

## THE COST OF CONFLICT



*Ethiopia*

*In this issue:*

- \* Anti-personnel mines: children as victims
- \* Rape in Kenya's refugee camps
- \* Meeting aid workers' need for help
- \* Psychosocial impact of violence and war
- \* Return of Guatemalan refugees
- \* Conferences, courses and reviews

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## Letter from the Editor

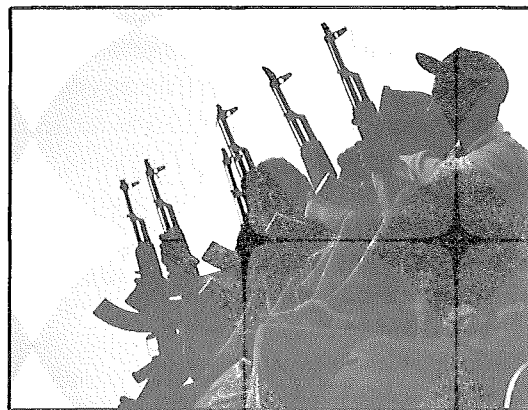
*This issue of the RPN looks at refugees and violence - at different aspects of violence and ways of responding to and coping with that violence. The theme for the next RPN will be: coordination, consultation and participation. Future themes proposed include: education and training and environment and displacement.*

*This Network depends on the participation of its members. Do you have something to share which would be of help to others? Articles of most use to other members are those with a very practical focus: a review of the experience of one particular project or programme, the results of recent practice-oriented research, a debate on the different approaches to working with refugees, and so on. For example, do you have a good example of how people who have been forcibly uprooted have participated in setting up their own programmes? of coordination between NGOs? of consultation with local communities or local government? or of any other aspects which relate to the forthcoming theme of coordination, consultation and participation? You may have ideas for the other two themes mentioned or for a different theme altogether.*

*Please send me your articles, project reports and ideas. (The RPN covers internally displaced people as well as cross border asylum seekers and those uprooted by 'development'.) Articles should not be longer than 3,000 words and may be much shorter! It does not matter if English is not your first language; we will edit any material submitted. If possible, please send photographs to illustrate your article; they will be returned. Material for the next issue should be submitted as soon as possible, preferably by 27 June.*

*Refugees, researchers and those who work with refugees are continually gaining valuable experience. Please share it with others. Thank you.*

*Marion Couldrey, RPN Coordinator/Editor*



### MAKING THE RSP LIBRARY 'TRANSFERRABLE'

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An important part of the RSP's work since it began in 1982 has been to encourage the development of research and teaching in other universities, particularly in the poorest host countries around the world. A major problem which faces researchers/teachers in these countries is the lack of library resources. To help resolve this problem, the RSP is seeking funding to reproduce the unpublished documentation it holds onto microfilm or digitised format so that it can be easily transferred.

Before the RSP can proceed (in addition to finding the necessary funding), we need to sort out the problem of copyright holders. This constitutes a major undertaking. We need to write to seek permission from a potential list of 8,000 authors! *Will you help us to reduce that number and so save costs?*

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Thank you very much for your help. We hope that more of the RPN readers will be contributing to our efforts to increase, and to extend access to, library resources on forced migration around the world.

# ANTI-PERSONNEL MINES : CHILDREN AS VICTIMS

by Rae McGrath

*Some months ago I was examining the site of a mine incident where a six year old boy died while playing in northern Iraq/Kurdistan. The boy had strayed into a minefield while playing but it was not clear at all how he could possibly have stood on a mine accidentally; the mines, all surface-laid pressure devices, were clearly visible and it was unlikely that the boy, from a village in a heavily mined area, would not have recognised them as mines. The area was grassland meadow and it was only when I crouched to inspect the accident site that I suddenly realised why the boy had died. Although the grass was no more than six inches high, from my new position I could see no mines: I could see only grass. My eye-level was roughly that of a little boy of six. The victim died because he was too small.*

Children are especially vulnerable to anti-personnel mines, not just, as with adults, as a result of their involvement in vulnerable occupations but quite simply because they are children.

## Disadvantages of being a child

Examine firstly the child's vulnerability by reason of physique. The example above illustrates that children may be too small to see scattered mines which are clearly visible to adults. They must also scramble over obstacles, such as low walls, which adults merely step over, presenting at least two risks: first, they may dislodge the earth or stones which could set off mines and, second, they may not be tall enough to see mines on the far side of the obstacle.



*Sadar Ramadan, 9 years old, lost his leg on a fishing trip with his father in the Choman area of Iraqi Kurdistan.*

*Photo: Rae McGrath/Mines Advisory Group*

Children in groups with adults, particularly war refugees, may not be strong enough to keep up with the party and so may stray off safe routes into minefields; very young children, of course, are unlikely to recognise graphic minefield warning signs and even less likely to understand written warnings. It is probable that even the most comprehensive and child-oriented community mines awareness programme

will have limitations in its impact on children due to the wide range of situations which demand a continuing awareness of the possible presence of mines.

## The dangers of returning home

It is the children of recently repatriated families who are particularly vulnerable. It is important to understand the strangeness and excitement of repatriation for young children who may have grown up or even been born in a refugee camp. It is certain that they will have looked forward to their return home with confused feelings and experience shows that they are, understandably, unlikely to recall mine awareness warnings during their first days back in their home country. It is also during this period when parents and elder brothers and sisters will be making their own adjustments and will probably be too busy to watch every movement of the younger children. For the children themselves there are places to explore, strange sights and new friends. It is little wonder that many die or lose limbs in those critical first days.

## Familiarity breeds... danger

The problem of the heavily mined areas is often a perverse reversal of the common perception of the 'hidden mine'. The actual devices may be so common that every child is likely to have seen a mine but not as a thing to be feared. Indeed, in northern Iraq, rural children commonly use mines as wheels for toy trucks and go-carts; in Cambodia they play *boules* with B40 anti-personnel mines. But it is not just in their own games that mines have become everyday objects. Many adult men disarm mines and bring them to dumps near their home or even actually into their home. Mine casings may be used as common household tools; two examples witnessed recently by the author are Valamara-69 cases being employed as flower-pots and plastic anti-tank casings being used as sugar grinders. It is little wonder that children maintain no fear of, or respect for, mines.

Even where children recognise the danger of mines, there cannot be an automatic assumption that such knowledge will





*Iraqi Kurdish children playing on toy trucks made with anti-tank mines.*

*Photo: Cameron Barnett*

deter them from tampering with mines. Especially among young boys, the risk element itself may prove a fatal attraction. In Afghanistan they compete in throwing stones at PFM-1 'Butterfly' mines, the winner being the child whose stone causes the mine to detonate; similar behaviour has been observed in other mined regions. On one occasion, I had to stop children from dropping boulders from a bridge onto an anti-tank mine in the dried river-bed below the parapet.

#### **Mine-vulnerable tasks**

The most common causes of mine injury and death among children, however, are the result of the victim performing mine-vulnerable tasks. Children, often as young as six years of age, have an essential working role in most subsistence agricultural communities.

The tasks they perform are among the highest risk occupations:

**Grazing livestock:** Especially in areas where remotely disseminated mines and sub-munitions have been deployed, pastoral land is often heavily mined. Grazing of livestock, especially sheep and goats, demands a continuing migration and search for the best available grazing and, inevitably, results in frequent incursions into minefields. Although knowledgeable herders follow behind their animals, it is by no means a fool-proof protection strategy since even cattle and camels, probably due to their weight distribution and the minimal ground pressure applied as each hoof meets the ground, often traverse minefields unharmed while the young herders behind them become casualties. It is also common

for shepherds to fall victim to mines while attempting to drive their animals out of a known mined area into which they have strayed.

**Water collection:** Children, especially young girls, often fall victim to mines while carrying water. Recently returned refugees and displaced people are particularly vulnerable until they become aware of safe routes and un-mined water sources.

**Firewood collection:** This is possibly the highest risk occupation for all age groups in a mined environment. A common scenario where children become casualties is when a mother with several young children takes them with her to cut firewood, either to assist her or because they are too young to be left alone. Wood cutting and brushwood collection demand a constant expansion of activity into new areas and therefore often into locations previously left undisturbed for long periods. Fatalities are high in some countries among victims collecting firewood, due to the high incidence of fragmentation mines laid in wooded areas. Children become casualties either while helping to collect or carry wood or, in the case of younger children, by straying off tracks while the mother, loaded with wood, is unable to control them.

**Scavenging:** Scavenging by children in poor rural communities is commonly an economy-driven activity rather than an extension of play. In some regions, it is by far the most common reason for children becoming mine casualties. Three specific reasons for incidents have been identified:

a) Children scavenging for souvenirs or items of value in abandoned military bases or combat areas (bunkers, trench

systems, etc) may handle or activate mines by accident or unknowingly.

b) Children may attempt to collect mines, and sometimes to disarm them, for their intrinsic value.

c) Although more commonly related to general ordnance (shells, mortars, rockets, etc) than specifically to mines, a common reason for severe injuries and deaths are attempts by children to remove valuable metals (usually aluminium fuses and copper driving bands) by chiselling and hammering explosive devices with almost inevitable results. Children have also been killed and injured as a result of building fires around mines and ordnance.

**Collecting mines:** Children, especially young boys, have been known to start mine collections and may use common mines to swap for rare ones. Insane as the practice may sound, it is a sufficiently common occurrence to examine two of the probable catalysts for such behaviour.

The first is undoubtedly the acceptance of mines by children as common objects made attractive by the variety of shapes and, possibly, the comparative risk associated with different devices but certainly the initial impetus for such behaviour originates from the activities of role models - older boys and adults who disarm mines and/or boast of doing so to younger children.

The second reason is unrelated to culture and community but arose from attempts to make refugees aware of the mine hazard. Wooden replicas of mines were produced in large quantities as teaching aids and soon fell into the hands of refugee children as collectors' items. After their repatriation it was only a matter of time before children began extending their collections to real mines. (For this reason most community awareness programmes now restrict the use of, and do not distribute, landmine replicas.)

It is worth noting that children often collect detonators and, since these may be set off by improper handling (it is possible to initiate a detonation by the heat of the hand), this is a very common cause of injuries - sometimes serious due to children carrying large numbers of detonators in their pockets.

Although the above illustrates the occupations performed by children which place them at risk, it should be remembered that merely playing games is one of the most common 'occupations' leading to the death and severe injury of young children. It is certainly true that a child is at greater risk than adults of falling victim during leisure time because of the wide-ranging nature of the games played and because, unlike adults, a child is unlikely to remember cautionary advice while playing.

Finally, children in poor rural communities are often driven into vulnerable occupations following the death or maiming of a key family breadwinner (often the father or an elder brother). The survival of the family group may then dictate that a child is forced by necessity to undertake a breadwinner role at an abnormally early age. Casual cash undertakings, such as salvaging copper and alloys from battle-field areas, are often the only opportunity for such children to play a support role for the family - with almost inevitable consequences.

### **The international challenge**

The plight of children in mined regions is a single aspect of one of the most urgent humanitarian problems facing the international community. There is an increasing tendency to avoid remedial action on the grounds that clearance operations are considered too expensive or simply not feasible. The former point is true but the costs are well within the capabilities of the international community if there is political will and support on a scale comparable to that which exists for the continuing sale of arms, for instance. The latter argument, that large scale mine eradication is not a feasible proposition, is simply not true. The work of demining NGOs in Afghanistan and of Mines Advisory Group teams in Northern Iraq present adequate proof that, when there is a genuine commitment from the donors and a properly planned and professionally supervised operation, mine eradication on a wide scale is as feasible as any other engineering project.

The solutions to this tragedy can be clearly defined:

- \* Well-planned village-based awareness programmes to minimise the toll in lives and limbs.
- \* Properly funded mine eradication operations aimed at producing indigenous capability to deal with mine eradication in rural areas.
- \* An international ban in the manufacture, sale and transfer of anti-personnel mines (including submunitions which have the same impact on civilian communities as anti-personnel mines).

Agencies with a responsibility for the welfare of children in mine-affected communities have a clear moral duty to campaign for such action.

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Editor's note: see p 37 for publications looking at land-mines (Crosslines and Landmines in Mozambique).

# THE PSYCHOSOCIAL IMPACT OF VIOLENCE AND WAR

## Bosnian refugee families and coping strategies

by Marita Eastmond, Lilian Ralphsson and Birgitta Alinder

### Introduction

In November and December 1992, the first 149 male Bosnian Muslim refugees and their families were accepted for resettlement in Sweden. They arrived from refugee camps in former Yugoslavia where they had been taken after the men were released by the Red Cross from Serbian prison camps in Bosnia. The families had spent about 40 days together in the same Red Cross camp awaiting transportation to Sweden. The criteria of selection for resettlement in Sweden were existing family or kin connections in Sweden (either earlier immigrants or currently as asylum seekers).

Physical and psychiatric assessments were made on arrival; all men were estimated to risk developing post trauma stress disorder (PTSD), and 32% formed a high risk group (Bjorn and Eriksson, 1993). The first 11 of these 149 men and their families were chosen for a more in-depth and long-term follow up during their first two years in Sweden, as a contextualised enquiry into the responses to extreme disruption and violence, rather than the more common individual and trauma-centred approach. These families all came from the same small town in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the men had been imprisoned together in the camp. As a fairly homogeneous group in terms of background and history, we felt that it was of particular interest to look at coping and wellbeing of families in relation to the different local contexts of settlement. Can we say anything about factors which promote or hinder ill health, including the development or resources as a group sharing the same fate?

A series of three interviews will be carried out over a period of a year and a half after the arrival and will involve visiting the families at their homes at six monthly intervals. The first two interviews were conducted in spring and autumn of 1993; the third is planned for the spring of 1994. A family therapist (Ralphsson) and an individual therapist (Alinder) conduct the interviews, in close cooperation with a social anthropologist (Eastmond). This paper is a first report of this inquiry which is still in progress. We can draw no firm conclusions as yet but wish to raise some themes which seem to be issues of wider relevance to the reception of traumatised refugees.

### Trauma and coping in social and historical context

This enquiry was guided by combined perspectives from

social anthropology and family therapy. In our approach, individuals and families are seen as parts of larger social and cultural systems. It is within those systems that painful events are experienced and expressed, and coping strategies are shaped. This view centres on suffering, trauma and coping as social rather than individual experience.

Responses to extreme events must then be seen within a wider context than the traumatic events themselves. Understanding what provided structure and meaning to life under more stable and normal circumstances will help us understand the focus of refugees' efforts to reconstitute meaningful existence in exile.

### Life in a Bosnian town: the world destroyed

The families all come from a small town in southern Bosnia, with a population of about 12,000. They constituted a small minority of Muslims, about 20%, the large majority being Serbs. Most of the families have lived there for generations. Despite their history of ethnic conflict, all families report that until the war in 1992 ethnicity had little relevance in everyday life of the town.

Much of life at home had centred on work but more as a means to promoting a collective or family enterprise than in terms of individual careers. All adult members had employment and also worked their own lands or parents' farms, and built houses for family members in their spare time. Most of the families grew fruit and vegetables, in their own gardens or on parents' farms, and some had a few animals.

Kinship was important in structuring social and economic life and vital to a sense of purpose and emotional wellbeing. The traditional domestic unit was a couple and their married sons, holding property (primarily land and houses) and working the land together, and women entering the group on marriage. There was an ongoing flow of mutual exchange of assistance and other resources embedded in daily interaction among relatives in the extended family, including caring for children and the ageing parents. This social world also extended to friends (mostly work mates and neighbours) who formed a multi-purpose resource network and who could be relied on for both economic and emotional support when in difficulty, irrespective of ethnic origin.

## Capture

Most of the men were captured in June and placed in a Serbian-controlled prison camp. They were released through the Red Cross four months later in October 1992. All men suffered different degrees of physical and psychological violence in camp. Some report being forced to watch others being abused or killed, and suffered death threats of different kinds; there was random shooting in the camp. Food and medical care were insufficient. The women delivering their husband's meal at noon also suffered threats and abuse, even physical attacks, from Serbian soldiers and civilians along the way.

Although there were few close social ties between these families prior to the war, the bonds forged among those who went through this ordeal together stand out clearly in all the interviews with the refugees. They constitute what may be called a 'community of fate' (cf. Eastmond, 1989).

### A community of fate: dispersal in Sweden

Within a few weeks of arrival in Sweden, the 11 families (57 individuals, of which 17 were children below 18 years of age and five were 60 years or older) were placed in five different Swedish municipalities, ranging from large towns to very small rural communities, in some cases at great distance from each other. The largest concentration was five families located in the same town. The separation of families was made in spite of advice to the contrary by health professionals.

As refugees with permanent residence permits, the families are entitled to receive economic support, housing and loans for furnishing their flats, language instruction in Swedish, health care and other social services according to national norms from state funds until self-sufficient. The children have started Swedish schools and the pre-school children are offered municipal day-care while parents attend Swedish classes.

