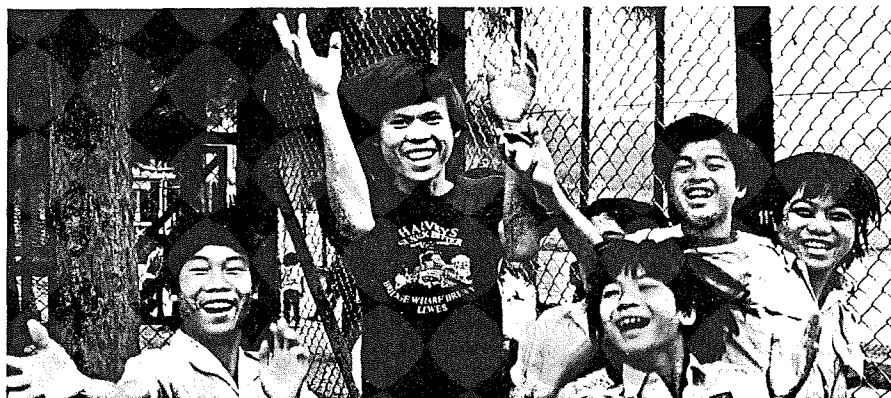


Closed Camp Education



Photograph by Clare Hanbury

Refugee Children in Chi Ma Wan Closed Centre

BACK TO 'ENGLISH 900'

by Clare Hanbury

July 2nd 1988 was the last time that I watched Chi Ma Wan Closed Centre recede into the distance as the boat took me from the tranquility of Lantau Island back to Hong Kong, to the madness of a Saturday afternoon in the city. It had been a quiet leave-taking. Untypically there had been no parties. I had tried to explain to my disappointed students that leaving them behind these fences was not something I wished to celebrate. Soon Chi Ma Wan was to become a detention centre for those who had arrived after 15 June. This followed a change in Hong Kong's policy to 'screen out' the 'genuine' refugees from the majority of people arriving who are now labelled and treated as 'illegal immigrants'. The refugees who lived there, some for up to six years, were to be transferred to a factory building in the New Territories where they would be temporarily housed.

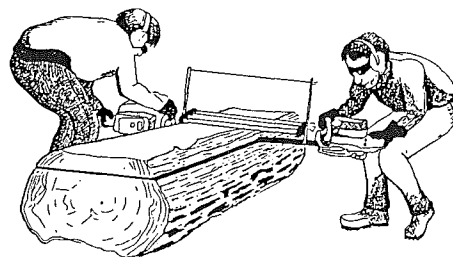
Chi Ma Wan was one of the three closed centres in Hong Kong, set up in June 1982 in order to stem the flood of refugees coming into the colony. It was run by the Prison Services Department and housed fifteen hundred people. Living space was very limited: eight feet by four feet by three feet per person. The whole camp was surrounded by twenty five feet high wire fences. The people living there came from South Vietnam and would remain inside until they left for the transit centre to be processed for departure.

For four years adult education at Chi Ma Wan was run by the refugees with minimal assistance from a prison officer. Classes took place in the large dining hall, the size of an aircraft hangar. In September 1985, UNHCR made funds available for a children's school and an adult language programme to be estab-

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lished. The International Social Services (ISS) were asked to implement these programmes and began work on the adult programme in March 1986. I arrived at Chi Ma Wan one month later.

The Education Co-ordinator was new to the job. His experience of TEFL teaching was in Taiwan; mine in Language schools in England and as a middle school teacher in Kenya. With the reduced number of refugees living in Chi Ma Wan in 1983, a 'hut' previously used for dormitory accommodation was being converted into eight classrooms. I was to assist the Co-ordinator to set up the adult language programme.

My first day in Chi Ma Wan coincided with one of the mornings when craft and carpentry classes were operating for about one hundred and fifty people in the middle of the dining hall. Around the edges eight groups of twenty or more were sitting on benches, looking attentively at teachers, copying down the lesson laboriously written on makeshift blackboards in front of them, or reading it aloud in unison after the lead of the teacher. Adding to the noise, was the loud speaker which shouted refugee identity numbers in Vietnamese, 'letters for 1432, 3409, 4452....' All of this in temperatures of up to 37 degrees centigrade. During the course of that day, I met fourteen year old Quong who, in proof of his ability, recited Shakespeare's sonnet, 'Shall I compare you to a Summer's day...'

'English 900' was the text the Vietnamese teachers were using; it was very out of date. Its stress was on the mastery of grammar and the memorisation of vocabulary lists. In other camps other books were being used and methods were developing in a haphazard way. In an attempt to standardise and upgrade the provision of English language classes the UNHCR man of the moment had hundreds of booklets printed for the compulsory use of all teachers and students in all the camps in Hong Kong. This initiative was welcomed and with his Master's degree in linguistics we thought we could afford to be confident of the content... On page one was a picture of a tall, blond, busty secretary standing, high-heeled next to a rather rotund bossman, smoking a cigar. 'Hello,' she says. 'Hello,' he replies, 'What's YOUR name?' The booklet didn't get any better.

Teachers were expected to collect and make their own materials for use in the lassroom and they were encouraged to use role-play. This may be sound educational practice elsewhere, but in the camp neither the items suggested nor the resources for making materials were available to the refugees. Since this approach was an integral part of the new compulsory system, the teacher's feelings of inadequacy and disadvantage were further exacerbated. In the hands of inexperienced teachers, 'role play' is a difficult teaching technique to use and one with which the Vietnamese students would not be familiar. The UNHCR booklet was making demands on both the

đặc san
Thân phận
ISS ADULT PROGRAM ♦ CHIMAWAN CLOSED CENTRE H.K.



teacher and the learner that were inappropriate to the context in which they were working. The teachers refused to use it; they had to live at very close quarters with their students and had an understandable fear of using material which could be easily derided. Some of the teachers were younger than the majority of their students and their confidence in the teaching material was their lifeline. Later, I discovered that this booklet had been lifted from two existing text books, used in England. The teachers went back to using 'English 900.'

'Streamline English' was the next text brought into the camp. The purchase of hundreds of copies was an impulse decision, taken without consulting the refugee teachers, in response to the sudden availability of funds which, it was feared, would be withdrawn if they were not quickly spent. The colour pictures made the text look appealing but students quickly tired of being drilled on phrases such as: 'Shall we use the Rolls Royce or should we use the Daimler?' The teachers again went back to 'English 900' and the redundant texts were distributed to random individuals in the camp.

It was then decided to write a curriculum with the refugee teachers. These writing sessions were also a chance to

practice pronunciation, to discuss teaching methods and the appropriate use of teaching aids such as flashcards and pictures. As it was the summer holidays, a team of young volunteers was recruited, after a visit of the ISS Co-ordinator to sixth form classes in local schools. Together with refugee teachers, the volunteers were organised into making the resources, using materials contributed by people outside the camp. The success of this programme relied heavily on the ISS staff and volunteers working closely with the teachers. Also crucial was the support system where the person responsible for the training sessions would visit each class daily and advise both the Vietnamese teacher and the volunteer working with him. During the first half of the lesson, the volunteer was expected to keep a low profile, providing back up to the Vietnamese teacher when called upon. In the second half, the role was more interactive. Within one class, the students responded to the volunteer's questions to practise what had been learned during that lesson and make it 'live', as well as drawing on previous lessons' experience. The students had a wide range of language experience and ability and it was hoped that this system would cater for this in a functional way, yet be sufficiently formal and structured to give the Vietnamese teacher security. As the refugee teachers were part of the curriculum development team, they had confidence in the material and began to enjoy teaching. This was important as their remuneration was very low (about fifteen pounds per month).

Sadly, this programme was short lived. It could not run itself. Its success depended on the energy and commitment of the ISS staff doing the training, curriculum development and monitoring. The goodwill of the volunteers and the co-operation of the Vietnamese teachers were also vital for its success. The students enjoyed the programme and within three months, five hundred new names were on the books. The honeymoon period was clearly at an end, however, when the departure of two ISS staff coincided with the transfer of two of the best Vietnamese teachers from Chi Ma Wan to the transit camp to be processed for resettlement. Another seventeen year old teacher could no longer cope. He was much younger than his students and wanted to spend more time playing football. The sixth form volunteers who had given the teachers much sensitive support had to start back at school. The enthusiasm had been high but it was not long before the teachers once again went back to 'English 900'.

An ISS visit to Phanat Nikhom refugee camp in Thailand generated the next curriculum. 'But,' as one teacher told me after the Phanat system had been in operation for nine months or more, 'the levels are very confusing. First, it is very easy and then suddenly it becomes too difficult.' I asked him if he had told anyone about this. 'No,' he said, 'it is difficult for others to understand our problems.' When I looked at the books with the teachers there did seem to be a 'jump'. I could only speculate that this sequencing was tailored to the refugee population of Phanat Nikom, but it did not transfer well to Chi Ma Wan,

because of the different history and prospects of the refugees there. Its modular approach with inbuilt assessment procedures was attractive because it was tidy. But no-one had taken the trouble to see if the material was suitable to the teachers and learners in Chi Ma Wan, nor had they consulted the teachers on the effectiveness of the material in the classroom. The Vietnamese teachers, knowing how pleased the ISS staff were at finding such a system, were reluctant to discuss their concerns, feeling that it was their inadequacy as teachers which was the cause of their problems. I found myself saying to them, 'Perhaps you should go back to "English 900"!' My friends laughed, knowing how much I had attacked the use of the book from the moment I set eyes on it. But it was the text the refugees felt comfortable with. In any case, much of the teaching went on informally outside the ISS classroom. People would gather on their bunks at night for gossip, tea and English classes. 'Don't worry,' I was assured, most people use "English 900" in their private studies anyway.'

All the staff worked with great commitment in a very difficult environment, but our greatest mistake was the failure to acknowledge our own lack of experience and work alongside the refugees. 'English 900' was the book being used by them when ISS came into the camp, in a system initiated by the refugees. We could have examined more closely the strengths of this book and adapted it in close collaboration with the refugee teachers, if they felt it was necessary.

The delivery of educational services was not only problematic in relation to finding the right materials and methods. The environment beyond the classroom and the camp structures profoundly affected the provision of education. The administration viewed the running of the camp as a security issue: the Commissioner of Prison Services described the success of his department in terms of 'no escapes'. 'We are not criminals,' wrote one boy in an essay, 'and yet we are worse than that. We are Refugees.'

Children saw the authority of parents being eroded by young Chinese prison officers. Attempts by refugees to hold independent democratic elections of their own community leaders came to nothing as the authorities refused to recognise them. The real power in the camps was the criminal element, the 'Bearheads'. They were used by the camp administration and recruited as labourers. They had access to scarce commodities such as cigarettes, alcohol and food items. Many refugees were intimidated by this element, and afraid of vocalising their fears, since the camp administration offered no protection from them at night. This fear also extended into the classroom.

A teacher was having problems with a particular student, and reluctantly expressed his dissatisfaction with the way his classes were going. He had wanted to resign. I invited myself for tea with his student, trying to deal with the

THE LUTAYA SCHOOL: A REFUGEE SELF-HELP PROJECT

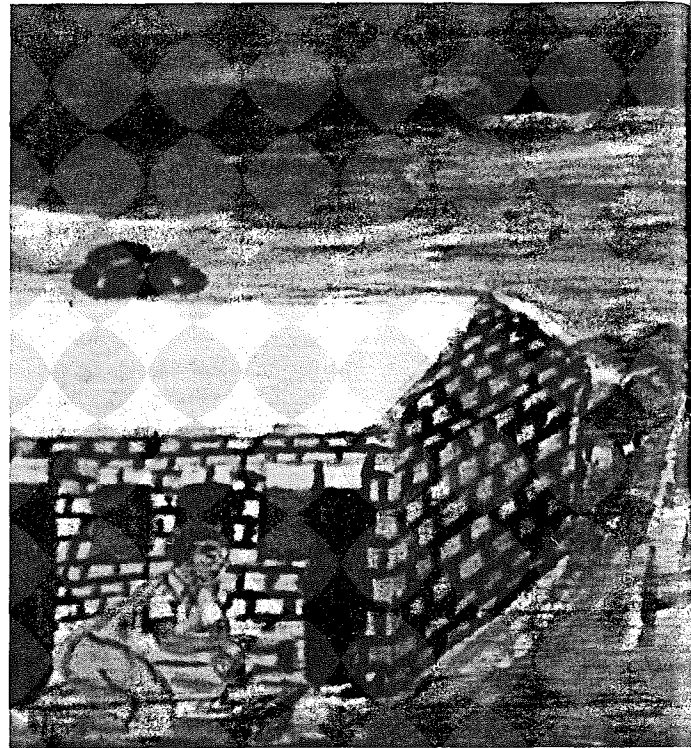
problem as sensitively as possible. The teacher was 'visited' the following night and was too shaken up to work for a week. Others were pressured by the 'Bearheads' to engage in dubious activities. 'I have to find ways of using my time,' writes one in a letter, 'yet ways of using it honestly'.

The classroom was a place where refugees *could* be active and constructive, but the agency was also guilty of alienating refugee teachers in a variety of ways. One such instance was when the Vietnamese school teachers were confused over how much money had been donated to the school after a fund-raising trip to the States by ISS staff. Their questions were not adequately answered and this served to deepen the suspicion that some of the money had been embezzled. The refugees knew of the sources of that money and were anxious that it be spent as the community saw fit rather than as the agency saw fit. As a result of this 'scandal' three refugee teachers resigned.

By supplying materials which were difficult for the refugee teachers to relate to and teach from, the agency merely contributed to their feelings of helplessness and frustration. Rather than providing support, the programme was another mechanism which controlled the refugees, through its imposed curriculum and treatment of the refugee teachers. In his letter of resignation, the Education Co-ordinator expressed his extreme frustration in trying to educate people, a basic principle of which must be to foster a sense of human dignity, in an environment designed to systematically strip all sense of dignity from the people in order to control and contain them. This fundamental contradiction underlies the work of humanitarian agencies within refugee camps. The danger is that the modes of delivery of educational provision, or other forms of 'humanitarian' assistance, can become part of the process of undermining human dignity, rather than contributing to its development.

Clare Hanbury previously worked as a Teacher Trainer for ISS in Hong Kong. She is now doing a Masters degree in Education in Developing Countries. Her dissertation is exploring the problems of the provision of education in refugee settlement camps. If you have any information on curriculum planning, materials development or teacher education in refugee settlement camps, please contact her at the following address:

*c/o Department of International Studies
Institute of Education
20 Bedford Way
London WC1*



Painting of The Lutaya School

Introduction

In 1983 a group of Ugandan refugee students started a secondary school in the Yei District of southern Sudan. The Lutaya School has involved people from all over the world and excited the interest of not just educationalists but those involved in rural development and refugee issues in general. It attracts such attention because of the energy which originally generated it and the unique circumstances of its subsequent growth. This short history/analysis of Lutaya will undoubtedly pique Network participants' interest; one day there should be a book, written by the students, teachers and outsiders who were involved. For the moment, this brief article, based on a review of the correspondence and reports from and about the school will have to suffice.

Viewed as a self-help project, involving both Ugandan refugees and Sudanese hosts, the Lutaya Project raises three important questions for practitioners and academics alike: 1) How was interest generated at the local level and who was involved at that stage; 2) how was that interest turned into fruitful action and who sustained that action, and 3) what has happened since 1983 both to the spirit that started everything and the hard work which made it a reality.

Background: Early Initiative

From 1979, thousands of Ugandans fled into the Yei District of southern Sudan. Many of them were secondary school students whose studies were interrupted by the civil war in Uganda. Indeed, when the war broke out in 1979,



by Jurugo Anjelic, a former pupil

there were an estimated 8000 students enrolled in secondary schools in the West Nile alone. Some went immediately to formal camps and many others settled among local people in the district. Already limited educational resources were stretched to their limit and most of the recent arrivals simply went without schooling. In the words of John Avuduna: 'The idea was to help ourselves because there were so many students stranded in need of secondary education. There were a few secondary schools in Sudan, but the few are crowded with nationals and there were no opportunities for refugees'.

It is hard to tell from the local records and correspondence exactly how many students were involved and whether the initiative came from more than just a few members of the combined refugee and local communities. In any case, their inspiration derived from a variety of sources, including examples of successful self-help projects at home and a keen desire to get back to school. (Many of them had been out of school for at least four years). They ignored the occasional pessimistic comment about student-initiated projects and began looking for material support. They needed land, building materials, some technical expertise and, in the long run, teaching materials and, of course, teachers. The students' persistence at this crucial point in the project is impressive and did lead to success. In 1983, they received 30 acres of land from the local Catholic Church and began work on the site in the latter part of that year; the foundations had been laid by early 1984. Up to this point they had relied on local resources and their own determination in the spirit of many self-help projects.

(In fact twelve primary schools had already been built and staffed by refugees in the region known as Kaya.) What was unique about Lutaya was active refugee student involvement from the very beginning. What remained to be seen was whether they could convert this initial energy into a sustained effort to bring the school to life.

Assistance and Success

The students realised that they could not continue without some sort of help, but they were not exactly sure how to proceed. During that crucial time, when they were determined to see the project continue and did not have the necessary resources, did they realise the pitfalls of relying on outside help, or were they simply blind to its dangers? They did recognise the need for self-sufficiency and arranged for the purchase of a small mill to grind corn flour for sale. They also received material and financial assistance, intermittently, from a variety of sources. To their previous contacts with the Catholic Church and UNHCR (both of which provided substantial financial aid) they added some Oxford University organisations, members of whom visited the site and made long-lasting contacts with the school. For example, members of Oxford's Third World First have raised money for timber and cement and contributed and installed a library at the school, while World University Service collected books and sent them to the area. A group of Oxford undergraduates travelled to Lutaya as part of the 'Lutaya Expedition' in 1984 and returned to the UK to publicise the school and raise money for ongoing costs. In addition, both government and private sources in Belgium and the Netherlands offered material aid at important times in the school's development. (From the records, it is nearly impossible to ascertain exactly how much financial assistance has come from the outside; cheques of \$1500-2000 have arrived sporadically since 1984.) The combination of enthusiastic support from within and without carried the project over this second threshold and the school became a reality.

Consolidation and Maintenance

With at least some form of assistance assured, the founders of the school then faced the real problems of control, staffing, day to day maintenance of the Lutaya school and its relationship with the local Sudanese community. For example, of the 180 places at the school, only 36 were occupied by local Sudanese and the rest by Ugandan refugees. UNHCR also provided £325 for the refugees, but the locals had to pay the school fees out of meagre government grants. No clear policy had been created for the integration of students into the local community although the curriculum followed Sudanese guidelines and included Arabic to respect local traditions. This meant that Ugandan students could take Sudanese exams and receive their certificates.

On another level, the school's founding groups became involved in a power struggle. From the beginning the students had been concerned about maintaining the independence of the school from outside control, worrying

that funds might dry up or that academic standards might fall if the Catholic Mission had a dominant voice on the Governing Board. Their Memorandum: 'Students View of Lutaya Secondary School', 27 July 1984, states very clearly the determination of the founding students to keep their voice on the Board and to play a continuing role in policy formulation. Their position was unyielding: 'We will not come to school even if it is to open. We have signatures to prove that the decision we have taken is true.' Their demands were met and the Board now consists of refugee parents, representatives of the local Catholic Church, the Area Education Officer (Sudanese) from Yei, a UNHCR Representative, and two students – one Ugandan and one Sudanese. In addition to issues of control, over the past few years the school has suffered from fairly major staffing and administrative problems. These problems have been compounded by the return home of many Ugandans, both staff and students, making it difficult to find trained replacements in time. (Because the teacher training facilities in southern Sudan are rudimentary, the school has come to rely on trained Ugandan teachers who were part of the refugee population there.)

