organisational difficulties that this creates for evaluators.

The methods and approaches used to evaluate development assistance have often been transposed into relief projects. A review of the experience of evaluations of development assistance raises a number of points. First, the dominant approach in the evaluation of development assistance, at least until recently, was a method which required that project outputs could be readily identified, measured and valued. Secondly, approaches to the measurement of efficiency and impact required very substantial investment in time-consuming data collection and analysis in order to produce statistically valid results. Finally, the body of knowledge which exists on the evaluation of development assistance is currently in flux. A number of 'new' techniques such

as Rapid Rural Appraisal have been developed over the last decade to take account of shifts in the content and objectives of development projects. The role of NGOs in the field of development is growing, and there is increased respect for the views of the populations being served. Participatory techniques are only just beginning to be used in the evaluation of relief programmes, but it would appear that these offer a rich source of methods.

Evaluating Relief: Defining the Difficulties

Transposing the values of evaluation of development programmes to evaluation of relief interventions poses a number of difficulties.

First, there is the matter of terminology. Strictly speaking, studies which do not address all five aspects of evaluation: relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability, should not be called 'evaluations'. They fall more properly into the category of reviews or audits, and it is these which predominate amongst assessments of the impact of relief programmes.

A second central problem faced by all evaluators of relief programmes is the lack of appropriate data, caused primarily by the severe time pressure which is characteristic of virtually all relief programmes. It would also seem that certain types of information required by evaluations are not collected as a result of inadequate thought being given to the types of information needed to assess impact and outcomes. This lack of an information strategy is both one of omission and of commission. The total absence of basic data such as utilisation rates of vehicles or timing of seed distributions is frequently encountered. Equally, where information is collected, for example through surveys, inconsistent methods are often used in successive surveys, depriving the evaluators of the opportunity to construct a valid longitudinal picture. Ethical considerations also constrain the application of conventional criteria and methods of evaluation. For example, the use of cost-benefit analysis to measure the efficiency of emergency medical intervention is viewed with distaste by many. The intensive feeding of severely malnourished children is known to be very expensive per beneficiary in comparison with less intensive supplementary feeding. Such programmes also make substantial demands on the time of skilled personnel, possibly diverting them from involvement in programmes that would benefit and perhaps save the lives of much larger numbers of children. Nevertheless, the chance of providing assistance to children who are close to death is frequently regarded as sufficient justification for the inclusion of intensive feeding components in most relief programmes. If decisions are made on the basis of non-economic factors, then evaluation techniques developed within an economic framework are, if not redundant, difficult to utilise.

The environment of change and uncertainty which characterises relief interventions also raises difficulties

for evaluation. In particular, the setting of objectives by which interventions will be judged is highly problematic: the goal posts are moving continuously. For instance, a delay in the arrival of food aid for use in general ration distributions might lead an agency to establish a targeted supplementary feeding programme in an attempt to prevent a deterioration in the nutritional status of children and other physiologically 'vulnerable' groups. In the face of such uncertainty, many relief agencies describe their objectives only in very general terms. This lack of specificity and identification of indicators of achievement means that conventional evaluation techniques cannot be transferred uncritically.

In contrast to development programmes which usually involve only a limited number of agencies, a relief programme typically involves a large number of organisations and agencies. Formal agreements and undertakings usually exist 'vertically' between donor organisations providing resources and those agencies responsible for receiving and distributing the assistance. However, 'horizontally' the relationships between organisations are often informal, and, depending on the context, the nature of the organisations involved and the personalities of the key individuals within the different organisations, may be characterised by misunderstanding and rivalry. The lack of formal agreements between different agencies reduces the 'points of reference' available to evaluators for comparing performance against expected roles and responsibilities that are both agreed and documented.

In such a context there are obvious limitations to the usefulness of evaluations which focus only on the activities of particular agencies. The case for joint evaluations involving several donor organisations and relief agencies was clearly illustrated by the experience in southern Africa during 1993–94, when at least a dozen agencies undertook independent evaluations of their response to the 1991–92 drought. A multi-agency overall evaluation combined with more focused agency-specific case studies would probably have been more cost-effective, and, in terms of lessons for the international relief system as a whole, a more valuable approach. This has been recognised in the current evaluation of international responses to the crisis in Rwanda, described in more detail below.

The final, and perhaps most intrinsic, difficulty confronting the evaluation of relief interventions is their high political and media profile. Relief programmes undertaken in areas of conflict require donor agencies to consider factors such as sovereignty, international law, the appropriate 'balance' of aid between opposing sides and perhaps also national foreign policy interests – factors which would not normally be considered when responding to a natural disaster in an otherwise peaceful country. Evaluations of such responses therefore involve the evaluators in the examination of matters which would

normally be kept out of the public domain, and which require different analytical skills and methods.

Most relief programmes, whether in response to natural or conflict-generated disasters, have a high media profile which may also influence decisions on the timing, scale and nature of the response. Such a profile generally extends to the evaluations of these programmes. Taken together, the high media profile and the frequent involvement of political and legal questions in the response to relief needs in areas of conflict, makes the evaluation process for relief programmes far more sensitive than is the case for the majority of development programmes.

Towards Improved Evaluation

Given all these difficulties, where does this leave the practice of evaluation in relation to relief programmes?

A starting point has to be that evaluations are seen as crucial to the process of learning from experience and improving upon past performance, and that the evaluation process and the information requirements for effective evaluation are accorded higher priority. If agencies involved in relief operations are genuinely committed to improving their performance, then evaluations should be undertaken more frequently, and appropriate resources allocated to them.

There is a need for basic agreement among donor and implementing actors as to the criteria which should be used to measure the 'success' of relief interventions in conflict and man-made disasters. These criteria could be used to guide planning, implementation and evaluation, and to facilitate inter-agency comparison.

It will also be important that evaluators solicit the views of the population in the affected area. In most evaluations it will not be possible to undertake extensive surveys capable of yielding statistically valid results. Rapid Rural Appraisal and crude sampling techniques could be used to gather the views of small, but reasonably representative samples, of the population regarding the appropriateness, effectiveness and timeliness of the relief assistance, and its impact on existing coping strategies and community organisation.

Improving the accountability of relief interventions will be dependent, therefore, upon developing appropriate criteria and methods to measure 'success'. But, perhaps more importantly, it will also rely upon the creation of a management culture which exacts the high standards of accountability from donor and implementing agencies to recipient communities.