Circumstances of settlement at the local level vary with respect to the size of the receiving communities, access to other Bosnians, work and education opportunities, health care and the personal involvement by the local Swedish population. In general there is much awareness among the receiving local agencies of the traumatic experiences the refugees have suffered but responses have been different both in degree and content, some offering psychological counselling and interventions to the men only, another to the entire family. The community which received the five Bosnian families has focused on activating the refugees' own resources with a positive response from the refugees themselves: each family has been provided with a garden plot in a communal land area which has become an impor-

tant daily meeting point among them and also with Swedish families. The refugees have also been involved in a project, together with unemployed Swedes, to rebuild a community house for social activities. The differences in local conditions influence the prospects that families see for themselves in Sweden at this point. Not surprisingly, the families settled in small rural communities have a more negative outlook than families in larger communities and with access to a Bosnian community.

During the first year, the major concerns and coping efforts of the families have focused on issues that are controlled by the national policy of refugee reception: family reunification and dispersal policy. At the time of the first interview, many families had relatives as asylum seekers in Swedish reception centres; attempts to bring them to stay with their families or to be moved to nearby reception centres failed and all involved suffered from the uncertainty of their fate. By the time of the second interview, the Swedish government had decided to allow asylum seeking Bosnians already in the country to stay (while introducing a visa requirement for all others). By now, the families know that their relatives in the country will be able to stay and, in some cases, to join them. Others worry about pending settlement decisions and what it will mean in terms of distance.

But more than this, it seems, the forced separation from the others in the group of 'the eleven' has been difficult. Many families report that they had believed they would be able to stay together as a group in Sweden and express disappointment at having been dispersed. This 'community of fate' is a vital point of reference and support group. At great expense and practical difficulty, the dispersed families do maintain contact, visiting where possible, telephoning or writing; those going through particularly difficult times, such as the death of an old father and a child having heart surgery, have received extensive support from the others.

### The meaning of loss and coping

In many western receiving societies and certainly in Sweden, policies of refugee assistance ethnocentrically focus almost exclusively on individuals or, at best, on the family and overlook larger social units which may be resources for positive adjustment and health.

During the first year in Sweden, much distress focused on the social world lost - the relatives and friends killed or scattered all over the world or left home to an uncertain fate. Much anxiety and effort have been directed towards locating and gathering around them as many as possible of their kin, trying to mend and preserve social bonds. One of the men works hard to keep track of and maintain a network of displaced members of his home town. However,



the continuing war and the daily media coverage also mean that grief and trauma cannot be placed behind them and worked through; although family reunification is proceeding, all families still have large parts of their kin group at home. At the same time, adjustment to the practicalities of life in Sweden brings new separations and the grief that goes with it: a few young male members of families have moved into their own apartments (although not far from their parents), leaving home earlier than would have been customary at home.

Nevertheless, at the second round of interviews, almost a year after arrival, the focus of grief seems to be shifting and is expressed more in terms of deep anger at having lost all that the family had worked for; the continuation of the war; and the passivity of the surrounding world. Looking to the present and forward, more attention is now being directed to starting to rebuild a secure base and a more independent life for that purpose. Many now express the need and eagerness to start work, learn Swedish better and be involved in Swedish society. The first year was also a time of preparation, a year needed by most refugees to attend Swedish classes to reach the level of language competence required for the labour market. As they near completion of their Swedish instruction, the refugees will now begin to confront the extremely difficult employment situation in their local communities. This may prove to be the major obstacle to coping, to recovering a sense of control and purpose in the refugees' own terms.

While much of the effort to recover a sense of control and purpose in their new settings reflects the concerns and values attached to everyday life at home before the war, trauma and coping are also clearly seen as intimately bound up with the 'group of eleven'. The importance of this group and the negative impact of Sweden's dispersal policy comes out in the statement of one woman:

The worst thing they have done to us since we came here was to put us in different places, all over the country. We depend on each other. They promised to keep us together as a group. We are only eleven, not too much for one municipality to receive. Or at least put us in places closer than now. This is more important than anything else. We have been through so much together.

The struggle to explain and integrate traumatic experiences, especially of the kind that cannot easily be talked about with outsiders, largely depends on access to others in the same situation. The ability to stay together as a group would have facilitated working through the experiences they have suffered together.

## Medicalisation or the reconstruction of life?

Although the findings of this study are only tentative, there is one more issue suggested in the data which we wish to raise: whether access to extensive psychological assistance may in fact facilitate creating and maintaining a sick role as traumatised victims and promote helplessness, in the absence of other structures to reconstitute a meaningful life.

The example to illustrate this is one family which was provided with extensive psychological attention from the day of arrival in the community. At the second interview, six months after the first and almost a year after arrival, we noted considerable health problems and distress of all four of the adult family members (parents and two adult sons) of the core household; the two parents were by then on 'sick leave' and exempted from Swedish classes while retaining economic assistance.

Health was deteriorating in spite of the fact that family reunification had been relatively rapid and extensive so that by the second interview the group formed six closely related households. On the other hand, the employment situation is severe, in particular for refugees. This is in stark contrast to the reported wellbeing and optimism of a number of men in our study, in other communities, who had held full-time jobs over the summer in the building industry. A major point made by this family itself is the loss of the 'group of eleven'. The woman's statement quoted earlier came from this distressed family, who make the point that keeping this group intact would have been a vital resource, even more than their own family and kin, in coping with their experiences and reconstituting their lives in exile.

While the Swedish policy of refugee assistance in the 1970s focused on material support and rapid labour market integration, there was little awareness of psychological needs. Today, there is a growing recognition of such needs and an increase in centres for the care of survivors of organised violence but great problems in integrating refugees into the labour market. In the overall difficult employment situation and the policy of dispersal of families who may constitute a vital resource in adjustment, the risk of medicalising refugees' responses to traumatic loss and promoting dependence and helplessness seems high.

*Marita Eastmond, Lilian Ralphsson and Birgitta Alinder work at the Medical Centre for Refugees in Sweden. The Centre is a department of the University Hospital in Linköping.*

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# MAKING SENSE OF VIOLENT EXPERIENCES

## The reconstruction of meaning of La Violencia among Guatemalan war widows

by Judith Zur, PhD

*The Quiché people of Emol, a mountain village in the Indian heartland of Guatemala, are trying to make sense of what happened to them during the internal war, known as La Violencia, which devastated rural Guatemala between 1978 and 1985. So far as the agrarian, mainly Indian population is concerned, La Violencia was an acute phase in a situation of chronic repression which continues to the present. This hidden though bloody war severely hampers villagers' efforts to understand their recent past; the continuing repression disallows the detached sensibility needed for a full analysis of their experience. Yet against all odds, people struggle to reconstruct meaning. Only by finding meaning in La Violencia can the Quiché restore the sense of an orderly world and the belief that one is capable of dealing with it.*

The villagers attempt to place *La Violencia* within an overarching framework through the application of categories of causation used in normal times: *costumbre* (Mayan traditionalism), Catholicism and the 'organisation' (politics). Few people found any one which was alone sufficient to explain the events of *La Violencia* and most resorted to several to explain both the phenomenon and the events within it.

The world is a mystery to the Quiché, with insight granted to only a few. The construction of explanations of violence are therefore facilitated by the reflections of specialists: the shaman/diviner, the Catholic priest or the representatives of labour unions, human rights groups and political organisations.



Shaman performing a ceremony at a grave site on the Day of the Dead.

Photo: Judith Zur

### Costumbre

Until the 1950s, Emol was entirely *costumbrista*; since then, the traditional authority system has been supplanted by a more fluid and competitive field of catechists (lay Catholic preachers), pastors, health workers and, of course, civil defence patrol commanders<sup>1</sup> who educate and organise the Quiché in new ways. Yet many Catholics and nominal Protestants still believe in fate (*suerte*), the fulfilment of prophecy or ancestral retribution (*castigo*) and ideas of evil perpetrated through malicious envy (*envidia*), of which witchcraft is the most extreme form: these were the main explanations people used to understand *La Violencia*.

#### a. *Suerte* (Malignant fate)

Whether one is good or evil depends on the *suerte* one is born with. In contrast to the orthodox Christian concept of free will, God is seen to will evil to be done. Most people say that since *La Violencia* was written in the Bible, it was bound to happen because it was their destiny (*suerte*). However, the course of *La Violencia* was not necessarily determined by *suerte* but whether or not a person was kidnapped or killed might be. *Suerte*, which can be revealed by shamans, provides people with a protective mechanism against too much introspection.

The theme of *suerte* is also tied to ignorance and the precariousness of one's immediate fate. This ignorance is also attached to wider matters: many widows had little access to information regarding the political motivations for *La Violencia* and were thus more likely to refer to *suerte* than someone who was more familiar with the political situation.

#### b. *Castigo* (Ancestral punishment)

Opinion differed about the degree to which the ancestors are involved in *La Violencia*. The Quiché see justice as the response of a personified, deified agency to an individual's moral conduct. This translates into the idea that people get

what they deserve; it permits individuals to believe they can avoid further misfortunes if they avoid repetition of the deed. Convention obliges them to perceive misfortune as stemming ultimately from the ancestors; the denial of control removes the connection to current or future suffering, eliminates responsibility, prevents morbid feelings of guilt and relieves people of some of their anger.

Shamans explained that both *La Violencia* and illnesses occur because of the 'abandonment of our customs', telling their clients that they had 'created their own problems'. Thus people saw the deaths as retribution by God and the ancestors and merely asked their pardon. However, a shaman may, for example, tell a person that the problem was due to both ancestral punishment and an attack by a witch motivated by *envidia* (malicious envy).

### c. *Envidia* (Malicious envy)

*Envidia* means 'bad feelings which one has for not being equal to another'; it 'is created among the poor who have nothing'. *Envidia* was the most frequently cited cause of *La Violencia* both as a national, general event and also as a specific event affecting the speaker. Through resorting to this concept, *La Violencia* was represented as an internal matter within society.

*Envidia* expresses every day theories of enmity and pertains to every aspect of Quiché life. The common denominator in all instances is its relation to perceived threats to the balance of power. Discrepancies in wealth, prestige and popularity are the most frequently cited reasons for *envidia* which is expressed through rumour and witchcraft. Post *La Violencia*, *envidia* is also expressed in false accusations or betrayals.

*Envidia* pertains to relationships between people and the strong value placed on conformity; being non-compliant or non-conformist is considered dangerous. *Envidia* was said to be behind the death of anyone who stood out in Emol; talk of such men's subversive activities was always mixed in with accounts of *envidia*.

*Envidia* also revolves around vengeance, traditional rivalries and discontentments. Many people saw *La Violencia* as a continuation of existing enmity within communities, traditionally expressed through witchcraft which is normally viewed as being motivated by *envidia*.

*Envidia* was sometimes used as an explanation because of a lack of other interpretations of *La Violencia*. People would reveal their incomprehension, saying 'who knows...I suppose *envidia*'. Women seemed to use *envidia* to explain most problems pertaining to violence and resorted to this concept when they had no idea why their male kin were

killed or abducted.

Perhaps the most important reason for attributing violence to *envidia* was the villagers' quest for safety. Together with 'who knows' and 'only God knows', *envidia* can be a protective expression of political neutrality: it says nothing about the victim's political alignment.

### Catholicism

Orthodox Catholicism was introduced into Emol in the 1950s. The priests also introduced many new concepts pertaining to economic and social progress and were active in setting up peasant unions etc, bringing state disapproval on themselves and their converts. Nowadays fewer than 20% of Emolians are practising Catholics.

Some women say that many of the men killed and kidnapped were victimised because of their own or their relatives' work as catechists or because they were active members of Catholic Action groups. Catholic priests encouraged this view of *La Violencia* and the dead. *Doña Eugenia*'s grief over the deaths of her husband and son diminished after the local priest told her that 'they killed them like they killed Jesus Christ, for speaking the truth'.

Some Catholics were able to ascribe positive value to their misfortunes because of their resemblance to the suffering of martyred saints; other people referred to the political martyrdom of Tecúm Umán, the last Mayan hero of the Conquest period. Martyrdom, if perhaps an extreme form of placing positive value on death, links death with a time of heroes, origins and myth. It reinvents tradition, connects present events with events in the past and provides history and hence meaning: a person's suffering may be more tolerable if it can be seen as part of a script which has high moral value.

Catholics' views of martyrdom often encompass the *costumbrista* belief that sacrifice is the best path to virtue: victims' sins are erased because they died for speaking the truth and the killers denied salvation and even punished for the sins of the war dead who would then be liberated from any sins they may have accumulated during life.

### The 'organisation'

Being 'organised' covers a variety of activities ranging from involvement in literacy classes and health programmes to being a guerrilla. Before *La Violencia*, support for the popular movements had been strong in Emol. Women, however, were largely excluded from political involvement although some had 'awoken' before *La Violencia*.

Any woman who had a 'disappeared' relative became po-

liticised to some degree. As people became politicised, they were more likely to link *La Violencia* to the 'organisation' and the armed forces than to the ancestors or God. In this interpretation, *La Violencia* may be seen as resulting from the malevolent effects of greed for Quiché resources and the military's assassinations as punishment (*castigo*) for the error of collaborating with so-called subversives.

Despite increased understanding, villagers blamed the people who had involved them in 'ideas' which resulted in mass destruction. Many people believed that, although the army and local *jefes* (chiefs) did the killing, the guerrillas were responsible because 'if the guerrilla had never come, then the army would not have come to kill'.

Several women questioned the wisdom of their involvement with the 'organisation'. The army indoctrinated people to believe that their kin were guerrillas and their pursuits immoral; only the army could save the community. Women's testimony, however, shows some resistance to army and militia rhetoric and indicates that they thought *La Violencia* stemmed from attempts to counter the villagers' efforts to improve their lives.

Women who thought being 'organised' meant to speak about issues such as equality rarely blamed themselves or their menfolk for their misfortunes: they never held their husbands responsible for *La Violencia*. Women are more likely to blame the *jefes* who were immediately and directly responsible for events rather than the army behind the scenes.

Some women seemed to regret that they had not done more within the popular movements; at times they thought that their failure was not due to the 'organisation' itself but to their inability to make it succeed. One woman blamed their lack of success on their forefathers who had not educated them or given them any 'ideas'.

### Other sources

The inadequacies of familiar explanations led people to search for new routes to understanding. Some people avidly devoured new information from the media (especially radio), activists, the army, civil patrols and rumour. Other people resorted to old information, such as that contained in the 16th century Mayan book *Popul Vuh*. This material has been used to link past and present in new ways; for example, Petronila, a catechist who is also the founder of the local branch of CONAVIGUA (a political organisation), used images from *Popul Vuh* in order to understand the violence and women's place in it. Indians claim to have learnt about traps from this book, suggesting awareness of the parallels between the Spanish conquest and present day army incursions.

Other people read meaning into dreams and portents. Once *La Violencia* started, some women began to remember their elders' predictions or warnings delivered through Bible passages. Recognition occurred in retrospect: women said that although they had forewarning of *La Violencia*, they could not understand them because they were obscure and disconnected from the context at the time. People did not lament their failure to read signs but attempted to gain a sense of mastery by reinterpreting them.

Women's lack of forewarning of *La Violencia* produced anxiety about the future: the world had become a less predictable and more punitive place. Anxiety was reflected in constant interpretations of present events as signs pertaining to the return of *La Violencia*.

### Interpreting *La Violencia*

Employing explanations such as those described above sets the experience in a familiar context. Such explanations, however, erase the violent intent of the military forces and attribute a knowable cause of death, making murders and other atrocities more manageable to some extent. All these explanations preserve the status quo by obscuring substantial political, economic and historical issues.

It may be that the very inappropriateness of these explanations to describe political killings underlines the difficulty of finding a vocabulary of comparison for incomparable atrocity. On the other hand, their use reflects people's need to protect themselves from further atrocity. Geertz points out the insufficiency of commonsensical systems of thought, arguing that 'the events through which we live are forever outrunning the power of our ordinary, everyday moral, emotional, and intellectual concepts to construe them, leaving [us], as a Javanese image has it, like water buffalos listening to an orchestra'. For the Quiché, the drastic changes brought about by *La Violencia* were probably even less comprehensible.

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Geertz (1968) *Islam Observed: Religious Development in Morocco and Indonesia*, p 101, New Haven, Connecticut, Yale University Press.

<sup>1</sup> The civil patrols are army vigilantes: local men forced to patrol their own villages since 1982.



# BACK TO THE FUTURE

## The return of Guatemalan refugees

by *Hugh Martins*

*Guatemalan refugees in Mexico are preparing for their return to Petén in Guatemala where human rights violations are still rife. They believe that the conditions which they have negotiated for their return and the way in which they intend to carry it out will form a human rights campaign in itself.*

### Background

Some 45,000 officially registered refugees from Guatemala are at present living in camps in the states of Chiapas, Campeche and Quintana Roo in southern Mexico. It is estimated that at least the same number again are unregistered, living largely in the south but also in other parts of the country. The majority fled from army brutality in Guatemala in 1981 and 1982 and have spent over ten years in exile. The refugees always assumed that they would return to Guatemala but circumstances did not improve, the return was postponed and longer term measures were adopted to accommodate the refugees in Mexico.