None of these problems are unique to refugee education in developing countries. But they assume great importance in a school like Lutaya because it is founded with such high expectations and with such strong initial student involvement. Although all of the original participants have pulled together to keep the school alive, they are all now widely dispersed and have lost direct control. However, recent graduates, many of whom have passed on to universities throughout Africa, do what they can from a distance. (See 'Problems with Higher Education for African Refugees' in RPN 4, based on a letter to Barbara Harrell-Bond from a Lutaya student presently studying in Cairo.) There seems to be mild disillusionment and sense of powerlessness as the school enters its fifth year. The latest letter from Oxford University supporters speaks of more careful management of finances and the importance of frequent communication with outside supporters. In Kenya, the Jesuit Refugee Service representative is looking for a better way to get funds and supplies to this remote area. The Headmaster writes to Oxford friends about problems of staffing and finance. The school is very much alive, but, at five years old it is starting another important phase of its growth.

Conclusions

From the perspective of an interested bystander, I have identified one key point in the growth of the school: when it began to receive outside aid and to develop the fame which attracted that aid, as a result it never really put enough emphasis on self-sufficiency. The maize mill, an important income-generating project, never lived up to the initial expectations. In short, the school became dependent on outside support. It will undoubtedly survive, but in a form quite different from the one envisioned by the Ugandan refugee students in 1983. Undoubtedly it will

become more integrated into the Sudanese educational system and society as the Ugandans return home.

What are the lessons of the Lutaya experience for those involved in refugee education? One must encourage self-help school projects among both self-settled and camp-dwelling refugees, promoting active participation in all parts of the community, including students. What form that encouragement should take is more difficult to decide. Any aid should have as its objective a school which is self-sustaining. If the aid compromises the independence of the project, then it is inappropriate. If, on the other hand, it increases self-sufficiency, it is appropriate. In the case of the Lutaya project, outside donors responded to a very clear need on the part of the refugee community and in a short time the school became a reality.

Whether that aid and the intervention of outsiders compromised its independence remains to be seen. The whole question of integration, both of the school itself and the Ugandans living in the Yei District, into Sudanese society is still unanswered. Lutaya school needs to grow a little more before we can see what role it might play in the turbulent world of southern Sudan.

Kim Bush

Education

The Eritrean Senior and Intermediate Schools for Refugees, Kassala, Sudan have brought out a school magazine entitled *Student Voice*. The primary aim of the magazine is to give students the opportunity to improve their standard of English and to maintain an understanding between their school and different associations.

Student Voice is interdenominational and is not involved with political affairs; it simply includes short stories, articles, interviews, puzzles etc. The students are anxious to exchange their magazine with other such productions and would also like to find pen-pals, preferably other refugees. As the magazine is mainly funded by the students themselves, the price for each copy of *Student Voice* is £1. Those interested should write to:

Abraham Mehary Haile
Senior School Editor
c/o Ministry of Education
Kassala, Sudan

Letter from the Lutaya Board of Governors

The following letter, dated 5 January 1989, was sent from the Board of Governors of the Lutaya Self-Help Senior Secondary School, Yei River District to the management staff of UNHCR - Foy and PMRA - Yei

[the Sudanese refugee office] on the subject of fund-raising to meet the running costs of two lorries and one grinding mill for the school:

Dear Sirs

.....Those of us on the School Board of Governors undersigning this particular request on behalf of the students, are well aware that the greatest support from local agencies has come from UNHCR, PMRA, the Church, and other humanitarian agencies.

.....Since 1984, Dr B.E. Harrell-Bond and her research team from Oxford have given both material and moral support to the school through 'The Lutaya Project'. The small grinding mill and second-hand carpentry tools, now in the school, are just some of the aid items that have been sent to us from the UK.....

However, the school continues to face financial crises, mainly brought about by the on-going civil strife in the war-torn southern region. The school has been unable to make full use of such aid items as the grinding mill and carpentry tools due to lack of raw materials. We have been unable to generate funds locally for running costs and nor have we been able to receive aid from abroad given the constraints brought about by the war. The grinding mill has a limited capacity, and is expensive to run. Everything requires three rounds of grinding, before the output is fit for human consumption. Because of this, diesel is wasted. It is not really an ideal tool for income generation.

.....Above all, the school needs transport to facilitate its work. Apart from being used for school transport, vehicles could also be hired out to meet school administrative costs. In September 1984 Dr Harrell-Bond sent a letter to the Sudanaid Diocesan Coordinator, Yei Catholic Centre, stating that two lorries were being sent to the Lutaya School. These lorries never reached Yei having been diverted to a certain refugee assistance programme somewhere in the northern region. Efforts made by the board through UNHCR, and the help of Ahmad Karadawi in Khartoum failed to locate the vehicles. As this donation was originally intended for Lutaya, the search for the missing lorries has not been given up easily.

Sirs, we are aware that UNHCR-Foy is winding up its programmes in the district and will probably hand over some facilities to PMRA and other humanitarian agencies. We, therefore, take this opportunity to request you to consider the Lutaya Self Help Senior Secondary School.

Yours sincerely,

[Lutaya School Board of Governors]

FOOD AID

REFUGEE CAMPS IN THAILAND: RATION DISTRIBUTION SYSTEMS AND THE VIABILITY OF THE CAMP ECONOMY

Introduction

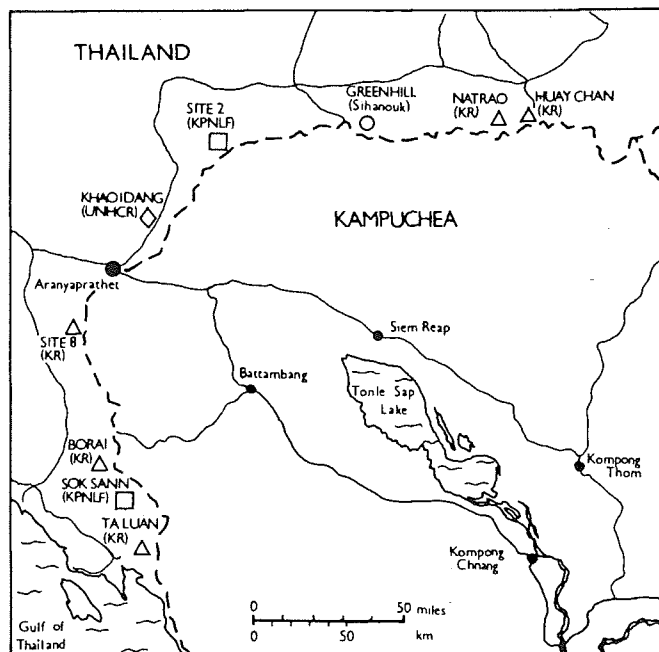
A family at Site 2, consisting of husband, wife and two children aged four and five.... The husband was a soldier and had been away for six months. His wife received one ration and a dry pack, because she was pregnant. She had no garden or livestock. Each week she ran out of rice and borrowed five cans of rice from various neighbours. In return, she helped look after their children, or carry water for them. In addition, she earned 5 baht by carrying water three times a week for another family. She milled rice for these same households, and in return they gave her clothes, and allowed her to mill her own rice on their machine, free of charge. She sold her ration of beans at 8 baht a bag and used this to buy extra cans of fish. She had to give one can of rice a week and one can of fish per month in tax [to the military]...

This article relates to the camp economies in three of the seven Khmer refugee camps in Thailand. It illustrates the effects that a particular ration distribution system can have on a whole camp economy. This makes it a useful case study for future reference, particularly because it has been suggested from time to time that the 'women only' distribution model could be replicated in other refugee emergencies. Whilst camp inhabitants may be reliant on rations, they also develop a wide range of strategies to meet their complex needs. By looking at the dynamics of the camp economy, and how the ration system interacts with this at household level, policy and practitioner relevant insights can be gained. In this case, some improvements have already been implemented in the distribution system and other measures to alleviate constraints on the camp economy, or to protect vulnerable households, are under discussion.

Layers of Power and the Structure of Aid

The seven Khmer refugee camps located along the Thai-Kampuchean border are now in their ninth year of existence. The three political factions which make up the UN-recognised Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea (CGDK), and control the camps are the Khmer Rouge (KR), the Kampuchean People's National Liberation Front (KPNLF), and the followers of Prince Sihanouk. The CGDK is in opposition to the Vietnamese-backed government within Kampuchea. Thus, the Khmer camp inhabitants are subject to a complex hierarchy of power groupings all of whom exert influence, directly or indirectly, on the economic and social life in the camps.

The Thai government has insisted on the provision of emergency assistance only, and on the closed nature of the camps, to ensure that Khmer inhabitants remain in 'temporary asylum' and do not integrate into the local population. Closed camps also serve the interests of the CGDK and its international supporters, since the civilian population in the camps lend legitimacy to their government in exile, as well as providing a recruiting ground for soldiers and a source of supplies. In Site 8 (KR), Greenhill (Sihanouk), and Site 2 (KPNLF) (see map), top officials in the civilian administration are also officials in the military hierarchy. Taxes are levied on workers' rations and, in some cases, general rations, for military purposes.



