

RSP/QEH

Refugee Participation Network



Newsletter No. 1

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Biographical note

Dr Maknun Gamaledin-Ashami, research officer who manages the Refugee Participation Network, is a development specialist with research experience in the Horn of Africa.

He has worked in Ethiopia as a manager of a rural cooperative and also sat on government committees dealing with agriculture; has tutored undergraduates at the University of Cambridge on social and political aspects of third world development; and has done research on famine, pastoralism and development.

His interests in refugee issues began in 1982 while doing field work in Djibouti. Since 1985 he has been involved in resettlement issues in the UK.

Credit

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Welcome to the first edition of the Refugee Participation Network (RPN) newsletter. Funding for the RPN, which is based at the Refugee Studies Programme, Queen Elizabeth House, Oxford, has been obtained from the World Food Programme, BANDAID, and the Norwegian Refugee Council.

The overall objective of the RPN is to establish a link through which practitioners, researchers and policy makers can communicate and benefit from each other's practical experience and research results. Those working for host governments, voluntary agencies and international humanitarian agencies acquire invaluable experience but are often too busy to record it; those doing research publish in places and in a style which often make their findings inaccessible or irrelevant to practitioners. The RPN intends to bridge this gap and in this way hopes to generate interactive research, establishing a data base which will provide policy makers with unique access to data from the field. Hopefully, researchers and practitioners can together build up the much needed institutional memory, improving management of refugee programmes and the delivery of services.

The Research Officer managing the programme will spend half his time on appropriate research and half establishing and running the network. The international network of researchers and practitioners will involve officials of host governments, international and local agency workers, academics, private consultants and refugees. Network members will receive mailings twice a year. These will include a newsletter containing announcements of conferences, workshops, short accounts of experience and ongoing research, summaries of conferences, a list of publications and full-length articles on particular themes. There will be no membership fee. However we expect members to actively contribute and we will be happy to publish long articles as Network papers, short accounts of particular experiences, comments on Network papers, or simply questions which other networkers may be interested to answer or comment on. You will be hearing from us from now on in June and

November each year. In order for you to receive regular mailings it is absolutely essential to complete and return the membership form.

This edition draws heavily upon a visit by the research officer to Sudan in August and September of this year. We are aware of the regional bias which we wish to transcend in our future editions, as the Network's concern is global.

We decided to include summaries of the outcome of two important workshops held recently. In Showak, Sudan (10th - 14th July 1987), the refugee-based organizations held a workshop on the relationship between refugees and their hosts. We believe that the Sudan experience has relevance to refugee situations elsewhere, and sharing of experience will be an important feature of our newsletter. The Showak workshop was unique — as far as we know such a meeting of refugees and their hosts has never occurred before in any country in the world. Additionally the agenda for discussions was prepared by the refugees and refugee-based organizations, thus reflecting their own interests and aspirations.

The second gathering, held in Amsterdam (24th -25th September 1987), was conducted jointly by the University of Khartoum and the Free University of Amsterdam, and concerned the research findings of the project 'Eritreans in Kassala'. Their findings give a concrete example of the dynamic nature of refugee communities in their struggle for survival. The approach adopted by the research team is radical and new as it departs from studying refugee communities in isolation from the surrounding communities and instead analyses refugees in the context of their environment.

Both workshops challenge the basic assumptions embodied in current views about refugees (who are normally depicted as being inert, passive and dependent), and in the Kassala project in the way they have been studied by researchers.

The report on the Kasha (i.e.the rounding up of refugees

without legal documents by the security service) in Khartoum during the events of last March by Dr Fawzi A/Mageed, a law lecturer at Juba University, Sudan and a RSP visiting fellow, reflects our concern for the promotion of refugee protection. The report from Darfour, Sudan by Alex de Waal sheds a new light on the causes of famine which has implications for food assistance.

We hope that RPN will act as a useful forum for dialogue, for the exchange of ideas and information. Write to the RPN as a means of communicating and sharing your experiences and views whether as a researcher, practitioner or as a refugee.

We would very much like to hear your comments and suggestions for priority activities for the Network. As the next edition is coming out in well under six months, we would appreciate an early reply from you.

Maknun Gamaledin-Ashami, Research Officer and Network Manager

How the RPN came into being

The idea of the RPN arose at a meeting held at Cret Berard, Switzerland in December 1985, jointly convened by the UNHCR and ICVA. It was felt that there is an urgent need to devise a method of rapid dissemination of information in the form of short, easy-to-read articles of common interest to those involved in refugee assistance. The participants recognized that there is a gap between research and practice, and that this can be bridged by selecting and digesting experience, research and practical information, and by disseminating this to members of a network, who in turn contribute their own comments and ideas.

Robert Chambers of the Institute of Development Studies, of the University of Sussex, was asked by the participants at the Cret

Berard meeting to look into the matter. He approached the Refugee Studies Programme with the suggestion that it respond to this urgent need, and recommended that the network model of the London-based Overseas Development Institute should be examined.

On the 9th May, 1986 a meeting was convened in Oxford by the RSP to which fifteen agencies concerned with refugees and the dissemination of information were invited. Comments on the proposal to establish a refugee network were received from UNHCR, the World Council of Churches, the Jesuit Refugee Service and World Vision. The meeting was attended by twenty-five including representatives of the British Refugee Council, the Independent Commission on International Humanitarian Issues, the Relief and Development Institute, Oxfam, the Overseas Development Institute and the Refugee Studies Programme. It was generally agreed that the model successfully developed by the Overseas Development Institute could be applied to the refugee field.

The Refugee Studies Programme

The Refugee Studies Programme (RSP) was established in 1982 at Queen Elizabeth House (QEH) Oxford University. QEH is the University's international development centre. It pursues basic and applied research and teaching and attracts both practitioners and academics from developing countries. In addition to RSP, QEH comprises the Food Studies Group, the Centre for Cross-Cultural Research on Women, the Contemporary China Programme and the Foreign Service Course, and it also incorporates the former Institute of Commonwealth Studies and Agricultural Economics.