This article draws on a chapter by John Borton from the *World Disaster Report 1995*, which will be published shortly by the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

Rwanda: A Model for Multi-Donor Evaluation?

The Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda represents an unprecedented attempt by the international community to draw lessons from the recent experience of humanitarian assistance efforts in and around Rwanda. Based on an examination of the roles of all the groups and agencies involved in the response, the evaluation is being funded by 20 donor organisations and UN agencies, and is being coordinated by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The evaluation comprises four discrete studies, which are being managed by the development assistance departments of Sweden, Norway, the UK and the USA respectively. Study I covers the historical background to the conflict in Rwandan society; Study II focuses upon conflict prevention; Study III is on the effectiveness of emergency assistance in Rwanda and neighbouring countries; Study IV tackles the effectiveness of repatriation, rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts. The evaluation began in January 1995 and draft reports of the four studies will be finalised by the beginning of December 1995.

This evaluation is significant not only because of the scale of the international response to the crisis in Rwanda, but because it may represent the beginnings of a coordinated approach to evaluation in complex emergencies. The Overseas Development Institute is responsible for Study III, and we therefore hope to disseminate some of the findings of the evaluation in future mailings of the *Network*.

Military Humanitarianism: Service Packages, the Way Forward?

The emergency situation in Bosnia has set many precedents in terms of international relief responses. Of particular note has been the unique role of the military in humanitarian operations. Aside from their role in peace-keeping and protection, the military have played an important part in the provision of airlifts and logistics support. Governments have contributed these assets to the humanitarian operation, within the coordination framework provided by UNHCR.

In 1994, the influx of Rwandan refugees into Tanzania and Zaire was of an overwhelming scale and rapidity, and UNHCR quickly recognised the need to expand its response capacity. It was in this context that UNHCR developed the concept of 'service packages', by means of which donor governments would provide self-contained facilities and services, mostly, but not exclusively, from

their military forces. UNHCR proposed eight discrete packages of assistance to meet the needs of refugees. These ranged from the provision of airport services through to site preparation and provision of domestic fuel. Importantly, UNHCR proposed that donors should assume responsibility for the management and administration of their particular package.

In the light of experience gained in the Rwanda crisis, the Executive Committee of UNHCR asked the Commissioner to refine the concept of service packages. This is now being done. Informal consultations between UNHCR and other key players in the relief system are underway to develop the concept. The proposal aims to improve preparedness for major emergencies, by improving capacity for resource mobilization. It is not assumed *a priori* that such resources will be limited to the military, and there may be provision for subcontracting to NGOs under this framework. However, the military is likely to be the most important source of logistics and personnel to expand rapid response capacity, although they will not have a direct role in the delivery of assistance to refugees.

This appears to be an important innovation within the United Nations, and it is certainly one which raises important questions about the changing role of the military in humanitarian aid response. There are also the three principal 'C' questions: coordination, costs, and comparative advantage.

In terms of coordination, the mandate for specifying and managing the service packages emerges as an area of potential controversy. Importantly, under UNHCR's proposals, the emphasis is on responding to refugee emergencies, and it is unclear who would be responsible for the design and delivery of such assistance within non-refugee situations. This, in turn, raises questions as to the respective roles of UNHCR and DHA in defining and coordinating these packages.

In relation to costs, the emphasis of the proposals is in terms of enabling urgent responses to acute emergencies. As a UNHCR background paper points out, the idea of service packages was developed as a stop-gap measure for Sarajevo, and was expected to last only a matter of weeks. The Bosnia crisis is now three years old. It will be important, therefore, to explore what the opportunity costs of such strategies are in prolonged emergencies which are not as relatively well resourced as that in Bosnia.

Finally, the issue of comparative advantage. Delegation of these roles to military actors from donor countries brings with it concerns about the operational and management capacity of bilateral aid institutions. Furthermore, there is an important advantage of non-military, non-bilateral mechanisms in terms of neutrality: the UN and ICRC can claim a mandate which specifies

their neutrality and impartiality in ways which bilateral agencies cannot. Careful definition of how military actors articulate with the system will be necessary, therefore, particularly in contexts where there are parallel peace-keeping operations in place.

EU wants Higher Profile for Humanitarian Aid

The European Union wants to increase the public profile of ECHO. A public opinion survey conducted in all the Member States revealed that, while there was a high general awareness among people about the humanitarian work of the EU, very few knew about the creation of ECHO. Those questioned were keen to receive more information about the Union's emergency relief work, and nearly 50% wanted an increase in humanitarian aid expenditure, with only 5.1% and 2.2% respectively suggesting that it should be reduced or stopped. Interestingly, 60% felt that the Union should become directly involved in the distribution of humanitarian aid, rather than delegating implementation to NGOs and the UN. This would imply a need for expansion of ECHO capacity and careful review of the operational and financial comparative advantage offered by the EU.

The EU was seen by many (41.3%) as the most desirable channel for bilateral humanitarian assistance, with only 15% of those questioned suggesting that individual Member States would be more effective. Despite the expressed preferences of the European public, it remains to be seen whether bilateral donors will be willing to reduce the visibility of their own programmes and hand over more of the political rewards of humanitarian action to the EU.

EDF Likely to Cut Funding for Africa

Many countries in Africa are engaged in a process of 'post'-conflict reconstruction and democratisation. The end of the apartheid regime in South Africa, elections in Mozambique and Malawi, and peace in Eritrea and Ethiopia are opening up new opportunities for development. The demand for resources in these contexts is considerable to finance the cost of reconstruction and to redress the historical inequalities between different ethnic and racial groups.

Disagreement at the Lomé mid-term review in February 1995, between the ACP countries (from Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific) and EU Member States, forced postponement of a decision on increasing EDF funding. In April 1995, although the EU seems close to agreement on an EDF total of ECU 13.34bn, this does not represent an increase in real terms on the previous EDF

figure of ECU 10.8bn, despite the accession of three new EU members – Sweden, Austria and Finland. This apparent failure to increase funds to ACP countries through the EDF is taking place at a time when the EU is expanding its activities in Eastern Europe and the Mediterranean, and is likely to have particularly negative consequences for Africa. NGOs throughout Europe are lobbying vigorously for sustained and increased levels of financing through the EDF to ensure a better outcome at the April negotiations, but the outlook is not rosy.