KEY

- International border
- ~~~~~ Roads
- △ KR = Khmer Rouge camp
- KPNLF = Khmer People's National Liberation Front camp
- Sihanouk = Prince Sihanouk camp

nouk), and Site 2 (KPNLF) (see map), top officials in the civilian administration are also officials in the military hierarchy. Taxes are levied on workers' rations and, in some cases, general rations, for military purposes.

The United Nations Border Relief Operation (UNBRO) is responsible for supplying food, shelter, fuel, water and other basic medical and social services to the 300,000 camp inhabitants. UNBRO follows a policy of delegating as much responsibility as possible to the Khmer for the running of the camps and distribution of relief goods. Ultimately, however, decisions about the quantity and type of goods provided depend on decisions made outside the camps.

Camp administrators, themselves appointed by the political-military elite outside the camps, in turn, have considerable control over the appointment of workers and section leaders. All camps are divided into sections of between 1000 and 3000 people which are further subdivided into groups. The administration is responsible for distributing bulk deliveries and some administrators supervise the distribution of extra rice to the needy, whilst others leave this duty to the Khmer Women's Association (KWA). Section and group leaders are responsible for overseeing the distribution of food, fuel and other supplies, ensuring that each family receives their entitlement, and reporting cases of hardship.

Within the camps, people's ability to manoeuvre their way around this system depends very much on their past and present socio-economic status. For example, some can afford to bribe officials in the camp to get a larger share of relief items. Other useful levers are kinship and friendship ties.

Rations and the Camp Economy

Economic activity within all the camps is based on the emergency food and non-food rations. These not only provide the inhabitants with their main source of food but also provide most with the only source of purchasing power to obtain essential items not provided by the assistance programme. Potential buyers of ration items are not only other camp inhabitants but also Thai villagers. Smuggling is an essential economic activity as it is the only means whereby the camp markets are stocked with a variety of food and non-food items. A complex system of exchange therefore exists within the camps, fuelled by cash which enters the camps from several sources. In Site 2, the main source is remittances from relatives living abroad, reported to amount to a total of \$150,000 per month, concentrated among 8 per cent of the population; in Greenhill it is the cash donations provided by Prince Sihanouk and generated by the co-operative shop, and in Site 8 it is the sale of craft goods to local Thai. Consequently, whilst the camps are theoretically closed, the camp economies are by no means closed systems.

Camp inhabitants also supplement and diversify their resources through cultivation and the rearing of livestock. These require access to fertile land and water supply, and poorer households, even if they have access to a plot, are unlikely to be in a position to invest resources in the necessary inputs. Extra land, apart from the small plots around the houses, is allocated by section leaders, who in some cases take a portion of the crop. Some poorer households sell plots to richer ones since they cannot afford the inputs and have to meet immediate consumption needs. Overall, almost half the households with insufficient rations could not grow vegetables and did not have livestock either. Various agricultural projects have been established by the Khmer administration especially in Site 2, with the aim of providing additional nutrition to poorer households. For example, chickens are distributed, and a proportion of their eggs exchanged for feed. Such schemes have covered less than 10 per cent of the population and have not always benefitted the worst-off.

Up to two thirds of the camp population are unemployed, which contributes to severe economic and social-psychological problems. Soldiers often bring in additional resources because they engage in cross-border trade. Other men work as porters for the military. For civilians, there are very limited opportunities for jobs in the administration, and these are mainly filled by men since under the 'women only' ration system it was perceived that men were likely to lose out. A small number of women work for the KWA or are employed on one of their schemes.

Otherwise, employment is not officially permitted but civilians hire out labour to provide services, or if they have the initial wherewithal to purchase tools, set up in businesses, such as basket-making, brewing and sale of alcohol, making and selling snacks, rice-milling, child-minding, or, where there is no alternative, prostitution. The income from such activities is very small but a vital supplement to the rations.

Markets are officially forbidden, although at the end of 1987 plans were afoot to allow an open market in Site 2. Unofficial markets exist, and are used by more than two thirds of the camp population. Many of the items sold are bought from outside. In Greenhill, Prince Sihanouk has used his influence with the Thai authorities to open a co-operative shop. Even here, though, unofficial markets flourish, using the co-op shop as a wholesalers. The main problem with unofficial markets is that they are vulnerable to bandit attack, and traders are exposed to the whims of the Thai rangers.

Ration Distribution Systems

The ration distribution system itself exacerbated the social divisions and unequal access to resources in the camps. As a result of this study and other research conducted in the Khmer refugee camps in 1986-7, the system of distribution came under scrutiny and was changed. Reference here is made to the former distribution system in several camps which was a 'women only' system. The research was conducted in Site 2 (KPNLF controlled) Site 8 (KR controlled) and Greenhill (Sihanouk controlled).

In 1986, there were two basic ration distribution systems operating in the Khmer camps: direct distribution in Sok Sann and the four closed KR camps; and 'women only' distribution in Site 2, Site 8 and Greenhill (see map). As a result of concern about the 'women only' system, direct distribution was introduced experimentally to Greenhill in December 1986. The relative success of this led on to the introduction of direct distribution in Site 2 (December 1987) and Site 8 (January 1988).

'Women Only' Distribution

In the 'women only' system, food was distributed only to women and girls over eight years old. Each eligible woman received enough to feed 2.75 people for one week. This system had been introduced by UNICEF in 1980, ostensibly to prevent food being siphoned off for military use, to limit corruption on the part of camp leaders, and to facilitate the logistics of distribution, by halving the number of recipients. Tickets entitling women and girls to rations were handed out at biannual head counts. The screening for eligibility involved in this process caused great distress as those with insufficient food rations tried to pass ineligible children through the screening gates. Parents with more boys than girls often tried to disguise them by dressing them in girls' clothing and allowing them to grow their hair long. To prevent people from getting extra rations in this way, the children's genitals were examined. This practice was later banned by UNBRO.

Table 1: Number of children per family by number of rations per person.

No. of Children under five years	Percentage of families	Mean rations per person
0	24	1.2666
1	38	0.876
2	30	0.691
3	7	0.592
4	1	0.508

Source: UNBRO Nutrition Unit.

This system may have had some initial justification but it created severe inequalities in people's access to food. Families with a large number of children under eight, or with a high proportion of males to females over eight received insufficient food. Given the high birth rate in camps whereby 73 per cent of families have at least one child under five, this was particularly serious. Table 1 illustrates this problem. Particularly discriminated against were families with children between 3 and 8, since after 3 the children no longer qualify for supplementary packs. Also disfavoured were families where the adult men were not soldiers, and most of all, single men. Because of these inequities, many households received less than they required to meet their minimum needs. Conversely, families with a larger proportion of women to men received a disproportionately large quantity of food. These problems led to severe difficulties for some households, compounded by the fact that the level of the individual ration was set low at 1850 calories per day.

Additional Ration Systems

As well as the basic ration, some households received further supplies through worker rations, supplementary dry packs, therapeutic feeding and the KWA special programme. However, the extent to which these additional ration systems made up for the deficiencies of the basic ration system was limited, and they also led to social problems. Worker rations were not targeted at those most in need, since the ability to enter the administration and agency staff is dependent on education, political considerations, and ties to those in authority. Voluntary agency rations were set somewhat higher than the average administration ration, which subtly served to undermine Khmer self-esteem vis-à-vis Western (agency) culture. The supplementary dry pack provided extra nutrition for some vulnerable groups: children under three, children diagnosed as malnourished, pregnant and lactating women and medical referrals. However, other large and potentially vulnerable groups, such as children between the ages of three and ten were not screened in any consistent way, in spite of being neglected by the basic ration system.

Therapeutic, advisory and hospital feeding programmes cater for the ill and malnourished who have been brought to clinics. However, households with few resources are less likely to bring members to clinics, because they are often more geographically distant from such facilities, and/or cannot afford the lost labour time or childcare required to bring sick relatives to the medical centres. This is particularly true of female-headed households. A proportion of households in difficulty received extra food via the KWA, but the quantity of rice given was small in terms of the number of people identified as needy. This had additional negative social consequences: needy households which did not receive help felt resentful and distrustful of the KWA.

This research has indicated that under the 'women only' system, although, in theory, enough rice was going into the camps for the whole population, at least 30 per cent of households had insufficient rations. This figure could rise dramatically to 53 per cent during the wet season when many soldiers came into the camps on leave. Another survey conducted by the UNBRO Nutrition Unit in 1987 revealed that nearly 83 per cent of households were not getting full requirements. Thus, poorer households had to resort to both exchanging some items to obtain sufficient food, and to alternative means of livelihood to supplement the rations. The most vulnerable households were those which had both insufficient rations, and lesser or no access to other income or productive resources.

Ration Redistribution Mechanisms

Although there is an extensive market in ration items, it should not be assumed that this necessarily relieves shortfalls and alleviates potential inequities, as some examples below illustrate.

Those with insufficient food will exchange non-food rations such as housing materials or blankets for rice, fish, vegetables and so on. Thus, houses with less than four thatch walls or with no walls may be suffering a shortage of food. The fact that they do not have such basic shelter implies that they may have had to sell their quota of thatch. Bamboo and plastic sheeting issued for the construction of water storage tanks are also sold. These sales are a fairly good indication of poverty, for as one aid official said, 'What is more important than water?' Such households become increasingly poor as basic items, which are too expensive to replace, are sold to buy food. Meanwhile households who can afford to buy these items slowly build up their resources. Even with these sales of non-food items, two thirds of Sites 2 and 8 households could not afford to make up ration deficiencies by buying food.

Changes in the Ration Distribution System

A realisation of the problems inherent in the 'women only' system encouraged UNBRO to consider changing to a direct distribution system. This was introduced in Greenhill in 1986, when each household was given a

ration book in which the names and ages of all members were recorded. This book was brought to the weekly distribution point and the section leader provided the household with a food ration for each member. All ration items distributed were noted in the book. Khmer administrators decided the quantity of rice for each person: children under five were given 1.4 kg per week; everyone else got 2.8 kg per week. Monthly monitoring by relief agencies was instituted to ensure that people received their entitlement. Direct distribution has now been extended to Sites 2 and 8.

Extensive research was carried out by UNBRO to determine the system which would provide the maximum nutritional benefit to the camp population overall. They also raised the rice allowance. It was recognised that whatever system was chosen (i.e. split rations or the same to all irrespective of age) some families would receive more than required and others less and that the latter group would have to rely on KWA supplements. However, the KWA was found to be effective only if their target population fell below 5 per cent of the total camp population.

Conclusion

The case of the Khmer camps in Thailand illustrates many points about the implementation of particular ration systems, and the wider camp economy. By conducting research at a household level, those vulnerable to food deficiencies were identified. Indicators of vulnerability in this case were the regular sale of non-food rations (especially housing and water storage materials), and the hiring out of labour to other families. The fact that such a large proportion of the population in the three camps had insufficient rations underlines the need for regular monitoring of nutritional status and access to resources. When rations are targeted at specific groups, the danger is that other potentially vulnerable groups can be missed entirely, creating hardship, suffering and resentment. Supplementary rations can only effectively cater for a very small percentage of the population: the basic ration itself must be maintained at an adequate level for all households.

The original decision to implement the 'women only' system in the camps in Thailand was not based on any economic or nutritional rationale. In fact, corruption, and the diversion of rations for military use, the major reasons for the introduction of this system, were not prevented: they simply occurred in other ways, i.e. through the taxation system, which hit the worst-off hardest. Agencies distributing relief supplies in this context face a real dilemma: humanitarian objectives are distorted by the controlling political and military interests. The 'women only' system, as illustrated above, served to create shortages of staple food items and sharply exacerbated existing inequalities. It also put immense psychological pressure on children (girls and boys) in the screening process. A certain amount of hypocrisy is involved here also, since direct distribution of UNBRO supplies has been practised in the closed KR camps for some time, with no monitoring at all.

Apart from the changes in the ration distribution system itself, other measures are needed to promote more self-sufficient economic activity in the camps. The psychological, as well as economic, value of employment cannot be underestimated. In order to achieve this, changes in attitude are required, on the part of policy-makers and practitioners. The obsession with security and the closed nature of the camps mitigate against economic viability. Bans on employment and markets have not prevented them happening, but do constrain their development, and make life hazardous for camp inhabitants. Exchange of items, including ration items, should be accepted as legitimate, and more attention given to identifying and supporting those families in need, rather than accounting for all supplies distributed. Agricultural and other projects need extending to cover a much larger population. In order to do this, however, constraints on the availability of land, water and inputs will have to be overcome. Imaginative initiatives are needed to involve poorer households in such activities, for example: subsidised inputs, low-cost credit or revolving loans, and co-operative ventures.

Whilst the new ration system fulfils the calorific and nutritional requirements of the population, ration systems by their very nature deny people the capacity to choose. The importance of this should not be underestimated. As one aid official observed, 'People walk up to 30 kilometres to buy a chicken. It is amazing for what small things people will risk their lives.' The marginal camp economies and underlying economic insecurity constantly undermine people's sense of autonomy. The complexity of physiological needs and the way in which they cannot easily be separated from social and psychological needs are frequently ignored in emergency assistance programmes, where the emphasis is on staving off malnutrition. It is only when this initial stage is successfully overcome that such complexities are highlighted and the underlying problem begins to emerge: namely the total inadequacy of closed camp systems to provide long-term living environments.

The above article was compiled by Sally Baden, based on research conducted in the Khmer refugee camp in 1986-7 by Josephine Reynell. A full account of this research is contained in Reynell, J. Political Pawns: Refugees on the Thai Kampuchean Border (1989), published by the RSP, Oxford.

SUSTAINING HUMAN DIGNITY? RPN RESPONSES

RPN recently sent to Network members copies of: *Sustaining Refugees' Human Dignity: International Responsibility and Practical Reality*, a lecture delivered by James Ingram, Executive Director of the World Food Programme, in Oxford in November 1988. We have received a number of letters in response to this paper, some extracts of which are reproduced below.

James Ingram acknowledges some of the issues that progressive practitioners and researchers have been stressing in the past five years. For example: refugees are like other human beings; organisations need a new view of refugees; the need for an understanding of the social, economic, political and power structures of refugee populations; the problems created by the less-than-ideal food-basket; the need for donors to allow some of the foodstuffs to be sold on the open market (but it's not clear whether he means sold by refugees or by organisations); the tendency to deal with refugees as objects rather than partners; how to help refugees together with the impacted local population.

More questionable are his dedication to 'food-for-work' programmes, particularly as they are currently administered, and his reluctance to pressurise states on refugee-related issues. There is little recognition in the speech of the real organisational needs of refugees and refugee communities, the role of refugee-based NGOs, or of the need for accountability to refugees.

Robert Mazur,
Department of Sociology and Anthropology,
Iowa State University, USA

There are two points with which I think some of those who run refugee-based humanitarian organisations might take some issue. The first concerns the apparent obsession with providing food aid in kind. It just does not make sense to feed refugees as though they were chickens. This is a lesson Oxfam learned in the early seventies in Welo in Ethiopia. It is essential to attempt (except in some dire emergency) to help the refugees to help themselves. Therefore, where it is possible, and it certainly is possible in one African country, it would be far better if WFP provided the necessary cash and equipment such as tractors, ploughs etc – enough to cover the infrastructure as well as seed corn – for the refugees to grow their own food. Likewise, to lease a sufficient area of land for the host country where the refugees could have an agricultural project.

Secondly, it is all very well to be aware of the possibility that donated cereal, oil and other commodities may be sold, but the obsession with this issue can be carried too far. In 1984-5, in one refugee camp in Africa, WFP's representative refused to let the mounds of cereal be distributed to the refugees even though he had been warned that the rainy season would soon set in. The



Warehouse for the distribution of relief grain

reason given was that it might be sold. Of course, the rain came and the cereal was ruined. How much better to run the risk that some of it might have found its way onto the market, than to have the whole lot destroyed. As with other UN agencies, WFP should make a greater effort to be in touch with what goes on at the coal-face, and not sit theorising in Rome.

B E Juel-Jensen,
Chairman, Ethiopian Aid, UK

James Ingram suggests that an appropriate approach in feeding refugees would be to donate funds to host countries or regions so that food can be procured locally. This, in a way, enables refugees to participate in choosing foodstuffs they prefer and in procure-



Photograph by Julian Quar

ment itself. In the Mozambican Refugee Camps in Zimbabwe, food has been provided by donors and refugees have remained on the receiving end. In many instances, this food has found its way to 'exchange markets' where refugees exchange food rations for commodities which camp authorities cannot provide. This problem could be lessened if funds were made available to host regions so that refugees could be involved directly in the procurement of foodstuffs. This would also enhance popular participation amongst the beneficiaries. I hope that in future, WFP will implement the approaches Mr Ingram advocates in a country like Zimbabwe.

N Jakaza,
Refugee Camp Administrator, Zimbabwe

My only specific comment is to support James Ingram's plea for allowing and indeed encouraging the conversion of food aid into money. One of the best ways for refugees to become self-supporting, and to integrate into the local community, is through becoming self-employed; this requires both capital and customers who are able to buy, and these require money; the sale of food aid is often the only way in which such money can be raised. Prohibition of such sale is tantamount to prohibition of integration into the local economy.

Malcolm Harper,
Director of Enterprise Development Centre,
Cranfield, UK

Mr Ingram says that 'most host countries would not give development priority to the refugees'. This phenomenon is particularly obvious in third world countries. Another important aspect that Mr Ingram highlights is how refugees can remain indifferent and refuse to integrate into the new environment because they think and hope that they will be able to return to their motherland. The only question I would like to pose to WFP is: how does it try to influence other international organisations and the UN to seriously study the root causes of refugee flows and if possible to seek a lasting remedy to that inhuman condition?

P Solomon Mbanzabugabo,
Switzerland

Mr Ingram used the words *Sustaining Refugees' Human Dignity* in the title of his lecture. This is a psychological issue and I do feel that the psychological manifestations of refugee status merit closer attention than was given in the lecture.

Dr Aggrey W Burke,
Department of Psychiatry,
St George's Hospital Medical School

My remark on Mr Ingram's lecture concerns the section on 'Food Aid as an Entitlement'. I think that he could have mentioned ICARA II and its resolutions concerning the link between refugee aid and development assistance (see R. Gorman's book: *Coping with Africa's Refugee Burden: A Time for Solutions* [NB: reviewed in this issue]).

Khadija Elmadmad,
Associate Professor of International Law,
University of Casablanca, Morocco

Further responses, comments and contributions on all aspects of the issue of food aid, would be most welcome.

Poetry

This 'Preface' and poem have been reproduced from a student's magazine from Chi Ma Wan Closed Centre, Hong Kong. Thanks to Clare Hanbury.



When we sat down to think about how we would gather the poems, stories and ideas of the people here, we faced many problems. Most people we spoke to didn't want to write anything. They claimed that they had told their story so many times that they were tired of telling it. They also felt that there were no people left who were interested in hearing 'the truth' of the Vietnamese plight.

It's a real risk putting down those things which are deepest in your heart. There is always a chance that the reader will reject what it is you are trying to say. As refugees it is even harder to write down what is inside because you are so used to knowing rejection and feeling a sense of uselessness.

This magazine is a small attempt to share with you, our friends overseas, some of our thoughts as we sit in 'limbo' in this closed camp. We are not only the voice of the Vietnamese in Hong Kong, but of all Vietnamese now trapped in refugee camps in South East Asia, and of course of our people languishing in our motherland.

CONTRIBUTING AUTHOR



"Human Zoo"

For those on the outside
The wire and gates mean nothing.
Smiling faces greet you
And Children seem oblivious to the events
Which have shaped their lives
For those on the inside things are different
The wire represents lack of freedom
And the gates a barrier to life itself.
The camp has become a 'human zoo'
For the people are caged in
With only the Freedom
to wander around this enclosure.
So many come to stare,
To take photographs, to observe
To watch the performing animals.
They come with patronizing words and
Plastic smiles.
Their 2 hour visit over
They leave contented
Carrying a few photographs
and some scribbled notes
about how nice the camp is
Leaving those on the inside
Convinced that this is a Zoo
We were forced from our country