RSP brings together academics, professionals from host governments, agency personnel and above all refugees themselves. It was founded on the belief that the knowledge and experience which has accumulated in the field of refugee assistance deserves systematic study, and that such study should be in a multi-disciplinary setting and should lead to

new approaches that can benefit current practice. Since 1985 thirty-five visiting fellows, practitioners and academics have been attached to the RSP. Courses, practical training programmes, visiting fellowships, symposia and workshops, documentation and a growing body of publications have established the Refugee Studies Programme as a major centre for research in the field of refugee studies and all aspects of forced migration.

The objectives of the Refugee Studies Programme are to study and address:

- * International refugee policy issues
- * The root cause of refugee movements
- * The social, economic and political impact of refugees on their hosts
- * The legal status of refugees and their protection
- * The training needs of host countries, refugee-based and indigenous agencies
- * The evaluation of emergency assistance programmes and resettlement programmes for refugees

And to act as a catalyst for dialogue between refugees and those responsible for their welfare.

The Mailing List

Please complete and return the enclosed membership form if you would like to join the Refugee Participation Network. If you do not return the completed form, we will assume that you do not wish to remain on our mailing list.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank those who responded to our circular letter of July 1987, in which we announced the establishment of the RPN, both for the interest you have shown in our activities and for providing us with a list of names and addresses. We now have some 700 names and addresses of potential members and we hope that all of you will

return the completed membership form.

We have plans to publish a register of the RPN members based on their completed membership form at some later date. This will make it possible for members to be informed of each others' work.

WHY A REFUGEE PARTICIPATION NETWORK?

In the spirit of the ICVA/UNHCR meeting at Cret Berard in December 1985, and of the meeting of NGO representatives and others at Queen Elizabeth House on 9 May 1986, the words 'refugee participation' have been used to define the orientation of the network. Those meetings recognised that greater respect for refugees as people and their more active involvement were frontiers in understanding and action. In exploring the potential of refugee participation, both research and practice had much to learn, and much to learn from each other. For the network to bring together researchers, practitioners and refugees, refugee participation provided a new central focus capable of linking and reorienting many traditional concerns.

The neglect of refugee participation in the past is easy to understand. The reasons include the image of the helpless refugee, the facelessness of mass influxes of refugees, and the dependency syndrome generated by the way refugees are treated. But refugees who are not seriously sick, traumatised or disabled, usually have a great capacity for active self-help, given the chance. The refugee participation network will emphasise this positive aspect in the interests of all concerned — refugees, host governments, and those who work with refugees.

Two themes underlie this approach. The first is ethical, the affirmation that refugees are people and equal to others, and that in their disadvantage they deserve help to help themselves. The second is practical, the recognition of refugees as resources, as people with skills and abilities who can contribute to the life, society and economy of their fellows and of their hosts. Their active participation, and the provision of services, is doubly justified as personal fulfilment and as social benefit to others, both refugees and hosts.

The hope is that 'participation', by putting refugees first, will help practitioners, and refugees to re-examine their preconceptions and take a fresh look at what they do and how they do it. By being new, the focus on participation does not

duplicate; and by stressing the positive and active, it promises to bring refugees, researchers and practitioners closer through shared learning from new approaches and experience.

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NEWS OF PAST CONFERENCES

The Showak Workshop on the role of refugee-based and indigenous Sudanese agencies. 10 - 14 July, 1987.

A workshop on the role of refugee-based and indigenous Sudanese agencies (RBA and ISA) was held in Showak, in Eastern Sudan, between 10 and 14 July 1987. It was organized by RBA and ISA with support from the office of the Commissioner of Refugees, Sudan (COR) and the Refugee Studies Programme (RSP), Queen Elizabeth House, Oxford and sponsored by BANDAID. The idea for the workshop was originally initiated by Ahmed Karadawi, Assistant Commissioner of Refugees, Sudan, who assumed the difficult task of bringing refugees and government officials together in Showak. This was an outcome of his long, practical experience with refugees and refugee-based organisations. The workshop was the starting point for the Refugee Participation Network which intends to hold a series of seminars to promote participation and to help establish local networks.

It was attended by six indigenous Sudanese and five refugee-based agencies, seven representatives of the Sudanese press, high ranking Sudanese officials including the Commissioner of Refugees and representatives of fifteen international agencies including the UNHCR. The agenda for discussions was prepared by RBA and ISA representatives in two preliminary meetings held in Kassala and Showak on the 24 and 30 June respectively. Thus the issues discussed during the four-day workshop reflected their interests and aspirations. The primary objectives of the workshop was to help construct bridges between refugees and their hosts, identify problem areas and find local solutions. The meeting was unique and as far as we know such a meeting of refugees and their hosts has never occurred before in any country in the world.

The workshop took place at a crucial time following the events of last March when thousands of refugees who live in Khartoum and other towns without legal documents and work permits, were rounded up by security forces (known as the Kasha in the Sudan) as the result of the Government's strict application of asylum and City Ordinances. This was accompanied by malpractices. The coverage of the kasha by the Sudanese press fueled

unnecessary tensions between refugees and their hosts. The presence of representatives of the press and other Sudanese officials offered the leaders of refugees, and those working with them, a unique opportunity to put their case directly to them. The workshop thus fully involved the participants in frank and constructive debate and this helped to identify both areas of agreement and difference.

The meeting addressed the following areas:

1. The role of indigenous and refugee-based agencies: shortage of funds and anxieties over foreign exchange rates were mentioned as major constraints. The participants agreed that RBA and ISA should be assisted to play a major role in assistance programmes to refugees and should be encouraged to engage in public information programmes.