Draft Convention on the Safety of UN and Associated Personnel

The safety and security of personnel working in war-torn communities has become a significant, and controversial, issue. More peacekeepers have died in the six years since 1989, than in the previous four decades. Numerous UN and associated personnel have been killed, taken hostage or otherwise maltreated. The question of safety and security in Bosnia has challenged military and civilian personnel alike, and UNHCR has issued guidelines on procedures and safety equipment for civilian personnel. In complex emergencies, particularly in areas where government authority has broken down, non-UN personnel working for NGOs have also lost their innocence. In countries such as Somalia, some organisations have hired local gunmen or have paid 'taxes' to militia, or requested the protection of UN peacekeepers.

Stung by attacks on UN and associated personnel in Somalia and Cambodia, the UN General Assembly passed a resolution in December 1993 calling for a legal response. In November 1994, the UN's Sixth (Legal) Committee produced a Convention, sponsored by some 40 states (including the Russian Federation and the United States) which was adopted without a vote. The Convention on the Safety of UN and Associated Personnel obliges host states to ensure the safety of personnel and their equipment to facilitate the prompt release on identification of captured and detained personnel, criminalises attacks or threats to attack personnel, and requires the exchange of information to prevent and record crimes. Finally, it introduces the 'prosecute or extradite' principle regarding alleged offenders.

However, the Convention is notable for its limitations regarding scope and implementation. First it applies only

to personnel, whether civilian, military or police, who are engaged in a UN-controlled operation for maintaining or restoring international peace and security, or where the Security Council or General Assembly has declared that there is an 'exceptional risk' to the safety of personnel involved. In effect, this means that it covers personnel who have been mandated by the Security Council, General Assembly or the Secretariat. To the disappointment of voluntary organisations and non-UN personnel, it generally excludes NGOs and bodies such as the ICRC, unless deployed under an agreement with the UN Secretary-General or a specialised UN agency. It also excludes personnel who are operating in situations which do not fall into 'exceptional risk' or 'peace and security' operations. Second, the onus of legal obligation is placed firmly on states to comply with the provisions. Indeed, the specified crimes have to be incorporated into national law. Jurisdiction over the crimes remains under state control, the right of states to prevent persons entering their territory is safeguarded, and the principle of host consent to the immunities of UN and associated personnel is emphasised.

The Convention is likely to be ratified by at least 22 states, the number required to bring it into effect. The impact of the Convention on the security of NGO personnel remains to be seen. Will it lead to the arrest and prosecution of those who attack aid convoys protected by peace-keeping forces? If so, would this itself exacerbate violence in the longer term by leading to revenge attacks on aid personnel? Once again, it is unclear whether the UN analysis of the dynamics of violence in complex emergencies is accurate and relevant. In addition, the loophole of selectivity has been built in, whereby the Security Council and the General Assembly can decide where, when and to whom the instrument applies. In the light of these limitations and those described above, NGOs would be right to remain wary that this new Convention will exert a profound influence on the security of their operations.

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Update

This section attempts to provide summary information on current and potential humanitarian emergencies with the objective of informing RRN members of the situation in countries other than those in which they are working/directly concerned. The information sources used are not always comprehensive in their coverage and so some humanitarian emergencies are not described here.

Southern Africa

Angola – The Lusaka Protocol was signed on 20 November 1994 by the Angolan Government and UNITA following more than 12 months of negotiations. The Protocol represents a comprehensive framework for restoring peace in line with the Bicesse Accords of May 1991 and subsequent relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

In his first progress report on the UN Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM III), Dr Boutros-Ghali noted that the Angolan conflict and the UN experience of peace-keeping in the country had led the Security Council to adopt a new approach. He argued that it would be difficult to justify deploying infantry units unless and until essential initial tasks had been carried out. These include an effective cease-fire; the full disengagement of government and UNITA forces and the setting up of verification mechanisms; reliable communication links between the parties of UNAVEM, and the early start of de-mining. Realistic and practical arrangements for integrating UNITA troops into the national army should also be a priority.

3.2 million people are estimated to be in need of humanitarian assistance. Angola does not appear to be affected by the drought in the region and the forecast is for one of the better agricultural seasons in recent years. Improved security has enabled more monitoring of the nutrition and food security situation in the country, and humanitarian assistance has expanded into previously inaccessible areas. A cholera outbreak was reported in Cubal where 100 cases were identified in early January 1995, rising to a total of 700 by the end of the month. The population remains at moderate risk of food insecurity due to the high degree of dependence on external food aid.

Mozambique – Elections took place in Mozambique in December 1994. The UN Special Operation in Mozambique has completed its mandate and is withdrawing its troops. By December it was reported that 1.5 million refugees had returned to Mozambique, and repatriation was completed from Zambia, Swaziland, Zimbabwe and Tanzania. 90,000 refugees remain in Malawi.

Drought is causing concern, particularly in the central and southern areas of the country. The predicted harvest

failure will necessitate emergency food assistance in 1995/6, but the scale of the requirement will be known only at the end of the growing season (April). There are fears that crop failure may jeopardise the continuation of repatriation and resettlement of refugees and displaced people. While the security situation has improved overall, there are still isolated incidents of banditry and hijacking of food aid.

Great Lakes: Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania, Zaire – An estimated 3 million people are affected by the crisis in the Great Lakes region. External aid, a re-registration exercise, repatriation and reasonable harvests in Burundi and Rwanda have combined to reduce the numbers of people estimated to be in need of assistance. The health and nutritional status of the remaining internally displaced and refugee population within Rwanda and in neighbouring countries is generally good. However, the massacre at Kibeho camp on 22 April, and the subsequent flight and forced evacuation of thousands of refugees from the camp to Butare and the surrounding area, has left many exhausted and weak from lack of food and water. Since January 1995, WFP has been warning of a serious crisis in food availability, which would engulf the entire sub-region by March 1995 unless action was urgently taken by the donor community. In recent weeks, WFP has been forced to take emergency measures in order to continue the supply of food. Current supplies are holding out, but will meet only the most immediate needs for the next weeks, and, unless stocks are replenished, WFP's capacity to respond to emergency needs elsewhere will be seriously constrained.

Increasing insecurity in northern **Burundi** and in the refugee camps in **Zaire** and Tanzania is a continuing and significant obstacle to relief efforts. Security incidents have been increasing in the region: banditry, armed robbery and threats of hostage-taking have been reported in Burundi and in the camps in Zaire, while the security situation in the Tanzanian camps has been described as tense. Following recent events in Rwanda, it is clear that the forced resettlement of displaced people and closure of camps by the Government and RPA will further delay the voluntary return of many thousands of refugees.