Freedom calling us to flee
And then trapped in a prison
Waiting for people to decide our fate
5 years have gone by
And we still wait
Numbered, filed, catalogued,
Animals in a cage.
People continue to come and stare
Click photos and smile sweetly
Delegations continue to mutter



Wondering whether or not we are worthy to
leave

And all the while we wait.
In this Zoo
It's not animals that are caged, but people!

*-AN PHUNG-

ASYLUM

by Sally Baden



Photograph by C. Penn, UNHCR

Indochinese Refugees arriving at East Midlands Airport, UK

RESTRICTIVE PRACTICES: ASYLUM TRENDS IN THE WEST

Western Trends in the Global Context

Relative to the global refugee population, and in particular the numbers of refugees and displaced persons in the 'third world', the numbers of asylum seekers in western countries are comparatively small: only 5 per cent of the estimated 14 million refugees in the world today have sought asylum in the West. Nevertheless, the disturbing trends in the provision of asylum (or lack of it) in western nations over the past decade, and particularly in the last two or three years, warrant attention, from asylum seekers, refugees and others working to defend their rights, not just in the West, but elsewhere too.

Why? Firstly, because restrictionism in western nations' asylum policies is inflicting physical and psychological suffering on people who may already be traumatised by persecution, violence, bereavement and the experience of displacement. The lives of many are being endangered by deportation and *refoulement* to their countries of origin. An independent adjudicator recently ruled that the British government acted illegally in the summer of 1987, by

refusing asylum to five Tamils, and returning them to Sri Lanka within four days of their arrival, in the summer of 1987. At least two of these Tamils are believed to have suffered beatings, detention, torture and abduction since their return. At the time of the repatriation, the then Home Office Minister for Immigration described their claims as 'bogus'.

Those who do gain entry often face long periods of uncertainty before their status is resolved, with the constant worry that they may be forced to return, as well as material hardship and even detention. The overall conditions for asylum seekers in western countries are progressively being degraded, the logic being that this will deter others from coming. Added to this worsening of material conditions are the hostile reactions of the media, fuelled by racist statements of some politicians: public acceptance of asylum seekers is hardly encouraged. This hardening of attitudes has negative implications for future asylum seekers, as well as for refugees, immigrants and ethnic minorities already living in the West. Those who do defend the

rights of asylum seekers are increasingly subject to harassment or legal penalties.

Secondly, the closing down of the 'resettlement in a third country' option also has serious implications for asylum policies in non-western countries. Where governments of relatively impoverished countries have generously hosted large refugee or displaced populations for long periods, seeing the prospect of resettlement receding, they naturally become reluctant to accept more refugees. Thailand and Indonesia have been much criticised for pushing back boatloads of Vietnamese into the sea. But there is a certain 'demonstration effect' when the US customs intercept boats carrying fleeing Haitians, turning them back before they even reach American soil. More directly, Britain has put pressure on the Hong Kong government to 'screen out' as many of the recent arrivals of Vietnamese as possible, ready for eventual repatriation. This same policy looks set to be adopted for all the refugees in camps in Southeast Asia. Given that the western countries are the major donors to international refugee protection and assistance organisations (UNCHR, UNWRA, ICRC, UNBRO et al) and that contributions to these are being trimmed (US contributions to UNHCR fell from 30 to 23 percent of the total budget in 1988), it also seems unlikely that adequate sums of money will be forthcoming to help support the refugee populations in first asylum countries. The policies being adopted by western nations at home are also being promoted abroad by donor governments, to the detriment of protection in 'third world' countries. Terms such as 'economic migrant,' 'economic refugee' and 'humane deterrence' have filtered into the jargon of agencies and host governments outside the western world.

Current Trends

The detail of legal, procedural and other developments in asylum policies in western countries differs from country to country, and also between regions of the same country. There have been positive changes but, overall, there is something of a convergence in the practices of all western nations.

Some recent legislation and regulations are designed to prevent asylum seekers from reaching western countries at all. These include the imposition of visa requirements on certain nationalities, usually when the numbers seeking asylum from that country start to rise. West Germany, in response to an influx of unaccompanied Tamil children, has now introduced a visa requirement for minors. Another such measure is the introduction of carrier's liability: fines imposed on airlines and other carriers for bringing in those without proper documentation, forcing the staff of private transport companies to act as unofficial immigration officers.

Since 1981, the US has turned back 18,250 Haitians under its interdiction agreement with that country. Only four have been allowed ashore to file asylum applications. Non-admission rather than refusal of asylum is increas-

ingly being applied, creating a substantial grey area over what constitutes entry to a given territory. The French authorities recently deported three Romanians to Austria, having held them for twelve days near the airport, claiming that, since they had not undergone police inspection, they were not legally subjected to French law, even though they were geographically in the country. There is some debate over whether non-admission effectively amounts to *refoulement*, under the terms of the 1951 Convention.

'Manifestly-Unfounded' Claims

Many countries, including Switzerland, the Federal Republic of Germany and Austria, have now formally introduced a two-tier system for processing asylum cases, ostensibly to screen out 'manifestly-unfounded claims' and speed up the process, thereby reducing the massive backlogs which have accumulated. Canada is one recent addition to the list. Bill C-55, which became law on 1 January 1989, introduced 'credibility' and 'eligibility' criteria, *before* someone's claim to asylum can be examined. One crucial criterion for 'eligibility' is that the asylum seeker should not have passed through a third country which is considered safe, i.e. one that is not known to practise *refoulement*. However, so far, the Canadian authorities have been unable to finalise their list of safe countries. This criterion is also an underlying principle of developments in Europe, with the effect that no country wishes to be seen as safe, since each one fears becoming a so-called country of attraction. Thus, levels of protection in the West are threatened.

The Role of Immigration Officers

Another feature of the two-tier systems is that decision-making power over who is eligible for consideration is increasingly being devolved to immigration officers. Their function of control is arguably unsuited to situations where people may be victims of persecution, as demonstrated by the often cursory conduct of interviews, poor interpreting services and the limited background knowledge of immigration officers. Neither are reported cases of physical and psychological abuse of asylum seekers by immigration officers reassuring in this light. Those asylum seekers who are admitted may be confined in prisons, detention centres, camps or reception centres. Frequently, bail terms are set which are beyond the means of most uprooted people. In some countries, for example the UK, unlike detainees suspected of criminal offences, asylum seekers can theoretically be detained indefinitely, although cases are reviewed weekly.

Status Definition

The delays in processing claims for asylum can reach two years or more, a period of great stress for asylum seekers, during which their rights are limited. Welfare support is minimal: either there is no financial support, or it is paid at reduced rates, or for a prescribed time only. In some countries those waiting for a ruling on their status are not permitted to work. The ban on work for asylum seekers in

FRG lasts for five years. In other cases, low-paid work, or work paid in kind is imposed on asylum seekers. Other restrictions on movement, access to health, education and housing provision, and the application of strict criteria for family reunion, create material and psychological hardship for the asylum seeker in the West.

The approval rates (i.e. numbers granted refugee status versus numbers applying) have dropped drastically in many western countries over the last few years: from 60 per cent (1983) to just over 30 per cent (1987) in France; from 16 per cent (1984) to 8 per cent (1987) in Switzerland; from 41 per cent (1982) to 8 per cent (1987) in the UK. Increasingly, asylum seekers are being accorded a lesser status such as 'Tolerance' (Federal Republic of Germany) 'Exceptional Leave to Remain' (ELR: UK), or 'B status' (Netherlands), which confer less rights than full refugee status and leave the host country the option of future repatriation. In the UK, only 378 applicants out of 4,508 were granted full refugee status in 1987 compared to 1,891 given ELR. Those accorded this status have to re-apply for leave to remain after a year, and are only eligible for permanent residence after seven years. Their families are only permitted to join them after four years, except in 'compassionate circumstances', and providing they do not draw on any public funds.

Approval rates also vary considerably for different ethnic or national groups. In different recipient countries, certain groups are systematically refused asylum – as was the case until recently with Tamils from Sri Lanka arriving in the UK and elsewhere. In the US the approval rate for Salvadorans was 2.7 per cent in 1988. By contrast Iranian, Ethiopian, Chinese, Nicaraguan and most eastern European asylum seekers all had acceptance rates of over 50 per cent. In France, the approval rate for European asylum seekers was 86.6 per cent in 1987 compared to 9.4 per cent for their African counterparts.

In conjunction with the overall decline in approval rates for asylum seekers, their rights to appeal against adverse decisions are in many cases being limited or removed. Under new rules introduced by the UK Home Secretary in 1987, asylum seekers can be deported to their country of origin pending the outcome of judicial review. Those involved in harbouring or assisting 'illegals', can now be fined or imprisoned under existing laws which have been recently reactivated, or new ones, such as Canada's C-84.

Economic Integration; Social Exclusion

The advent of the US-Canada Free Trade Agreement, and the 1992 European Single Market implies closer cross-border co-operation between the US and Canada and the twelve member states of the European Community, respectively. Given the trends outlined above, this does not bode well for the would-be asylum seeker attempting to find refuge in the West. In the current climate of paranoia regarding immigration in general and 'third world' asylum seekers in particular, the relaxation of controls to facili-

tate trade, financial exchange and movement of labour *within* Europe and North America has been accompanied by a concomitant concern with the security of *external* borders. The spectres of drugs and arms dealers, terrorists and illegal immigrants are simultaneously raised to justify this preoccupation. In this context, restrictionism in any one European country has a domino effect, reducing standards of treatment of asylum seekers to the lowest common denominator in all member states.

Different fora have been established in Europe in the last few years, to work out joint agreements on security issues, and asylum seekers appear to have fallen into this category. The most important of these – the Trevi and Schengen groups – are working out their own procedures independently of European Parliament resolutions and European Commission (EC) directives and guidelines. Their consultations are informal and secretive, excluding EC officials, UNHCR or NGOs, let alone representatives of refugee organisations. The Schengen group, at present consisting solely of Northern European states, has more or less finalised its agreements, which are due to be implemented in 1990, and will serve as a model for Europe-wide policy. Other EEC members, notably southern European states which have traditionally acted as transit countries for asylum seekers, are now being pressurised to accede to these pre-defined rules.

Essentially, the objective of these inter-state agreements is to control the influx of asylum seekers. Each country's asylum procedures are set to remain intact, but once an asylum seeker has been deemed the responsibility of one country, the decision of that country will be binding for others. Therefore, all *national* restrictive measures, which are also very different from one another, will be in force *cumulatively* for all asylum seekers coming to the Schengen territory. The country responsible for a given application will usually be the one where the asylum seeker first arrives. This proposal is likely to lead to the southern European states becoming dumping grounds for asylum seekers. It also means that asylum seekers will no longer have any choice over where they seek refuge. Visa regulations are also to be co-ordinated.

To facilitate these processes, systems for the exchange of information on asylum seekers and other entrants are being developed, such as the Schengen Information System (SIS). This is not only a violation of privacy, but also a potential risk for family members of the asylum seeker, who are still in the home country, in so far as information might get into the hands of the persecuting state.

Problems of Monitoring and Statistics

Whilst the Schengen Group and other fora are moving towards sophisticated information systems on asylum seekers, non-governmental organisations, researchers and observers are left struggling to find out, with any precision, numbers of arrivals, their countries of origin, outcomes of asylum applications, numbers of detainees, and

so on. Official statistics which are released may be misleading in terms of numbers of applicants and numbers accepted, in an attempt either to justify restrictions, or to make the policy look more liberal than it actually is. Aggregation of statistics, for example on approval rates, tends to conceal biases in the allocation of refugee status, as shown above. 'Arrivals' may in fact include persons already resident who have just made a claim for asylum. Also, the figures may not include subsequent rejections, withdrawals of applications, re-emigrations, repatriations, or transfers of status. If departures are subtracted from the arrivals figures, the increases might look substantially smaller. Furthermore, there are no easily accessible statistics on the numbers of people who have been turned back before being allowed to enter the asylum process, although there is evidence that such data is collected. In June 1988, a leaked UK Home Office document gave descriptions of people sent back to their own countries or other non-Geneva Convention countries. According to these documents, in the first three weeks of May 1988, 35 people were removed.

Rhetoric and Reality

In spite of cynical use of statistics by those in favour of a more restrictionist policy, there does appear to be an increase in the numbers of asylum seekers in western countries, which reflects the greater increase in the numbers of displaced people throughout the world. The growing number of spontaneous arrivals in Europe and the Americas can be related to two factors: firstly, the intensification of conflicts and crises which force people to move, and secondly, the increased facility of movement, and awareness of possible destinations, brought about by the evolution of transport and communications industries. Since the 1970s, a large proportion of asylum seekers coming to the West have originated in 'third world' nations, whose presence poses uncomfortable questions about western responsibility, historical and contemporary, for poverty and repression elsewhere.

Western nations are no longer able to select who arrives on their doorstep so easily, hence the implementation of preventive, and deterrent measures, although the efficacy of these is doubtful. Whilst unable to prevent undesirable groups from arriving, the immigration authorities do their best to address this problem by applying vastly divergent approval rates to different nationalities. One way of restricting entry is to move away from any acceptance of group persecution (in spite of the words 'membership of any social group' which feature in Article 1 of the 1951 Geneva Convention), by defining large areas of the 'third world' *a priori* as ones which do not produce refugees (eg Sri Lanka, El Salvador). Even groups, such as Southeast Asians, which were previously granted refugee status *en masse*, are now being rigorously screened. To justify such a move, alternative labels are required for people fleeing these regions, preferably ones which discredit them, such as 'manifestly unfounded claims' or simply 'economic migrants'. Ironically, by refusing to accord groups such as the

Salvadorans refugee status, the US (and to a lesser extent other countries) has created a large undocumented labour force. In a recent amnesty for 'undocumented aliens' in the US, one notable exception to the rule allowing only pre-1982 entrants to apply, was persons who had worked as agricultural labourers for ninety days or more. By forcing asylum seekers underground, they are easily exploited as cheap labour, and easily removed when their labour is no longer required.

Conclusions

Expulsions and removals of asylum seekers to countries where their safety is not guaranteed have become commonplace. Even nations with a reputation for liberalism in this regard, such as Canada, Sweden and Denmark, have adopted restrictive measures, albeit with more safeguards, to be in line with other countries as economic integration proceeds. The language and arena of debate regarding refugees and asylum issues has moved from any semblance of humanitarianism to concern with border control, security, cultural and racial homogeneity, and the reduction of welfare budgets.

With the reduction of rights and entitlements for asylum seekers, the imposition of *de facto*, rather than full refugee status on increasing numbers, and frequent use of detention, asylum seekers and refugees in the West are being marginalised and criminalised. They are no longer necessarily able to enjoy protection or basic rights such as employment, education, and freedom of movement. Nor do they have any significant voice in the formation of policies.

Practically, much more systematic and rigorous monitoring of asylum policy and practice is needed in both quantitative and qualitative terms, to expose new trends and biases. This needs to be linked to investigation of developments in areas which are producing refugees and to where they are being repatriated. When people are expelled, practical measures are required to ensure their safety, if possible. At the very least, these cases should be followed up. Increasingly, asylum cases are being challenged in the courts, and the expertise of legal workers in the field is vital to this. Where a national judiciary is inaccessible or makes consistently adverse rulings, European courts may provide another arena for such challenges.

Increasingly, the resources of western NGOs involved in refugee assistance are being drawn away from long-term settlement issues to the protection of asylum seekers, and campaigning for humane policies. This role is particularly difficult and ambiguous for agencies who are largely government funded. The availability of advice, information and legal assistance at ports of entry is one area in which activities need to be intensified. Campaigning, if it is to be successful, needs to be broadened away from specialised agencies, into the wider population, through churches, community groups and opposition parties. Information and analyses gathered by journalists and researchers are

Asylum Seekers in Major Western Countries. (Sources: ECRE, Migration Newsheet; World Refugee Survey)

Country	Number 88	Number 87	% Change 88/87	% Approved 88 ^a	% Approved 87 ^a	Main groups
Austria	15790	-	38 (+)	27	-	Poles Hungarians
Belgium	4458	5976	25.4 (-)	41.9	-	Ghanaians Zaireans
Canada	40000 ¹	17000 ¹	135.3 (+)	-	-	
Denmark	4668 ²	2627	77.7 (+)	72.8 ³	-	Palestinians Iranians
FRG	103076	57379	79.6 (+)	8.6 ⁴	10	Poles Yugoslavs
Finland	64	-	30 (+)	6.3 ⁵	-	Iranians Turks
France	34253	-	24.2 (+)	34.4	32.5	Turks Zaireans
Greece	3992	2223	79.6 (+)	44	-	Poles Iranians
Netherlands	7486	13460	44.4 (-)	6.7 ⁶	-	Ghanaians Ethiopians
Norway	6602	-	44 (-)	2.2 ⁷	7.8	Chileans Iranians
Sweden	19595	18114	8.2 (+)	84.7 ³	86.2 ³	Iranians Chileans
Switzerland	16726	10913	53.3 (+)	5.5	7.4	Turks Sri Lankans
UK	-	4508	-	-	8.4 ⁸	Iranians Sri Lankans
USA	60736	26107	132.6 (+)	39.1	-	Salvadorans Nicaraguans

a. Refers to granting of full refugee status, except where otherwise stated.

1. approximate figures

2. including 774 family reunion cases

3. cases not rejected after three months

4. 60% tolerated

5. 25% residence

6. 10.5% other statuses

7. 68% humanitarian grounds

8. 41.9% exceptional leave to remain

of direct use in this context. Improvements in practice (such as increased resources for legal aid, training of refugee workers and immigration officers) are possible short-term goals, along with demands for long term changes, in relation to asylum rights, and also to the root causes of refugee movements.

Refugee campaigns, agencies and organisations are attempting to keep human rights issues on the agenda,

USEFUL PUBLICATIONS for monitoring and campaigning

(For full addresses see ORGANISATIONS below)

Droit D'Asile, Rigaux, F. (ed) 1988

Story Scientia, Brussels. Contains papers, discussions and conclusions from Second European Assises on the Right of Asylum (in French). Looks at the right of asylum in global context and compares US and European situations from a legal perspective, as well as the movements to defend the right of asylum.

Index of Useful Addresses 1989

European Legal Network on Asylum (ELENA). A booklet with lists of addresses of contacts and organisations, for those working in the field of aid to refugees and asylum seekers.

focus on the root causes of the growing refugee population and western responsibility for these, and challenge the racism inherent in current policies. Co-ordination between different groups engaged in research, information, campaigning or practical work is essential, both within the West, and also between western and 'third world'-based organisations. Refugee-based organisations are the key link between north and south, being most directly in touch with conditions in refugee producing and receiving areas.

International Journal of Refugee Law

Quarterly journal to be published by Oxford University Press. Volume 1 is forthcoming and will cover current legal developments in the international refugee field as well as containing scholarly writings.

Migration Newsheet

Monthly of Churches Committee for Migrants in Europe (CCME). A useful survey of European newspapers, including a special section on Refugees and Asylum Seekers, with country by country reports.

REFUGEE WOMEN

Refuge

Quarterly of Refugee Documentation Project, York University, Canada. Covers refugee issues from Canadian viewpoint.

Special Issue of Refugees

on 'Europe 1992' produced by Refugee Service of Commission on Inter-church Aid, Refugee and World Service, World Council of Churches, Geneva. Gives an analysis of developments in Europe in a global context, and provides a campaigning package useful for churches and others.

Refugee Reports

Monthly of US Committee for Refugees, Washington, USA. News service covering developments in the US and elsewhere.

World Refugee Survey

Annual of US Committee for Refugees, Washington, USA. Contains feature articles, country reports, statistical summaries and bibliography for the year.

ORGANISATIONS

Churches Committee for Migrants in Europe (CCME)

23 Avenue d'Auderghem, B-1040, Brussels, Belgium.

European Consultation on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE)

Philip Rudge, General Secretary, Bondway House, 3-9 Bondway, London SW8 1SJ, UK. Consortium of European NGOs working in the field of refugees/asylum seekers, and attempting to influence European policy. ECRE have annual conferences, to discuss these issues (the most recent took place in April 1989), and also produce working papers.

European Legal Network on Asylum (ELENA)

c/o ECRE (address above). Europe-wide network of practitioners in the field of asylum law.

Refugee and World Service

World Council of Churches, 150 Route de Ferney, 1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland.

Refugee Documentation Project

York University, Suite 290J, Administrative Studies Bldg., 4700 Keele Street, North York, Ontario, Canada M3J 1P3.

Refugee Forum

54 Tavistock Place, London WC1, UK. UK-based umbrella group for refugee-based organisations working and campaigning for refugees and asylum seekers.

US Committee for Refugees (USCR)

1025 Vermont Avenue NW, Suite 920, Washington, DC 20005, USA. Private voluntary organisation campaigning, lobbying and providing information on refugee issues.

Editorial Note

Practitioners attempting to provide services and facilities for refugees and generally assisting their resettlement, require some understanding of their cultural, religious and social background. However, as the article below illustrates with reference to Kurdish women, refugees of the same nationality are not necessarily a homogenous group. Galawiesh Abeid provides us with a 'classification' of Kurdish refugee women to demonstrate how differing social and educational backgrounds imply different needs on resettlement. In particular, she stresses the influence of Islam over some Kurdish women's lives, since many specific requirements of day-to-day living stem from this. There are some insights into potential sources of misunderstanding and misconceptions on the part of those working with Kurdish refugee women. She also makes specific recommendations on provision for the needs of Kurdish women refugees in Denmark.