In 1987 the refugees elected representatives of their community to negotiate the terms of the return with the Guatemalan Government. These formed an official group known as the Permanent Commissions Representing Guatemalan Refugees in Mexico (now referred to as the Permanent Commissions).

The Permanent Commissions drew up a list of seven basic conditions which they considered essential prerequisites for the return of the refugees. Under considerable international pressure to resolve its human rights problems, a large section of which was seen to be the refugee issue, the Guatemalan Government accepted all seven conditions. This agreement (now known as the 'Seven Agreements') between the Guatemalan Government and the Permanent Commissions was signed in October 1992.

A first contingent of about 2,600 returnees went back to Ixcán in north-west Guatemala in January 1993, followed by a further 1,500 in December.

There are many reasons, personal, economic and political, why the refugees are returning, and returning now, to a country where conditions have not changed fundamentally since they left. They are aware that human rights violations are still rife, that the mass of the population still lives in poverty and that overall about one million people have been displaced by violence and internal war. They believe, however, that the conditions which they have negotiated for the return and the way in which they intend to carry it out will form a human rights campaign in itself and will play an important rôle in the popular movement for social justice in the country as a whole.

### The return as a continuous process

Plans for the return of Guatemalan refugees from Mexico to Petén in the north of Guatemala are gathering momentum. Three delegations have made reconnaissance visits. The first was largely diplomatic: to look for land, to study land availability in general and to make contact with local populations in possible areas of resettlement. The second was a more practical inspection of terrain in the rainforest of the north. The third was to make contact with a landowner, negotiate a price and make a definite offer of purchase.

The most direct outcome has been a sense of clarity about the areas to which the first Petén contingent will return and settle. There are at present two options: first, the El Quetzal cooperative, on the river Usumacinta, deserted since the massacres of the early eighties and, second, a region close to the Mexican border near the river Candelaria, also an area of empty rainforest. Both areas have enough land for substantial human settlement. The portents for El Quetzal are good and negotiations have already started with the Federation which owns it. Candelaria also offers hope, though the process is less advanced.

The enthusiasm generated by the three visits, and the tours of information which took place in the camps immediately afterwards, have created a surge of support for this return and numbers are growing rapidly. By January 1994, the estimated total was 621 families, which could represent more than 3,000 people.



*Refugees returning, Huehuetenango, January 1993.*

*Photo: Reencuentro, Guatemala City*

The two areas mentioned are not sufficient for the numbers involved and so the idea of 'blocks' of people returning to single identifiable locations is no longer applicable. The 'first return' to Ixcán in January 1993 was a single event of great historical and political importance; what it triggered, however, should now be seen much more as a continuous process, both of search for new land and of return as land becomes available.

The logistics of the return to Petén are becoming more complicated as numbers grow. Land has to be found and purchased; it also has to be seen and inspected in advance by representatives of the people concerned. It must be the land that they want: according to the Seven Agreements, the refugees have the right to choose where, when and how they return.

The land which they find will never be homogeneous. There are mountains and rivers and jungles as well as flat, fertile land suitable for food crops. They have to decide where to establish the new settlements, how to share natural resources such as water and, most contentious of all, who shall have what type and what size of parcel of land.

### **Back to the future**

The returnees are a highly organised group of people. They formed the Permanent Commissions in 1987 and instigated the signing of the Seven Agreements in October 1992. The Permanent Commissions do not exist, however, solely to facilitate the physical return of a group of farmers to their land. There were political and economic circumstances which drove them out: exploitation, poverty and the brutal control of a dictatorial government and its army. The refugees are survivors of massacre and repression. Most of them have lost friends and relatives. They are determined to change things in their country. They talk about economic, personal and cultural development, about returning to the future and not to the past.

This means many things. It means that they are not planning to return to a backwater in the depths of the rainforest. Instead, they are planning economic communities which will produce and compete in external markets. They are talking of small-scale industry and tourism. They intend that their children should have health facilities, education and opportunities.

Their campaign is not only for themselves. They are forming alliances with groups of poor and marginalised people in Guatemala, with trade unions, with universities and also with the new commercial sectors which need a better environment in which to survive and flourish. The return is a movement for social and economic change and, as such, has a strong political agenda. The implications of this are

as massive and as urgent as the financial, legal and logistical problems of finding land and fitting an ever-growing number of people into it.

### **Communal decision-making**

One of the most demanding tasks involved in the return to Petén springs from the determination of all the refugees that both logistical and ideological decision-making should derive from consultation with all those involved in the process. As numbers grow, the problems posed by this deeply held principle become more challenging.

People have to decide not only where they are going but what kind of community structure they intend to adopt and what economic model they wish to follow. The decisions are complex, requiring theoretical, conceptual knowledge and a great deal of hard information.

First, they have to ensure that a group of 3,000 people (with numbers still rising) spread over the three southern Mexican states of Campeche, Quintana Roo and Chiapas, hundreds of miles apart from each other, will be able to reach important decisions as democratically as possible. Secondly, they have to set up a training process which ensures that the rural refugee community, many of them illiterate or only recently literate and many of them from different ethnic groups and often not Spanish speakers, will receive adequate preparation to enable them to make these decisions in such a manner as to benefit them all.

These are the basic ingredients of the situation. The refugee population is large and far-flung, of many ethnic groups and languages and with a multiplicity of different backgrounds and histories. Yet this diverse group has a shared experience of violence, horror and exile, as well as a common political will to return to their country in a collective and democratically organised manner, to insist on the rights they have won and to campaign for similar rights for other Guatemalans who are victims of the same repression. They face complex organisational challenges: to find ways of debating and resolving the large number of differences and conflicts which exist within the refugee community and to find ways rapidly to provide training for the population in the practical and ideological issues which face them.

### **Community organisation**

The 3,000 refugees involved in the return to Petén are organised at camp level into groups. They are 'natural', often historical, groups which may have been together for years - ethnic groups or extended families (either pre-exile or more recently formed). They can be large or consist of only two or three families.

Representatives of these groups form Planning and Follow-Up Committees (CPS in Spanish). The CPS are in constant contact with the Permanent Commissions; they pass information to them, receive information from them and are in effect their operational arm. In this way there is a real flow of information and the families in the camps are directly involved in decision-making and policy formation. Difficulties arise when decisions require specialist and/or conceptual knowledge. The following examples indicate how much training, information and experience the refugees need to support them on the road homewards:

1. The rain forests of Petén will not tolerate conventional, slash-and-burn agricultural methods. They are part of a protected 'biosphere' which can only be used for human habitation if ecologically appropriate methods are used. The refugees have had to learn about renewable resources, environmentally adapted agricultural methods and organic farming; at the same time, they have had to revise many of their own, age-old traditions.

2. They have had to study concepts like human rights and learn how their own acquired or inherited sense of right and wrong is often enshrined in law, i.e. that what seems right to them is in fact a legal right to which they are entitled.

3. They are now confronted with the need to progress from believing in a just society to building their own, new society based on a just social and economic system.

4. They also believe that their mission is to influence the social and economic policy of Guatemala as a country.

As it develops, the return to Petén is organising itself into a more and more complex structure, based firmly on the bedrock of the CPS and the families in the camps. A number of external organisations, governmental (in Mexico and Guatemala) and non-governmental, are supporting the return and the process of organisation. The non-governmental organisations include the UNHCR and many international agencies and groups (including churches) providing funds, training and logistical support to the refugees.

### Training

The CPS are the key to identification of the training needs of the refugee community. Much of the discussion of the

return happens at the level of gossip, anecdote and ordinary social intercourse. The fears, worries, conflicts, hopes and aspirations of the people are picked up by the CPS and, where concrete common issues are involved, are taken up in meetings and discussions at a community level. This is a continuous process which clarifies what problems need to be solved, what skills are required and what information needs to be passed on to the people.

Assisting the CPS in Mexico is a 'professional support team' consisting of members of the CPS and the Permanent Com-

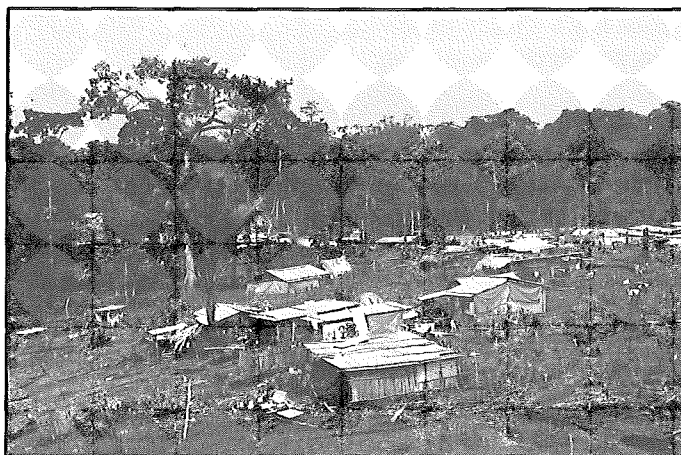
missions, as well as people from national and international non-governmental organisations (NGOs). In this way, Guatemalans, Mexicans and some Europeans are involved.

Within Guatemala there is strong support for the refugees and the displaced from a variety of national NGOs. Moreover, the work of the Catholic Church through local priests is one of the most efficient information, training

and development networks for the population inside the country, playing a crucial rôle in preparing the ground for the return among the local people.

Training issues are discussed by the professional support team, working with the CPS and a group of 'animators': members of the refugee community who will be directly involved in the training process among the people in the camps and other refugee settlements. The team develops programmes and resources based on specific issues which arise from among the population and on the broader issues which are the guiding principles of the return. In this way, several broad areas of concern are consciously combined: the question of land (which is the epicentre of economic and political debate in Guatemala), the concern of the leaders to make the return a part of the campaign for human rights and social justice in the whole country and the domestic agenda of the refugee families themselves.

The training materials are thoroughly tested and rehearsed with the animators, until they feel they 'own' them sufficiently to use them in their communities and to train new animators. During this next phase, the support team follows up on the animators in the camps and discusses the continuation of the process with them, developing and changing materials if necessary, according to special needs and circumstances. Many refugees, for example, are illiterate or recently literate; many are not comfortable with the use of Spanish and materials may have to be translated



'Victoria 20 de enero', Ixcán: resettlement site of the first return, January 1993.

Photo: Reencuentro, Guatemala City

into their own languages. There are also differences of need between sectors such as women and young people or between specialist groups, for example education or health workers. The content of the training programme is broad, involving many practical skills: tailoring, horticulture, shoemaking and dentistry, as well as issues such as women's development and human rights. Recently, as the moment of return comes closer, the programme has focused on community organisation, economic development and management.

The support team always works with the animators in small groups; the animators in turn work with groups of no more than about six. In this way, everyone has a chance to participate in the learning, discussion and decision-making process.

In the most recent training sessions, with the focus on organisation and management, the groups have worked mainly on analysing and categorising ideas and on organisational processes such as defining work structures, decision-making strategies and lines of responsibility. This is done with simple resources (such as shapes cut out of different colours mounted on large sheets of white paper to make what are in effect flow-charts or flag-charts) to illustrate existing or desirable organisational processes and structures. This helps groups understand and make decisions about the increasingly complex network of ideas, tasks and problems which need to be welded together as they plan and execute the return.

The environment in which they find themselves at present demands that they learn, and learn fast, and their desire to learn is obvious. Consequently, the speed of learning and the resulting development are evident on all sides: men, women and young people are visibly gaining power and confidence. The intellectual force behind the return to Petén is formidable.

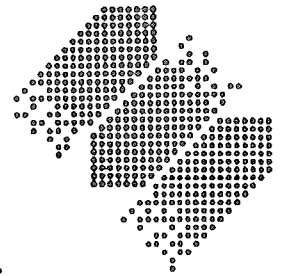
### The challenge for the returnee community

In numerical terms, the return is the equivalent of moving a small town wholesale into a wild place where they have to build everything anew and where they have to re-fashion their way of living together. There will be disagreements and conflicts. The challenge as they see it, however, is not to weld everyone into some form of homogeneous equality but to find a way in which their community can absorb and resolve conflicts and differences, educate its children and care for the vulnerable. Most importantly, they want to use their obvious new strengths to help the impoverished, battered and exploited country which is their homeland and to which they are at last returning.

*Hugh Martins is a British teacher working in collaboration with the Permanent Commissions (the official representatives of Guatemalan refugees) in southern Mexico.*

Editor's note: see p 37 for publications on Guatemalan refugees (Guatemala Bulletin and Reencuentro).

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# WOMEN VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE

## Rape in Kenya's Refugee Camps

by *Fouzia Musse*

*In late February 1993, I was recruited as a consultant by UNHCR, Geneva, and sent to Nairobi, Kenya, to carry out an assessment mission in seven refugee camps in Kenya where unprecedented cases of sexual abuses against Somali refugee women had been reported.*

*Four of the camps (Liboi, Hagadera, Ifo and Dagahaley) are located in northeastern Kenya and are called Dadaab camps; three (Marafa, Hatimy and Jomvu) are situated in the coastal area. The camps host approximately 210,155 refugees, mainly from Somalia (Ethiopian and Sudanese constitute less than 10% of the total population). The core mission activities were to document the incidents, determine the scope of the problem and develop an easy training module for refugee outreach workers on how to counsel and assist rape victims.*

My strategy was to undertake a three day tour to the camps to familiarise myself with UNHCR field staff, implementing partners, the refugee elders and the refugee outreach workers. During the tour, I met three Somali women who had been gang raped by seven bandits the night before. Their vulnerability and their desperate need for immediate assistance transformed the mission programme into action.

The role of UNHCR in the field involves funding and supervising the delivery of refugee programmes by implementing partners. For an external consultant like me to intervene in this administrative set-up and introduce the stop-gap intervention urgently needed by the victims was no easy task. Indeed, as a Somali woman, I noted that the recovery needed by the victims was naturally linked to the reconstruction of their social and economic networks and that anything which UNHCR could do to improve their material status would help ameliorate the psychological trauma they were suffering. In addition, more systematic and lasting follow-up measures, both to prevent further attacks and to provide long-term assistance to victims of such violence, were essential.

### **Mission documentation and findings**

The mission assessment took place over a period of four months, during which 192 sexual abuse cases against refugees (mainly Somalis) were documented. 187 of these cases were perpetrated against women; four involved children; and in one case a man was the victim. The mission believes, however, that those documented cases represent only the tip of the iceberg.

107 of these attacks occurred either while the refugees were resident in the refugee camps or after they had crossed the border into Kenya. All these cases occurred in Dadaab area; the remaining 85 documented cases were within Somali territory. The high proportion of cases occurring after refugees have entered Kenya highlights an alarming lack of security for the refugees in northern Kenya.

Of those cases taking place in Kenya, 100 have been attributed to armed bandits operating in the bush while the remaining seven are said to have been committed by members of the Kenyan security forces.

Almost all the assailants attacked their victims in groups armed with rifles, hand grenades, daggers, bayonets, clubs and walking sticks. Some victims who were raped while in Somalia reported that armoured vehicles were used to threaten their homes while their children were inside. The assailants use violent physical assaults to repress the resistance of their victims and to obtain information. In addition, they often attack the families of their victims. In at least one case a child suffered permanent brain damage after being beaten about the head with rifle butts by her mother's attackers.

Methods of attacks used by the assailants varied. Some victims were attacked in the bush during daytime while collecting firewood for commercial and household use. Most of them were assaulted at night in their tents or houses. Of these, some victims were raped inside their tents but quite a number of them were taken to the bush to be raped. In most cases when assailants came in groups, they attacked several women in the neighbourhood. Only a few victims reported that they had been raped by one assailant while the rest were raped by between two and ten assailants at one time.

Most of the assaults in the camps, according to the accounts of victims, appear to be clan related. Many victims have stated that during attacks men would ask their clan affiliation or demand to know the location of the dwellings of a particular clan. The assailants would then target the women of that group.

When the attack happens inside the victim's tent or house, the assailants demand money and gold and loot all the goods they can find (clothes, blankets, tents, utensils, food and ration cards).

## Mission intervention

Following the documentation of each sexual abuse case, the mission took the following steps:

**Counselling:** Counselling was the main form of assistance offered and took place in two phases. The first phase consisted of the initial counselling sessions which were conducted at the time of the interview with the victims. These sessions were invariably individual in nature. The object of this first session was to enable women to begin to talk about their tragedy. Contrary to Western perceptions about Muslim societies' reluctance to discuss sexual matters, Somali women have shown themselves extremely open in talking about their ordeals. These sessions were generally the most emotional and traumatic for the victims. At the same time, they provided women with an outlet to show their anger, their fear and their anxiety. This is true especially for the Barawe and Bajuni women from Hatimy and Jomvu camps who traditionally lead a secluded life. Counselling also often provided women with their first opportunity to express their feelings and expectations in a society which would often suppress their tragedy, blaming the victim for her calamity rather than helping her cope with it.