2. Health: the participants agreed that:

- a) COR and NGOs include refugees in their long term plans in line with the 1974 Asylum Act;
- b) There is a need to conduct a survey of the refugee affected areas.
- c) There is an urgent need to look into health problems of urban refugees;
- d) Coordination between programmes of the Ministry of Health and those managed by NGOs be improved;
- e) Existing health centres be rehabilitated, upgraded and provided with the necessary equipment and medicines;
- f) Donated medicine be of long duration and consistent with the priority list of the Ministry of Health;
- g) RBA be encouraged to serve their respective people in various places.

3. Education: Refugee education emerged as the most contentious issue. Some difference emerged regarding Sudan's education policy for refugees. As the workshop was not able to resolve this complex issue, the participants called for a high level seminar involving the Ministry of Education to look into the whole area of refugee education. COR and the Refugee Studies Programme were called upon to help organise it and BANDAID to fund it.

4. The role of the media: There was much discussion of the Kasha and the role of the media. The latter was severely criticised for its coverage during the events of last March. The representatives of the press pointed out that there is a serious lack of information and that their total dependence on official sources was to blame. The participant journalists prepared a statement at the end of the workshop. This was a sort of commitment on their part to publicise the ordeal of refugees.

5. Resettlement: there was unanimous agreement that the resettlement programmes to third countries be discouraged. The participants felt that the programme is politically motivated and is selective and discriminatory. Furthermore the RBA and ISA were of the view that resettlement has a negative effect on their programmes as they lose people in whom they have heavily invested. It was mentioned that resettlement deprives the refugee community of its natural leaders.

6. Repatriation: the participants agreed that:

- a) Sudanese authorities and UNHCR should not engage in any attempt to repatriate refugees without their consent;
- b) 'Spontaneous repatriation' is an ambivalent term which should not be accepted as an alternative for organised voluntary repatriation;
- c) Voluntary repatriation is the most durable solution but depends on a proper basis such as full consultancy.

7. Rights and obligations: Obligation on the part of refugees for accountability and respect for the laws and values of the host country and the anxieties over the government's intention to remove refugees from urban centres to settlement camps were all critically examined. The participants agreed that:

- a) Refugees be offered fuller participation and greater opportunity in the plans and programmes affecting them;
- b) COR should make efforts to provide assistance to urban refugees;

- c) Materials dealing with rights and obligations of refugees be made available to the general public;
- d) The status of refugees needs to be regularised particularly with regard to legal documents;
- e) The policy of COR in connection with urban refugees be clarified;
- f) Misunderstanding and misconception need to be resolved in the interest of both refugees and nationals.

The workshop received substantial press coverage. The Sudan News Agency wrote a six-page report on the 'workshop' which was quite favourable.

As a result of the Showak Workshop refugee-based agencies now meet regularly. The first meeting took place on 7 August, 1987. They see this as part of a process involving a series of meetings and seminars through which they intend to find local solutions for their problems.

Report on Amsterdam Seminar on the research findings of the project 'Eritreans in Kassala'. (24 - 25 September 1987).

A seminar on 'Eritreans in Kassala' was held at the Free University in Amsterdam from 24 to 25 September 1987. It was attended by some thirty representatives from the University of Khartoum, Free University of Amsterdam, international agencies (UNHCR), refugee-based agencies, EEC, the Dutch Foreign Office, and the Refugee Studies Programme (RSP), Queen Elizabeth House, Oxford. The purpose of the seminar was to present and discuss the findings of the project 'Eritreans in Kassala' This was jointly conducted by the Institute of Development Studies and Research Centre (IDSRC) of the University of Khartoum, and the Centre for Development Cooperation Services (CDCS), Free University of Amsterdam and financed by the Dutch Government. The research commenced in June 1985 and completed in November 1987.

The research project's brief was to study the effects, for the Kassala region in the Sudan, of the influx of refugees and drought victims. The methodology adopted was radical and new, concerning refugee issues. Refugees were studied within the context of their environment. Eritreans and Sudanese were jointly taken into account. The project analysed how Eritreans fit into the regional economy.

The project divided Eritreans into four different groups; the inmates of the Wed Sherefey Camp; the self settled in Kassala town; Beni Amer agro-pastoralists who have settled on small-scale rainfed agricultural zones; and the agricultural labourers. It is within this framework of different zones and different categories of Eritreans that their integration and impact are analysed. Investigation indicates that each group has acted in the economy in a different way.

Three major areas were investigated in order to study the impact of Eritreans: socio-economic impact of the influx in Kassala; environmental impact of the influx in Kassala; the impact on housing and public services.

Socio-economic impact of the influx in Kassala area: A household survey (786 interviewed) involving Eritreans and Sudanese and a case study on the village level (by two

anthropologists) was conducted. The main purpose was to identify the most disadvantaged groups and to study how well the Eritreans are integrated. Their findings indicate that economic integration is well advanced while social integration is limited for all groups but the Beni Amer who constitute half the refugee population. In Kassala town Eritreans are involved in all sectors except the government sector. Outside the urban areas they are engaged in horticulture and the mechanised agriculture where they form the majority of the work force.

The Beni Amer pastoralists, who have settled in the villages, have swelled the number of impoverished, marginalised small-scale rainfed farmers. Other pastoralists have joined the rank of the unskilled labour force in Kassala and face direct competition from Eritreans. In commercial agriculture Eritreans have largely taken over the role formerly held by West Africans. The study suggests that aid given to refugees in Wed Sherefey Camp may have contributed to wages being depressed as Eritreans accepted the lowest wages since they had no legal documents. The study indicates that there was an impact on wages but this was secondary to the effects of high inflation caused by the economic crisis in Sudan since 1978, and points out that real income has generally declined in the Sudan during the past ten years. In brief, Eritreans concentrate in the most expansive and productive sectors of the economy and as the labour force contributes to the expansion of these activities and to their profitability. Landowners and employers have benefited greatly from cheap and quality labour. This cheap and quality labour is not unionised and has no legal rights and thus, despite their positive contribution, Eritreans remain at the lowest scale of the social order.