In Burundi it is estimated that 740,000 people are in need of food assistance. Despite an improved harvest, the overall food supply remains extremely restricted with widespread provincial variations: Kayanza is particularly badly affected.

In Zaire, voluntary repatriation is continuing slowly with a total of 239,000 refugees having been repatriated since August 1994. There was serious disruption to refugee food supplies in the Goma area, due primarily to the closure of the border with Rwanda in December 1994, preventing all cross-border food deliveries. As in other areas of the region, bottlenecks in the food pipeline and insecurity are affecting delivery of humanitarian aid.

The Horn of Africa

Ethiopia – In December 1994 the new Ethiopian Constitution was ratified. Most controversially, this provides for the secession of the newly created regions. Opposition to this remains vigorous within the country, but the donor community remains broadly supportive of the government.

The Oromo opposition appears to be consolidating and reorganising. Three Oromo movements: the OPLF (Oromo People's Liberation Front), United Oromo People's Liberation Front (UOPLF), and the Oromo People's Liberation Organisation met in Nairobi in December to consolidate their organisation and strategy. An agreement was also reached between the UOPLF and the Islamic Front for the Liberation of Oromia to unite within a new, United Oromo Liberation Front. UOLF rejects the new constitution and refuses to participate in the elections in May. Instability is expected to increase during the election period.

3,400 officials of the former regime have been put on trial for war crimes, including genocide. Unique among the accusations is that the government of Mengistu Haile Mariam withheld and manipulated food aid during one of Ethiopia's periodic droughts in order to suppress dissent. Ethiopians hope that these trials will set a precedent for other countries which have experienced extreme abuses of human rights and where food has been used as a weapon of war.

While the 1994/5 meher (main) season's production is greater in overall terms than the previous year's, the population increase has meant an overall decline in production per capita. There are widespread food needs throughout Ethiopia, but the most urgent problems are in South Wello and Wolayita. The number of refugees/returnees in the country, has risen to 379,000, due largely to an influx of Somali refugees into Eastern Ethiopia and the continued influx of Sudanese refugees in the west. Fighting in Hargeisa, Somaliland, led to an influx of 74,000 people, and food distributions for the new arrivals were carried out in January 1995. Overall the refugee population in the east of the country is not reported to be at heightened nutritional risk, despite the influx. However, the returnee population in the Ogaden (Gode) is still in a critical state, and the refugee population in southern Ethiopia is at moderate risk with elevated levels of wasting.

Eritrea – Asmara's dramatic snapping of diplomatic relations with Khartoum in December is looking more and more like part of a concerted regional strategy to isolate the NIF Government, coming as it did after a series of accusations against Sudan's government from Cairo and Kampala. Eritrean President Aferworki accuses Khartoum of funding and training fundamentalist terrorists operating in Eritrea.

Under a new policy, foreign aid agencies are prohibited from being operational, a role reserved entirely for Eritreans. Donor agencies are also restricted from paying Eritrean staff more than the prevailing in-country rates to prevent them from draining skilled people away from government services. Agencies are required to account for all funds spent in Eritrea, and no more than 10% is to be used for office overheads.

In December 1994, the first Consultative Meeting on Eritrea was held in Paris. Donors earmarked US\$250 million in international aid for 1995, and the country was added to the IMF's list of members.

Sudan – The SPLA and the Umma party signed a formal agreement on 12 December 1994, committing themselves to political cooperation and recognising the right of the South to self-determination. This high level opposition agreement is sharply increasing pressure on the NIF Government, and reflects growing regional hostility towards Khartoum. The 'Declaration of Political Agreement' between the two parties was apparently drawn up by Eritrean President Isayas Aferworki. Absent, however, were Garang's rivals. Reports persist of substantial military aid from the USA to the SPLA which recently received large consignments of ammunition. Interestingly, despite this increasing international pressure, the IMF is reported to be holding discussions with the Sudanese Government concerning future cooperation.

Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS) reported in a statement that relief agencies had temporarily moved some staff from Nimule on the border between Sudan and Uganda. Insecurity continued to disrupt relief activities in northern Bahr el Ghazal. An estimated 500 refugees were reported to be moving daily into northern Uganda because of fresh fighting in Sudan: this compares with a figure of 200 per day in the same period in 1994.

The UN has appealed for US\$ 10M to meet the 1995 needs of vulnerable groups in war-torn Sudan. FAO/WFP had forecast that overall 1994 production of sorghum and millet would be a record 85% above the previous year's production. It also reports that improved security in southern Sudan has allowed it to move cautiously from relief work towards rehabilitation. However, the mission also warned of the need to anticipate an escalation in the fighting and the consequent need for contingency planning.

Somalia – The UN Under Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs, Peter Hansen, said on 3 March that UN agencies and international NGOs would be staying on in Somalia, despite the withdrawal of the final 12,000 military personnel remaining in the country. The termination of the UN military mission comes at a time of good harvest, but fighting could mean that food will become as scarce over the coming months as it was two

years ago.

The UN appealed for US\$70.3 million for emergency relief and rehabilitation for the next six months. WFP is to supply more food aid to Somalia during 1995 – although the August 1994 harvest was very encouraging, reaching an average 90% percent of pre-war levels. While much more food is available in Somalia than during the previous three years, many people are still without jobs or sufficient income to feed their families. 600,000 people are estimated to require humanitarian assistance in 1995. The WFP has stated that it will need 115,270 tonnes of foodstuffs for its aid programmes in Somalia in 1995; it has already secured 49,000 tonnes of these requirements from pledges and stock carried over from 1994.

Somaliland – A state of emergency was imposed by the 'country's' President in December amid heavy fighting in Hargeisa. The struggle centred on control of the city's airfield, which had been controlled for 18 months by Eidagella militia, who levied tolls on all passengers. The situation is now relatively stable and international agencies have been invited to return to Hargeisa.

GTZ, USAID and the EU have set up offices in the past few months, and UNDP has earmarked US\$29 million for the development of Berbera's port facilities. A national bank has been set up and a new currency was introduced in November 1994 at the rate of 50 shillings to US\$1. The new currency has gained acceptability, and is reported to have been used successfully in Kenya and Djibouti. Each ministry now has its own budget; the next step is to draw up regional and district budgets.