**Medical referral:** Almost all victims interviewed have medical disorders associated with sexual trauma. These include mutilation of the female genitalia<sup>1</sup>, venereal diseases, infertility, miscarriage, menstrual disorders, abdominal pain, vaginal discharge and persistence of severe and/or chronic pelvic pain and insomnia. Arrangements were made with medical practitioners in each camp for private and confidential medical examinations. Victims who needed medical examinations not available in the camps were referred to Nairobi hospitals. Medical referrals were also made for children of victims who were displaying signs of severe malnutrition.

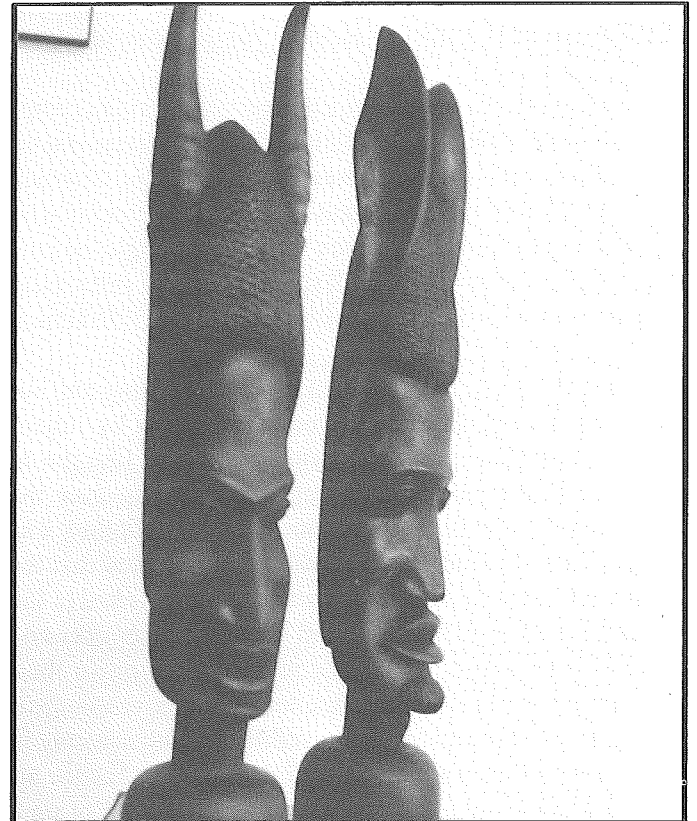
### Transfer:

a) Several victims were found living at the periphery of the camps and were consequently more vulnerable to attacks. All these were either transferred to sections where they felt more secure or transferred to another camp within Dadaab where they had relatives.

b) The mission identified 29 cases which merited transfer to coastal camps. The majority of these victims faced sexual abuses because of their clan affiliation or that of their children. Other criteria used in selection of those cases were: women who experienced more than one attack; women who were ostracized as a result of bearing children from rape incidents; women pregnant as a result of rape; single women with no immediate family or relatives within the camp and who displayed extreme emotional distress at the prospect

of further attacks; and mothers of child victims of sexual abuses.

**Replacement of clothes:** Due to their poverty, many victims cannot obtain new clothes and have to continue to wear the same dress in which they were raped. For many, this is a source of severe psychological trauma, the clothes serving as a constant reminder of their ordeal. Others have stated that by not being able to change their clothes they feel that they are in a perpetual state of ritual impurity and thus unable to perform religious duties such as their daily prayers. Actions were taken to replace their clothes.



*Images carved by refugee women rape victims in Hagadera camp, Kenya.*

*Photo: UNHCR*

**Replacement of looted items:** Many attacks carried out within the camp also included the looting of the victim's household goods. The mission undertook to have essential items such as blankets, clothes, kitchen utensils, tents and water jerry cans replaced. The replacement of these goods is obviously necessary for the survival of the victims and their families. The mission also believes, however, that immediate replacement of looted items is essential in these cases to avert the growth of the feeling that they have not only lost control of their physical being but also of the means with which to maintain their lives.

**Training:** The mission undertook the training of 310 Somali refugees (already involved in various outreach programmes among the wider refugee population) as counselors for victims of sexual violence. Trainees included so-

cial workers, community health workers, traditional birth attendants, nurses, teachers, women's group activists and a number of victims of sexual violence.

### **Impact of the intervention**

**Awareness creation:** The greatest impact of the mission was to raise the general level of awareness about sexual assault within the refugee camp system in Kenya. It also raised awareness among members of the national and international community. The mission was able to communicate the existing crises within the camps to NGOs, government agencies, journalists and international human rights organisations, consistently highlighting the continuing security problems surrounding the camps which has increased the vulnerability of women living within.

**Enhancing women's ability to cope with rape:** The mission enabled many victims to address their problems and needs directly for the first time. The mission also provided victims with the means of reporting incidents to the proper authorities, helping them to realize that they could do something about their victimisation. It provided many with both the opportunity and the means to bring their plight to the attention of the wider world by allowing them to speak unhindered to journalists and human rights activists. The mission also had the more concrete effect of enabling victims to seek and receive counselling, medical and material assistance to help them recover from their ordeal.

Finally, selected heads of women's groups in each camp participated in training workshops in which they learned skills for dealing with rape. Such an activity enhances the ability of traditional female community opinion leaders to bring their concerns to agencies working in the refugee camps.

**Manifestation of concern about sexual violence in Dadaab camps:** At the beginning, a refugee committee of elders (exclusively men) showed little concern about the sexual violence happening in the camps. The only help they gave the mission was with the initial identification of rape victims. For them, what was more important was the improvement of assistance services provided to refugees.

However, more recently, the male elders have shown a change in attitude. In Dagahaley camp, for example, elders have participated in providing refugee labour to plant trees for fencing around their blocks. When one refugee was unable to provide such labour, the elders collected 50 Kenyan Shillings (US\$0.70) to hire labour for that particular refugee.

Another area of concern shown by the refugee male elders was to ensure that the victims contacted the mission imme-

diately. For example, in Ifo camp, an elder brought out several victims who were in need of escort to report the incident to the police or UNHCR. A remarkable piece of advice given to the victims by the elders was that they should preserve evidence to support their claims of rape (e.g. to refrain from washing their bodies or changing the clothes they were wearing during the incident). These manifestations of concerns, however, do not extend to persecuting the accused rapists under Kenyan legal systems. In three cases where accused rapists were arrested by the police, male clan elders representing both sides intervened and settled the matter according to traditional Somali customs.

### **Project development**

The scale of the problem, as revealed by the mission, was so apparent that the Branch Office asked the mission to prepare a special project to include a comprehensive and systematic approach to both preventive and assistance measures for the victims. By the end of this mission, UNHCR was initiating a project, 'Women Victims of Violence', to provide the continued intervention necessary. The project has three major aspects: preventive measures; assistance to the victims and their families; and a cross-border operation for repatriating victims.

#### **1. Preventive measures:**

- a) Improvement of the physical setting of the camp by fencing sections of Dadaab camps to curtail bandit attacks.
- b) Organisation of a refugee security committee to arrange night patrols (who will be given whistles to alert the community).
- c) Support for Dadaab police by giving bullet-proof vests, additional communication equipment and facilities for transport maintenance. UNHCR is expecting the police to recruit female police officers for the Dadaab camps in order to facilitate the documentation and follow-up of reported sexual abuse cases.
- d) Provision of legal assistance for the victims by recruiting additional protection officers to handle the sexual abuse cases and employment of an independent lawyer to take cases to court.
- e) Provision of training workshops to disseminate information on refugee rights (both national and international laws) among NGOs and the police working in the refugee camps.
- f) Provision of vocational and skills training activities for the victims to provide an alternative to selling firewood.
- g) Provision of public education and information campaigns to ensure greater participation by all refugees in preventive measures.

## 2. Assistance to the victims and their families:

Provision of:

- a) Medical examinations and treatment within the camp and in Nairobi.
- b) Individual and family counselling services.
- c) Domestic support such as clothes and household goods.
- d) Skills training and income generation activities.

## 3. Cross-border operation activities:

- a) Setting up of counselling services through four major towns in southern regions of Somalia (Kismayo, Afmadow, Bardera and Luq) where the majority of the refugees are expected to repatriate. This will be done through existing Somali women's groups operating in these areas.
- b) Provision of training activities for counsellors, aimed at handling sexual abuse cases reported within their community.
- c) Provision of public information and education campaigns to sensitise the community to prevent any further sexual abuses against women.

*Fouzia Musse is currently Coordinator of the UNHCR Women Victims of Violence project, based in Nairobi, Kenya.*

<sup>1</sup> Between the ages of seven and ten, Somali women undergo a surgery called circumcision which constructs external virginity. Assaultants cut the external virginity of victims who have never had sexual relations, often inflicting severe injury on the victim's genitalia.

Editor's note: see p 37 for information on the African Rights report The Nightmare Continues... Abuses against Somali Refugees in Kenya.

### PEDRO ARRUPE TUTORSHIP UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

*The Refugee Studies Programme, University of Oxford, The Jesuit Refugee Service and Campion Hall, University of Oxford, will jointly sponsor a position entitled the Pedro Arrupe Tutorship. This person will be nominated by the Jesuit Refugee Service, approved by Campion Hall as a member of their community, and agreed to by the Refugee Studies Programme. The Tutorship will be held ideally for three years but shorter periods of no less than six months may be negotiated. The nominee will do his own work and will participate as appropriate in RSP activities.*

*The RSP will provide shared office space and hospitality and the necessary expenses associated with his work. Campion Hall, with the support of the British Province of the Jesuits, will offer board and lodging. The JRS will pay the fare to and from the UK. In each case, the RSP and the JRS will jointly raise the funding required as an honorarium.*

*The initiative for the Pedro Arrupe Tutorship came from the Refugee Studies Programme which appreciates both the breadth of field experience of the JRS as well as its access to a highly motivated public. Initially, the position will be limited to a Jesuit or to a single man, since Campion Hall's constitution currently prohibits other residents. Enquiries may be directed to Campion Hall, to the RSP at Oxford University or to the JRS. Applications should be directed to the JRS European Coordinator:*

Fr Eddy Jadot SJ, Jesuit Refugee Service Europe,  
61 rue de Bruxelles, 5000 Namur, Belgium.  
Tel: +32 81 72 50 83 Fax: +32 81 72 50 90

## PROMOTION OF TEACHING ON REFUGEES

### A SOAS-UNHCR PROJECT

UNHCR has funded a project through the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London. The main objective is to help UNHCR in making a basic set of publications and refugee-related course materials available to African, Asian and Middle Eastern academic institutions which host (or would like to host) refugee studies courses (initially only in English) but lack funds to purchase such materials. The project is developing:

- \* a short list of such materials,
- \* a basic syllabus comprising several 'modules' to illustrate how these materials can best be used for teaching purposes; and
- \* a list of universities which may be potential beneficiaries of this project.

Academic institutions in Africa, Asia and the Middle East which are interested in this project should contact Dr Stefan Sperl or Dr Gaim Kibreab, Centre for Development Studies, SOAS, University of London, Thornhaugh Street, Russell Square, London WC1H 0XG, UK.



# AGENCY INFORMATION : AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

*Amnesty International's work with refugees is a fairly recent development. Their policies for working on behalf of refugees are outlined below.*

Amnesty International (AI) works specifically with refugees who are threatened with *refoulement*: ie the forcible return of a refugee to a country where he or she risks either imprisonment as a prisoner of conscience, torture, 'disappearance' or execution. Their work is based on an internationally accepted principle:

*No Contracting State shall expel or return ('refouler') a refugee in any manner whatsoever to the frontiers where his life or freedom would be threatened on account of his race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion. (1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees)*

AI calls on all governments to ensure that asylum-seekers have access to fair and satisfactory asylum procedures.

## Direct assistance to refugees

AI may provide help in one or more ways to refugees threatened with forcible return:

- \* AI can provide well-researched and impartial reports on human rights violations in countries around the world; these can demonstrate to sceptical authorities why an individual has good reason to fear for his/her safety if returned home.
- \* A local AI office may be able to take up individual cases. The extent and level of work which local offices are able to undertake varies considerably; only the larger offices (some of which have specialist refugee departments) can take up cases of individual asylum-seekers. Sometimes this will involve providing vital background information to lawyers representing asylum-seekers about the risks their clients may face if returned; sometimes the AI office will be able to take up the case directly with the relevant authority; and sometimes AI will refer the individual - or the individual's lawyer - to another agency better placed to help.

## Other work on behalf of refugees

A very important aspect of AI's work for refugees is to ensure that states' asylum procedures (including the procedures and practices followed at their airports and borders) are adequate to identify asylum-seekers who would risk serious human rights violations if sent against their will to another country.

While recognising that governments are entitled to control immigration and entry to their territory, AI calls on them to ensure and demonstrate adequately that asylum-seekers have effective access to their asylum procedures and that any restrictions on entry (such as visa requirements, sanctions on airlines or other transporters, or other similar measures) do not obstruct this access in practice.

AI opposes the detention of asylum-seekers unless they have been charged with a recognisably criminal offence or unless the authorities can demonstrate in each individual case that the detention is necessary, that it is on the grounds prescribed by law and that it is for one of the specified reasons which international standards recognise may be legitimate grounds for detaining asylum-seekers. AI investigates and reports on instances where a state's asylum procedures are not adequate and campaigns for the adoption of improved procedures.

*If you or your family face being forcibly returned to a country where you believe you will be in danger, Amnesty International may be able to advise you; contact your local Amnesty International office either directly or through your legal representative. If you cannot contact your local office, contact the International Secretariat at 1 Easton Street, London WC1X 8DJ, UK. Tel: +44 (0)71 413 5500*

*If you fear that your letters to Amnesty International may be intercepted, the RSP would be happy to forward them on your behalf. Send them to the RPN at the address on page 2; make it clear inside your letter that you wish it to be forwarded to Amnesty International.*

# MEETING AID WORKERS' NEED FOR HELP

## Danish civil defence policy for helping its aid workers

by Flemming S Nielsen

The Danish Emergency Management Agency (DEMA) is a professional civil defence organisation which has responsibility for the Danish National Rescue Corps (DNRC). During the last few years, DEMAs has sent DNRC teams on various humanitarian relief missions and they currently have one team working in Bosnia. DEMAs and DNRC function like military organisations, though unarmed and trained only in humanitarian work, and therefore have a tradition of senior staff - officers and non-commanding officers (NCOs) - taking care both physically and mentally of the personnel under their command. When DEMAs started sending DNRC personnel abroad, it was natural for them to extend this tradition into their new area of work.

This article will describe firstly DEMAs general strategy for helping personnel cope with stress and secondly how they dealt with the aftermath of an attack on a DNRC convoy at Maglaj in Bosnia where two of their staff were killed and two wounded.

### 'Helping the helpers'

Relief missions are generally stressful and occasionally dangerous. DEMAs has developed a five-pronged strategy to help personnel - and their families - cope with stress.

#### 1. Before the mission

Great importance is placed on the ongoing training of personnel. Officers are trained to cope with stress situations, enabling them to look for signs of stress among personnel and to give appropriate help if needed; NCOs are also trained to look out for signs of stress in their staff. In their daily training, privates are exposed to stressful situations but are not trained specifically in coping strategies.

In the short term, all team members participate in a three to four day briefing just before a mission. As much information as possible is given about the situation in the country and area of work; possible dangers are also discussed. Mission members are told of how much contact they will be able to have with their families as well as what contact DEMAs will have with their families.

#### 2. During the mission

DNRC personnel are trained to work in teams and it is this teamwork above all which helps prevent and overcome stress. Officers and NCOs are constantly on the alert for signs of stress in their staff and are trained to deal with them where possible. If a person has a more serious psychological problem, the officer either sends the person home or requests a professional to visit the team.

Teams on mission are given as much comfort as possible, as well as the opportunity to relax when off duty. Comforts may range from a communal recreation room, games, books, satellite TV and video to the possibility of buying

chocolate, soft drinks, cigarettes, etc.

One of the things that DEMAs always stresses is that, as personnel are volunteers, they may return home at any time if they feel they cannot cope with the stress. Someone who is continually depressed or unbalanced is of no use in the job or to the team (or him/herself) and could easily create problems within the team. There is also the possibility of the person eventually having a breakdown.



The hazards of driving in Bosnia:  
DNRC convoy vehicle in trouble.

Photo: DEMAs

#### 3. After the mission

This is the part of relief work that is most commonly forgotten. Organisations sending people on relief missions have a responsibility for the mental health of their personnel, particularly when they are involved in stressful situations.