THE NEEDS OF KURDISH REFUGEE WOMEN IN DENMARK

By Galawiesh Abeid

This is a difficult subject to discuss in any depth or to analyse with precision. What I shall try to do here is simply to open a door for free discussion.

The social background of the Kurdish women in Iraq Education

The level of education of the Kurdish population is generally low and, although schools exist in the four Kurdish towns situated in Iraq, there is no educational provision for the villages and country districts. Furthermore, instruction is not given in the Kurdish language, as it was for a few years before being suppressed by the new regulations. All instruction is in Arabic and, right from the very first primary class, is filled with the political views and ideology of the government. Naturally enough we find young people leaving primary school knowing only the Arabic alphabet, and having learned a mass of political slogans which they repeat like parrots with little or no understanding. In a sense, the pupils are in a real dilemma, being caught between what they are taught at school and what they actually see and hear of the dreadful persecution suffered by families if a member is not loyal to the regime. It has become commonplace to execute as many as ten Kurds, who have had nothing to do with an incident, as retaliation for the killing of one soldier.

All this applies equally to boys and girls. For girls, there are also lessons in cooking and domestic economy, convincing them that these alone are their duties, duties which boys do not share. As a result of this unequal education, girls help their mothers in all household matters and seldom disagree with this unfair division. Another factor affecting the education of girls is the distance of the school from the home. If the school is a long

way off, girls will be prevented from completing their education since the families, in particular fathers and elder brothers, think it unnecessary as girls will eventually get married. There is also the overwhelming fear that girls may lose their virginity through mixing with the opposite sex.

The Media

Television, radio, daily newspapers and magazines of all kinds play a significant part in forming opinions, and especially in our society which is closed to the variety of world currents concerning thought, politics, literature, arts, and methods of education. We hear, see and read nothing but the views of the party holding power in Iraq. I still remember how we used to talk with friends whom we trusted, about the deliberate jamming of most foreign broadcasts. The television relays only Egyptian Arabic films and these are mostly comedies emphasising the man's dominant role and the need for women to make sacrifices for his happiness.

Magazines are scarce and, as they are published locally, most are on political subjects and speak of the positive aspects and achievements of the party and government. There are only one or two women's magazines and these present a picture of the ideal wife and mother. The Iran-Iraq war has made the situation worse: some serious and committed Arabic magazines have been removed from public sale for fear of the occasional reference to the evils of the Iraqi regime. The same can be said for bookshops which now only sell trivialities masquerading as literature. Moreover, most bookshop owners have become part of the investigation system and convey information about those who buy undesirable books.

Hence, Kurdish women in Iraq no longer have a window for acquainting themselves with the heritage of world ideas, apart from some books which educated families keep hidden. The fortunate women are those born into educated families who are a little more socially and politically aware. There can be little doubt that the reaction of this group towards Danish society when they arrive as refugees, will be quite different from the reaction of those without any educational background.

Kurdish Refugee Women in Denmark

To enable us to recognise the women under discussion, and then to deduce the needs of each group, I shall classify them into (1) city women and (2) country and village women.

City Women

Most of these come from a background of cultural and social development but differ in their attitude towards religious belief. Firstly, there are the rigid traditionalists who turn to the Quran as their basic reference, by which they interpret all aspects of life, making it the absolute judge as to the lawfulness or unlawfulness (in Islamic terms) of general conduct. For example, on the question

of seclusion they believe that veiling should be complete. Every part of the body, except for the face and hands, must be concealed from all men except husbands, fathers, brothers or sons. The explanation for this is that if women's bodies are seen unveiled, this will incite men to commit evil deeds! Women must avoid being alone with strange men because 'the third person there will be Satan'. In addition, the Quran states that women are duty-bound to comply with all the sexual needs of their husbands. Obedience to husbands is absolute, even in cases where the woman is in the right. According to the Quran, where two witnesses are needed in a lawsuit, to obtain the right judgement, the court considers the witness of two women as being equal to the witness of one man. The justification for this is that women are emotional and that feelings and sentiments will impede their judgement. There is one final important point: the Quran disapproves of women working outside the home as this can distract them from their domestic and wifely duties.

Secondly, there are those city women who believe that Allah exists as a force for good, but do not believe in Muhammad as a prophet, nor in the Quran as a book sent down from Allah. They consider Muhammad a brilliant social reformer. However, as times change, so these women believe less and less in all that the Quran pronounces. For example, they consider the permission given to men to marry more than one woman extremely backward. They feel that this contravenes the rights of women and disregards their personality and nature.

Most of these women, however, still preserve all the customs, values and traditions which they have held since childhood, but this does not prevent them from accepting new ideas such as women working outside the home, particularly if they wish to improve their standard of living. They may wish to form social relationships with Danish people, but have reservations about some points they regard as negative. For example, they disapprove of family break-up brought about by the frightening number of divorce and separation cases for reasons which they consider trivial. Most do not approve of drinking alcohol, but do not oppose it completely, as when, in certain circumstances, a husband may drink with a group of friends.

There is also the very sensitive issue of women with young daughters who are concerned that they should preserve their virginity. This is a matter of great importance and causes much anxiety. They will warn their daughters not to adopt customs followed by Danish girls. Whatever their faults, eastern men are considered better than Danish men who often regard divorce as acceptable. Eastern men seldom contemplate divorce, especially when there are children involved, and only seek this solution in exceptional cases.

Thirdly, there are those city women who have no belief in the existence of a divine power. What is relevant here is these women have not simply accepted their husbands'

opinions, but have formed their own views through study and discussion. Most, in this group, hold the attitude that work is a duty for every individual, giving value and meaning to human existence. They acclimatise well to Danish society, mixing without the fear that they might be 'carried away' by Danish customs and traditions since they are sufficiently informed through their own enquiries and education. It is rare to find anyone in this group fascinated or dazzled by the western world simply because it is new. On the contrary, they usually analyse every phenomenon and seek the reason which brought it about. The largest group of this type hold Marxist opinions, though they are not necessarily members of a Marxist party.

Women from the Villages and Countryside

Of these, only a small proportion have come to Denmark and other western countries because most do not have the resources to do so. Coming from a rural background, many are illiterate, and even after learning Danish, are conscious of a stark divide between them and their environment. Generally, women from this group do not voice opinions about anything, preferring to keep silent. In particular they are conscious of the many things of which they are ignorant. Often these women experience embarrassment when Danish women visit them: they think they must emulate the Danish in such things as eating or arranging the table, which are quite new to them. Their belief in God is undoubted. This is by inclination rather than through a sense of solidarity and the need to defend their culture. Because of their low educational level, they do not have much desire or opportunity to work outside the home.

Needs of Kurdish Refugee Women in Denmark

Following on from the descriptions of different groups of Kurdish women who have become refugees in Denmark, some specific, practical recommendations can be made which would facilitate their resettlement without contravening their norms, values or beliefs. In the first instance, those women who adhere to Islam will need:

- (i) the presence of an Islamic mosque near to their residence;
- (ii) a number of special places where they can buy meat slaughtered in the Islamic way;
- (iii) a number of schools catering for Islamic children as these women consider Danish schools unsuitable;
- (iv) no compulsion for Muslim women to work outside the home.

Some additional measures to address the needs of all groups could include the following:

1. A much greater emphasis on the necessity for Kurdish refugees, particularly women, to learn Danish in a specified period of time. There are some husbands who burden their wives with household chores, with the result that the women neglect their language learning and so are reliant on their husbands. One effective method to induce



Kurdish Refugee Women in Turkey

women to learn Danish would be to stop their remuneration and allowances for transport unless they attend school. As this would directly affect the family's standard of living, it would make husbands encourage their wives to attend classes regularly. They would then be compelled to bear some of the household burdens which were previously the women's sole responsibility. Exceptions could be made for special cases supported by official papers.

2. A library should be added to those schools where Danish is taught, containing books of a good standard in the mother tongues of refugees. This would be especially beneficial to those women who are not given the freedom to visit bookshops.

3. Discussion groups should be held for refugee women who speak the same language so that they may discuss and study problems encountered in everyday life. Holding such meetings frequently would help to strengthen women's self-confidence. The subjects addressed should be those that refugee women are really concerned with, for example: seclusion; the problem of children's education; what is meant by 'equality of men and women'; the phenomenon of the number of births above two children



Photograph by Richard Wayman

in the refugee family; the question of women's material independence from their husbands.

4. A short period could be set aside on the radio or television for holding open discussions between refugee women and Danish women about the positive and negative aspects of each society. For example: why eastern society attaches such importance to the preservation of virginity in young girls; the reasons behind the strengths and weaknesses of eastern and Danish family relationships; the relative importance of work for women from each group.

5. Certain legal or regulatory relaxations should be made for refugee women who wish to pursue or complete a university education, in particular for those who were students in their country of origin, but who do not have appropriate legal or educational papers. It is hardly likely that the university of the country of origin would agree to grant papers to help students complete their studies outside their own country. The same applies to graduates who do not have graduation certificates. This can be done in numerous ways, one of which would be to allow a preparatory period for women who wish to pursue their studies, and to test them afterwards on the subjects they claim to have previously studied.

6. Appropriate laws should be passed to prevent the custom of beating which eastern men practise on their wives and children. The problem here is that this question is always surrounded by silence on the part of the women, for fear of what will happen to them and their children.

7. The Social Services and the Office of Refugee Affairs should pay more attention to facilitating social relationships between Danish and eastern refugee families.

Kurdish Refugee Women in Turkey

It is unquestionable that the country of refuge shapes the needs of refugee women. What I have said about the needs of refugee women in Denmark, of course, differs greatly from the needs of Kurdish refugee women in Turkey. If I had put forward the above suggestions to Kurdish refugee women in Turkey, they would be astonished as their problems there are not the same: they are much harsher. What refugee women in Turkey most need is somewhere settled to live, sufficient food to feed their hungry children, and above all, warmth. The latest information I have from Turkey, by way of letters, is that not a day or night goes by without some fifteen to twenty children under the age of seven, dying as a result of the bitter cold and insufficient shelter or covering. In addition there is a disgraceful scarcity of medical supplies and personnel. The most impoverished communities are from Silopi and Gahvareh in the region of Kurdistan. Foreign reporters are not allowed to enter these two communities, for fear of their spreading the shocking news of the Turkish government's inhumane treatment of the Kurds living there, and the effect this would have on world public opinion. Ironically, these people have been compelled to seek refuge in Turkey because of the brutal chemical attacks launched upon them by the Iraqi government. All this obliges Turkey to put into effect the resolutions concerning refugees. Turkey will do this only under compulsion, and under pressure from the Common Market countries in particular, because Turkey needs their support.

Galawiesh Abeid comes from a Kurdish family of eight children, of moderate income, who have lived in Baghdad since 1958. She was a student at the University of Technological Engineering but had to leave two months before graduating as a electrical engineer. In 1981 Galawiesh worked with one of the Kurdish parties in Iraq, called P.U.K., but fled to the mountains after the arrest of one of the members. In 1985 she went to Iran and lived among Kurds and Iraqi Arabs in Teheran until her arrival in Denmark in 1986. For the past two years Galawiesh has been working for a Kurdish journal, published in Denmark, and is hoping to write about 'Women in Christianity and Islam'.

(This article was submitted in Arabic and has been translated by Penelope Johnson)

REGIONAL NETWORK

Information and Documentation: Developments in Sudan

Sudan hosts almost a million refugees, numerous agencies and many researchers and the government itself has offices – the Commissioner for Refugees (COR) – in many refugee-affected areas. With so many refugees and people working with refugees it is clearly essential that there is a system whereby each is informed of present situations, problems and activities.

How Do They Do It?

A comprehensive network has evolved. At the forefront of this is a quarterly magazine produced by the Refugee Settlement Administration of the Ministry of Refugees and Relief in the Eastern Region. The 'Showak Magazine' is a forum for free discussion between bodies interested in refugees' well-being in the region. Published in English and Arabic editions, it contains the latest news, refugee viewpoints, interviews with government officials and general articles. It is informative, educational and essential reading for refugees and practitioners alike. Other countries or regions who run a similar project, or would like to start one, should write to the address below to exchange information or ideas. (See 'News from RSP')

Another valuable source of information is the widely read *Sudan Times* newspaper which should be commended for its regular articles on refugees and for publishing many 'letters to the editor' written by refugees themselves.

At the head office of the Commissioner for Refugees in Khartoum, the Documentation Centre houses over 3,000 documents. This national Documentation Centre in Sudan is being linked to other government departments and with a forthcoming grant from IDRC, the Centre will be computerised and join the international HURIDOCs system. The Centre is used primarily by researchers and agency workers who require specific information or general reading. At the centre I was able to instantly gain access to basic figures on, for example, the number and location of refugees.

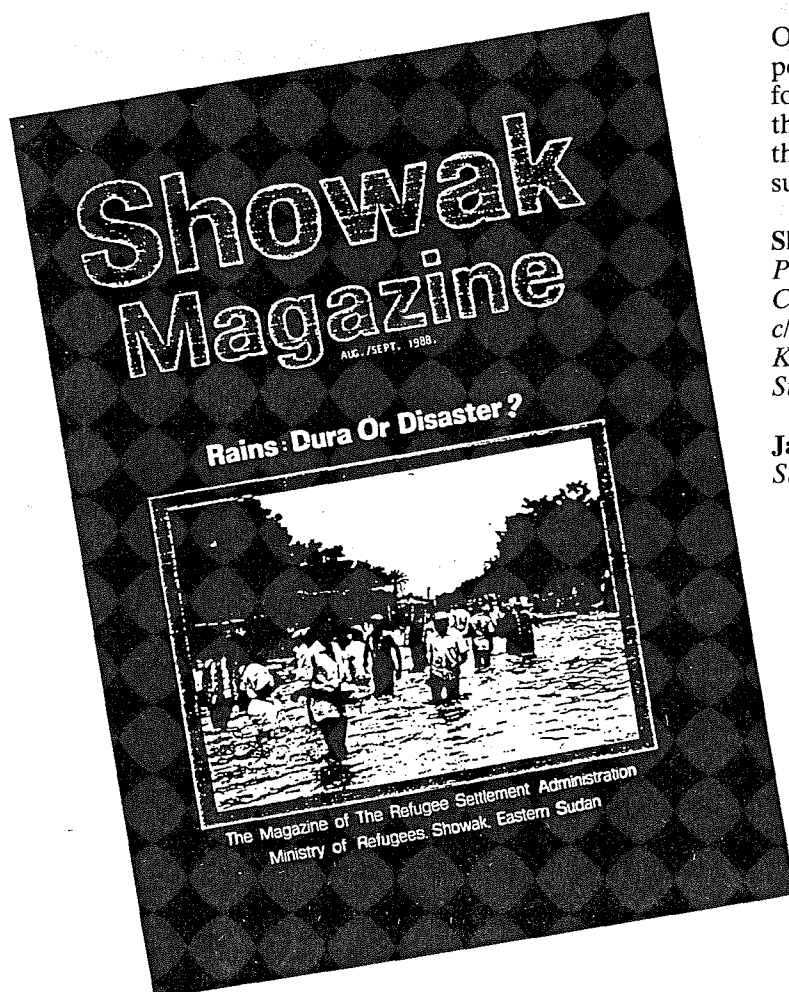
However, the staff at the Centre still feel they should have more documents. They say that many people have conducted research in Sudan but have not sent a copy of their report to the centre, even though they used the Centre during the course of their study. Surely all research reports made in Sudan should be sent there? Those who have not already sent in their reports, please could they do so.

Overall efforts are being made in Sudan to ensure that people are well-informed and have access to all the information they require. Those that work in Sudan are sure this is the basis for improvements in their assistance and the welfare of the refugees. Others may wish to follow suit.

Showak Magazine:
Public Relations Department
COR Showak
c/o PO Box 1929
Khartoum
Sudan

COR Documentation Centre:
COR
PO Box 1929
Khartoum
Sudan

James Cope
Sudan



RESEARCH REPORTS

Editorial Comment

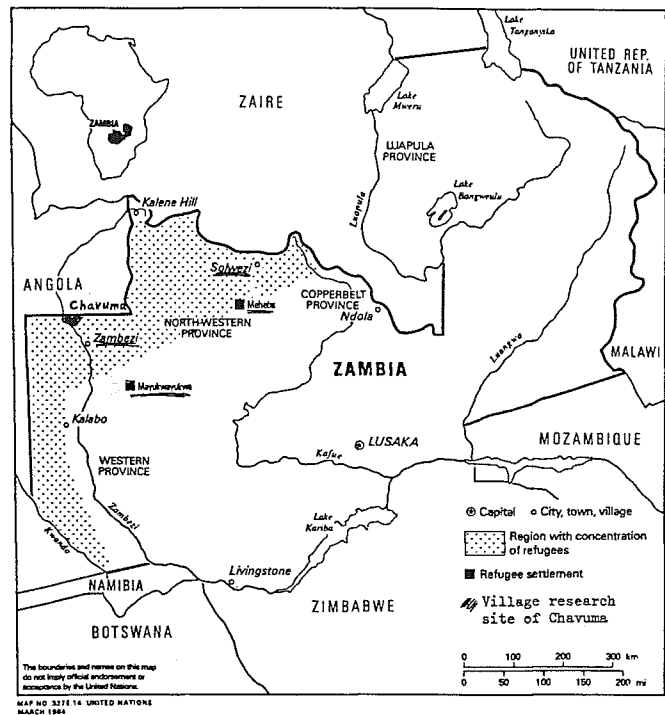
One of the major objectives of RPN is to bridge the gap between the field experience of practitioners and the findings of researchers. This is a two way process. Issues and problems raised by the experience of those in the field should inform the direction of research, and provide material for systematic evaluation, investigation, and analysis, in order to create a body of coherent knowledge. Equally, by outlining ongoing research initiatives, and disseminating relevant findings in an accessible manner, RPN makes available to practitioners, information, ideas and insights which may assist the orientation of their work. In order to conduct useful and productive research, it is essential to be in touch with the reality on the ground; in order to improve practice, those in the field need to be aware of research findings in their field. Here RPN gives short reports on two current research projects: interested Network members are invited to comment on these.

EVALUATION OF REFUGEE SETTLEMENT STRATEGIES: A ZAMBIAN CASE STUDY

Refugee settlement strategies can be divided into two broad categories: settlement in planned schemes and self-settlement. Planned schemes are a particular feature of refugee assistance in sub-Saharan Africa. Out of a total of 120 such UNHCR schemes developed up to 1982, 116 were in Africa. They are particularly prominent in Eastern and Southern Africa, and are usually based on agriculture. In spite of this prevalence of planned settlement, the information on such schemes is minimal and uneven, partly because research tends to focus elsewhere, once the flow of international assistance ceases.

Self-settlement, on the other hand, is said to account for more than half of the refugees in Africa, under 40 per cent of whom receive any form of assistance. Refugees often remain in border areas, closer to home, in a familiar village setting, despite this lack of material assistance. This makes them 'invisible': they tend to reside in remote areas, and are hard to identify since they often do not wish to reveal their identity to officials, for fear of being forced to live in camps.

Planned settlements tend to be favoured by governments and international agencies, who hold that the delivery of assistance and services is facilitated through such schemes, and that self-settled refugees compete for resources with local communities. Self-settled refugees, according to some governments, pose a security risk. Others, however, cite the widespread occurrence of self settlement as evidence of refugees' preference for remaining within village structures and the capacity of host communities to absorb and support refugees.



The record of planned settlements to date is not impressive in terms of promoting self sufficiency or 'integration' of refugees. In many cases, they were initially established to provide relief services in an emergency situation, then became institutionalised, without long-term plans having been made to ensure their viability. Neither is self-settlement an ideal option in many cases: there is a tendency to promote vague ideas about the virtue of 'African hospitality', without recognising the costs that self-settled refugees can impose on the host community, and particularly its poorer members. Whilst an influx of refugees may be of benefit to some groups such as landowners, traders and traditional leaders, it may affect subsistence farmers or landless people negatively by increasing pressure on common property resources, and food prices, for example.

There is a need for a reassessment of the planned scheme model, and a closer examination of the pros and cons of self-settlement in particular contexts and for particular groups. Insufficient attention has been given to the impact of refugees on local host communities. In-depth research is needed to disaggregate how various subgroups of self-settled refugees fare, and how subgroups of the host community are affected. If alternative strategies are to be devised to assist the self-settled and local communities (the linking of refugee and development aid, as proposed at ICARA II), more detailed knowledge is required about the impact of refugees, and vulnerable groups in refugee and host populations, as a basis for assessing needs.

A major ongoing research project is attempting to investigate the *long-term* consequences of different settlement strategies from the various perspectives of government,

refugees and the local communities where refugees have settled, focusing specifically on the Angolans who moved into north-western Zambia between 1966 and 1972. The first phase of the project was carried out in 1970-72, when samples of the refugee and non-refugee population in Chavuma (Zambezi district, North Western Province: see map) were interviewed in depth and a census taken in the same area, where many refugees have self-settled. This was followed up in 1979 by interviews with refugees in the Meheba government settlement scheme, close to Solwezi, also in North Western Province. The second phase of the research, which is to be undertaken from mid-1989, aims to compare self- and planned settlement options in the long term, by reinterviewing sub-samples of the same populations, as well as conducting some additional interviews and analysing the impact of the different strategies at district and national levels.

There are many variables involved in the adoption of different settlement strategies, which relate to the nature of the local economy and ecology, the history of ties or tensions between the host community and the refugees, government policy, the timing of the refugee movement, and socio-economic and other characteristics of refugees, such as whether or not they have relatives in a given location, who could facilitate self-settlement. These issues are bound up in the particular context, hence the need for more in-depth case studies of this kind. On the basis of the 1972 survey in North Western Province, it is estimated that that 86 percent of the Angolan refugee population in Zambia are self-settled in Northern and North Western Provinces. The remainder of the refugees are in planned settlements. This is in spite of past government policies requiring all refugees to settle in camps. The proposed research hypothesises that the majority prefer to remain in villages because of their familiarity with that environment. Physical proximity to the home area and the existence of accessible social networks limit the degree of desocialisation, anxiety and loss of power and control. Many refugees also have kin in the border area villages, which are largely populated by first and second generation immigrants of Luvale and other 'ethnic' origins, also from Angola.

Earlier research carried out in Chavuma in 1971-2 and Meheba in 1979 will provide baseline data for evaluating the long-term (15-20 year) consequences of self- and scheme settlement. Fresh interviews will be conducted to determine who is 'better off', which here has economic, health, and psychological dimensions. It also takes into account access to services and 'integration' into the Zambian society and economy, including attitudes towards remaining in Zambia or returning to Angola. Hosts in the villages where refugees are located will be asked similar questions to the refugees to assess the impact of refugee settlement on them; a similar procedure will be carried out for the host population in the vicinity of the Meheba scheme. A third aspect of the analysis will be looking at district and higher level demographic, economic and political factors.