West Africa

Liberia – In December 1994 a peace agreement was signed in Accra, Ghana. Improved security since the implementation of the peace accords and adherence to the cease-fire have improved access for humanitarian aid; food convoys have been able to cross into Nimba County from Cote d'Ivoire. Additional cross-border convoys are reportedly planned from Guinea to support internally displaced Liberians and those fleeing the conflict in Sierra Leone.

The mandate of the UN Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) expired on 13 April 1995. The UN Secretary-General stated that an extension of UNOMIL was possible if all warring parties showed clear political commitment to the peace process.

It is estimated that 1.8 million people remain in need of humanitarian assistance; of these, 0.5 million people are outside the ECOMOG (Economic Community of West Africa Ceasefire Monitoring Group) controlled areas, which are receiving only sporadic relief. Events in Sierra Leone (see below) have caused significant refugee

movement into Liberia, necessitating a further increase in humanitarian aid to the country. WFP reports that the food pipeline is very weak, and there is a need for early provision of cash funds for staffing and logistical support costs to ensure adequate distribution, monitoring and coordination.

Sierra Leone – Since 1991 the civil war in Sierra Leone has displaced over 1 million people. Rebel attacks on a number of large towns throughout the country in late December 1994 caused large-scale displacement. UN and NGO expatriate staff have been recalled to Freetown. Deteriorating security conditions are deterring private transport companies from travelling with relief food into the northern, southern and eastern provinces without an army escort. An estimated 85,000–125,000 Sierra Leonean refugees were expected to arrive in Côte d'Ivoire during February 1995; in Guinea the total number of refugees from Liberia and Sierra Leone is estimated to be 120,000.

Asia

Afghanistan – The emergence of a new military force – Taleban – has had a major impact on the evolution of the Afghan conflict. Taleban means 'seekers', and is generally applied to Islamic theology students. Some are trained fighters, having fought with the Mujahideen against the Soviet army. Apparently they lost faith in the Mujahideen leadership after the Soviet withdrawal. The Taleban have been pushed southwards from Kabul to Muhammed Aga and Maydan Shar after losing control of Charasyab. However, in Western Afghanistan, the militia appears to have taken the province of Nimroz and most of Farah. The UN peace process is still under way, but the previously agreed deadline for President Rabbani to hand over to an interim Council has been deferred.

The Iranian Government has announced that it will not renew the temporary residence permits of half a million Afghan refugees in Iran. They are to be given the option of returning to Afghanistan or being transferred to camps in Iran. The Iranian Government added that it would only accept new refugees in exceptional circumstances, raising concern that if fighting intensified, Iran could not be relied on as a refuge. UNHCR suggests that sympathy for the Afghans has declined because of the deteriorating economic situation in Iran itself.

The population in Kabul is considered to be facing a severe nutritional and health situation. High levels of wasting and limited food security are reported in the city. Those living in camps in Jalalabad are considered to be at moderate risk, because of the erratic supply of general rations and low levels of immunisation.

Sri Lanka – Since January 1995, the temporary truce seems to be holding, but relations between the Government and Tamils remain strained, with both sides

accusing the other of prevarication in the peace process. A number of differences remain to be resolved before the next round of talks can get under way. Despite the government's announcement that it is finalizing a political package which could include substantial devolution of power, the fact that all relevant sections of government – finance, defence, ethnic affairs, integration and policy planning – are all tightly controlled by President Kumaratunga ensures that progress is often slow. The delays are being interpreted by the LTTE as deliberate prevarication on the part of the government. If the Tamils mistake muddle for insincerity, international hopes for the next round of peace talks may be dashed, with serious implications for the refugees in Tamil Nadu.

A governmental task force on Rehabilitation and Construction has been created. The total costs of rehabilitation are now estimated to be Rs 65 billion. In late February, the LTTE made it known that they want to be included officially in the Task Force and other similar bodies. With no new opportunities for international aid or improved access for NGOs and UNHCR into contested areas, the refugees' situation remains extremely precarious.

Commonwealth of Independent States

The UN presented its Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeals for the Caucasus (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and the countries neighbouring Chechnya). In the Chechen region alone, an estimated 240,000 people are internally displaced, with a further 160,000 refugees in neighbouring republics. The UN undertook assessment missions in January and February. Emergency food aid needs for a targeted 1.7 million people in the CIS countries total some 138,000 mt for a 12-month period for the Caucasus and Tajikistan, and for 6 months for the displaced from Chechnya.

Former Yugoslavia

Croatia – Shortly before 31 March 1995, the Croatian Government was persuaded to reverse its decision to evict UNPROFOR, although on the understanding that only half the peacekeepers (from 12,000 to 6,000) would remain. This decision helped to stave off the immediate threat of war, but has left many Croats disappointed that

their chance to regain Krajina was lost. It also puts the UNPROFOR forces, renamed UNCRO (UN Confidence Restoration Operation for Croatia), in a dangerous position as they patrol the same lines with half the number of men. The Croatian government had earlier reported that its decision to terminate the UN military presence in the country was due to the fact that demilitarisation had not taken place in the UN Protected Areas and illegal paramilitary Serbian militia had not yet been disarmed.

Bosnia – The Bosnian Serbs have refused to sign the international community's latest peace plan. This initiative, put forward by the Contact Group (comprising France, Germany, UK, Russia and the USA), would have required the Serbs to relinquish large areas of territory, reducing their area of control from the current levels of 70% of Bosnia-Herzegovina to 49%. The failure of the plan has left the Group with few alternative options. There is some hope that as Bosnia's Serbs become increasingly isolated from their counterparts in Belgrade, many of whom are disassociating themselves from the Bosnian Serb actions, negotiations may continue. But with the early breaking of the tenuous four-month cease-fire, and the Bosnian government's despair of finding any alternative but to resume war, conditions for the affected populations remain critical. Conditions in Bihac remain generally unchanged: over 200,000 people face severe food shortages – 100 mt of food was delivered in mid-March, but subsequent requests for clearance for convoys have been denied. A significant increase in military activity in Tuzla and Travnik in central Bosnia has caused further population displacement. Food convoys into Sarajevo resumed in mid-March, but airlifts are still suspended because of repeated security incidents at the airport.

Sources:

Africa Confidential; Angola Peace Monitor; Horn of Africa Bulletin; ACC/SCN Refugee Nutrition Information System; FEWS Bulletin; United Nations Information Centre, News Summary; The Economist. Additional, confidential sources were also used in preparation of the update.