DEMAS strategy is to ensure that, first of all, the journey home takes several days in order to give staff time in a safe place before meeting families and the press. In this situation

they can get used to 'normal' life again and be with team members to discuss their experiences, both good and bad.

DEMA always arranges a debriefing when the team arrives home. This debriefing is in two parts: 1. a sharing of experiences of the work itself, equipment, back-up from DEMA, etc and 2. a psychological debriefing concerning the problems of returning home to everyday life. During this second part of the debriefing, close relatives (parents and partners) are asked to be present as they are part of the 'returning home' experience.

Mission members are contacted again after about a month when it is normally clear if they have any psychological problems. Staff are offered professional help at any time they feel they need it.

#### 4. Trauma producing experiences

When a person experiences human suffering or danger to themselves, or sees friends being injured or killed, it is very likely that help will be needed to get over the trauma of such an experience.

It is extremely important to start treatment within the first 24-48 hours. In the DNRC this is done by the team leader (an officer). After this initial help, a person who still has problems will be treated by a professional psychiatrist who is experienced in the field of post traumatic stress. Details on coping with trauma producing experiences are given below in the account of the Maglaj attack.

#### 5. Families

Families are an important part of a mission. Firstly, they deserve to be kept informed. Secondly, mission members are more comfortable if they know that their families are being kept informed. Thirdly, nervous and unhappy family members sending letters of distress may add considerably to a relief worker's stress which will in turn affect his/her effectiveness.

The DEMA makes sure that close relatives know that they will always be welcome to contact the organisation; most parents and partners do phone frequently, a clear indication of the importance of this facility. It is also important for DEMA to contact and reassure relatives if the media report fighting or killing from the area where the team is.

Every week a newsletter is sent to the parents and partners, giving an update on the mission and providing an important vehicle for the exchange of information between relatives.

As mentioned above, DEMA also makes sure that close relatives are present at part of the psychological debriefing.



*DEMA personnel maintaining communication*

*Photo: DEMA*

It is important that relatives are aware of the need to listen to the relief worker's experiences and also that they understand and can handle the relief worker's reactions.

#### The Maglaj attack

The DNRC convoy team in central Bosnia was delivering UNHCR relief goods to Tuzla and towns around Zenica when it was attacked near the town of Maglaj on 1 June 1993. It was a high risk area but local parties to the conflict had all consented to allow the convoy safe passage. To avoid mortar fire, they had parked inside a tunnel. Without warning, however, the convoy was attacked, shells exploding up to as much as 100 yards inside the tunnel. Two drivers were killed, the convoy leader was badly wounded and another driver was wounded.

#### Initial treatment

Within hours of the attack, the remaining team members were 'treated'. The two wounded men were brought to the Zenica hospital where two team members and an interpreter were with them at all times, talking to them when possible. This not only helped the injured but also the other team members; as they said, 'We are paying off a bit of the debt because we weren't injured'.

The initial psychological debriefing of the team was carried out by the team leader as soon as he returned to their hotel from the hospital. It was conducted as a group debriefing and everyone was given the chance to talk about the experience and their feelings. The team leader made it clear to the team that their professionalism had helped prevent even worse results. The debriefing ended after a couple of hours as people felt that they had covered the most important aspects. The team leader warned them of the possible

physical and mental reactions that could develop within the next 24 hours and told them to stay together and be alert for signs of such reactions in each other.

In the evening they continued the group debriefing during which the team leader observed their behaviour and attitudes; he also told them about probable mental reactions during the next few days. The team leader decided to ask for professional psychiatric help for the team members because of the degree of trauma experienced by the team and because he himself had been involved. Later that evening a Danish medical doctor arrived and spoke with the team members for four hours.

### *Going home*

The team members were asked by DEMA if they wanted to return home or stay. Eleven members opted to go home. It was decided that the journey home would take two days so that a former team leader (who knew the situation in the area) and two professional psychiatrists specialised in traumatic stress could carry out the debriefing before the team was exposed to family and press. The team was flown from Sarajevo to Frankfurt, Germany, where they were booked into a hotel and joined by the former team leader and the two psychiatrists.

The team members stayed in the hotel for a whole day during which the psychiatrists carried out their psychological debriefing. The aim of this was to carry out 'a systematic, targetted and detailed review of the concrete events, impressions, reactions and feelings of the personnel during and after the attack' (psychiatrists' report). The psychiatrists noted that the seemingly good mental condition of the team members could be attributed to two important factors: team solidarity and the team leader's debriefing.

On the following day, the team, psychiatrists and former team leader were driven by bus to Denmark where they again booked into a hotel. This was for an evening of relaxation except for a short meeting where the psychiatrists focused on the home-coming of the next day, discussing possible reactions of team members and relatives. It was also stressed that the whole group should meet again three to four weeks after returning home.

The press and a large number of relatives were there to greet the team and it was clearly difficult for most team members seeing their close relatives again. Team members and relatives were given some time to talk; then the team members and closest relatives were given a debriefing by the psychiatrists, mainly concerning possible reactions and how to deal with them.

Contact has been kept with the members to make sure that

they recovered fully. Since the attack, only three members of the team have needed extra psychiatric help; two of these were the wounded.

### *Helping the families*

The relatives of the unhurt team members were contacted by DEMA a number of times before their sons or husbands came home. This was done not only to give them information but also in case they felt they needed to talk or needed help. On the whole, these relatives took the experience well, despite the shock. The relatives of those team members who had decided not to go home until the end of their mission were of course concerned about their safety but supported their decision. These team members probably recovered more quickly than the rest, simply because they stayed to complete their job.

The relatives of the two people killed and the two people injured were each appointed a contact officer by DEMA. These four officers were chosen because they knew the killed and injured persons and because they had the right attitude and understanding for such a delicate job. The reason for appointing a contact to each family was to take as much of the load as possible off the families' shoulders. The officers were to help in any way they could. They were there whenever the families wanted to talk; this was important as some parents needed to talk about how and what had actually happened. They also undertook practical tasks, such as making funeral arrangements, organising an official, local reception when the coffins arrived, arranging professional psychiatric help if needed and keeping the media away from the families. The contact officers carried on their work with the families until it was no longer needed, which in one or two cases was some three to four months after the incident.

When giving this type of help, the contact officers must be very carefully chosen and must also be aware that they themselves may well become deeply involved with the tragedy and the families.

### **Conclusion**

In any field of work it is important that employers take care of their personnel. This is even more important in cases where people are confronted with human suffering and personal danger. Relief organisations would be even more effective if they accepted three principles: pick the right people for the job, provide appropriate and adequate training and, lastly but not least, 'help the helpers'.

*Flemming Nielsen is a Captain in the Danish Emergency Management Agency. He is currently a Visiting Fellow at the Refugee Studies Programme, Oxford.*



### *Who helps the helpers?*

Response to Sarah Stearns' article in the September 1993 RPN

Following Sarah Stearns' article on 'Psychological distress and relief: who helps the helpers?', Daryl Barker sent a copy of a letter he had written to The Guardian newspaper on 23 June 1993 in which he refers to the predicament and constraints of NGOs in Somalia:

*...tragically, what is being blatantly ignored and in many cases criminally neglected is the condition of many individual aid workers coming in and out of such situations... Many are going through varying degrees of psychosocial stress caused by post traumatic stress disorder/burnout etc and little or nothing is done by organisations employing them.*

*I make, therefore, a plea that with minimum delay a co-operative network of support be set up among NGOs active in the region (and other troubled regions) to render practical assistance to field workers and support staff in the recognition, prevention and treatment of PTSD, by providing, for instance, an effective programme of rest and recuperation in the region and appropriate counselling if required as well as training in stress management and coping strategies.*

*Aid workers should be not treated as amateur do-gooders however well intentioned and left to fend for themselves without adequate preparation and training but should be given the professional support they require and deserve to perform to their best ability the increasingly complex and dangerous service they are attempting to provide in many troubled regions with the only will remaining in this world to effect real change and to keep hope alive in communities which are losing hope and degenerating into auto-genocide.*

Since then, in consultation with others, Daryl Barker has established the pilot programme of a new support network to provide:

- \* an effective programme of rest and recuperation in the region (or country of origin)
- \* appropriate counselling if required
- \* training in stress management and coping strategies
- \* advice on adequate preparation, training and improving support to field staff

A similar programme to this proposed 'Rainbow Network' is being established in tandem in the Netherlands. Simultaneously, an electronic support network is being set up (via GreenNet in the UK and ANTENNA in the Netherlands) to provide communications such as E-mail, conferencing, counselling and information services.

For more information contact: *Daryl Barker, Hondstong 26, 1964 LH Heemskerk, The Netherlands (Tel/fax: +31 (0)2510 43007; E-mail rainbownet) or: Henk de Jong, Centrum Kontakt der Kontinenten, Amersfoortsestraat 20, 3769 AS Soesterberg, The Netherlands (Tel: +31 (0)3463 51755; Fax: +31 (0)3463 54735).*

## E-MAIL DISCUSSION NETWORK FORCED MIGRATION

The Refugee Studies Programme has initiated a discussion network for E-Mail users, entitled 'Forced-Migration'. This new discussion list intends to encourage greater exchange of information and to promote discussion on refugee and forced migration issues.

The aims of the group are as follows:

- \* To increase understanding of the causes, consequences and experiences of forced migration worldwide.
- \* To exchange information concerning ongoing research around the world.
- \* To inform the members of teaching and training opportunities.
- \* To inform the members of forthcoming conferences and other academic events.
- \* To provide the members with up-to-date information on refugee crises in their respective countries.
- \* To link academics from a wide variety of disciplines.

**If you have an E-Mail address and you would like to join our discussion group, follow these instructions:**

1. Send a message to:

**mailbase@mailbase - for JANET users in UK**  
**mailbase@mailbase.ac.uk - for overseas users**

2. In the text of the message, and not in the subject field, you should write the following:

**Join forced-migration first name last name**  
**For example: Join forced-migration John Smith**



# REFUGEES AS A TRUE COST OF CONFLICT

by *Tim Hancock (conflict researcher for Saferworld)*

The Cold War has ended and in its wake dozens of racial and ethnic conflicts have resurfaced in violent or potentially violent forms. Old assumptions and traditional methods of response have revealed themselves as inadequate for dealing with the challenges of the 1990s. In the absence of effective international mechanisms, states have reverted to short-term and often short-sighted calculations of self-interest. This article focuses on the costs of conflict associated with the displacement of people. Such costs are astronomical whether they are measured in terms of lost dollars, lost potential or lost lives. It is a chronic waste of resources, the effects of which are felt far from the arena of conflict, in rich and poor nations alike.

## Human costs

In attempting to assess or examine the costs of refugee crises it should not be forgotten that the greatest costs of all are borne by the refugees themselves. According to UNHCR's The State of the World's Refugees, there are now over 18 million men, women and children classified as refugees, in addition to a further 24 million who have been displaced within their own countries. Most of this displacement has been caused by vicious intra-state warfare in which the armed parties deliberately target civilians and intentionally displace communities. Those who cross international borders face continued insecurity. Food, water, shelter and other essential resources may continue to be scarce, while epidemics are a recurrent danger amongst poorly serviced, concentrated refugee populations.

Aid workers too are threatened, attacked or killed as armed bandits or warring factions seek to prey on refugees or attempt to seize aid. To protect themselves, aid workers must routinely surrender portions of this aid or recruit armed guards. Both of these options necessitate the sacrifice of precious resources but, in financial terms at least, are dwarfed by the costs of providing military protection for humanitarian assistance.

## Financial and economic costs

As the number of conflicts in the world escalates so does the financial cost of providing assistance to the resulting displaced communities. In 1989 the expenditure of the UNHCR totalled US\$570 million; by 1992 this figure had rocketed to over US\$1 billion. Nevertheless, the UNHCR still faces cash shortages and consequent problems in fulfilling its mandate. Nations which are host to refugees are faced with the financial costs of supporting the refugee population. Such costs are often paid from economies which are disrupted by conflicts in neighbouring countries (or conflicts in the host country itself) and scarcely able to stand the extra drain on national resources.

The global refugee crisis also costs the richest nations of the world billions each year. In 1992 the nations of the G7 and the European Union contributed over US\$840 million to UNHCR and this figure does not include bilateral emergency aid or contributions channelled through other agencies and organisations. These costs are undoubtedly a burden on public expenditures but the industrialised nations, with their large resources, are able to absorb their relatively small refugee populations with com-

parative ease, although even here costs may be felt upon local economies. In the developing world, however, a large refugee population can place a tremendous strain on the national economy and infrastructure. The Middle East Economic Digest of October 1991 estimated that Jordan's acceptance of 800,000 refugees, returnees and foreign nationals during the Gulf Crisis contributed to a 20% drop in that nation's GDP.

## Environmental costs

Long-term environmental damage is another cost associated with large refugee flows. The search for food, fuel and building materials can lead to the depletion of the natural resources of the area receiving large number of refugees. In Malawi the presence of over a million people displaced by the civil war in Mozambique contributes to the loss of 3.5% of the nation's forest cover each year. The inevitable consequence will be land degradation to such an extent that lost productive capacity will lead to further food shortages. Combined with a rising population, any reduction in cultivatable land will exacerbate the problem of land hunger and contribute to insecurity, instability and perhaps further refugee crises in the future.

## Costs of repatriation

The ultimate desire of most refugees is to return home but the costs of post-conflict repatriation are huge. In Central America, during the 1980s, more than two million people were uprooted due to interstate war, civil war and massive human rights violations. By the late 1980s domestic conditions had improved throughout the region and refugees began to return home. In order to support this return the International Conference on Central American Refugees (CIREFCA) was convened in May 1989. CIREFCA subsequently developed a three year plan of action with a total expenditure of approximately \$250 million. This plan has successfully supported the return of more than half the region's refugees.

These costs are small, however, when compared with the long-term assistance which is necessary if repatriation is to be a success. National economies which have been shattered by war need careful development while the returnees themselves require on-going support. Medical, agricultural and educational facilities need to be rebuilt whilst the countryside will often require long-term mine clearance and mine education programmes (there are an estimated 4 to 10 million mines in Cambodia alone).

## Political costs

Whether those who flee conflicts cross international borders or move to other areas within their own nations, they are often perceived as a threat to the livelihood of indigenous populations. This threat is often combined with ethnic, cultural and religious differences that produce tension and exacerbate conflict. Western states are now seeking to protect themselves from large inflows of refugees. A variety of tactics are employed, such as the denial of rights, forcible expulsions and the deliberate maintenance of living standards at the lowest possible level. The Maastricht Treaty on European Union allows member states to

raise visa requirements swiftly to prevent mass inflows in case of emergencies occurring outside the EU. In the meantime, officials of the Union's interior ministries have been quietly working towards the development of a common (and restrictive) asylum policy. Even African nations, traditionally the most hospitable to refugees, are increasingly uneasy about the scale of refugee flows and growing more restrictive in their policies. The only way to avoid the threat of large-scale, conflict induced refugee flows is to prevent and resolve conflict at the earliest possible stage.

### Threats to international security

In 1990s Europe there is a danger that refugee flows could contribute to the escalation of conflict within the ex-Yugoslavia, an escalation that could consume the whole of the Balkans. If conflict were to break out in the Serbian province of Kosovo, there would be a massive refugee flow amongst the two million ethnic Albanians living in that province. Such displacement could seriously destabilise Macedonia and lead to direct confrontation between Albania and Serbia. Were refugee flows seriously to affect Greece, there is the possibility of her direct involvement in the conflict, with inevitable implications for NATO and the EU.

Threats can also be of a more insidious nature. In The State of the World's Refugees, Mrs Ogata states that 'the massive number of people on the move has weakened international solidarity and endangered, at times seriously, the time honoured tradition of granting asylum to those in genuine need of protection'. The nations of the world are bound together in a complex web of interdependence but the rules and norms which are the bonds of our international society are brittle. The breaking of bonds through the reduction of trust and the dereliction of duty undermines that society and makes itself felt in other seemingly unrelated spheres of interaction.

### The way ahead

Over 40 million displaced persons clearly represent a daunting and complex series of problems. They also present a huge financial and humanitarian challenge to the international community. These resources would be far better spent on concerted action to try to prevent the conditions arising which lead to massive refugee flows. This necessitates a willingness to address the root causes of conflict. The international community urgently needs to develop a genuine early warning system in tandem with the development of clear sets of principles and mechanisms for the prevention and management of conflict. At the same time, more stringent controls need to be established to govern the international trade in arms.

The main stumbling block to the achievement of fundamental and progressive reform is the absence of political will and the desire for change. Arms control and an effective framework for the management of conflict will inevitably have costs but it is likely that these will be offset by the benefits and savings of a more stable world. Highlighting the true costs of conflict is just one element in what must be a sustained effort to demonstrate that failing to address the causes of conflict cannot serve the longer-term self-interest of even the most powerful nations.