The proposed research will provide an assessment of the costs and benefits of the two major settlement options outlined above for Angolans in Zambia, from the point of view of the various groups within the refugee and host populations, as well as district and national governments. As such, the outcomes of the research may prove useful in informing future policy in relation to the settlement and provision of assistance for current or anticipated flows of refugees into Zambia, or other countries in the region. It may prove valuable in providing a critical evaluation of the settlement scheme model for refugees and non-refugees.

The principal investigator in this study is Art Hansen, Associate Professor of Anthropology at the University of Florida, who carried out the first phase of research in 1970-72. The project has institutional links with the University of Zambia (UNZA). Four UNZA faculty members will collaborate in the research, which is co-sponsored by the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD). They are: Raban Chanda (Geography), Nsolo Mijere (Sociology), Allast Mwanza (Economics), and Irene Maimbolwa-Sinyangwe (Psychology). A University of Florida graduate Anthropology student, Holly Ann Williams, will also participate in related research.

MENTAL HEALTH: TRAUMATIC LIFE EVENTS AND PSYCHIATRIC DISORDERS

Background

Dr Abdul Wali, a psychologist based at the University of Hull, UK, has recently completed the first comparative psychiatric study of refugee populations. This is based on field work carried out with Afghan refugees in Pakistan in 1986-7 and with Ethiopian refugees in the Sudan in 1988, as well as among the local populations in both areas. Dr Wali was attempting to establish scientifically, firstly, the extent to which these refugee populations suffer traumatic life events, and secondly, the degree of resulting psychiatric impairment. The study compared refugees and local people, the two refugee populations, and different age groups among the Afghan refugees.

Methods

A series of diagnostic tests¹ were carried out to determine the degree of anxiety, depression, somatic disorders, and general mental state amongst the refugee (experimental) and local (control) groups. These diagnostic instruments had been adapted for cultural sensitivity in conjunction with a group of Afghan professionals. In the Sudan study, further measures were used: a Traumatic Life Inventory (TLI), Social Support (SS) and Perception, which were devised in consultation with Sudanese experts. Blood

pressure readings were also collected at three different times to give an indicator of potential cardiovascular problems.

Due to social problems associated with interviewing women, all the interviewees were male. In the Pakistan study, the subjects were divided into three age groups (13-16, 20-40 and 40+), and also included both long- and short-stay refugees. The Sudan study was restricted to young adults. In both cases, matching 'control' groups from the local population were interviewed.

Results

Most of the Afghans and Ethiopians interviewed had, as part of the process of becoming refugees, experienced several traumatic life events, such as loss of family members, close or distant relatives, loss of property, loss of career or work opportunities, loss of stability in lifestyle and all had suffered displacement. From the Pakistan study, the data collected consistently showed that Afghan refugees suffer a greater degree of psychiatric impairment than the Pakistani control group studied. This was particularly true of the adult groups, suggesting that adolescent refugees are less vulnerable to psychiatric disorders. This may be due to a lesser awareness of their plight and its implications, or a time delay in the manifestation of psychiatric illness amongst younger people.

The differences were less marked in the Sudan study, although the extent of nervous, depressive and anxious illness was on the whole greater amongst the refugee group. One explanation for this might be that the Ethiopian refugees had been in camps for a longer period than most Afghan refugees and were therefore better adjusted, although the Pakistan study did not reveal any significant differences between short- and long-stay refugees. The Ethiopian refugee group were, however, found to have suffered twice as many traumatic life events as the local Sudanese. Overall about one third of the refugee groups were found to be experiencing psychiatric disorders, the most prevalent being anxiety, depression and somatic disorders. Although there were no women in the study, reports from the field would suggest the likelihood that women are more seriously affected than men by mental health problems.

The blood pressure data did not reveal any significant differences between control and experimental groups in either study and blood pressure levels were found to be near normal in all cases.

Implications

The research to date does not enable strong links to be made between the experience of specific traumatic life events and the onset of *particular* psychiatric disorders. Traumatic experiences are very difficult to locate and classify, and should perhaps be seen as a process rather than a series of separate events. There is also the possibility that the camp experience could be a contributory factor to the onset of psychiatric problems. When considering the implications of this type of research, it is necessary to bear in mind that not all refugees will suffer from such disorders, and moreover, where they do, the nature of the disorder is usually *reactive*.

Nevertheless, the level of psychiatric disorders amongst the refugees is significant, and, particularly, given the imminent repatriation of Afghans, and the devastation in that country after many years of war, there is an urgent need to provide appropriate mental health services, before existing problems are compounded.

There are only two known specialist psychiatric units in the North West Frontier Province of Pakistan, where treatment is carried out. For a population of 900,000 refugees, there is only one professional psychiatrist. Often, in such circumstances, doctors are left to deal with mental health problems but with little understanding of them, tending to treat physical symptoms with drugs. There is a need for training of doctors concerning the mental health of refugees.

Most cases are not severe and would be best addressed by counselling and psychotherapy services rather than psychiatric units. Mental health services need to be appropriate, and accessible, and introduced in a sensitive manner because of the stigma attached to mental illness. Possibilities for doing this include the involvement and training of local traditional healers, the use of educational institutions as a point of delivery of services, and self-help groups.

From a long term perspective, however, refugees are in desperate need of a stable and secure environment and lifestyle, so that successful treatment is possible, and further problems are prevented.

A comprehensive account of Dr Wali's research and its findings will appear in the International Handbook of Traumatic Stress Syndromes to be published by Plenum in early 1990.

REFUGEE CHILDREN

THE REFUGEE CHILD AND CHILD-TO-CHILD

Refugee and Displaced Children

Children often account for as much as half the population in refugee communities. All over the world it is the child under five years old whose health and psycho-social development are at the greatest risk. Many small children become very ill or die from malnutrition, diarrhoea, measles, malaria and accidents – most of which can be prevented or easily treated if recognised early on. They are also involved in the social and emotional disruption faced by their parents which may have a long term effect, particularly if the extended family is broken up.

As children are the parents of the future, what they learn about health is of the greatest importance. But children can also participate now in the health care and health education of their communities. In many countries, older children already spend much of their time caring for their younger brothers and sisters. By putting their knowledge about health and child care into practice, they may be able to give valuable help to their friends and family now. (They should never, however, be placed in a position where they seem to be contradicting elders or parents.)

Child-to-Child activities will help to make children more aware of health needs and encourage them to apply appropriate solutions. Thus, they will be enabled to play a useful role in the community and will be proud to be involved.

What is Child-to-Child?

Child-to-Child began in 1978 in preparation for the International Year of the Child in 1979. Its aim is to promote an approach to health education which develops the potential role of children in spreading the message of Primary Health Care. The Child-to-Child approach empowers children with an understanding of appropriate health issues and encourages them to pass on health messages to their younger brothers and sisters; to their friends; to their families and communities.

The Child-to-Child Co-ordinating Office, based in London, operates through the Institutes of Education and Child Health of the University of London. Through a worldwide network of health and education workers, the Child-to-Child approach to health education has spread to over sixty countries. Being international, Child-to-Child is not identified with any religious, racial or political group.

Why Child-to-Child in Refugee Communities?

In a refugee community of 10,000 people, at least 5,000 will be under 15 years old. Generally, these young people like to join in activities and in some cases children have played a key role.

For example, in a refugee camp in East Africa, the organiser of a supplementary feeding programme found that a Child-to-Child approach was developing quite spontaneously. The 10-14 year olds became responsible for 'organising' the younger children, helping them to wash

their hands, distributing the food, and encouraging the young ones who were not eating well. When the food was delayed, the older children organised games and singing to keep the younger ones occupied. These activities developed through the children's own initiative, as it was culturally quite natural for them to take responsibility for the younger ones. The organisers of the feeding programme took this opportunity to help the older children learn more about health and nutrition and to relate this knowledge to their community. They became very adept at noticing changes in the behaviour of younger children which might indicate sickness.

The same spontaneous Child-to-Child activity has developed in a refugee camp in Pakistan, where the older children have replaced their mothers in bringing the younger children to the day-care centre. Once there, the older children have been encouraged by the day-care workers to make toys out of scraps of material and to play with the younger children. Through these enjoyable activities, they have learned how to stimulate young children. While enjoying their activities, the children are also a source of comfort and support to other children, younger and of the same age.

Other situations where children have taken part in community health include:

- ★ finding out which children are malnourished;
- ★ finding out which children need immunisation;
- ★ making a safe, interesting play area for younger children;
- ★ organising games and story telling for younger children;
- ★ spreading the message about rehydration drinks.

Refugee communities do offer many special opportunities for Child-to-Child activities to be developed. For children, the greatest feeling of security comes from being with their families. In many cases, the extended family may have broken up. For these refugee children some security may be gained from joining in 'group' activities. The Child-to-Child approach encourages such group activities.

How to Introduce Child-to-Child

When starting up Child-to-Child activities among refugees, great care must be taken to be sensitive to the needs and interests of all concerned. If the refugees are based in a camp, it is necessary to get the approval of the host government and the camp authorities, and to consult them and involve the camp administrator. In any situation, it is always important to involve the refugee leaders and the parents. By having early discussions with the parents and asking them for help and ideas thereby obtaining their support, it will be easier for the children to practise what they have learned in their own homes. The involvement and understanding of the parents are essential to the success of Child-to-Child.



Photograph by Jean Bray

Older children spend much of their time caring for their younger brothers and sisters

If there is a school in the refugee community, it may be the teachers who lead the activities. Currently, Child-to-Child activities are being adapted for use in refugee primary schools in Thailand and Hong Kong. Child-to-Child activities can be based in schools, health centres, day-care centres, literacy classes – indeed wherever children gather together. Starting with too large a group can lead to difficulties. To start with, a good number would be between ten and twenty children. The group could then later expand at a manageable pace. To achieve cooperation, it is a good idea to set up a Child-to-Child committee which should include refugee leaders, parents, teachers, health workers and children.

Child to Child

ACTIVITY SHEET 1.1

Child-to-Child Activity Sheets are a resource for teachers, and health and community workers. They are designed to help children understand how to improve health in other children, their families, and their communities. Topics chosen are important for community health and suit the age, interests and experience of children. The text, ideas and activities may be freely adapted to suit local conditions.



PLAYING WITH YOUNGER CHILDREN

— THE IDEA —

All babies and young children like to play. They can be helped to play better. Better play makes children grow and learn well. Better play helps children and parents to understand one another. Different ages need different kinds of games, and older children can help younger children to play better.



Children everywhere spend some time looking after younger brothers and sisters. They are often told what not to do when looking after the baby: 'Don't let her near the fire. Don't let her hurt herself.' They are seldom told what they can do with the baby.

This sheet talks about why children need to play, what kinds of play are suitable for children at different ages, and how children can help each other to play.

Children Like to Play

All babies and young children like to play from an early age. Babies like to watch things moving, like the shadow of a tree against the sun. Later, they like to reach out to grab hair, or some pretty beads, or a dish. When they can walk and run, they also like to hide, to jump, to skip and to twist around. As soon as they can understand and begin to talk, they like to play games using words: 'Where's my nose?' or 'Find the ball'. We can encourage them to do all these things and even more. We can help them to play better and to do many different kinds of things.

This sheet should be used together with Toys and Games for Young Children (Sheet No. 1.2), which concentrates on play materials - where to get them, how to make them, and how to use them - and with A Place to Play (Sheet No. 1.5), and Playing with Babies (Sheet No. 1.6).

Choosing activities

Activities that are seen to meet the needs of the refugees will have a greater chance of success and will be of more value both to those concerned and to the community as a whole. For example:

Problems in the Community Helpful activity sheets

- | | |
|--|---|
| Many accidents to young children, especially burns | ★ Accidents
★ Road Safety |
| Many sick children in the community | ★ Caring for Children with Diarrhoea
★ Caring for Children who are sick
★ Coughs, Colds and Pneumonia
★ Feeding Young Children
★ Our Neighbourhood
★ Children's Stools and Hygiene |
| Lack of play, games or toys | ★ Playing with Younger Children
★ Toys and Games for Young Children
★ A Place to Play
★ Playing with Babies |
| Special Problems | ★ Our Teeth
★ Clean, Safe Water
★ Handicapped Children
★ Understanding Children's feelings |

These are just some examples of activities that have already been carried out. The activity sheets can be selected and adapted to suit local priorities. New activities can also be designed to support, for example, feeding programmes. It is important that the activities are enjoyable for the children.

Conclusions

Child-to-Child activities have been tried in many countries throughout the world. They were particularly successful where the activities were chosen and adapted to suit local needs. Children themselves have provided many of the new ideas.

It is very useful to keep a record of the activities and how the materials have been adapted and developed. These experiences can be shared with other groups using Child-to-Child around the world.

Rachel Carnegie
The Child-to-Child Trust
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Older children have replaced their mothers in bringing the younger children to the day-care centre

Children

The Universal Childbirth Picture Book by Fran P. Hosken (price \$7.00 plus \$4.00 for overseas air mail) is a versatile, illustrated and locally adaptable teaching tool to help women understand the process of childbirth and the importance of taking charge of their own health. Many women and men around the world have little understanding of the process that creates life. This needless ignorance is a source of great suffering, illness and death. In many areas of the world, more women still die of childbirth than any other cause.

The aim of *The Universal Childbirth Picture Book* is to change all this by making available to the largest number of people, regardless of language or literacy, the facts about reproduction from a woman's point of view.

To order write to:

WIN News
Fran P. Hosken
187 Grant Street
Lexington, Mass. 02173, USA

PREVENTABLE CAUSES OF CHILD MORTALITY IN REFUGEE EMERGENCIES

Abstract

To help set priorities for early interventions in refugee emergencies, we carried out a survey of senior health staff from non-governmental agencies, soliciting their experience with and views on the major causes of child mortality in these settings. We obtained a strong consensus on the five major causes. Recent data suggest that these identified causes are preventable with readily available technology. To the extent that prevention of mortality is the major priority in early phases of refugee relief efforts, issues of measles prevention, dehydrating diarrhoea, acute lower respiratory infection, falciparum malaria¹ and food deficits should receive highest priority.

Introduction

On several occasions during the past decade, mass movements of people across international borders have occurred, resulting in the concentration of large numbers of refugees in crowded camps such as those currently or recently found in Thailand, Somalia, Sudan, Uganda, eastern and western Ethiopia, Malawi and Pakistan. Many of these populations have been in a poor nutritional state and have had higher than normal incidences of infectious diseases, resulting in unusually high child mortality rates during the first few months after arrival in the camps. Although host country governments are primarily responsible for assisting refugees, these national governments often ask international agencies and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to help provide basic needs, such as food, water, sanitation, shelter, and health care.

Our own observations have been that many relief programmes and agencies still fail to appropriately emphasise basic preventative activities. Instead, curative medical care continues to command a high proportion of available health resources in refugee emergencies, at least in part because of a heavy reliance on teams staffed primarily by clinically-oriented expatriate health workers. Relief programmes of this kind may fail to focus on control of the most important prevailing health problems among the refugees, resulting in slower than optimal declines in overall and cause-specific mortality.

Because of our concern that future relief efforts concentrate on the most important health problems, we carried out a mail survey of senior health staff of ten large NGOs, asking them to identify the five major preventable causes of child mortality in refugee emergencies.

Results

Seven replies were received, from (in alphabetical order): Community Aid Abroad (Australia), International Rescue Committee (USA), League of Red Cross Societies (Switzerland), Medecins Sans Frontieres (France), Oxfam (UK), Save the Children Federation (USA) and Save the Children Fund (UK).

All respondents included measles, diarrheal diseases, and acute respiratory infections among the five major prevent-



Photograph by Carol Williams, OXFAM

A refugee child receiving a measles immunisation

able causes of child mortality. Four of the respondents ranked measles as the number one cause. All agreed that malaria was one of the five most common causes of death, with several commenting on its geographical and seasonal variation. All noted undernutrition diagnoses as a primary or contributing factor in many, if not most, child deaths. The other listed major causes of death mentioned were pertussis², tuberculosis, and meningitis.

Conclusion

A consensus appears to exist among experienced agency staff that the major causes of child mortality in acute refugee emergencies are confined to a limited number of preventable conditions. A similar consensus was reached at a recent international symposium on refugee health. These causes are, in general, quite similar to leading causes of developing country child mortality in non-refugee populations. They can largely be prevented or otherwise controlled by the provision of adequate quantity and quality of food and water and by the implementation of low-cost primary health care programmes which include measles immunizations and appropriate diarrheal disease control. When falciparum malaria occurs in large numbers of refugees, a public health approach to its control is also warranted.

Disease Problems Associated with High Mortality among Refugee Children.

Problem	Appropriate anticipation	Prevention of further illness	Curative action	Common management errors
Measles	Measles immunization	Measles immunization	Symptomatic Rx ¹ adequate food	Waiting for measles outbreak to occur
Childhood diarrhoea	Obtain ORT ² supplies	improve water and sanitation	use ORT feed early	emphasis on i.v. rehydration
Acute lower respiratory diseases	Adequate shelter, prevent measles and malnutrition		Penicillin	Late treatment, lack of OPD ³ outreach
Severe malnutrition	Plan general ration on >1900Kcal/person/day	Provide both general ration and targeted supplement	Intensive feeding programme	Inadequate general ration
Falciparum malaria	Consider exposure during flight	Specific anti-malarial drugs	Specific anti-malarial drugs	Late treatment
1. Rx: treatment		2. ORT: Oral rehydration therapy		3. OPD: Oral Penicillin dispensary

During the early phases of refugee emergencies, every relief operation should give high priority to setting up programmes to control these life-threatening conditions. Standard recommendations for preventing or controlling many of these conditions in refugee populations are available (Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees 1982, Toole and Waldman 1988, de Ville de Goyet et al 1978, Nieburg et al 1988, Appleton 1988, Simmonds et al 1982). Only after reliable programme evaluation data indicate that these life-threatening conditions have been adequately addressed should other interventions be accorded higher priority.

Acknowledgements

We wish to thank the staff of the participating NGOs for contributing their time and expertise.

1. Falciparum malaria: a particular type of malaria
2. Pertussis: whooping cough

Phillip Nieburg, Michael J. Toole, Ronald J. Waldman
World Health Organisation Collaborating Centre for Disaster Preparedness and Response

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REVIEWS

Williamson, Jan and Moser, Audrey (1988)
Unaccompanied Children in Emergencies: a field guide for their care and protection
published by International Social Service, Geneva

While unaccompanied children do not generally account for more than a small percentage of the total affected population in emergencies, they are probably the most vulnerable group. They are the group least able to look after themselves and most in need of special care and protection. They are also most likely to suffer long-term effects after an emergency if appropriate and sensitive provision is not made for them from the outset. During emergencies the traditional support networks that cater for unaccompanied children may well be impaired and alternative services need to be developed, often at great speed. These services form the focus of this International Social Service booklet.

The volume is a comprehensive field guide intended for use both in the training of emergency workers and as an aid to practitioners in the field. It draws on the global experience of a wide range of inter-governmental and non-governmental organisations. The reader is taken through the various problems – intellectual, emotional, physical and medical – faced by unaccompanied children and told about the most effective responses to these problems. Although the guide mostly concentrates on the immediate and short term measures required during a disaster, it also covers a sequence of interventions, from disaster preparedness through to long term planning and placement.

The authors argue that it should never be assumed that unaccompanied children are orphaned: there are many reasons why they might have become separated from their families. They may have run away, or have been abandoned or conscripted. The volume acknowledges the great diversity of problems that can affect children according to the type of separation or type of emergency in which they are involved and recognises that specific responses will vary with individual children and cultures. Throughout, attention is drawn to the importance of the child's age in determining both needs and appropriate responses.

General welfare issues involving unaccompanied children in emergencies are discussed with special emphasis on protecting the children's legal rights and recognising and treating trauma. Practical measures of care, including how to identify, register and interview unaccompanied children, the forms of emergency and interim provision, and measures for tracing and reuniting families are also described.