Conferences

Reports on earlier conferences

Conflict and Development: Organisational Adaptation in Conflict Situations, Birmingham, 1–3 November 1994, organised by ACORD, University of Birmingham and Responding to Conflict.

This three-day workshop was attended by 40 academics, NGO policy-makers and practitioners to test their ideas around a number of topics ranging from understanding the causes and nature of conflict to the adaptations that organisations are making in response to complex emergencies.

The wide-ranging and complex nature of the agenda generated a rich if slightly bewildering array of issues. Discussions highlighted the uncertainty and doubt that exist within agencies over recent responses to armed conflict. As a result, the conclusions were tentative, and it was felt that NGOs and other international organisations were still some way from a full understanding of unstable policy environments. However, this was a useful meeting, providing an important forum for NGOs to discuss key matters concerning their response to conflict.

A background document for the conference provides a useful overview of the literature and practical NGO experiences of conflict (see also Network Paper 9). Written by Mark Adams and Mark Bradbury, and published by Oxfam as a discussion paper bearing the same title as the conference, this is available from: Bournemouth Educational Book Centre, 15 Albion Close, Parkstone, Poole, Dorset BH12 3LL. Telephone: + 44 1202 715555 priced £9.95. For further information about the meeting contact Mark Adams, ACORD, Francis House, Francis Street, London SW1. Telephone: +44 171 828 6711. Fax: + 44 171 976 6113.

Crisis and Emergency in International Conflicts, Rome, 23–24 November, 1994, organised by CISP-MOVIMONDO, in collaboration with the Italian Office of the European Parliament.

This international seminar reviewed trends and approaches in international responses to complex emergencies. Following a session on political strategies for conflict prevention, the conference then focused on questions of whether and how development and relief programmes could contribute to the prevention and mitigation of complex emergencies. This included discussion of nutritional and epidemiological issues, displacement and the psycho-social effects of conflict. The final session was devoted to the sensitisation of public opinion in relation to emergencies. A report on the conference will be published shortly.

For further information contact: Barbara Marziali, CISP-MOVIMONDO, Via Marianna Dionigi 57, 00193, Rome, Italy. Telephone: + 39 6 3215498. Fax: + 39 6 3216163. Email cisp.movimondo@agora.stm.it.

International Symposium on Water in Armed Conflicts, Montreux, 21–23 November, 1994, organised by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

In situations of armed conflict a lack of clean water often kills as many, or more, people as bullets and bombs. This symposium was the first step in an effort by the ICRC to draw attention to the problems of ensuring safe water supplies in conflict situations. The initiative's main objective was to achieve more effective protection of the victims of war, especially when water installations and

supplies are affected by hostilities. A number of important recommendations were made at the end of the meeting. These included the need for absolute protection of water supplies in situations of armed conflict and dissemination of the rules of war concerning access to water. There was also a proposal to establish an international network to centralize, provide and share essential operational information concerning emergency water supplies.

A report on the meeting is in preparation. For further information, please contact: PG Nembrini, International Committee of the Red Cross, 19 Avenue de la Paix, CH1202 Geneva. Telephone: + 41 22 730 2792; fax: + 41 22 733 2057.

Programming Relief for Development, Copenhagen, 20–22 February 1995, organised by the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

This meeting, organised in collaboration with the Danish Red Cross, aimed to identify relief strategies which can contribute to the achievement of longer-term development objectives. The characteristics of developmental relief programmes were identified as including: building up the capacity of survivors of disasters and of recipient institutions, and improving the accountability of aid agencies working in emergencies. The inappropriate organisation of the international humanitarian aid system, which continues to be separated operationally and financially from the 'mainstream' of development assistance, was identified as a major constraint to increasing the developmental value of relief.

For further information and copies of the final conference statement, contact Peter Walker, International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, PO Box 372, 1211 Geneva 19, Switzerland. Telephone: +41 22 730 4222; fax: + 41 22 733 0395. email: Walker@ifrc.org

Aid Under Fire: Redefining Relief and Development Assistance in Unstable Situations, Wilton Park, 7–9 April, 1995, Co-convened by the United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs, Overseas Development Institute and ActionAid.

This meeting brought together 60 senior policy-makers, including Peter Hensen, Under Secretary General of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, from the United Nations, donor agencies and NGOs to discuss the implications of conflict for the management and design of relief and development programmes. It aimed to build consensus between these different actors in the aid system as to the nature of the problem posed by instability and the priorities for action by aid practitioners. While much of the meeting was characterised by disagreement over terms and priorities for policy action, it was important in cutting across many of the barriers which typically divide relief and

development practitioners, and bilateral, multilateral and NGO agencies. The need for intensive follow-up was recognised, and a programme of action is being developed by the organisers. This is likely to include a similar meeting in 1996.

Copies of the conference report and background paper will be available from Jo Macrae at the RRN.

Draft Workshop on Improving Nutrition in Refugees and Displaced People in Africa, 5–7 December 1994, Machakos, Kenya.

This workshop aimed to identify ways of reducing the persistent and unacceptably high rates of mortality and malnutrition in refugee and displaced populations in Africa. Organised by UNHCR and the Applied Nutrition Programme, University of Nairobi, it sought to foster consensus among participants, and communicate agreed methods for prevention and treatment of protein energy and micronutrient malnutrition. Over 100 delegates with technical, policy and managerial responsibilities for nutrition of displaced populations from host governments, NGOs and international agencies, (working in 10 African countries) attended the meeting. Both

technical and management aspects of four main issues were addressed: quantity and quality of general food rations; prevention of micronutrient deficiencies; prevention and management of malnutrition and health and nutrition information systems. A group has been formed to consider follow-up of the recommendations and a report synthesising the results of the workshop with recommendations can be obtained from: John Mason, Technical Secretary, ACC/SCN, c/o WHO, 20 Avenue Appia, CH 1211, Geneva 27, Switzerland, Tel: + 41 22 791 0456, Fax: + 41 22 791 0746.