## THE TRUE COST OF CONFLICT

### *An international inquiry by Saferworld*

*Saferworld is a UK-based foreign affairs think-tank and public education group working on common security issues. One of its main projects is the True Cost of Conflict programme. Violent conflict ranks as probably the highest profile problem facing the international community. Yet the full costs of conflict are still to be understood. Saferworld's True Cost of Conflict programme intends to highlight these costs and to make clear the connection between international conflict and other major concerns facing the international community - such as the fact that the vast majority of the official 42 million refugees and displaced persons in the world today are victims of conflict.*

*The costs are being examined by collecting expert evidence from specialists, academics, charities and NGOs who have agreed to partner Saferworld in this endeavour. The project is guided by a task force consisting of, among others, OXFAM, World Vision International, Save the Children, Concern, NOVIB, Human Rights Watch and the Swedish Red Cross. The Dossier is focusing on the cost of conflict in relation to eight countries: Mozambique, Sudan, Iraq, Bosnia, Indonesia (East Timor), India (Kashmir), Peru and Britain (Northern Ireland).*

#### *Dossier of Evidence*

*The main publication from the True Cost of Conflict programme will be the Dossier of Evidence. Its role is two-fold: firstly, the process of gathering this information will forge a constituency of support, allowing interested groups to identify the links between conflict and their own work and to address this common problem together and, secondly, it will provide a tool which NGOs, journalists, interested groups and the concerned public can use to influence decision-makers and opinion-shapers in favour of more effective prevention and management of international conflict.*

*Saferworld will use the Dossier to help raise awareness and support for the need for tighter arms export controls and better international agreement on principles and policy instruments for international involvement in conflict. The Dossier of Evidence will be published in June 1994 and will be disseminated globally through the networks of participating NGOs and will be targeted at the concerned public, NGOs, opinion-shapers and decision-makers, including governments and International Governmental Organisations, including the European Parliament, the UN, IMF, the World Bank and the International Commission on Global Governance.*

#### *Can you help?*

*Saferworld is very keen to hear from individuals and organisations who have reliable information on the costs of conflict in case-study areas or may be interested in helping to disseminate the findings. Contact: Inger Buxton, Saferworld, 82 Colston Street, Bristol BS5 1BB, UK.  
Tel: +44 272 276 435 Fax: +44 272 253 305*

# Medical Rehabilitation Centre for Torture Victims : MRCT

## Zagreb, Croatia

*The Medical Rehabilitation Centre for Torture Victims, funded by the Soros Humanitarian Foundation, has been functioning since 1 April 1993. The objective of the project is to provide psychosocial help to displaced persons; this is carried out by a multi-disciplinary team in a rented flat in Zagreb. The displaced persons coming to the Centre are mainly Croatian citizens from Eastern Slavonia; they are defined socially and psychologically by their forced migration and associated misfortunes. They have suffered cruel experiences during the war, have lost family members and property and are now coping with the dislocation to Zagreb. The following outlines the beliefs behind the Centre's strategy for providing assistance:*

1. After reaching safety, displaced persons need several weeks to organise their common life in a new environment with the assistance of hosts and spontaneously-formed groups of people who have some authority in their society ('self-helpers')

2. Our human and professional belief is that everybody has a right to mourn what has happened and to try to solve their externally-caused psychological problems by themselves. Some of the displaced people have proved their ability to do this for themselves using their own resources. Therefore it was decided from the beginning of the project that the displaced population should decide for themselves whether they wanted professional help or not.

However, it was necessary to let them know that they could, if they wanted, get help at a place which was not a hospital (ie avoiding the medicalisation of the problem). The Centre had to be promoted discreetly; this was done by introducing the members of MRCT to the self-helpers who were acquainted with the needs of the displaced people. In this way, the project has avoided the intrusive entering of professionals into the new homes of the displaced.

3. The visiting of displaced persons in their own locations by professionals such as psychiatrists is harmful, suggesting that there is something wrong with them and, even worse, that they are mentally disturbed.

4. Displaced persons have an inner psychological conviction that they are stuck in their hopeless situation which is itself symbolically represented by the place in which they are located. They feel that there is nowhere to go.

5. When they make the decision themselves to come to the Centre, they become aware that they themselves can decide something and do something to help them-

selves. This is the first psychological step in solving their sense of impotence and hopelessness. Moreover, the rented flat in which the project is based is furnished in a homely way; it has a club atmosphere and there is no feeling at all of being in a hospital.

6. Stigmatisation as a mental patient is hard to avoid when seeking help from existing medical and psychiatric facilities. Therefore the need to form a centre which was different from the other mental health institutions was obvious (although even the title of the centre represents some sort of stigma; torture victims). Only small centres for torture victims, operating professionally through a network and communicating with the media as little as possible, can provide proper rehabilitation for victims of war/torture.

The centre's methodology for treating clients involves individual psychotherapy, family therapy, group therapy, alternative group meetings and consultations with the self-helper groups which are active at the Centre as well as in the places where the displaced populations live.

7. Surveying the situation of the displaced population provides important insights into cases of violations of human rights; cooperation with the committees and institutions in charge of protecting human rights is the final, inevitable aspect of the work of the MRCT.

*Taken from a report by Suzana Kulovic, MD, Psychiatrist, Designer of the MRCT project. For more information, contact Suzana Kulovic at:*

*Medical Rehabilitation Centre for Torture Victims  
Medicinski centar za rehabilitaciju zrtava mucenja  
Zagreb, Radiceva 15/1, Croatia.  
Tel/fax: +385 041 434 144*

# REFLECTIONS ON... REFUGEES AND VIOLENCE

*An interview with Dr Derek Summerfield of the Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture in London, UK. Derek Summerfield has worked in conflict areas in Southern Africa and Nicaragua. He has been a consultant to Oxfam and other non-governmental organisations and is now principal psychiatrist at the Medical Foundation.*

*Are the challenges facing people now working with refugees different from, for example, ten years ago?*

I think that in their essence they have not changed but that the scale appears to have increased enormously. As recently as 1970, UNHCR registered as few as 3 million refugees in the world, with many more internally displaced. Now that figure has increased to about 18 million: double that if you include the internally displaced. Throughout the 1980s there have been probably 20 to 30 endemic wars and civil conflicts going on worldwide and the non-combatants now represent well over 90% of total casualties. What has changed is a realisation of the complexities of the horrors. People no longer face 'just' the threat of annihilation to themselves and their families but to their livelihoods, their social institutions and their cultural world.

The reconstitution of the material and spiritual bases of those people's lives clearly lie beyond the individual survivor and his/her health worker, yet are the framing forces capable of transforming traumatic experience into something more meaningful. Throughout this century, medicine and psychology have had the individual mind as the centre of the field of study and have tended to resist socialised definitions of health and mental health; that puts them, in my view, poorly placed to come to grips with the complex phenomena at work here.

*Who are the most vulnerable of refugees?*

At the wider level, the most vulnerable refugees are those whose worlds have been most destroyed. There are Sudanese adolescents in Juba, displaced from the rural areas by the civil war, who have only been refugees for two or three years; yet none of them can remember any tribal traditions, the village where their grandparents came from or the name of their grandparents. A whole swathe of their personal histories and their culture had already been lost to them. In the long term, these people will have to find a social and cultural framework which will fill those spaces.

Otherwise, what we can gather from literature does tend to pinpoint the following as the most vulnerable: women without a male to protect them who may be subject to sexual violation; children who have been orphaned or separated from their parents (it is crucial to network and try to get them back in touch with their extended family); those who are physically handicapped

and mutilated because so often they are part of economies that stress manual labour; and the elderly (very little has been written about the effects on the elderly).

*This RPN includes an article on rape of Somali women refugees. The media have carried reports of rape of Bosnian women refugees. Is this a new phenomenon?*

It is certainly not a new phenomenon. I think that rape and other forms of sexual violation have been the most 'invisible' aspects of war traditionally and certainly one of the most institutionalised; rape and sexual violation have always been part of the traditional bounty of winning soldiers. For example, if one looks at women activists taken into detention in Latin America, most of those women would have had some form of sexual violation while in prison; it is clearly a way in which they are disempowered and humiliated.

*Are there specific psychological problems attached to rape?*

I do not think there is any specific horror or torture - and I would include rape as a form of torture - which leaves a distinctive psychological injury separable from other injuries. Moreover, refugees go through multiple traumatic events.

*Is the international community prepared for dealing with rape?*

The problem is that we in the West see rape as a very emotive issue and I think there is a considerable danger of inappropriate and poorly thought through projects which aim to give counselling to newly arrived refugee women in relation to their rape and which ignore all the other things they have been through. We cannot assume rape is necessarily the defining trauma of a war; victims will also be widows, bereaved mothers, refugees in a strange or hostile society. I think there is a danger that we will not start where the refugees want us to be. Any study of rape would have to take account of all the other human rights violations and horrors which are common in situations where rape takes place. We have to be careful that the things that we consider the most horrific about foreign conflicts do not violate the priorities of the victims and survivors themselves. These priorities may of course shift as their social situation changes.

continued...

*You have talked of rape as a form of torture. Should it be institutionalised as an international crime, as is torture, in situations of war?*

I prefer the term 'organised violence'. If you just refer to 'torture', most people think of dungeons where some psychopath inflicts terrible things upon the body of a victim whose name is known to him to get specific information. Clearly a great deal of that torture does go on but most torture in the world is an open-air affair. It is atrocity, as we see in Bosnia and elsewhere. Within the spectrum of atrocities, clearly rape is one of them. My feeling is that when we talk about torture within legislation we are including acts like rape already. Perhaps that needs to be made more explicit.

*Another article in the RPN looks at child victims of landmines. Do these children have specific psychological needs?*

I do not think that one can segregate the psychological needs of children from that of their context. If we want to ameliorate the psychological effects of war and horror on children, we must address not their minds first but their worlds. Anything that assists the parents of child victims to reassemble their lives and regain a measure of security will obviously begin to ameliorate the psychological effects of the war upon children. Certainly during the conflict the stresses on the child are to some extent a function of how they perceive their principal care-givers. Provided that their parents, in particular their mother, can retain some measure of composure and control - often in the midst of tremendous terror - then children are often able to remain relatively untraumatised, at least in the short term.

I would put the psychological needs of children in the context of the kind of rebuilding that is necessary after wars which have been so much played out on the terrain of subsistence economies, particularly in Africa and Cambodia, and where a very substantial kind of material rebuilding needs to go on.

*What are the most positive current developments in our response to victims of trauma?*

I think there may be some positive developments in the sense that the various disciplines - the health professions, anthropologists, human rights workers, etc - may be realising that they have to cross disciplinary boundaries. We need much more concerted work. The WHO are now stressing that mental health work should not be a separate professional activity but rather embedded in primary health strategies. They are currently field-testing a manual, for example, to assist primary health workers to be alert to ways in which trauma may be reflected in families and in communities and the coping strategies that are available.

## PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AFFECTED BY ARMED CONFLICTS

*The following is an excerpt from the QUNO Reporter (Quaker United Nations Office Geneva Newsletter), October-December 1993. It reports on discussions held during the 44th UNHCR Executive Committee meeting in Geneva, 4-8 December 1993:*

'Children are among the principal victims of war. They are killed, maimed and traumatized during indiscriminate attacks on civilian communities. They are frequently subjected to... torture, rape, detention and conscription into military service...[and] suffer disproportionately from the side-effects of conflict, such as famine, malnutrition, disease and separation from their families. Those who survive are likely to be scarred for life.' UNHCR: State of the World's Refugees, 1993, p.73.

The first topic chosen for discussion by the Committee which oversees the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child was children in armed conflicts. As a result of this discussion, the Committee requested the Secretary-General to undertake a study of better ways and means of protecting children affected by armed conflicts, and proposed an optional protocol to the Convention raising the minimum age of recruitment from 15 to 18 years of age. These recommendations were strongly supported by the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna (June 1993).

On 8 December, the Committee's request for a study was approved by the General Assembly, by consensus, in a resolution co-sponsored by 74 states from all regional groups and with active QUNO involvement in the drafting. In consequence, the Secretary-General is to appoint an expert to undertake a comprehensive study of the question of the protection of children affected by armed conflicts, including the participation of children in armed conflict, and to make specific recommendations.

*The question of a draft optional protocol to the Convention of the Rights of the Child raising the minimum age of recruitment will be before the next UN Commission on Human Rights (31 January - 11 March 1994).*



## Would you like to join the Refugee Participation Network?

The Refugee Participation Network is a network of over 2,060 individuals and organisations in 110 countries. It brings together researchers, policy-makers, refugees and all those working on the ground with refugees. Its aims are:

- \* to improve information exchange on refugee issues
- \* to provide policy-makers with field data
- \* to provide a voice for refugees
- \* to foster the development of local networks

The *Newsletter* is produced three times a year; each issue focuses on a specific theme. It carries articles and reports, book reviews, letters and updates on new publications, forthcoming conferences, etc. The Network's *Directory of Participants* can help you improve your local networking and information exchange.

The *Newsletter* is mailed free of charge but if you can afford to pay our suggested voluntary subscription of £20 a year, please do so. This will help our work continue. If you can afford £40, you will be covering the subscription for someone less able to pay. *Thank you!*

*If you would like to join, please fill in the form below and return it to RPN at the address given.*

### YES, I WOULD LIKE TO JOIN THE REFUGEE PARTICIPATION NETWORK!

I am able to make a contribution towards my annual subscription of:  £20  £40  \_\_\_\_\_

Please make cheques payable to RSP/QEH. Tick if you require a receipt:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_

Organisation \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Town \_\_\_\_\_

Country \_\_\_\_\_

Tel/Fax/E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Main area of work experience (eg education, health, etc) \_\_\_\_\_

Special interest group (eg refugee women, children, etc) or second area of experience \_\_\_\_\_

Geographical area of interest \_\_\_\_\_

Type of organisation (eg NGO, international agency, refugee-based, individual, etc) \_\_\_\_\_

**Please return to: Refugee Participation Network, RSP, QEH, 21 St Giles, Oxford OX1 3LA, UK.**

# CONFERENCES : Announcements and Reports

## **REFUGEE, MIGRATION AND SOCIAL CHANGE**

Berlin, Germany : 22 - 25 June 1994

An international conference on culture and development. Organisers: Working Group Culture and Development (AKE), Berlin Institute for Comparative Social Research, House of the Cultures of the World, Friedrich Ebert Foundation.

*Contact:*

Berlin Institute for Comparative Social Research,  
P O Box 30 11 25, D-10722 Berlin, Germany.  
Tel: +49 30 444 1088 Fax: +49 30 444 1085

## **CARING FOR AND EMPOWERING VICTIMS OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS**

Manila, Philippines : 5 - 9 December 1994

The objective of the conference is to exchange information on assistance to victims of organised violence, focusing on:

- \* socio-political conditions and their consequences on the health of refugees and displaced people
- \* diagnosis, treatment and evaluation of therapy with consideration of victims' resources, gender and culture
- \* children and adolescent victims of organised violence

*Contact:*

Aurora A Parong, 150 K-6, Kamias,  
Quezon City, Philippines  
Tel: +63 2 921 8702 Fax: +63 2 921 8702 (at night)

## **WORLD FEDERATION OF PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATIONS**

Bali, Indonesia : 5 - 8 December 1994

### **VII International Congress : Health, Economics and Development: Working Together for Change**

This conference will bring together professionals in health, development and economics from countries around the world who will examine the linkages between health, economics and development; and develop an action agenda to integrate health concerns with economic and development policies.

The WFPHA is a non-governmental organisation composed of national public health associations from 41 countries. Congresses are held every three years and are co-sponsored by the World Health Organisation and UNICEF. Participation is open to all. The official language of the Congress is English. Abstracts must be posted by 15 May 1994.

*Contact:*

WFPHA Secretariat, c/o APHA, 1015 15th Street NW,  
Suite 300, Washington DC 20005, USA.  
Fax: +1 202 789 5681

## **World Council of Churches conference reports**

### **South America Regional Refugee and Migration Network consultation : 14-17 September 1993**

22 delegates from ecumenical organisations in Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay met in Montevideo, Uruguay, 14-17 September 1993, for the biannual consultation of the Ecumenical Network on Refugees and Migration in South America. In agreeing to policy guidelines for the work of their organisations over the next two years, delegates focused on the needs of internally displaced persons. The large scale violations of human rights associated with internal displacement in Colombia and Peru were identified as a focus for project advocacy to link their service work with efforts to address root causes. The next full consultation is projected to take place in Chile in September 1995.

### **All African Conference of Churches Workshop on Refugee and Emergency Assistance : November 1993**

Representatives of national councils of churches and local ecumenical refugee service agencies from 22 African countries met in Kenya in November to define new strategies for Refugee and Emergency Assistance. The resulting new mandate shifts the attention of church work towards providing attention to rural refugee and displaced populations from a previous emphasis on providing services to urban concentrations of refugees.