Environmental impact of the influx: the research team found that the impact of the influx on the environment was considerable as was the effect of sedentarisation of Sudanese semi-nomads. Overgrazing, deforestation and lack of water were mentioned as major consequences.

The impact of Eritreans on the social services: the report disputes the current assertion that the influx has created a considerable burden on the country's infrastructure and social services leading to shortages in housing and to higher rents. It points out that if there is a burden it is borne by the population. The poor functioning of government services cannot

be explained by the presence of Eritreans. Accordingly it indicates that high rent is generated by general inflation which has not been compensated for by an equal increase in wages. The report admits that the influx has had some effect on infrastructural services such as power supply, roads and sanitation but says that all these services have been inefficient in the Kassala areas. In education and health there has been a flow of international assistance which at least partly compensated their use of the services. It highlighted the fact that education is given low priority and is not sufficiently funded. The researchers pointed out that refugee-based and indigenous Sudanese agencies (RBS and ISA) also provide these services for both Eritreans and Sudanese. The report also states that the majority of refugee children go to schools provided by their own organisation (RBA) as the Sudanese Government restricts entry of Eritreans into Sudanese schools by various administrative mechanisms. These, however, are not always strictly applied.

The rationale for the Government's and UNHCR's current strategy, which is based on settling refugees in organised settlements, is disputed. They indicate that the majority of refugees (65% of all refugees) have opted for self-settlement which they claim is by definition a rejection of the organised settlement, and pointed out that most of the organised settlements are not self-sufficient or integrated.

Conclusions and recommendations: the Government of the Sudan should:

- a) legalise self-settled refugees (this ought to be done with the minimum administrative procedures);
- b) make clarification of the existing Asylum Act (they pointed out that the Act lacks clarity in relation to work permits, self-employment, of land in town and the holding of tenancies in agricultural schemes);
- c) allow refugees to settle outside the organised settlement.

The international community should integrate refugee aid with development assistance in refugee affected areas. Projects should have target groups which incorporate both refugees and Sudanese. Specific recommendations on priority areas for project intervention within the Kassala area are given in the report involving among others a need for housing schemes for Eritreans.

For full report from: Centre for Development Cooperation
Services, PO Box 7161, 1007 MC Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

SHORT ARTICLES AND REPORTS

ON REFUGEE PROTECTION IN SUDAN by Dr Fawzi Mageed,
Associate Professor at the University of Juba, Sudan

The Sudanese and foreign media gave a lot of coverage to the rounding up campaign that took place in Khartoum City in March, 1987. The rounding up known as Kasha, is not a new phenomenon in the history of Khartoum. It dates back to 1976. It took intensive form in June 1978, when a decision was made by the National Defence Council. It was decided that the refugees be temporarily moved outside Khartoum for the duration of the OAU summit.

Since then the Kasha has become a traditional response of the local authorities to the refugee problem. The Kasha has been implemented as a means of enforcing laws and ordinances. Looking at refugees as a distinct category of people has not been a priority of the local authorities, there seems to be a lack of appreciation of the efforts of the Office of the Commissioner for Refugees, which is supposed to be responsible for refugee matters. There is a lack of appropriate coordination between the local authorities and the Office of the Commissioner for Refugees. There was a failure to consider the refugee problem separately from other pressures in the city.

In response to the media coverage of Kasha, Dr Fawzi, sponsored by the RSP, Queen Elizabeth House, made a trip to Sudan to investigate the situation. Having produced video-taped interviews with the appropriate Khartoum local authorities, police, media representatives and the refugees themselves, some of the media allegations were revealed to be untrue while others were confirmed.

A campaign to round up refugees is usually conducted with the pretext of returning them to the settlements. Surprisingly, a large number of refugees in Khartoum are not registered even though they have stayed in Khartoum for some time. One of the reasons that refugees do not register is that they come to Khartoum without obtaining permits to leave the settlement, which is officially required. Another is that some refugees come to towns, and in particular to Khartoum, without passing

APPLICATION FORM

Refugee Participation Network

PLEASE FILL IN AS CLEARLY AS POSSIBLE and return to:

Refugee Participation Network
Refugee Studies Programme
Queen Elizabeth House
21 St Giles
Oxford OX1 3LA
U.K.

Tel: 0865 270729

BLOCK CAPITALS PLEASE

- 01 Name
- 02 Present Position
- 03 Organisation
- 04 Department
- 05 Mailing Address:
-
- 06 Country
- 07 Telephone Telex.....
- 08 Country of residence if different from postal address
.....

09 Type of Employment (please tick one)

- 01 International or National Aid Agency
(e.g. UNHCR, USAID, SIDA, etc.)
- 02 Government Civil Service
- 03 Non-Governmental Organisation (NGOs,
PVOs, Foundations, Religious
Institutions etc)
- 04 University, College,
Research Institution etc.
- 05 Library, Documentation Centre,
Editing, Publishing
- 06 Business - including independent
consultancy

10 Interests by geographical areas.

Please list the areas in which you are most
interested/knowledgeable

- | | | |
|----------|----------|----------|
| 01 | 05 | 09 |
| 02 | 06 | 10 |
| 03 | 07 | 11 |
| 04 | 08 | 12 |

22 Interests by subject within refugee studies.

Please indicate your main areas of knowledge and interest
(This is to help assess the strengths of the Network: you
will receive network papers on all subjects).