Forthcoming conferences

Development Studies Association Conference, Dublin, September 1995 This year's annual meeting of development academics and practitioners coincides with the 150th anniversary of the Great Irish Famine. To reflect this historic occasion, the theme of the plenary sessions will be on famines past and present, their causes and effects. For further details contact Professor Helen O'Neill, Centre for Development Studies, University of Dublin, Library Building, Belfield, Dublin 4, Ireland. Telephone: + 353 1 706 7603; Fax + 353 1 269 1963. Email: RBAKER@ollamh.ucd.ie

Publications

Humanitarianism Unbound?, London, African Rights, 1994. Copies of the paper are available from African Rights, 11 Marshalsea Road, London SE1 1EP, Telephone: + 44 171 717 1224; Fax + 44 171 717 1240, price £4.95 (including postage and packaging).

This is a provocative and important discussion paper. It maps out many of the key dilemmas facing the humanitarian aid system in complex political emergencies, and charts the changing context of relief interventions over the past decade, drawing on examples from Ethiopia, Angola, Bosnia and culminating in an analysis of international responses to the crisis in Rwanda.

Its main thrust is the argument that there is a need to redefine the boundaries of humanitarianism. It contends that the emergence of multi-mandate agencies concerned with human rights, conflict resolution, the delivery of relief aid, and, one might add military intervention, is resulting in a crisis of mandate and accountability. The humanitarian agenda, it argues, remains distorted in favour of ensuring the delivery of relief assistance, rather than addressing the political factors which promote crises such as those in Rwanda. Overcoming this distortion is seen to entail both clarification of the objectives of humanitarian intervention on the part of donor countries, and improvement in the quality of regulation of different

actors.

Guaranteed to provoke discussion, this is compelling and compulsory reading for relief and development policy-makers and practitioners.

Demobilization and Reintegration of Ex-combatants in Mozambique, by Joao Paulo Borges Coelho and Alex Vines, London. Earthscan and ICVA 1995, price £13.95.

Demobilisation of armed forces and their reintegration into civil society constitute a major challenge in many countries making the transition from war to relative peace. This report assesses the experience of Mozambique in demilitarisation. An important distinction is made between demobilisation and reintegration. While there may be difficulties in its implementation – in Mozambique, for example delays in timing – demobilisation is a finite process guided by tangible and detailed rules. In contrast, reintegration is seen as an open-ended process, since it tends to merge with overall socio-economic development processes. It is in this latter context that the report should be of interest to NGOs working in situations of 'post'-conflict transition. Ensuring that the needs of demobilised soldiers are met will be a pre-condition for sustainable peace in countries as diverse as Cambodia, El Salvador and Ethiopia. Combining individual testimony and formal survey

results, this report is an important contribution to a growing, but still small, literature,

For further information and copies of the report contact: Refugee Studies Programme, Queen Elizabeth House, University of Oxford, 21 St Giles, Oxford OX1 3LA, UK: Tel+ 44 1865 270722: Fax +44 1865 270721

Meeting Needs: NGO Coordination in Practice. Edited by Jon Bennett, London, Earthscan and ICVA, 1995.

Kenya: NGO coordination during the Somali refugee crisis 1990–1993, Monika Kathina Juma

Lebanon: The Lebanese NGO Forum and the reconstruction of civil society, 1989–1993, Jon Bennett

Central America: NGO Coordination in El Salvador and Guatemala, 1980–1994, Alan Burge

Cambodia: NGO Cooperation in a changing aid context, 1979–1984, Jon Bennett and Charlotte Benson

The True Cost of Conflict. Edited by Michael Cranna, London. Earthscan 1994, price £14.95.

The search for mechanisms of effective coordination of relief aid resembles that of the search for the Holy Grail: the expectation is that if coordination could be improved, then 'things will be alright'. This book examines mechanisms for the coordination of NGO interventions in a number of complex emergencies. Its starting point is that the increase in the volume of relief assistance targeted through NGOs reflects a systemic crisis in the international relief system. It asks, therefore, whether and how NGOs can improve their accountability and competence through different coordination mechanisms. The cast of contributors is distinguished and the selection of countries relevant. A clearer typology of the different functions and mechanisms of coordination in different contexts would have strengthened the conceptual basis of the book. Nevertheless, an important starting point for the mythical search!

Contents:

Introduction: Recent Trends in Relief Aid, Jon Bennett

Afghanistan: Cross-Border NGO Coordination 1985–1993, Jon Bennett

Ethiopia: NGO Consortia and Coordination Arrangements 1984–1991, John Borton

Eritrea and Tigray: Changing Organisational Issues in Cross Border Relief Assistance, 1983–1992, Mark Duffield

Mozambique: Post-War reconstruction and the LINK Forum, 1987–1994, Jon Bennett

This book reports on a two-year study undertaken by the British-based NGO, Saferworld. It is an attempt to calculate the cost of conflict, not only in terms of death and injury, but also the economic costs to the countries involved as well as to their trading and investment partners. It also recognises the benefits that conflict may bring to different political, economic and military groups. The book examines case studies including: the Gulf War, East Timor, Mozambique and Sudan, Kashmir and the former Yugoslavia, and is rich in data mapping the local, national and international costs of conflict, including the costs of relief.

Not surprisingly, it concludes that the costs of conflict far outweigh the benefits, and provides a series of policy recommendations to guide international responses to conflict. These include an increased emphasis on early warning and prevention, deployment of UN troops and upholding human rights. These are worthy rallying points, most of which have been sounding since the creation of the United Nations some fifty years ago. Overall, an interesting source of data, which, if used carefully, could contribute to advocacy and lobbying activities. The resulting critique and recommendations are weak, however, and do not add much to the already substantial literature on the subject.

Broadcasting for Restraint: Crisis Reduction through UN-Supported Initiatives, Peter Loizos with Gordon Adam and Jelena Subotic, LSE Discussion Paper No. 11, 1994. This paper is available, free of charge, from the Centre for the Study of Global Governance, London School of Economics, Houghton Street, London WC2A 2AE. Telephone: +44 171 955 7583. Fax: + 44 171 955 7591.

In both Rwanda and Bosnia, propaganda and incitement to violence by radio and the mass media have been a major concern. For example, Radio Mille Collines in Rwanda played a significant role in fomenting genocide in that country in 1994. This paper argues that, as radio can contribute to the dynamics of violence, so it can be used as an important tool in crisis reduction. It suggests that the UN is the most obvious organisation to develop this role further, emphasising that this needs to be done in collaboration with nationals of the affected country. This is a thoughtful paper, introducing a number of examples where experiments with radio have been used to contribute to peace-building. The important question of who is defining alternative messages to promote peace is left to some extent, up in the air. What implications would there be for the operational neutrality of organisations like the UN in airing opposition views on public radio? As the paper suggests, evaluation of existing peace initiatives by the media is merited and cautious experiments in new situations deserve encouragement.