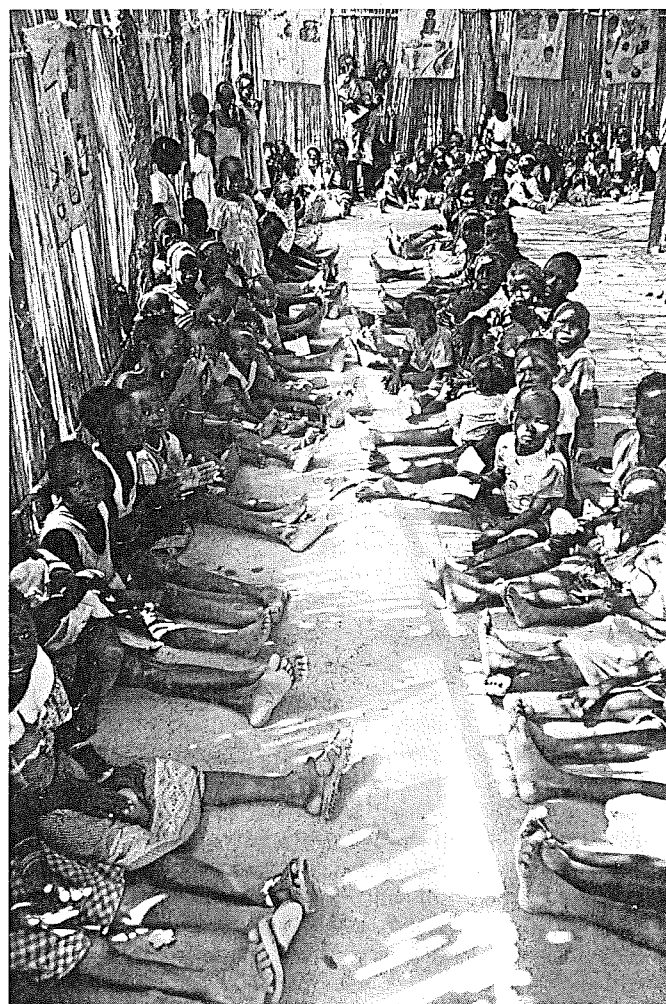
In addition to giving broad guidelines, numerous detailed practical suggestions are made and these are backed up by useful checklists and annexes. Brief and to the point, the text is presented in a lively style, with black and white photographs, insets, and plenty of sub-headings. Unfortu-

nately, the variety in the layout can be confusing to the reader and at times the text is almost too cryptic.

Two priority principles govern all the guidelines in the volume. The first is that any intervention to assist unaccompanied children should, above all, be in the children's best interests. The second insists that the goal of field workers should always be to reunite the children with their families. Experience of previous emergencies shows that, normally, it is in the children's best interests to be returned to their families, or at least to be placed with close relatives, neighbours or others from their community. The reader is strongly discouraged from arranging permanent placements which would alienate children from their community of origin. Equally, the need to provide long term assistance for vulnerable families to prevent separation during an emergency is stressed.

Other facets of the 'best interests' principle are also explored. For example, it is argued that while the individual and particular needs of unaccompanied children must be

Sudan Council of Churches Supplementary Feeding Centre for Children



Photograph by Jeremy Hartley, OXFAM

met, these children should not be awarded special standards of living or privileges as past experience has shown that this can encourage families to abandon their offspring. In line with this recommendation, field workers are strongly advised to build on existing local resources within the community whenever possible rather than introduce specialised interventions run by centralised agencies. Thus, foster care with local families is suggested as more appropriate than institutionalisation in some distant town.

While adherence to clear principles such as these is obviously necessary in a field guide of this nature, it might have been more helpful if mention had been made of the controversies and debates involved in emergency work with unaccompanied children. For example, the authors argue for a coordinated effort in response to disasters, without acknowledging that there can be many different vested interests and goals represented by the various agencies involved in emergency programmes. Field workers need to be alerted to the significant differences in policy and practice before they can protect the children in their care. Not all agencies agree on the best interests of the child. While the majority of agencies might agree that family reunification should be a major priority, others promote long term placement in institutions or through other measures such as inter-country adoption.

The reluctance to convey controversy in the guide is paralleled by the inclusion of only a minimal amount of illustrative case material. Of the cases mentioned, some are too cryptic to be enlightening. For example, the reader is left wondering why the 1975 Babylift from Vietnam to the United States and Britain resulted in an appallingly low rate of family reunification, while evacuations of Spanish and Biafran children during the civil wars in these countries and British children in the Second World War resulted in very high rates of reunion. Often a good example of a concrete situation can be far more informative than an abstract statement or a list of 'dos' and 'don'ts': the guide would have been much strengthened by the inclusion of such material.

Jo Boyden

Mageed, Fawzi A: *Adoption of Children, with special reference to the procedure of refugee child adoption in Sudan* (1988).

University of Juba Offprint.

In contrast to the previous volume, this article concentrates on just one of the possible interventions available to help children caught up in emergencies. It discusses adoption from a number of perspectives, both from an international viewpoint and also with specific reference to Sudan. Issues as diverse as the role of religious doctrine in the adoption process and the rights of adoptive children are covered.

The author begins by looking at adoption in the historical context, comparing the Muslim and Jewish traditions and showing how these are interpreted in adoption law. In the second part of the article the legal framework for the procedures of adoption of expatriate – and especially refugee – children in Sudan are examined. By describing one particular case, some of the problems with contemporary adoption procedure in Sudan are illustrated. A number of recommendations are made in relation to these procedures, with the aim of ensuring better protection both for adopted children and their parents by birth. Brief mention is made in the second half of the paper of the abuse of the adoption process at the international level. The author refers to the growing concern that children are being adopted in order to be recruited into drug trafficking, prostitution and other exploitative and illegal activities. The article finishes by calling for means to be sought to bring an end to such abuses.

The author argues that during the pre-Islamic period adoption was common. However, the Quran opposes adoption in the full sense, stating that the adoptive child cannot be considered as equal to other children in the family. Adoptive children are expected to retain the name of their father by birth, when this is known, and are not able to take the name of the adoptive parents. Another important theme is the question of inheritance within adoption. Some legal codes give greater protection to adoptive children than others, guaranteeing that they will inherit on an equal footing with children born into the family. In some instances, the adoptive child also retains inheritance rights within their family of origin. But, whatever the law dictates, the author points out that the main problem is to ensure that parents comply and that inheritance rights of adoptive children are not alienated by their parents.

Not all Muslim countries follow the Quranic law to the letter. In the case of Sudan, the author highlights the anomalous situation that exists, showing how different rules and procedures apply according to whether the child and/or the adoptive parents are nationals or expatriates. Whereas national adoptions are handled by the Department of Social Welfare, adoptions involving expatriates are overseen by the Commissioner for Refugees. Expatriate adoptions are shown to follow the same procedures as those employed in the resettlement of refugees abroad.

The author covers a great deal of ground in just a few pages. Although a number of interesting themes are raised, none of them is really well developed, because of the shortage of space. Moreover, the article unfortunately contains many typographical and grammatical errors, making it hard to follow at certain points. Given the broad scope of the work, it would benefit the reader to have some previous knowledge of the process of adoption and the doctrine of Islam. Ultimately, the paper will probably be of more interest to people concerned with adoption or with children's rights than those working with children in

emergencies. The focus is more on adoption itself and on the different sets of rights and obligations it entails than on the adoption of refugee children specifically.

Jo Boyden

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The Lowest of the Low.

Translated by Martin Chambers. Methuen.

This documentary exposes the living and working lives of illegal sub-contracted labourers working for fractional wages in the most dangerous and least protected areas of German industry. These workers include immigrants, many of whom are illegally in the country and some of whom are refugees. Forced to work continuous shifts, sometimes of twenty, thirty or more hours, with no compensation for injury or sickness, they are exposed to extreme temperatures, work sites that are precariously high or else underground. They haul heavy loads, breathe poisonous fumes and suffer racial abuse from their legally employed colleagues. Some prostitute themselves as guinea pigs to the pharmaceutical industry. All are at high risk of chronic ill-health. Their wages, a fraction of the sums made by the sub-contractors, are, if paid, insufficient to rent a home, let alone sustain a family.

The book, eminently readable, is a criticism of the system that condones the abuses described. It has had widespread repercussions. However, it is doubtful if the public outrage and law suits would have occurred had not the author been a German investigative journalist, living out the part of a Turkish worker. The writing of a real Turk would have had little appeal.

Rosemary Preston

Jason W. Clay, Sandra Steingraber and Peter Niggli (1988)

The Spoils of Famine, Ethiopian Famine Policy and Peasant Agriculture

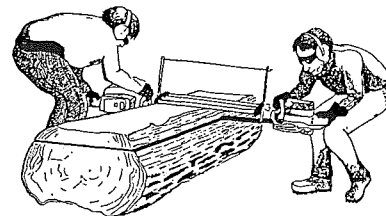
Cultural Survival Report No. 25. Cambridge, Mass.; Cultural Survival Inc. Price US \$15.00

This book follows Cultural Survival's previous report *Politics and the Ethiopian Famine 1984-5*, published in 1985. That report accused the international humanitarian agencies working in Ethiopia of 'help[ing] the Ethiopian government to get away with murder' by supplying it with the support it needed to implement its resettlement programme, which was killing thousands of people and depriving many more of basic human rights. *The Spoils of Famine* enlarges on this theme, including several chapters on the 'villagisation' programme. The authors allege that this has been carried out with great brutality, with the aims of freeing prime agricultural land for state farms, creating the conditions for collectivised production (under

which the government can take as much 'surplus' as it likes), and providing military control of potentially hostile populations. 'Villagisation' has been possible only because of the complicity of international agencies, and has reduced previously prosperous areas to the brink of famine. The evidence is provided by the testimony of refugees in Sudan and Somalia; Cultural Survival were not permitted to do research inside Ethiopia. Cultural Survival's

first report sparked a violent reaction, with prominent academics and UN officials working on the Ethiopian side condemning it for political bias, claiming the authors' ignorance of Ethiopian history, and dismissing the testimony of refugees as unreliable. It is true that some of the more extreme claims in the first report, such as the analysis of death rates, were open to criticism, and likewise this volume has an over-simplistic account of the land reform of 1975. Yet, once again, one is struck by the honesty and clarity with which the researchers lay their methods bare for independent verification, and the consistency of the refugees' accounts. We still await independent research from within Ethiopia, with free access to all areas, to provide an alternative account. It will be a great stain on the conscience of the 'humanitarian agencies' if, when they finally are able to do this essential research, the testimony of the refugees turns out to be correct.

Alex de Waal



E.G. Richards, Robert Plumptre and Stuart Wilson (1989)

Wood and Woodworking Tools: a handbook

published by I.T. Publications.

This handbook attempts to present non-technical aid workers with an elementary understanding of working with wood to make simple furniture, and the tools needed for this purpose.

The value of trees, their physical properties and methods of working with wood are briefly described in the first chapter. Subsequent chapters discuss different types of saw-mills: basic hand tools and workshop equipment, including clamps and lathes; and simple furniture designs.

The book brings together some useful information about simple wood-working tools. However, better editing could have helped to give some consistency of detail and layout in the text, and better illustrations. A bibliography and reference list would have been useful.

Philip Revell

Nobel, Peter (Ed) (1987)

Refugees and Development in Africa

Seminar Proceedings No 19, Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, Uppsala, Sweden.

The agonising spectre of hundreds of thousands of helpless human beings desperately fleeing homes and homelands to escape from persecution, oppression, conflicts, violence, war, poverty and deprivation, has been one of the characteristic features of the African scene in the past three decades of independence. The presence of large refugee populations in already poor African countries has serious implications for their development. Every person has the right to participate in and benefit from development in the sense of a progressive improvement in the standard and quality of their life. Undoubtedly, that group of human beings generally called 'refugees' have a role in this process. The first two papers in this volume, by Nobel and Dieng, provide an overview of the concepts involved in human rights including the right to development. Refugees can be both an asset and a liability in the development process. These and other questions related to the causes of refugee exoduses, the integration of refugees and the relation between development assistance and refugee assistance, are some of the pertinent issues which constitute the subject matter of this book.

Mekuria Bulcha, Adama Dieng, Gaim Kibreab and Peter Nobel are the contributors to this volume edited by the latter. Essentially, it is a report of a seminar on 'Refugees and Development in Africa' held in Uppsala on 28-30 October 1985, under the auspices of the Scandinavian Institute of African Studies (SIAS). It is rightly noted that the problem of refugees, despite claims to the contrary, is not purely an internal affair of any one state. Bulcha observes that there are two major factors behind most mass exoduses in the 'third world' today, namely: violent conflicts and competitive intervention by the superpowers for areas of influence, which complicate the already existing problems of nation-building. Further, the presence of over four million refugees cannot be perceived as merely symptomatic of political problems: they are, as well, manifestations of the structural socio-economic crisis which has gripped the continent.

The 'basket cases' of Ethiopia and the Sudan are ably analysed in the papers: 'Historical, Political and Social Causes of Mass Flight from Ethiopia,' 'Sociological and Economic factors in Refugee Integration: the Case of Ethiopian Exiles in the Sudan,' (by Mekuria Bulcha); 'Rural Eritrean Refugees in the Sudan: a Study of the Dynamics of Flight,' and 'Rural Refugee Land Settlements in Eastern Sudan: On the Road to Self-Sufficiency,' (by Gaim Kibreab).

Undoubtedly, substantial burdens on the general economic infrastructure of the asylum countries in Africa are associated with the acceptance of large refugee populations. The book gives several examples of ways in which

the status of refugees can be improved, whilst avoiding the problem of the refugees becoming a favoured group in an impoverished environment. Political responses are a prerequisite to the solution of the refugee problem, but the economic problems of Africa must also be tackled if the lives of the host country nationals, refugees and returnees are to be meaningfully improved.

In the concluding chapter, entitled 'Sociology, Economy and Law: Views in Common,' Bulcha, Kibreab and Nobel have agreed that:

'the root causes of the refugee flows are the major part of these problems. A serious effort to understand and remove the causes is the necessary counterpart to responses after an exodus. There is little wisdom in treating only symptoms'.

On the whole, this volume, which is the twelfth book on refugees published by SIAS, is a very valuable contribution to the literature on this important subject.

Kay Mathews

Visiting Fellow, RSP

Robert F. Gorman (1987)

Coping with Africa's Refugee Burden: a Time for Solutions

published by Dordrecht, Martinus Nijhof. xv+206pp, ISBN 90-247-3457-6 (UN Sales Nr.: E.87.xv RS/15)

Published under the auspices of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), this book provides an account of the Second International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa (ICARA-II), United Nations, Geneva in July 1984. It traces the evolution of efforts to link refugees and development assistance in the African context, and provides a detailed account of the policies, organisational constraints and roles of governments, international and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in responding to the refugee-related development needs of poor host countries in Africa.

The number of refugees in Africa, no more than a quarter of a million in the early 1960s, had dramatically increased to over five million (excluding much larger numbers of internally displaced persons) by the early 1980s, then representing half the world's total refugee population. Undoubtedly, the refugee burden has placed severe strains on many of Africa's least developed and most seriously affected nations. This situation has led to various international initiatives to deal with the problem, the most important among them being ICARA-II held in 1984.

Earlier in 1979, the Pan-African Conference on the Situation of Refugees in Africa, convened in Arusha, Tanzania, contributed somewhat to the idea of refugee-related development aid by introducing the concept of burden-sharing. Subsequently, ICARA-I, held in Geneva in April

1981, focused on the emergency assistance needs of the refugees themselves but did little to address the question of the additional development burden facing asylum countries. As a result, many Africans considered ICARA-I a failure. However, the idea of refugee-related development assistance gradually gained momentum as exemplified in ICARA-II in 1984. Here, it was generally agreed that neither refugee assistance that ignores development, nor development assistance that ignores refugee-related burdens, can be truly effective in the long run.

One of the main objectives of ICARA-II, as laid down in the UN General Assembly Resolution (37/197), paragraph 5c, is: 'to consider the impact imposed on national economies of the concerned countries and to provide assistance to strengthen their social and economic infrastructure to cope with the burden of refugees and returnees'. Professor Gorman's book is a useful commentary on ICARA-II. Part I (pp. 7-44) is devoted to a discussion of the relationship of refugee aid and development assistance and the efforts of the international community to deal with the problem. Part II (pp. 45-150) deals with the response of the various actors to the main theme of ICARA-II in detail. In Part III (pp. 151-170) the prospects for the successful linkage of refugee and development assistance are assessed and recommendations are made for future action by the international community. Also included at the end of the book are six useful appendices which reproduce relevant UN General Assembly Resolutions and Guidelines and the Final Declaration and Programme of Action of ICARA-II, plus a select bibliography on the subject. However, the value of the book should also be assessed in the light of its basic assumptions, methodology and the validity of its conclusions. Even though the book provides much empirical data, it lacks a coherent theoretical framework and analytical approach.

The conventional 'durable' solutions of repatriation: resettlement in a third country; integration in the host country; and voluntary repatriation, have so far proved to be illusory. Indeed, the promotion of self-reliance is vital so that refugees do not become 'permanent wards' of the international community or 'a continual drain on the host country's resources'. This necessitates the linking together of refugee relief and development assistance.

Professor Gorman has rightly stressed the need for increased co-operation between concerned UN agencies, particularly UNHCR and UNDP. However, at the end of this book, one is left with the impression that the more crucial questions regarding the root causes of refugee flows in Africa, as well as permanent solutions to the problem, have been neglected. The usual 'humanitarian' responses should not be confused with the solution to the underlying causes of the refugee problem in Africa. Valiant efforts have been made to deal with specific symptoms, rather than with the root causes of the problem, the disease itself, but the experience of the past three decades has demonstrated that Africa's refugee crisis is not amen-

able to conventional approaches and solutions. It is a pity that most available literature on the subject, including the book under discussion, choose to ignore this reality. The problems of underdevelopment and other human rights violations, the mounting crisis of democracy and foreign intervention, the increasing militarisation of the continent and its maintenance in the strategic zones of the great powers, have been crucial factors in creating the African refugee crisis. It is a pity that these issues are not often considered in books dealing with 'solutions' to Africa's refugee problem.

Despite its grandiose title, impressive layout, and material information, Gorman's book contributes little to a critical understanding of the dynamics of refugee problems in Africa.

Kay Mathews
Visiting Fellow, RSP

ARE THERE ANY ENVIRONMENTAL REFUGEES?

A COMMENT

Following Ken Wilson's review of Jodi Jacobson's *Environmental Refugees: A Yardstick of Habitability* published in RPN 4, we have received the following comment.

Ken Wilson's review of Jodi Jacobson's *Environmental Refugees: A Yardstick of Habitability* leaves much to be desired. Refugee studies is not as yet a well-established academic field. For this reason book reviews in the field need to pay attention to both the structures of books and how they relate to refugees. This last point is particularly important with regard to a controversial title like the one above. In his review, Mr Wilson has not asked the only important question that needs to be asked. This is: are there, or could there ever be, any environmental refugees?

During the last two decades, as the numbers of refugees have increased and the geographical origins of refugees have become more numerous and diverse, a search for a proper definition of refugees has also quietly gathered momentum. This search has two distinct trends. On the one hand there are those people and organisations eager to help refugees, who have sought to broaden the definition of refugees so as to include as many people as possible. On the other hand, there are governments and certain politicians or political parties who have sought to restrict the definition so as to exclude as many people as possible. This search has almost taken the form of a political struggle between the two groups. The recent case of the Sri Lankan who took refuge in a Manchester church, is a manifestation of this struggle. His supporters were con-

vinced that he was a refugee, and the government was convinced that he was not a refugee. As a result of this struggle, the concept of refugee has become a matter of debate with serious consequences.

Refugees have been taken too lightly, humiliated and even persecuted. In particular, the original humanitarian approach to their problems has been replaced by political approaches on the part of politicians and among academicians, refugees have become just another abstract field in the social sciences. Now we talk about 'economic migrants', 'economic refugees', 'disaster victims', 'illegal aliens', and 'environmental refugees', and 'refugees' without any distinction.

The fact remains that the 1951 Convention's definition of a refugee, though rather technically worded, is the only correct and acceptable definition: that a refugee is a person who is 'outside the country of his (or her) nationality owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted...' From this quotation, two simple but important conclusions can be drawn: a) only those persons outside the country of their nationality owing to the fear of persecution are refugees; b) refugees are essentially and strictly political victims.

This implies that there can never be environmental or economic refugees. If, for example, one of the off-shore islands of the United States were to become uninhabitable through pollution or even sinking under the ocean due to some natural disaster, the inhabitants who managed to get to the mainland could not be called refugees or treated as such since they would still be inside the country of their nationality. They are simply displaced persons. Likewise, if an Icelander is to escape some natural or man-made disaster and flee to the UK, and because of fear of that disaster, is unwilling or unable to return to Iceland, he or she is not a refugee because it is not a political persecution.

It is important for academicians to restrain themselves from wild interpretations of what refugees are. It may be easy to gain a doctorate and/or prestige by coming up with a 'novel' idea, but this should not be done by ruining the identity of already unfortunate people who depend on this identity to exist. Some may claim that there is no harm in talking or debating, or in trying to broaden the meaning of 'refugee', but this kind of academic romance puts governments and politicians in a panic, confuses them and makes them even more sceptical and cynical. The extremely hard and inhuman attitudes that most governments adopt towards refugees today, have their origins partly in this search to re-define refugees. This situation cannot be allowed to continue.

James Appe
School of Social Sciences
Hampshire College, Amherst, Massachusetts, USA

PUBLICATIONS

Villagisation

Survival International has published a report on *Ethiopia's Villagisation Programme* (Price £2.50, US \$5.00, 60 pp). Villagisation is a scheme to move the entire rural population of Ethiopia – peasants, herdsman, hunters – most of whom used to live in separate homesteads, into centralised, planned settlements. According to this report, out of a total of 38-39 million, 11 million people have been villagised. Although government propaganda proclaims the benefits of life in the new villages, the evidence shows that the programme is very unpopular with most of the peasantry. Observers fear its effect on production and the environment.