*For more information, contact:*

Unit IV - Sharing and Service, Refugee and Migration Desk,  
World Council of Churches, P O Box 2100, 1211 Geneva 2,  
Switzerland.

## **PARINAC (Partnership in Action)**

PARINAC is the process of a comprehensive UNHCR/NGO consultation in each region designed to enhance dialogue and understanding between UNHCR and NGOs, to facilitate closer collaboration and to increase the combined capacity to respond to the global refugee problem and, where appropriate, the problem of internal displacement. It was launched jointly by UNHCR and ICVA (International Council of Voluntary Agencies) and involves six regional consultations which are addressing four main issues: protection, internally displaced persons, emergency response and the continuum from relief to rehabilitation to development. A global Conference will then be held in Oslo, Norway, from 6-9 June 1994. This should lead to a Plan of Action to form the basis of concrete actions on behalf of refugees and displaced persons in the 1990s. *For further information, suggestions and input, contact:*

Mr Santiago Romero-Perez, UNHCR, P O Box 2500,  
1211 Geneva 2 Depot, Switzerland.  
Tel: +41 22 739 8208 Fax: +41 22 739 8789

or:

Ms Eleanor Brenna, ICVA, C P 216, 1211 Geneva 21,  
Switzerland.  
Tel: +41 22 732 6600 Fax: +41 22 738 9904

# COURSES

## REFUGEE STUDIES PROGRAMME

### SHORT COURSES AND WORKSHOPS - 1994

#### THE LAW OF REFUGEE STATUS

Weekend workshop : 14 - 15 May 1994

This comprehensive workshop on the scope of the refugee definition gives participants the opportunity, through a mix of lecture and working group exercises, to grapple with the difficulties of the application of legal norms in the context of factual scenarios based on actual refugee claims.

The workshop will be led by Professor James Hathaway of the Osgoode Hall Law School, Toronto, Canada. Professor Hathaway is Associate Director (Law) of York University's Centre for Refugee Studies in Canada.

*Cost: £90 (including lunch; excluding accommodation and other meals)*

#### HUMANITARIAN AID IN COMPLEX EMERGENCIES

5 day course : 5 - 9 September 1994

This course for practitioners working in areas of conflict aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the issues involved. It will cover:

- humanitarian law
- the relationship between types of war and relief provision
- the coordination of relief
- protection of vulnerable populations
- the role of the UN
- repatriation and various aspects of the reconstruction of communities

*Cost: £350 (excluding meals and accommodation)*

## 1994 INTERNATIONAL SUMMER SCHOOL

Four week residential course : 4 - 29 July 1994

The main objective of the Summer School is to provide a broad theoretical background to the subjects of forced migration and assistance, against which participants can then examine, discuss and review the role of assistance in practice. It offers an occasion for study and reflection in a setting removed from the day-to-day pressures of work.

An underlying theme of the course is that the systematic study of refugee situations will improve the planning of effective programmes. Such study aims for an understanding of the refugee experience in its many aspects - political, legal, cultural, socio-economic, psychological and organisational, ie through a multi-disciplinary and comparative approach.

The Summer School is specifically designed for senior and middle managers and administrators involved in programmes of assistance and/or policy-making for forced migrants and victims of other crises calling for humanitarian assistance. Representatives of governments, inter-governmental organisations (IGOs), non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and donor organisations are welcome to apply. Participants will have the option of being evaluated on their work for the course, as well as the opportunity to extend their stay for two weeks for field trips and/or supervised study/project development.

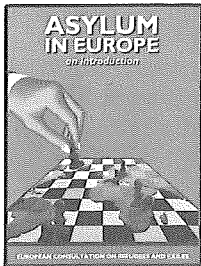
Cost: £1,950 for the four week Summer School, inclusive of bed and breakfast accommodation from 3 - 29 July inclusive. The optional two week extension will cost a further £650 for the period 30 July to 12 August, inclusive of bed and breakfast accommodation.

**Deadline for enrolment and payment of fees is 15 May 1994.**

*Prior registration is required for all courses. For further information and application forms, please contact:*

*The Education Unit, Short Courses Section, Refugee Studies Programme, Queen Elizabeth House, University of Oxford, 21 St Giles, Oxford OX1 3LA, UK.*

*Tel: +44 (0)865 270723 Fax: +44 (0)865 270721 E-Mail: RSP@VAX.OXFORD.AC.UK*



## **Asylum in Europe: an introduction**

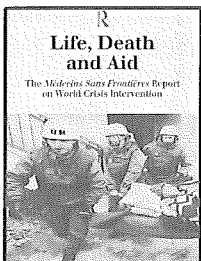
by *European Consultation on Refugees and Exiles*. 4th edition, volume 1. April 1993. 105pp. ISBN 0-9521634-0-3. £6.75. Published by *ECRE, Bondway House, 3-9 Bondway, London SW8 1SJ, UK*.  
Tel: +44 (0)71 582 9928 Fax: +44 (0)71 820 9725

This is volume 1 of the long-awaited 4th edition of *Asylum in Europe: a Handbook for Agencies Assisting Refugees* previously published in 1983; volume 2, covering laws and procedures in selected European countries, is expected soon. Although this book is primarily designed for practitioners of refugee law, it will prove useful for all those interested in the protection and assistance of refugees and asylum seekers at both the international and the European level, whether lawyers or not.

Part 1 covers the international level. The introduction guides us through the basic terminology of international legal instruments. A section on Refugee Definition provides the key text of the 1951 Convention and then discusses important aspects of it. The chapter on asylum discusses various forms of asylum, family reunification, countries of first asylum, refugees in orbit and non-refoulement. International Institutions such as UNHCR, the IOM and other inter-governmental institutions are described and their objectives listed. Major colloquia, consultations and conferences are mentioned with their respective dates. Part 2 covers similar matters at the European level with a brief historical introduction. All the major systems of European cooperation are covered, including the Council of Europe, the European Community and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. Both parts 1 and 2 provide useful appendices which include bibliographies, addresses of European-based international organisations and listings of instruments, treaties and resolutions.

It is hard to fault this handbook. It covers both 'hard' law, 'soft' law and current practice (where this differs). Its tone is factual yet it does not hesitate to highlight weak aspects of legal provisions and to criticise official agreements. The individual numbering of each paragraph of text makes cross-referencing easy. The language is unambiguous and totally intelligible to the lay reader. I hope that future editions give us a consolidated contents list to parts 1 and 2 at the front. A serious omission is a listing of acronyms which in this complex and fast-developing area grow like mushrooms in the night.

*Reviewer: Gabrielle Brocklesby, former RSP Visiting Fellow*



## **Life, Death and Aid The Médecins Sans Frontières report on world crisis intervention**

*Edited by François Jean*. 1993. 160pp. ISBN 0-415-10550-1. £9.99. Contact: *ITPS, Cheriton House, North Way, Andover SP10 5BE, UK*. Tel: +44 (0)264 332424

Contributors to *Life, Death and Aid* include MSF employees, journalists and academics. Through this book, MSF aims to draw the attention of public opinion towards the ten most urgent humanitarian crises in the world.

The first part of the book comprises ten different crisis-cases, compiled under four headings: 'Non-intervention' as in Sudan and Afghanistan; 'Regional intervention' as in Tajikistan, the Caucasus and Liberia; 'Peacemaking operations' as have been tried in El Salvador, Angola and Cambodia; and "Humanitarian" military intervention' as seen in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Somalia. These ten articles give historical outlines of the situations up to the time of writing, including accounts of what went wrong, and are useful to anyone who wants a quick and not too in-depth view of the situation in any of the ten areas of crisis. The second part of the book is entitled 'An International Response Marked by Paradoxes and Ambiguities' and looks at the following five subjects: 'The paradoxes of armed protection', 'Peacekeeping operations above humanitarian law', 'The human rights challenge to sovereignty', 'Health-care reconstruction: the lost agenda' and 'When suffering makes a good story'. This part of the book looks into some of the main problems that confront the international humanitarian regime of today. It comments on the problems arising because of the international community's lack of policies, credible solution models and common humanitarian goals, all of which seem to be part of the aftermath of the ending of the cold war.

Because of the number of problems presented, one should not expect them to be looked at in depth, though the articles do give a very good idea of some of the most urgent problems confronting the humanitarian regime of today. On the whole, it is a readable and interesting book that could very well be used as a 'starter' by anyone interested in the world of humanitarian aid.

*Reviewer: Flemming S Nielsen, RSP Visiting Study Fellow*

# REVIEWS

## Communicating Building for Safety

by Eric Dudley and Ane Haaland, Cambridge Architectural Research Limited. December 1993. 80pp. ISBN 1 85339 183 2. £7.95/\$15.50. Published by Intermediate Technology Publications, 103/105 Southampton Row, London WC1B 4HH, UK.

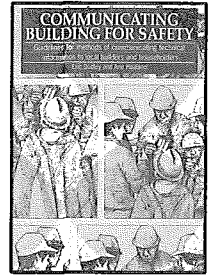
Changes to behaviour and habit, in health, building, organising, etc, are most difficult to accept by communities if their advantages are unclear and particularly if they are promoted by 'outsiders'.

This book is an excellent guide to making technical information culturally acceptable to local builders and households to assist them in making safe buildings. The book focuses on communicating ideas and techniques to poor communities and places emphasis on local community cooperation to make best use of limited resources. It is organised in three sections: Communication in planning; Education material; Illustrating building for safety.

The book distinguishes itself in various ways. It recognises, for example, the important complementarity in communication between language (ie signs, images, symbols) and the constraint which culture places on change. It bothers to find out how people perceive different kinds of drawings and signs through its effective surveys. It recognises in its text the conflict, which must be overcome if guidebooks are to work, between indigenous methods, based on well tried ideas handed down over generations where doing the same as before is regarded with respect, and necessary changes, which are de facto difficult to accept. The book recognises implicitly that the best way to communicate change is to show a picture of what people want (based on locally expressed needs) and then print information on how to get it and do it.

The book offers case studies to illustrate issues. It avoids prescriptive solutions but instead offers ways of thinking about communicating to enable field workers to do the job locally and effectively. At £7.95 it is a bargain buy for development professionals working with communities.

Reviewer: Nabeel Hamdi, Director, Centre for Development and Environmental Planning (CENDEP), Oxford Brookes University

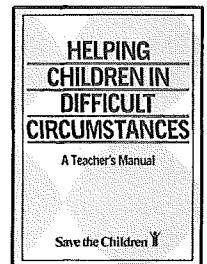


## Development Manual 1: Helping Children in Difficult Circumstances:

A Teacher's Manual by Naomi Richman and Diana Pereira, Save the Children Fund. 1991. A5 paperback. 48pp. ISBN 1 870322 42 8. £2.95.

## Development Manual 2: Communicating With Children: Helping Children in Distress

by Naomi Richman, Save the Children Fund. 1993. A5 paperback. 108pp. ISBN 1 870322 49 5. £3.95.



Available from: Publication Sales, Save the Children, 17 Grove Lane, London SE5 8RD, UK.

Tel: +44 (0)71 703 5400 Fax: +44 (0)71 703 2278

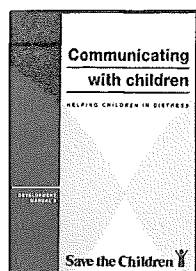
Development Manual 1: Helping Children in Difficult Circumstances is a practical guide designed for teachers working with children who have experienced traumatic situations. It covers two broad topics: the impacts of trauma on children and methods of support for children in difficult circumstances.

During development, children have a number of physical and emotional needs. When these needs are not met, development is often disrupted. The case studies presented in the book are of children who have suffered trauma because of war. According to the manual, the restoration of self-confidence and trust is a vital element in the recovery of children affected by trauma. Several techniques are suggested. The manual emphasises, for example, the importance of creativity and play in helping children develop self-confidence. Children are encouraged to express themselves through drawings, poems, games and theatre. They learn that they can be creative, productive human beings and, more importantly, that they can be accepted by others. The family and the community are also important elements in the recovery process. The authors stress that 'it is essential that children recognise the value of their culture and traditions, and have the possibility to learn as much as possible about their own culture'.

continued....



# REVIEWS



Development Manual 2: Communicating With Children covers much of the same material but it is written instead for those who are developing training programmes for people working with children 'in situations of social crisis or conflict'. It provides a number of useful exercises designed to help practitioners understand the child's perspective and to become more effective listeners. Furthermore, it presents several important guidelines to communicating and building trusting relationships with children. Emphasis is placed on both verbal and non-verbal communication skills. The manual also covers topics such as how long a conversation should last and what sort of questions should be asked.

The manuals deal with an important, but often neglected, issue: the impact of stress and trauma on teachers. Essentially, it argues that those who work with children must take time to examine their own feelings and beliefs. Although these manuals were designed for use in Mozambique, they provide insight into the problems confronting children in difficult circumstances which could be applied anywhere. The focus on creating self-confidence is important. However, the manuals seem to neglect some of the more damaging psychological impacts of trauma, especially in the section on boy soldiers. Making these children feel loved and accepted is a critical step in their recovery but they may require further help before they can be fully reintegrated into society. This is a minor criticism, however, and anyone planning to work with children will find these manuals to be informative, practical and thought-provoking.

*Reviewer: Shannon Analore, RSP Visiting Study Fellow*

## PUBLICATIONS

### **Directory of Refugee Service Agencies - Kenya**

*prepared by Jesuit Refugee Service, Eastern Africa.*

*January 1994*

This Directory lists the Refugee Service Agencies and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) which offer services to refugees and asylum seekers in Kenya, with a focus on the greater Nairobi area. Agencies and NGOs are listed alphabetically by their recognised acronyms.

*Contact: Rev Michael A Evans, SJ, Regional Director, JRS/Eastern Africa, P O Box 76490, Nairobi, Kenya.*

*Tel: +254 2 567065*

### **Peru: the dispossessed** *December 1993. 21pp. £3.00.*

*Published by the Peru Support Group, 37-39 Great Guildford Street, London SE1 0LS, UK. Tel: +44 (0)71 620 1103*

An estimated 600,000 people have fled from their homes in rural Peru during the 13 year war between Sendero Luminoso and the armed forces. This report examines the situation faced by internal refugees in Peru, looking at:

the occupation of jungle regions and enslavement of indigenous peoples, violence against women, the dilemma facing the displaced of whether to return or not, the recommendations of the recent international commission on displaced peoples in Peru, and political prospects for Peru.

**EDICESA briefing** is a monthly update on human rights and refugee issues in Eastern and Southern Africa, produced in English and Portuguese. It is published by EDICESA, the Ecumenical Documentation and Information Centre for Eastern and Southern Africa, which also produces the monthly **EDICESA News**.

*Contact: EDICESA, P O Box H94, Hatfield, Harare, Zimbabwe. Tel: +263 4 50311 Fax: +263 4 52979*

### **NGO Views and Recommendations on Refugees and Displaced Persons**

*ICVA (International Council of Voluntary Agencies),*

*Geneva. October 1993.*

ICVA's Statement to the 44th Session of the Executive Committee of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees' Programme outlines NGO concerns in respect of the present protection and relief effort by the international community. It points to weaknesses and obstacles in the international refugee system but also to opportunities for improving the system. The statement makes recommendations directed at UNHCR and other international agencies, donor states, countries of asylum and countries of origin and NGOs.

*Contact: ICVA, Case postale 216, 1211 Geneva 21, Switzerland. Tel: +41 22 732 6600 Fax: +41 22 738 9904*

*Telex: +41 25 86*

### **Rebuilding wartorn societies**

*UNRISD (United Nations Research Institute for Social Development). September 1993. ISSN 1020-1092.*

Report of the workshops on The Challenge of Rebuilding Wartorn Societies and The Social Consequences of the Peace Process in Cambodia, held in Geneva, 27-30 April 1993. The report presents a synthesis of the themes and findings of the two meetings which focused on the effectiveness of international interventions in establishing peace in countries torn apart by civil war, strategies for reconstructing wartorn economies and civil society, key social problems that require urgent attention and future research priorities.

*Contact: UNRISD, Palais des Nations, 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland. Tel: +41 22 798 8400 Fax: +41 22 740 0791 Telex: +41 29 62 UNO CH*

# PUBLICATIONS

**The State of the World's Refugees, 1993 : The Challenge of Protection** UNHCR. 1993. 208pp. ISBN 0 14 02.3487x. £8.99/\$14.00. Published by Penguin Books Ltd, Bath Road, Harmondsworth, West Drayton, Middlesex UB7 0DA, UK. Tel: +44 (0)81 899 4036

This report focuses on a wide range of issues related to refugees and argues that the traditional methods of protecting refugees must be complemented by innovative approaches that seek, where possible, to prevent the emergence of conditions that cause refugee outflows. It traces the historical development of international refugee protection and includes case-studies providing detailed information on a wide range of topics. The report also contains maps and graphs, statistical tables, extracts of important international laws and conventions, a bibliography and chronologies of events in Somalia, Cambodia and former Yugoslavia. This report is not being distributed by UNHCR.