- | | | | |
|---|-------|---|-------|
| 01 Agriculture | ..... | 10 Protection | ..... |
| 02 Camp Administration..... | | 11 Psycho/Social issues | ..... |
| 03 Education | ..... | 12 Refugee Children | ..... |
| 04 Food Assistance Assessment & Nutrition | ..... | 13 Refugees and economic development | ..... |
| 05 Health | ..... | 14 Refugees and host country | ..... |
| 06 International Politics/Law | ..... | 15 Repatriation | ..... |
| 07 Moral/Ethical issues of Refugees | ..... | 16 Resettlement | ..... |
| 08 NGOs | ..... | 17 Rural Refugees | ..... |
| 09 Organisations/ Regimes | ..... | 18 Urban Refugees (Gender issues) | ..... |
| | | 19 Women Refugees (gender issues) | ..... |

12 Last two main professional responsibilities

It is often helpful for Network members seeking to consult others to know your recent professional responsibilities. If your job title does not give much indication of your duties, please give them here, with similar brief information on your last post. This information will be published in the Register of Members.

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Today's date YEAR MONTH DAY

I have completed the registration form and would like to be a networker.

Signature _____

through settlements or registration points at the borders. Another major reason why refugees do not register when they come to Khartoum is the fear of being jailed for illegal presence in the country because they did not register at the borders. It should be mentioned here that Sudanese authorities are quite lenient towards illegal immigrants when they happen to be asylum seekers. Accordingly, such refugees remain unregistered and a rounding up campaign therefore puts both the refugees and the Office of the Commissioner for Refugees in a difficult situation.

The rounding up campaign in March was apparently conducted by the local authorities in Khartoum to implement certain ordinances like The Trade Licence Ordinance, The Health Ordinance, and The Public Order Ordinance. It was said that the measures taken to implement the Ordinances had nothing to do with refugees in particular. Any refugee or national who falls under a section of any of the ordinances finds himself in a situation where he is taken to the police station. The Eritrean Refugee Committee in Khartoum agreed to this statement. Nevertheless, the committee expressed its concern about the malpractices of some of the police force members against refugees.

Concerning police malpractices, Mr Bona Malwal, Editor of Sudan Times, said that he witnessed a policeman destroying a document of a refugee and throwing it in his face. Miss Khadra Ahmed Ali, the Assistant Commissioner for Refugees and Director of Individual Cases Office, mentioned that she received some verbal reports from refugees concerning the destruction of documents by some policemen. The matter was reported to the Commissioner for Refugees. There clearly are police malpractices, and these could be avoided if close cooperation existed between the Commissioner for Refugees, the police and refugees.

The foreign media made an allegation that the office of registration and identity cards in Khartoum had been closed down. Our investigations show that the office has never been closed down for a single day. There was a certain period of a little more than two weeks, when the office was undergoing some maintenance which reduced the speed of the office work - documents, cabinets etc. were moved from one room to another, and there was consequently some delay in registration and

production of identity cards. Unfortunately, this coincided with the rounding up campaign, which caused much inconvenience for some of the unregistered refugees who were caught by Kasha.

The Eritrean Refugee Committee in Khartoum agreed that the office has been functioning continuously and were appreciative of the difficulties that the office faced during the maintenance period. Miss Khadra Ahmed Ali mentioned that her office issues between 100 and 150 identity cards daily and sends a similar number of letters to the labour office to arrange work permits for refugees issued with identity cards. Accordingly it should be confirmed that the office was not closed nor did it purposely slow the issue of documents.

There are a number of refugees in the jails of Khartoum province. All are serving sentences for different crimes: theft, murder, rape, or dealing in alcohol. None of these were being kept in prison without trial at the time of our investigation into the situation.

FAMINE MORTALITY: A CASE STUDY OF DARFUR, SUDAN 1984-85
by Alex de Waal

This is a resume of a study of famine mortality in Darfur region, Sudan during the famine of 1984-5. The study was undertaken as part of an extensive investigation of the course of the famine and local responses to it. What follows is based on a survey of 1182 households in ten sites throughout Darfur.

In Darfur in 1984-5, 100,000 people are estimated to have died due to the famine. The crude death rate was raised slightly over three times, to 40/1000 for the year 1985. Excess mortality was highly specific to age, with the great majority of it being found in children between the ages of one and five. During the worst months of the famine the death rates for this age group was raised eight times. Infants were not more likely to die than in normal times, and adults were about 30% more likely to die. Mortality was highly seasonal, peaking at the end of the dry season and the rains (see graph).

What was striking about the findings was that most socio-economic indicators failed to predict mortality. There were no differences in excess death rates between richer and poorer villages, or richer and poorer households. Female headed households were no different to male headed households. What did predict mortality were factors related to health such as quality of water supply, facilities for sanitation, availability of milk, the existence of a functioning health clinic etc.

Most people were dying of diarrhoeas, measles and malaria. Clinic records do not mention starvation as a cause of death. In other words, people were dying of the same causes as in normal times, but in much larger numbers.

The causes of famine deaths in Darfur were severe, localised health crises. The origins of the health crises were related to the failure of food production and entitlement, but the famine deaths were not directly caused by the failure of the food system. All the excess deaths can be attributed to a changed disease environment.

This leads to a new model of famine mortality. Drought and

food production failure lead to social disruption (chiefly migration, leading to crowding around inadequate water supplies etc), which in turn leads to greater exposure to potentially lethal diseases. Diarrhoeas are made more common by the depletion of water supplies and poor sanitation, and the spread of measles is facilitated by the concentration of population in larger villages and towns. This 'health crisis' model deliberately excluded increased susceptibility to these diseases due to malnutrition. In other words, undernutrition plays no direct role in the famine deaths. Undernutrition may be the consequence of a disease, leading to greater vulnerability, but it is not in itself the main 'engine' of famine deaths. This is justified because of the failure of food consumption indicators to predict mortality, and because studies on child malnutrition have so far failed to show that mild or moderate malnutrition in children increases the risk of mortality.

This model is in direct conflict with the established (usually implicit) model of famine mortality (and tries to explain away the fact that starvation as a cause of death is so rarely documented in famines). It agrees with empirical studies of famine mortality.