In the view of Survival International, even at its most peaceful, villagisation is being imposed without regard to the desires and rights of the people. It is part of a process aimed at destroying traditional cultures and social systems, particularly those of the Ethiopian minority peoples, and imposing central control.

To order a copy of the report write to:

Survival International
310 Edgware Road
London W2 1DY, UK

International Children's Rights Monitor is a quarterly publication of Defence for Children International. The Monitor is also published in French under the title *Tribune Internationale des Droits de l'Enfant* and in Spanish, under the title *Tribuna Internacional de los Derechos del Niño*. (Subscriptions: Annual rates for four issues: Individuals: Sw.Fr. 20, airmail 25; organisations: Sw.Fr. 40, airmail 45.)

Defence for Children International (DCI) is an independent non-governmental organisation founded as an international movement in 1979 (The International Year of the Child). It seeks to foster and ensure on-going, systematic and concerted international action to promote and protect the rights of the child. DCI's *International Children's Rights Monitor* is the organisation's major tool for making known problems and responses in the children's rights field, and is distributed, in its three language editions, to members, subscribers and correspondents in nearly 90 countries.

For further information write to:

Defence for Children International
PO Box 88
CH-1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland
Tel: (022) 340 558

The International Catholic Child Bureau (ICCB) is a non-profit organisation dedicated to serving children worldwide, regardless of their religious creed. In October 1988 ICCB held a conference on the spiritual and psychosocial needs of Southeast Asian refugee children who resettled in the United States. Conference proceedings and recommendations will be published in early 1989 by ICCB, Incorporated. Those interested should write to:

ICCB, Incorporated
c/o ICO Center
323 East 47th Street
New York, NY 10017, USA
Tel: (212) 355-3992

Women's Groups

No Short Cuts is a starter resource book for women's group field workers, produced by Change International. The four main sections of the book are: how can a field-worker support women's groups?; women's group organisation; women's group activities ideas; and resources. The booklet provides ideas to start up discussions and resources to follow them up, including addresses for free advice and the exchange of ideas, and reading references. Write to:

'No Short Cuts'
c/o Change International Reports
P O Box 824
London SE24 9SS
UK

Refugee Women in Britain

Women's Education Group has published a double issue of *GEN*, issue 12/13, February 1988, price £2.00, entitled *Refugee Women in Britain*. The issue includes 'Refugee

— Women and International Law', 'Refugee Women and Homelessness', 'Tamil Refugees', 'Politics of Exile' and much more. It also has an extremely useful resources and reading list at the end that includes UK agencies working with refugees and refugee community groups.

Available from:

Women's Education Resource Centre
ILEA Drama and Tape Centre
Princeton Street, London WC1, UK
Tel: 01 242 6807

Bibliography/Guide Books

A bibliography of articles on refugees in Malawi from national newspapers (October 1986 – October 1988) has been compiled by V. Somba to assist researchers. The main sources of information are taken from *The Daily Times* and *Malawi News*.

Those interested should contact:

MacNight R.E. Machika
Chancellor College, University of Malawi
PO Box 280, Zomba, Malawi

Race in Britain: a Research and Information Guide (1988), by Paul Gordon, published by Runnymede Trust. Price £3.50 plus 40p p&p. This booklet aims to provide a guide to sources of information on racism and racial discrimination in Britain. It does not provide the information itself but is intended to assist those doing their own research by pointing them to appropriate and relevant bibliographies, official reports, key books, pamphlets and articles, journals and organisations.

If you are not already a member of RPN and would like to join, please fill in the tear-off form below and return it to us as soon as possible.

<p>*YES, I WOULD LIKE TO BECOME A MEMBER OF RPN</p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p>Town _____ Country _____</p> <p>Organisation/Institution/Basis of interest _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Send to: Refugee Participation Network, Refugee Studies Programme, Queen Elizabeth House, 21 St Giles, OXFORD OX1 3LA, UK.</p>
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Anti-Racist Resources: A Guide for Adult & Community Education (1988), by Paul Gordon, Rosy Massil and David Rosenberg, published by Runnymede Trust. Price £5.95 plus 75p p&p. This guide represents a large amount of research and collation of resources with an anti-racist perspective, for use by people working in community and adult education.

There is often a shortage of resources suitable for adult students in areas which tend to be well resourced for school children. The offer of a guide, clearly organised and covering a wide range of original sources, will be an asset to people researching their own collection of materials, as well as those hoping to use existing work. Both these publications are available from:

Runnymede Trust
178 Gower Street
London NW1 2NB, UK

Human Rights

Basic Documents on International Migration Law (1988), Richard Plender (ed.). Published by Martinus Nijhoff in association with Interights. Paperback price: £17.95.

This book brings together, in a single volume, the principal international conventions, declarations and instruments governing the law on international migration. It includes the full texts of the principal treaties and declarations governing nationality, the protection of refugees and migrant labour, as well as relevant extracts from human rights instruments. It also contains the texts of the principal items of legislation of European Communities and the principal instruments adopted by the Council of Europe, the Benelux Community and the economic communities of West and Central Africa, and of the Caribbean.

Available from:
Interights
46 Kingsway, London WC2B 6EN, UK
Tel: (01) 242 5581

Mental Health

VAST Newsletter is a quarterly publication of the Vancouver Association for the Survivors of Torture. Short and to-the-point, it updates VAST members on issues relating to mental health, such as research and education, support group therapy, literature, and forthcoming conferences and seminars. Subscriptions are \$10 – individuals, \$25 – corporate members, \$100 or more – benefactors.

For further information write to:
The Editor
VAST Newsletter
105-1045 West Broadway
Vancouver, B.C. V6H 1E3, Canada

The Impaired Mind (March 1988) is published by the Psychiatry Centre for Afghan Refugees. The Psychiatry Centre was established in June 1986 with the official permission of the Pakistan authorities. The main objective of the Centre is to provide psychiatric care and information on the psychological problems of Afghan refugees, including torture victims. *The Impaired Mind* includes such articles as 'Refugee Camps and Torture Victims', 'Disorders caused by abuse of psychoactive drugs', 'Refugee Camp Syndrome' and also features several case histories.

For further information write to:
Psychiatric Centre for Afghans
Shaheen Town, University Road
PO Box No. 641 G.P.O.
Peshawar, Pakistan
Tel: 42987

REFUGEE SCHOLARSHIPS

Ethiopian Refugee Scholarship scheme

The aim of this scheme is to provide scholarships for refugees, who are in the Sudan, to go on to further education *inside that country*. These scholarships will be funded by Oxford University Junior Common Rooms (JCRs). The scheme has been set up by an Oxford student, Dan McCallum. It took a year's planning and several colleges

helped fund his trip to Sudan during which the scheme was successfully worked out. There will be:

- a) Five scholarships to Kassala Nursing College
- b) Three scholarships to New Halfa Agricultural Institute
- c) Three scholarships to Port Sudan Female Teacher Training College.

Students who study in these institutions will learn skills which are relevant to the Sudan. Refugees can do a far more effective job than foreign aid workers whose contracts usually only last a year. They also speak the language and understand the culture of the Sudan. Education is the most positive way to promote African development and these student refugees will use their skills within Africa for the rest of their lives. The cost of the scheme will be £10,000 each year for eleven scholarships. The money will go towards college fees, maintaining the students, and providing equipment for the institutions at which they study. If readers have any questions regarding the scheme then please contact:

Dan McCallum
St Edmund Hall
Oxford, UK

REPATRIATION

Events at Burma's Border

The Tak Repatriation Centre was set up as a transit camp on 22 December 1988 by the Thai military, to repatriate Burmese students from Thailand until 31 March 1989. This was despite the Thai Cabinet decision of 22 November to offer asylum to Burmese students.

- A total of 328 students have returned from the Tak Repatriation Centre since its inception, including the last group of twenty-two students reported repatriated on 8 February 1989. Other students continue to return on their own overland. The number who have returned independently is roughly estimated at 1800.
- Concern was raised by Amnesty International and other groups as to whether the repatriation was actually voluntary.
- Burmese government spokesmen said international agencies would not be allowed to monitor the safety of returning students since the government regards the matter as part of Burma's internal affairs.
- UNHCR did protest against the Thai repatriation programme for Burmese students and requested a UNHCR presence along the border. However, no response has been given by the Thai government.
- On 31 January, the Tak Governor, along with twenty-two other Thai officials, accompanied five or six Burmese students back to Burma from the Tak Repatriation Centre. The Governor met with the Saw Maung regime and praised their efforts to restore law and order while rebuilding their country's economy.

Source: Notes taken from press reports prepared by Therese M. Caouette, Jesuit Refugee Service Asia/Pacific.

HUMAN RIGHTS PRIZE

In commemoration of the 40th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the French National Consultative Commission for Human Rights has awarded a human rights prize to the European Legal Network on Asylum (ELENA) which is a project of ECRE (European Consultation on Refugees & Exiles). This prize, worth £15,000, is for the future development of the legal network. A symbolic medallion was handed over to members of the ELENA Working Group by the French Prime Minister, Michel Rocard, in Paris on 16 February 1989. The ELENA Working Group were especially appreciative of the efforts of France Terre d'Asile in promoting the ELENA work to the members of the Commission.

Official recognition for work in defence of the rights of refugees and asylum seekers is very rare these days. This award is a tribute to the work of those who created the ELENA network and have given their time, ideas and energy, usually voluntarily, to ensure its success.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Institute for International Migration Issues (IMI)

With the advent of 1992 in mind and the belief that further work is urgently needed to improve the position of refugees, IMI is planning the European Refugee Congress for December 1989. Four themes have been provisionally selected for the agenda:

- Permits (internal/external borders)
- Employment and education
- Public Health
- Media

This programme is open to change depending on the response of those interested.

For further information write to:

Eli A. Ros
General Secretary
IMI, Postbus 227
2000 AE Haarlem, The Netherlands

REFUGEE HOLIDAYS

John Crosby, recently returned to Britain after working for two years in a Salvadorean refugee camp in Honduras, has submitted a proposal for refugee holidays for Latin American exiles. He feels there is a need for these people to come together to reaffirm their cultural roots and identities, to offer mutual support to each other, and to encourage a cultural identity through the Spanish language for their children. The aim is to hold one or two such weeks in the second half of September in SW Scotland with the hope that this will develop into an annual event.

John Crosby is in the process of applying to various organisations and trusts for grants and bursaries to contribute to the costs of these weeks, and to enable as many exiles as possible to come without being hampered by expense. He would like to hear, as soon as possible, from any people interested in such a week, and would welcome any ideas as to what people would most like to get from it.

Those interested should write to:

John Crosby
*Orchardton House, Auchencairn
Castle Douglas, Galloway DG7 1QL, UK
Tel: Auchencairn (055664) 366*

ORGANISATIONS

Development Innovations and Networks (IRED) is an international association of individuals and network partners throughout the world who share the same values and ideals and who try to promote the same development strategies. IRED facilitates South-South exchanges and communication among grassroots associations, and helps in the development of local and national networks. *IRED Forum* is published quarterly (price for four issues per year: US \$25, Third World US \$12) to disseminate information, support and experience to a network of 800 peasant associations, artisans' and women's groups, and organisations for development action in urban surroundings.

For further information write to:

General Secretariat
*IRED3 rue de Varembe, Case 116
1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland*

IRED Forum can also be obtained from IRED regional offices in Niger, Zimbabwe, India, Peru and Sri Lanka, the addresses of which are available from the Geneva-based Secretariat.

Cambodian New Generation is a community based non-profit organisation serving refugees in Northern Carolina. They aim to create economic self-sufficiency and a higher quality of life among refugees. To achieve these goals the following are offered: The Youth Resource Centre and Youth Tutoring Programmes; classes in English as a Second Language (ESL); Effective Parenting for Academic Achievement and Crime Prevention; and services in Vocational Training and Employment, Naturalisation and Citizenship, Housing, Family Counselling, Cultural Preservation, and Community Development.

For further information write to:

Cambodian New Generation
*1909 E 14th St., Suite 202
Oakland CA 94606, USA
Tel: (415) 532 0804*

Relations between 'southern' and 'northern' non-governmental agencies

In March 1988, the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) established a task force to prepare a paper on relationships between northern and southern NGOs. The paper is entitled 'Relations between Southern and Northern NGOs in the Context of Sustainability, Participation and Partnership in Development'. The 1980s have been marked by an increase in international NGO activity in the developing world. In 1986, for example, they raised \$3.3 billion and received an additional \$1.5 billion of aid money from governmental and inter-governmental sources, representing 10 per cent of official development assistance. Northern NGOs have been remarkably free from regulation or any system of accountability to southern governments or to the recipients of aid. As the paper puts it they are '... coming under pressure to re-evaluate their strategies and respective roles in the development process.'

The discussion paper reviews recent research and experience in development, summarises the main issues affecting relations between southern and northern NGOs, analyses the basis for genuine and equitable partnerships, and proposes concrete action that ICVA could pursue in this field. This paper is a useful context in which to place any discussion of the recent steps taken by the Sudan government in regulating the work of foreign voluntary agencies. (see below)

Available from:

ICVA
*13 rue Gautier
1201 Geneva, Switzerland
Tel: (022) 32 66 00*

Sudan takes steps to organise the work of foreign voluntary agencies

The Sudan government has made a Provisional Order, entitled 'The Foreign Voluntary Work in the Sudan (organisation) Act, 1988'. This legislation is designed so that, when promulgated, a technical committee for organising the work of foreign voluntary agencies working in the Sudan will be established under the authority of the Minister for Social Welfare and Displaced Persons and the Council of Ministers. A registration form has already been forwarded to the head offices of agencies which currently operate in the country. Agencies have been asked to provide their local Sudanese Embassy with brief reports of their organisation's work and achievements during the period they have been working in the Sudan. Copies of an Explanatory Note and the Provisional Order may be obtained through any Sudanese Embassy.

LETTERS

James Cope, formerly attached to RSP for a short period, is at present travelling extensively in Africa in an attempt to distribute and promote RPN more widely. From Sudan he has written:

'As would be expected, I have encountered mixed reactions to RPN from the delighted to the extremely cynical. The most cynical are those at the upper end of the hierarchy. They do not consider reading such magazines and are critical of the concept, but of course, RPN is not designed for them.

Further down, so to speak, smaller agencies are either more grateful or more polite..... I think it is a problem that usually only one copy goes to each building and does not get circulated enough. Where the magazine is most appreciated, read, and acted on is amongst the younger practitioners. I have met a lot of these and have found them eager to learn and to improve. These were the people who would talk and ask questions.

As for the refugees, the Network is only really accessible and digestible to refugees who are working with agencies. For the 'average' refugee, the length of the magazine, the nature of the language and the type of article make it all too daunting and no more than a gift, gratefully accepted, with thanks for the concern over their plight.

Both I and others have concluded that in trying to appeal to such a broad readership, RPN has a little in it for everyone, but not a great deal for anyone.....

One more thing. Several people have, I think wisely, suggested that 'research' articles should be more action-oriented rather than policy-oriented. This seems to make a lot of sense as the researchers are linked more with practitioners than they are with policy makers.....

I think it will always be impossible to get real refugee participation from England. The only way for that to happen (and there is great potential here) is to have some regionally based local networks.'

We are grateful to James for having put forward these views. There are both criticisms and suggestions. On the question of regional networks and greater refugee participation we have received a letter from Christian Freres of the Comision Fulbright in Bogata, Columbia:

'I live in Latin America and know that relatively few people other than the well-educated speak or read English. Perhaps a regional organisation could sponsor a Spanish edition.

I have also noted that of RPN's four objectives, one has not been well addressed and that is the one that pertains to the 'P' in RPN: 'participation of refugees in

the planning and implementation of all aspects of the programmes which affect them.' With the exception of a few articles in RPN 3, this objective was not addressed and it is a shame because it should be the rationale for the Network.'

In contrast to these two letters, we heard from Nora Sveaass of the Psychological Team for Refugees in Norway:

'We feel quite strongly that RPN, especially as it now seems to be developing, has been successful in reaching its objectives of becoming a true newsletter, of interest to a broad group of people, both to those experiencing refugee life themselves, and to those working with refugees in different ways.

One suggestion might be to focus a bit more on the countries and life conditions people have been forced to run away from. That is specific information on violation of human rights, political persecution and so on.....'

Perhaps the greatest difficulty RPN encounters is indeed the fact that it is trying to reach a broad group of people. In the last two issues of RPN we have tried to take some of your suggestions on board by including a few more articles written by refugees themselves, and by addressing some of the life conditions people have had to run away from, for example, 'The Kurdish Refugee Emergency' in RPN 4. Once again we would urge readers to send in their contributions and responses.

NEWS FROM RSP

The Guest Editor for this issue (RPN 5) is Sally Baden, assisted by Mary Kilmartin. The layout, design and printing is by OXFAM.

Participation and Postage

We have received a few comments from Network members, that surface mail takes too long to reach overseas destinations thereby restricting full participation. We would like to remind readers that RPN operates on charitable funding and that air mail would considerably increase costs. However, we would also like to point out that it is never too late to participate, bearing in mind that the topics and themes included in RPN are ongoing concerns and will continually be referred to in future editions. So please keep sending your contributions: they are unlikely to be out of date.

Training for Expatriate Agency Workers

RSP has received a request from a donor government for the establishment of some in-country training for expatriate agency workers sent overseas to work in the development field. This government-funded organisation already has a three week training programme for participants with transferrable skills, such as engineers, doctors, nurses etc. They also include those who are simply interested in 'helping' people in poorer countries. The government in question wishes to find institutions in various countries which might be prepared to take on this much-needed work, for which they would be paid.

RSP has a training programme for practitioners working in the field of development and displaced persons and has agreed to approach colleagues to explore the possibility for such a programme being mounted in their country. Anthea Sanyasi, RSP's Course Training Officer, would be pleased to share materials and even to assist where needed in establishing such in-country training.

We would be grateful if you would write to RSP in response to this. Once we have ascertained the level of available assistance we will put you in touch with the government-funded organisation which made the initial request. If you are not personally interested, please would you put us in touch with someone in your country who has the appropriate skills and possible interest in developing such a training programme.

International Training Workshop

In April, RSP organised an International Workshop on the training of practitioners working with refugees and displaced peoples. The basis of this event was collaboration between agencies and individuals to exchange ideas, information and experiences, with the aim of developing more effective training programmes and consequently improving practice. 40-50 participants from 27 agencies and 9 different countries took part in the 5 day event, with wide-ranging presentations of individual training programmes and on particular target groups.

UNHCR gave a summary of their training activities and approaches. The School of Social Work, Denmark, outlined courses designed for a cross-sectoral and cross-professional target group. The Agency for Personal Service Overseas gave a session on the training of overseas development workers. Two returned volunteers from closed camps in Hong Kong, reflected on how appropriate training would have benefitted them, and the quality of service they were able to provide for refugees. In the area of specific skills, the Richmond Fellowship College, London, presented sessions on further counselling skills and stress management. Other contributions were made by: the University of Gothenburg (Sweden); the Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture (UK); the Psychosocial Team (Norway); and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. Finally, RSP presented its training programme of academic and practitioner related long and short courses. Workshop sessions were held on identified training needs, training methods, and meeting the needs of refugees. These meetings facilitated the development of an informal network of people with common professional interests, and promoted the interchange of ideas on appropriate and effective training.

Showak Magazine

RSP has agreed to lend their support to Sudan's regional network project by distributing copies of their *Showak Magazine* either with this issue or with RPN 6 (depending on when we receive the magazines) to selected countries in North America and Europe. Those who receive a copy are urged to support Sudan in this enterprise by subscribing to the magazine (£25 for four issues). (See James Cope's article *Regional Network*)

Directory of RPN members

To facilitate the development of regional networks and to encourage more exchange between RPN members, we intend to include a directory of all RPN members with RPN 6. If there are any members who do *not* wish their names and addresses to be included in the directory, then please let us know as soon as possible.

Publications

RSP has published a Report on the International Symposium (4-7 January 1989): *The Refugee Crisis: British and Canadian Responses*, co-sponsored by the Refugee Studies Programme and the Refugee Documentation Project, York University, Canada. To order please write to RSP.

RSP is also currently compiling *Refugees and Displaced Peoples: A Resource Guide*, to be published by Hans Zell Publishers as an imprint in the Saur division of Butterworths. This will identify a wide variety of sources of information in the study of displaced peoples, such as an annotated directory of major libraries and archives, a select bibliography of the most important monographs, lists of publishers, journals and research institutions. The editor, Julian Davies, would welcome any additional information for inclusion.