**Crosslines** is a reporters' newsletter that aims to provide critical insight and information on international development, humanitarian action and global trends. It is a self-funded report that draws on a growing network of concerned journalists and analysts. It seeks to focus on the activities, both positive and negative, of governments, donors, aid agencies, NGOs, companies, individuals and communities worldwide. Published 10 times a year. Vol 2, No 1 (January - February 1994) includes two articles on landmines, plus an extensive contact list of relevant organisations. Free specimen copy available. Range of annual subscriptions offered. Contact: Sue Pfiffner, Crosslines Global Report, P O Box 171, CH-1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland. Tel: +41 22 756 1984 Fax: +41 21 808 5830

**Landmines in Mozambique** February 1994. £5.99. Published by Human Rights Watch, 90 Borough High Street, London SE1 1LL, UK. It reports that landmines in Mozambique have claimed more than 10,000 victims, mostly civilians, and calls for greater urgency in mine clearance and funding for mine victims.

**Guatemala Bulletin** is the quarterly publication of the Guatemala Human Rights Commission/USA, a nonpartisan, humanitarian organisation that monitors the human rights situation in Guatemala. Subscription: \$10 per annum. Contact the Guatemala Bulletin, Guatemala Human Rights Commission/USA, 3321 12th Street NE, Washington DC 20017, USA.

**The Nightmare Continues... Abuses against Somali Refugees in Kenya** September 1993. 54 pp. £4.95/\$7.95. Published by African Rights, 11 Marshalsea Road, London SE1 1EP, UK. Tel: +44 (0)71 717 1224 Fax: +44 (0)71 717 1240 This report focuses on the plight of the 300,000 Somali refugees in Kenya. It documents the human rights abuses that Somali refugees are currently enduring at the hands of bandits and the Kenyan security forces, including killing, rape, robbery, torture, arbitrary detention, extortion and deportation. It also tells the story of the refugees' arrival during 1991 and 1992 and looks at the failures of UNHCR to ensure the protection of the refugees. The report concludes with a series of recommendations for holding the Kenyan security services accountable and improving the respect for the rights of refugees.

## Migration and Mental Health Newsletter

Vol 1, No 1, 1994.

The aim of the Newsletter is to draw attention to the topic of migration and mental health in the European Region as well as to facilitate the exchange of news and information in this particular field. It will be published twice a year and distributed jointly with the Newsletter on Migration and Health issued by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM). Readers are encouraged to contribute by sending information on research work, news on conferences and meetings, abstracts and other relevant initiatives in the field. Contact: Migration and Mental Health Newsletter, WIAD, Godesberger Allee 54, D-53175 Bonn, Germany. Tel: +49 228 8104 172 Fax: +49 228 8104 155

**Listening for a Change: Oral Testimony and Development** by Hugo Slim and Paul Thompson. Contributing editors: Olivia Bennett and Nigel Cross. October 1993. 168 pp. ISBN 1-870670-31-0. £9.95. Published by The Panos Institute, 9 White Lion Street, London N1 9PD, UK.

Tel: +44 (0)71 278 1111 Fax: +44 (0)71 278 0345

This is a guide to collecting, interpreting and using the oral testimony of the people on whose actions and commitment development ultimately depends. The aim is to help development workers to improve their listening and learning skills and to value the knowledge, experience, culture and priorities of local people. The book briefly traces the revival of the oral history movement in the North, highlighting its relevance to development practice. With case-studies from all over the world, it explores the many different ways oral testimony can be used, by agencies and by communities themselves, to contribute to development and relief projects. It gives practical guidelines on methods of collection, as well as on recording, transcription and translation, and information on relevant organisations and publications. Finally, the limitations and ambiguities of oral evidence are explored, as well as ethical issues.

**Guide to Current Indexing and Abstracting Services in the Third World** by G E Gorman and J J Mills. 1992. 278pp. HB. ISBN 0 905450 85x. £47.00/\$85.00. Published by Zed Books, 7 Cynthia Street, London N1 9JF, UK.

Tel: +44 (0)71 837 4014 Fax: +44 (0)71 833 3960

This book - a companion volume to the authors' Guide to Current National Bibliographies in the Third World - assists libraries in deciding whether a service warrants acquisition, by providing full information on all currently produced indexing and abstracting services in the Third World. Each entry includes: full biographical citation together with publisher address and current cost; statement of scope and description of contents; critical analysis of the organisation of each indexing and abstracting service and the accuracy of the information provided.

**Reencuentro** is the monthly publication of the Coordinación de ONG y Cooperativas para el Acompañamiento de la Población Damnificada por el Conflicto Armado Interno, looking at the process of return and reintegration of refugees to Guatemala. Range of subscriptions. Contact: Coordinación de ONG y Cooperativas, Edificio Atanacio Tzul (Nivel 2), 40 Ave y 2a Calle, z 7, Residenciales 'Valle del Sol', Guatemala, Ciudad, Código Postal 92-1.

## *Announcement of the establishment of the*

# **International Association for the Study of Forced Migration (IASFM)**

### *New association*

The 4th IRAP conference was held at Somerville College, Oxford, UK, 5-9 January 1994. The 242 assembled participants from over 30 countries decided in a plenary session on Friday 7 January to establish IASFM in order to continue and institutionalise the valuable tradition of IRAP. Since the first conference in 1990, IRAP has served to bring together from around the world a group of recognised experts - both researchers and practitioners - in the field of forced migration (including refugees as well as internally and other displaced persons).

### *Evolution*

The first IRAP conference was held in 1990, convened by the Refugee Studies Programme (RSP) and the Journal of Refugee Studies (JRS) as an advisory panel to the RSP and the JRS. IRAP stood for the International Research and Advisory Panel on Refugees and Other Displaced Peoples. Participants at this first conference deliberated about the current status and future directions of the RSP, the JRS and the fields of refugee studies and forced migration.

Participants at the second (1991) and third (1992) conferences no longer saw their roles as being explicit advisors to the RSP and JRS. Instead, the conferences served to create and unite a large and heterogeneous international community of researchers and practitioners and to enable members of that community to interact and exchange ideas. In the 4th conference (1994), this process came to fruition when the participants established the IASFM to ensure the continuity of IRAP conferences.

### *The role of the IASFM*

The IASFM is an institutional form of the IRAP community and is to further the interests of that community. Primarily, it will take on the responsibility of organising future IRAP conferences; IRAP will now stand for International Research and Practice with Forced Migration.

The acting officers will work to establish IASFM as an independent association.

*Office: The IASFM plans to establish its own office. In the meantime, enquiries may be addressed to any acting officer or committee member, or to: IRAP, c/o RSP, Queen Elizabeth House, 21 St Giles, Oxford OX1 3LA, UK.*

### *IASFM officers*

At the January 1994 IRAP Conference, an ad-hoc executive committee was elected and four acting officers appointed:

Acting President: Art Hansen, University of Florida, USA

Acting Vice-President: Barbara Harrell-Bond, University of Oxford, UK

Acting Secretary: Richard Black, King's College London, UK

Acting Treasurer: Sarah Collinson, Royal Institute of International Affairs, UK

### *Committee*

Dean Ajdukovic, University of Zagreb, Croatia

Michael Cernea, World Bank, Washington DC, USA

AJV Chandra Kanthan, University of Jaffna, Sri Lanka

Janina Dacyl, CEIFO, Stockholm University, Sweden

Khadija Elmadmad, Université de Casablanca, Morocco

Ibrahim Elnur, University of Juba, Sudan

Ines Gomez, University of San Francisco, USA

Edvard Hauff, University of Oslo, Norway

Monica Kathina, Centre for Refugee Studies, Moi University, Kenya

Chan Kwok Bun, National University of Singapore

Lorraine Majka, La Trobe University, Australia

Lucia Ann McSpadden, Life and Peace Institute, Uppsala, Sweden

Gabriel Murillo-Castano, Universidad de los Andes, Bogota, Columbia

Seteney Shami, Yarmouk University, Jordan

Effie Voutira, Cambridge University/Refugee Studies Programme, Oxford, UK

Thomas Wenzel, University Hospital for Psychiatry, Vienna, Austria

Loes van Willigen, Pharos Foundation for Refugee Health Care, The Netherlands

Roger Zetter, Oxford Brookes University, UK

Effie Voutira and Lorraine Majka were appointed to form an acting Publications Committee.

## IRAP PAPERS

Two of the workshops at the January 1994 IRAP conference focused on the theme of violence. Papers presented are available from RSP (see below for details) and are as follows:

### *Workshop: Violence and its psychosocial impact*

'The psychosocial impact of violence and war: Bosnian refugee families and coping strategies' by Marita Eastmond, Birgitta Alinder and Lilian Ralphsson, University of Göteborg, Sweden (shortened version in this RPN).

'Responses to the trauma of detention' by Maryanne Loughry, Jesuit Refugee Service, Bangkok.

'Level of anxiety in Gaza before and after the Intifada' by Samir Quota, Gaza Community Mental Health Programme.

'Mental health status and psychosocial symptoms of the crew members involved in evacuation of refugees and the humanitarian aid convoy' by Lucia Maric, Maritime Faculty, Dubrovnik.

'Returning from exile: psychological aspects of reintegration' by Zonke Majodina, University of Cape Town.

'The reconstruction of meaning of La Violencia among Guatemalan war widows' by Judith Zur, London (shortened version in this RPN).

### *Workshop: Changing political contexts of persecution, violence and flight*

'Racist violence in France: symbolic and historical dimensions' by Cathie Lloyd, University of Warwick.

'Forced migration in conditions of the collapse of the USSR and the transition of Russia from the planned to a market economy system' by Sergei Nickolsky, Centre for Humanitarian Studies, Moscow.

'Violence and its relation to refugee flight' by Mark Gibney, Purdue University, North Carolina.

*The papers are available from RSP at a cost of £3.00 each; please send orders with cheques made payable to RSP/QEH to IRAP Papers, c/o RPN, at the RPN address on page 2.*

## THE RSP VISITORS PROGRAMME

The Visitors Programme brings together students, practitioners and senior academic researchers, some of whom are also refugees, from different regions and different disciplines. Study Fellows follow a supervised course of study. Research Fellows use RSP's resources for independent study, the development of course materials for teaching in their own universities or undertake supervised study.

RSP is part of Queen Elizabeth House, the University of Oxford's International Development Centre, and all applications for attachment are reviewed by the QEH Affiliations Committee. On the basis of their *curriculum vitae* and references, successful applicants may be designated Visiting Research Fellows or Visiting Study Fellows. The latter undertake nine modules of RSP's multi-disciplinary Foundation courses.

Application forms and more detailed information are available from: *The Director, Refugee Studies Programme, Queen Elizabeth House, 21 St Giles, Oxford OX1 3LA, UK.*  
Fax: +44 (0)865 270721

Please indicate a preferred beginning and ending date for your proposed attachment, your study/research objectives and your planned funding sources.

### **Applicants to the Visitors Programme may be interested in the following information:**

#### *1994 VISITING SCHOLAR FELLOWSHIP COMPETITION*

*The Social Service Research Council-MacArthur Foundation Committee invites applications for the 1994 Visiting Scholar Fellowship Competition. These three- to six-month fellowships allow junior scholars, journalists, public servants, lawyers and others to pursue innovative research on peace and security issues at universities and major research centres outside their home regions.*

*The 1994 competition is open to qualified nationals of Eastern and Central Europe, sub-Saharan Africa and the non-Russian republics of the former USSR, who reside in these regions. It is designed for junior scholars and postdoctoral researchers in the first seven years of their postdoctoral careers as well as other eligible applicants at an equivalent stage, including lawyers, journalists and public servants. Applicants are expected to demonstrate an English language ability that is sufficient for carrying out research at the postdoctoral level and interacting with other researchers. Successful applications will explore contemporary issues that bear upon peace and security in a changing world. Fellowships will cover round-trip economy airfare, institutional fees and a modest stipend.*

*Applications should be completed and returned to the Council by 15 July 1994. Awards will be announced in November 1994. For more information and for application materials, contact: Social Science Research Council, Visiting Scholar Fellowship, International Peace and Security, 605 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10158, USA.*  
Tel: +1 212 661 0280 Fax: +1 212 370 7896

# NEWS FROM RSP

## Teaching

Since September 1993, **Dr Chaloka Beyani** has undertaken teaching engagements on Refugees and Human Rights at the University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania; Moi University, Kenya; the Finnish Refugee Council, Helsinki, Finland; and the Hague Academy of International Law, The Netherlands.

In January 1994, Dr Beyani participated in a preparatory meeting for the women's world conference in China, 1995. The meeting was organised by International Women's Rights Action Watch and was held in New York, USA.

**RSP Foundation Course:** During Hilary Term (January - March 1994), Dr Beyani taught 'International Legal Order: Human Rights and Forced Migration'; **Dr Kemal Mustafa** taught 'Livelihood and Economy'; and **Dr Effie Voutira** taught 'Identity, Nationalism, Regionalism and Ethnicity in Eastern Europe'.

## New European Master's Degree in International Humanitarian Aid

RSP has been invited to co-author two teaching modules which will be taught from September 1994 in five European universities as part of the new Master's Degree in International Humanitarian Aid. Dr Effie Voutira (Cambridge University/RSP) is RSP's author for the Anthropology/Psychology module; Mark Walkup (University of Florida/RSP) is RSP's author for the Policy Issues in the Management of Humanitarian Crises module. The writing of the modules is undertaken in collaboration with other member universities, the former module being written with Professor J Benoist of Aix-en-Provence University and the latter with Bernardo Garcia of the University of Bilbao.

## Research

Research Officers **Mark Leopold** and **Abbas Shiblak**, together with **Dr Barbara Harrell-Bond**, are working on a study of **assistance to Palestine refugees in the Middle East**. Fieldwork has been carried out in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The work is being financed by the Commission of the European Community as part of its contribution to the Multilateral Working Group on Refugees of the Middle East Peace Talks. The main aims of the study are:

- \* to compile an inventory of refugee assistance activities carried out by governmental, inter-governmental and non-governmental organisations in the region;
- \* to outline bilateral and multilateral donor contributions to these activities;
- \* to evaluate the activities according to refugee needs and established international standards;
- \* to identify legal and practical limitations to the meeting of these needs; and
- \* to recommend a set of priorities for action.

Research Officer **Dr Nicholas Van Hear** is extending his recent work on the **forced mass exodus of migrant and minority communities** in the Middle East and Africa to other regions of the

world, in a study funded by the UK Economic and Social Research Council. Running from 1993-95, the study will investigate the circumstances which give rise to involuntary mass departures of migrant communities and long-settled minority populations worldwide, examine their socio-economic dimensions and consequences and consider the policy options available to deal with them. Such mass exodus will be related to current changes in the world political economy - notably global economic restructuring and the disintegration and reconstitution of nation-states. Investigation of the impact of these 'migration crises' on the development prospects of populations and countries involved will be central to the study, which involves research visits to Asia, Europe and North America. Findings of the first phase of the investigation are currently being published.

## Documentation

The RSP's **Documentation Centre** has expanded greatly over the last decade. It is now both an invaluable archive and a centre for the collection and dissemination of current material in the field of forced migration, including the areas of psychosocial issues, education, human rights, refugee law, relief administration, international affairs and public health and nutrition. The Centre now holds the Refugee Health collection accumulated and donated by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. The majority of the collection is 'grey literature' and the Documentation Centre receives material through its close links with a large network of organisations. This section of documentation includes over 350 current periodicals and newsletters, field research reports, conference and seminar proceedings, pamphlets, occasional papers and 130 PhD and MA theses. The Centre is also becoming a repository for personal papers and among them are those of Dr Paul Weis, a key figure in drafting the 1951 Refugee Convention, and Tristram Betts, a leading Africanist.

All material in the collection is catalogued according to the Human Rights Information and Documentation System (HURIDOCs) format and classified under the scheme of the British Refugee Council which orders by region and then by subject. All items are assigned subject index terms from the International Thesaurus of Refugee Terminology, published by the IRDN. In using these standard formats it is hoped that closer electronic links will be established between IRDN participating institutions in the future. The RSP's collection currently cannot be remotely accessed although soon the collection of 1,200 monographs will be catalogued and indexed onto the Oxford University Library Information System (OLIS) ensuring their access via JANET and INTERNET.

The Documentation Centre facilitates dissemination through its quarterly list of accessions which is now distributed to 55 institutions worldwide. The Centre also provides interested parties with bibliographic print-outs from the database. Material can be requested by telephone, fax or mail. **Contact Sarah Rhodes, Documentalist, at the RPN address on page 2 or on:**

**Tel: +44 (0)865 270298 Fax: +44 (0)865 270721**  
**E-mail: [rsp@vax.ox.ac.uk](mailto:rsp@vax.ox.ac.uk)**