These findings have direct relevance to relief policy. Relief policies have so far seen famine as a food crisis, and responded by supplying staple foods. Under the health crisis model, relief policies should aim at tackling directly the causes of famine deaths. This can be done in advance of the famine actually occurring. In Darfur this would mean responding to the threats posed by the diarrhoeas and by measles. This would imply improving water supplies by protecting wells, improving sanitation, especially in larger villages and in towns, and inoculating children against infectious diseases. In areas with different health environments, there might well be other priorities. The aim must be to restrict young children's exposure to potentially fatal diseases.

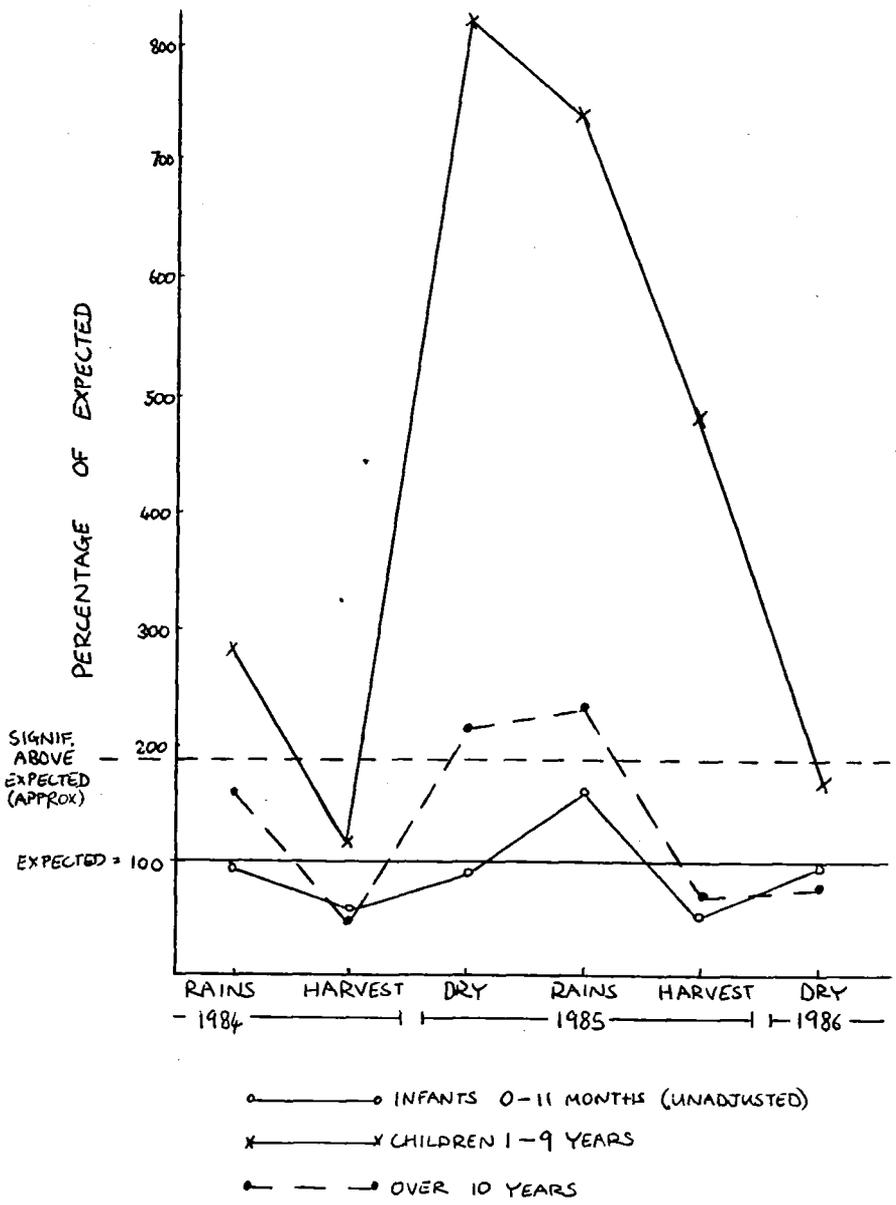
This should not be seen as an argument against grain distribution. The distribution of staple foods is vital in preventing too much social disruption, preventing too much severe undernutrition, and in assisting people to return to their normal way of life. This is instead an argument for

supplementing grain distribution with an attempt to solve the problem that grain distribution cannot. This problem is the changed disease environment, which is killing so many children.

More information from: Alex de Waal, Nuffield College, Oxford, U.K.

This and other information relating to the famine in Darfur is available in a report by the same author entitled Famine that Kills: Darfur 1984-5, which can be obtained from Overseas Department, Save the Children Fund, 17 Grove Lane, London SE5 8RD, UK.

SEASONAL MORTALITY BY AGE CATEGORY



FACILITATING COMMUNICATION by Tim Allen from Uganda

It seems that a recurrent theme of conferences and articles dealing with the issue of anthropologists involving themselves with development agencies, is the complaint that advice is not listened to at all, or, if it is listened to, in practice, is ignored. My own experience has been so contrary to this that it seems worth commenting on. I have found that NGOs are often enthusiastic about receiving information relating to the people they are attempting to assist, and eager for ideas or ways to improve their activities. This is even the case when feedback of this kind involves quite serious criticism. Indeed I have found, both in Sudan, and currently in Uganda, that I have to be careful what I suggest, since many suggestions are rapidly acted upon. A brief example of how a few words in the right ear can get things moving in this way, will help illustrate what I am talking about.

When arriving at Laropi, my present research location, in Northern Uganda, I was struck by the fact that the primary school was only half re-built. Like almost all buildings in the area, the school had been destroyed during the recent civil war. An NGO, the Lutheran World Federation, was responsible for a fairly comprehensive programme, aimed at general rehabilitation, including the re-roofing of schools with corrugated metal sheets. This work has been completed in the neighbouring village. Why had it been abandoned at Laropi?