A Healthy Peace? 'Post'-Conflict Rehabilitation and Development of the Health Sector in Uganda and 'Post'-Conflict Rehabilitation: Preliminary Issues for Consideration by the Health Sector. These reports are available from the Health Policy Unit, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Keppel Street, London WC1E 7HT, priced £10 in Western Europe, Australia, Japan and USA, £5 elsewhere. Telephone + 44 171 927 2404. Fax: + 44 171 637 5391.

These papers report on a series of studies concerned with 'post'-conflict rehabilitation of health services. The first discusses the experience of Uganda, and concludes that rather than contributing to the sustainable long-term development of health systems, much of the rehabilitation inputs in the country during the late 1980s have exacerbated the crisis of sustainability and the poor quality of health service delivery in the country. The second report moves away from a country focus, and reviews broad trends in international aid responses to situations of 'post'-conflict transition. Although the focus is on the health sector, it offers a commentary on broader trends in aid policy and practice in unstable situations.

Disasters: The Journal of Disaster Studies and Management. The following articles will appear in the June 1995 issue (19:2) of the DISASTERS journal.

'Developing Decentralised Capacity for Disaster Prevention: Lessons from Food Security and Nutrition Monitoring in Malawi', by S.C. Babu (IFPRI) and G.B. Mthindi (University of Malawi).

'Structural Adjustment and Drought in Zambia', by M. Mulwanda (Copperbelt University).

'Decentralised Data Management in Nutritional surveillance for Timely Warning and Intervention', by M Mulder-Sibanda (PAHO/WHO) and R.I. Chowdhury (Jahangirnaga University, Bangladesh).

'The Impact of the 1993 Latur-Osmanabad (Maharashtra) Earthquake on Lives, Livelihoods and Property', by S. Parasuraman (Tata Institute of Social Sciences).

'Towards a Redefinition of Security in Central America: the Case of Natural Disasters', by L. Pettiford' (Nottingham Trent University).

'Risk Factors for Death in the 27 March 1994 Georgia and Alabama Tornadoes', by T.W. Schmidlin (Kent State University) and P.S. King (Cornell University).

The Continuing Metamorphosis of the Humanitarian Practitioner: New Colours for an Endangered Chameleon, by H. Slim (Oxford Brookes University).

'Nutrition, Disease and Death in Times of Famine', by H. Young and S. Jaspars.

The following articles are planned for the September 1995 issue (19:3):

'The Role of Food Aid in Drought and Recovery: Oxfam's North Turkana (Kenya) Drought Relief Programme (1992-1994)', by J. Bush.

'El Nino/Southern Oscillation Events and Disaster', by M. Dilley (USAID).

'The Association between El Nino/Southern Oscillation Events and Typhoons in the Marshall Islands', by D. Pennemann, (Charles Sturt University) and I.C. Marschner (Harvard School of Public Health).

'Primary Health Care and Disasters', by R.B. Fjaer (Norwegian Armed Forces).

'Flood Control Projects in Bangladesh: Reasons for Failure and Recommendations for Improvement', by M.M. Hoque and Md. A.B. Siddique (Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology).

'Malnutrition and Poverty in the Early Stages of Famine', by S. Jaspars and H. Young.

'Long term effects of Hurricane Andrew: Revisiting

Mental Health Indicators', by S. McDonnell (CDC) et al.

'The Impact of Reduced and Uncertain Food Supply in Three Besieged Cities of Bosnia-Herzegovina', by F. Watson (Institute of Child Health, University of London).

The above can be obtained from David Turton, Editor,

Disasters, Dept of Social Anthropology, University of Manchester, Manchester M13 9PL, tel: (0161) 275 3999, fax: (0161 275 3970), Email: D.A.Turton@man.ac.uk. A free sample copy may be ordered by sending a request to jnlsamples@cix.compulink.co.uk, including the journal title and reference number CO164.

Changing Faces on the Network

Joanna Macrae has joined the team as a Research Fellow. In her previous work at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, she was involved in a number of research projects concerned with 'post'-conflict rehabilitation of health services in Ethiopia, Uganda and Cambodia. Her professional interests include international aid policy in unstable situations, the relationship between relief and development planning and the impact of conflict on health and health services. She is co-editor of *War and Hunger: Rethinking International Responses to Complex Emergencies*.

Véronique Göessant, who played a key role in setting up the Relief and Rehabilitation Network, left the RRN in November 1994 to live in Botswana with her husband. We wish her every success and happiness.

Nathalie Vegezzi has taken over as the Network Administrator. Her previous job was in the Development Cooperation section at the Local Government International Bureau, which provides information to local authorities on European and international issues. She will be getting married on 1 July and, thereafter, will be Nathalie Shellard.

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Relief and Rehabilitation Network

EuronAid, the European Association of Non-Governmental Organisations for Food Aid and Emergency Relief was established in 1980 to provide logistics and financing services to NGOs using EC food aid in their relief and development programmes. Its offices are located in the Hague. The EuronAid member agencies are currently: ADRA Germany, CAFOD, Care Britain, Caritas Belgium, Caritas Germany, Caritas Italy, Caritas Netherlands, Caritas Spain, Catholic Relief Services, Christian Aid, Concern, Deutsche Welthungerhilfe, Diakonisches Werk der EKD, Diakonisches Werk der EKD/Bremen, Dutch Interchurch Aid, Lutheran World Federation, Oxfam Belgique, Oxfam UK, Prosalus, Save the Children Fund, Secours Catholique, Secours Populaire Français, SOS Sahel International, Tear Fund UK, Trocaire. AMI, Food Aid Management (USA), Help and the World Council of Churches have observer status. The **EuronAid Working Group on Training and Research** made up of representatives of six member agencies provides the reference group for the RRN.

The **Overseas Development Institute** was founded in 1960 as an independent centre for development research and a forum for discussion. The Institute is engaged in policy-related research on a wide range of issues which affect economic relations between the North and the South and which influence social and economic policies within developing countries. Besides the new RRN, ODI also maintains four other specialist networks of practitioners and researchers in agricultural research and extensions, irrigation management, pastoral development and forestry. Currently, ODI has over 30 staff in Research Fellow and Research Associate positions and some 25 support staff, including librarians and publications personnel.

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