During a trip to the district capital Moyo, I asked the LWF co-ordinator what the problem was. He explained that the people at Laropi had refused to cooperate in rebuilding the walls of the school. Moreover, when he had visited Laropi to find out what was happening, local representatives had been too drunk to have a productive conversation.

Returning to the village I asked local people for their version of events, and received a variety of contradictory replies. Eventually I called together interested parties, and the following statement was arrived at after prolonged discussion.

'In July 1986 the former LWF co-ordinator came for a meeting at

which he said that parents should do voluntary work on the school. He promised to bring cement, iron sheets, etc., and accepted that he would also contribute 200,000 shillings for renovating seven classrooms. This money would be used to pay the carpenters, masons and their assistants (altogether about 10 people), who would do most of the construction work. The first of four classrooms, however, still had the old roof on. The people wanted to remove this and put on new iron sheets. But when the new LWF co-ordinator came he said 'no'. Instead he told the people to start rebuilding the half-demolished other wing. He then paid 100,000 shillings, and offered a further 100 000 shillings for the work to be done on the other wing. The carpenters and masons said this was not enough. They demanded the promised 200,000 shillings for the first seven classrooms, plus 200,000 for the other wing. So, while the parents contributed 1 000 shillings each for bricks and sand, which were taken to the site, and also built nine mud houses for teachers, the work on the school has not been able to progress.' The concensus was that LWF had 'brought confusion'. Whether or not this was really the case, there had clearly been a communication breakdown. The LWF co-ordinator did not know, for example, what his predecessor had said about the issue. To be fair he simply did not have the chance to spend the required amount of time to gather interested parties, and slowly work through all the various versions of why the walls of this particular school had not been finished. Moreover, if he had tried to do so, it is likely that people would not have been directly critical of what he or his staff had said or done. Once he had this information, however, he was rapidly able to set wheels in motion and the school is now almost finished.

Since reporting to him about the problems relating to Laropi School, there have been numerous other instances where a bit of information has proved helpful. An extremely aimiable relationship has evolved between us, which quite apart from the small amount of assistance that has been facilitated for the people among whom I live, he has also been of tremendous help in carrying out my fieldwork. LWF has been instrumental in sorting out the many logistical difficulties of working in a relatively remote place. I am sure I am not the only anthropologist to have this experience. It would be interesting to hear from others who have shared it.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

CHURCHES DROUGHT ACTION IN AFRICA STUDIES SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT ON THE ROOT CAUSES OF HUNGER AND FOOD INSUFFICIENCY IN AFRICA

In 1984-5, a sub-committee of the Churches Drought Action in Africa (CDAA), an ecumenical undertaking by the metropolitan churches and their agencies, carried out a study into the root causes of hunger in Africa. It also examined the development role of the churches in eight African countries, using African researchers, with a view to making policy recommendations. In their report, the sub-committee concluded that the roots of hunger were to be found in the historical legacy of colonialism and underdevelopment, and in the continuing subordination and exploitation of Africa under neo-colonialism and through the international economic order. Furthermore, on the basis of their country studies, it argued that the complicity of the metropolitan churches is not merely a past phenomenon: despite good intentions and manifest sincerity, they remain part of the system which obstructs sustainable development in Africa.

A number of fundamental problems were outlined:

1. The planning of developmental projects by the churches was often geared towards satisfying the demands of aid donors rather than the actual needs of the communities in question.
2. That the dependence of local/national African churches on metropolitan funds meant that their role in church development work was often passive and reactive.
3. Partly due to this passivity at the grass-roots, the churches do not have the necessary structures or organisation to carry out sustainable development programmes.
4. While the importance of fostering agricultural production is increasingly acknowledged, the projects embarked upon have had mixed success. Successful projects tend to be those focussing more on welfare/assistance.
5. Churches, metropolitan and local/national, did not develop a clear theoretical perspective on development issues. Neither was there adequate research or preparation before embarking upon specific projects.

The report gave numerous concrete examples backing up these assertions. In Sierra Leone, it looked at the Yonibana Community Development Project of the United Methodist Church, 90 miles from Freetown. Established in 1982, it contains a demonstration farm, a livestock project, and an agricultural extension project. Much of this, however, remains theory rather than reality. Funds are inadequate, the benefits to the local population open to question. The local church in Sierra Leone had its own development proposals torpedoed in 1983, the donors considering them too ambitious. The donors were prepared to fund the Yonibana project, and the local church dutifully undertook to implement it. In Tanzania, external donors have proven unenthusiastic about providing funds for agricultural projects. In Zimbabwe, despite helping to fund forty agricultural producer cooperatives, the churches have taken little action to rectify the marginal role of women in producer and collective cooperatives, instead funding non-agricultural 'pre-cooperatives' for women. Finally, at Muthara Community in a nomadic area of northern Kenya, local church and state officials conspired to usurp the leadership of the community-generated 'village polytechnic', stressing self-help, on the grounds that it was backward-looking.

The story is not without its successes. For example, the report described how, in the semi-desert Sahel region, the small local churches have played an active and positive role in encouraging sustainable development. Crucial to the progress toward achieving regional food self-sufficiency has been the coordinated response of governments. But the churches have developed a clear perception of the problems and needs of the region. There has been a willingness by the metropolitan churches since the onset of drought in 1972 to provide massive funds and expertise on a continuous basis. Most important is the mobilisation and active involvement of local communities. Every church programme includes the training and support of rural animateurs.

The practical policy recommendations arising out of these country studies: local African churches must demand from, and be given, a more active role in church-supported development work by the external aid donors and metropolitan churches. To achieve this, local churches have, from congregational level upwards, to gain a measure of financial autonomy, through, for

example, income-generating projects. They must throw off their passivity and dependency. They must engage in their own independent research, for example, on questions of land reform, markets and production incentives. Above all, the local churches must become part of the community and ensure that it is the people who are the agents of development rather than its objects.

Having made many specific recommendations on policy, the report ended by returning to the general theme with which it began: what guarantee of success in achieving self-sustained development can be hoped for until the international economic order is reversed? The report concludes that the metropolitan churches must bite this bullet if they are to escape the charge of complicity and move into a state of genuine solidarity with those who they claim to want to help in the struggle against hunger and for development in Africa.

Note: Copies of the report (2nd edn. June 1986), from Dr Sibusiso Me Bengu, the Lutheran World Federation, 150 Route de Ferney, 1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland.

Summarised by Jon Lunn.

SUMMARY OF ARTICLE

Summary 'Innovations in the Struggle for Self-Reliance: The Hmong Experience in the United States,' by Simon M. Fass
International Migration Review 20(2): 351-75 (1986)

The Hmong, a hill tribe people from Laos, arrived in the United States with large families containing many unemployable dependents; and with employable adults who were illiterate in their own language, who had little prior occupational experience other than small-scale farming and warfare, and who had rarely been exposed to western culture. They found difficulty in participating in the labour market and relied for their subsistence on public welfare support. Often with help from Americans, they also launched themselves into different kinds of projects in search of ways to increase their participation in the economy, and to decrease their dependence on public assistance. These projects were components of a struggle by Hmong and the Americans working with them to move from what they knew to what they did not know, and in this respect were in the midst of a process very similar to the one by which 'traditional' societies move into 'modern' economic activities.

Few of the ventures achieved early success. In 1984, there were 28 projects engaged in marketing textile crafts produced by some 1800 Hmong women. Although total net income generated by these efforts exceeded 500,000 dollars per year, the amount received by each woman, on average less than 240 dollars per year, was very low relative to the time and energy put into the work. There were also 11 commercial farming projects in which 230 families sought their livelihoods, but most of these were having difficulty generating enough revenues to cover costs. With somewhat more success, 12 of 28 grocery stores were either making profits, or were at least earning enough to break even. Among other small businesses, including two restaurants, a bakery, and a security guard service, most were struggling to survive.

Although these entrepreneurial activities achieved less than their proponents had hoped for, there were manifestations of a 'modernization' process which offered hope for the future, for several reasons. First was the very fact that there were

projects underway - a matter not to be treated lightly in the case of people like the Hmong. Second was the observation that Hmong and American project designers, managers, advisors, and other participants engaged themselves in activities that were entirely new to them. This risk-taking movement into the unknown was the essence of a 'modernization' process. Third was the observation that in most instances participants learned from successes so that they might press such lessons into service again. Although Hmong and Americans could not predict eventual outcomes of their efforts, for these and other reasons they could find optimism in the fact that together they exhibited most of the dynamic cultural properties which history and theory suggested were the prerequisites for eventual success in economic adjustment.

PUBLICATIONS

A new manual for income-generation projects It Can Be Done by Christopher and Clare Rozfe (co-authors with Professor M Harper), is to be published by Intermediate Technology Publications soon. Further information can be obtained from:

Christopher & Clare Rozfe
(Refugee Enterprise Enquiry)
90 The Ridgeway
Brighton BN2 6P13
U.K.

Journal of Refugee Studies

The Oxford University Press in association with the Refugee Studies Programme at Oxford University announces the forthcoming publication, commencing in March 1988, of the Journal of Refugee Studies (JRS).

Information on subscription and submission of articles can be obtained from

Dr Roger Zetter
Managing Editor, Journal of Refugee Studies
Refugee Studies Programme
Queen Elizabeth House
21 St Giles
Oxford OX1 3LA
U.K.

FORTHCOMING CONFERENCES, MEETINGS, WORKSHOPS AND SYMPOSIUMS

AGE IN EXILE: International Conference on Elderly Refugees in Europe

The aims of the Conference have been agreed as follows:

1. To promote the situation and welfare of elderly refugees among national governments and UNHCR
2. To exchange information, data and experience about elderly refugees and their problems
3. To identify the needs of elderly refugees and those who have become elderly in their European countries of settlement
4. To promote the development of relevant and effective policies and the provision of services to elderly refugees and former refugees at European, national and local levels
5. To identify and mobilise resources to meet the needs of elderly refugees especially in the areas of training, and access to information
6. To educate the public by, inter alia, promoting the positive value of elderly refugees and former refugees in our society and encouraging young people to value the experience of older refugees
7. To encourage research particularly in the period before the Conference so that better data could be available
8. To be concerned with the proper treatment and support of post settlement problems after those concerned have technically and legally ceased to be a refugee.

The Conference will take place in Holland in November 1988.
Those interested should contact:
Michael Harris, OBE,
Organising Secretary,
Age in Exile.
18 West End,
Witney,
Oxon OX8 6NE
U.K.

EIGHTH ICM SEMINAR ON MIGRATION

The Intergovernmental Committee for Migration will be holding its eighth seminar on 13 to 16 September, 1988. The subject for the seminar will be the 'Impact of Migration on Social Structures'. Three sub-themes have been identified: a) social effects of migration in countries of origin; b) social effects of migration in receiving countries; c) effects of migration on family structure.

Those interested should contact:
The ICVA Secretariat,
13 Rue Gautier,
1201 Geneva,
Switzerland.

HEALTH CARE FOR DISPLACED PERSONS AND REFUGEES: AN INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM will be hosted by Georgetown University Medical Centre in Washington, D.C. at the Sheraton Washington Hotel on December 4-7, 1988. With the participation of academic medical centres and refugee relief organizations, the Symposium will bring care providers together with researchers and educators. Four concurrent programmes will include: Progress in Disease and Therapy, Health Care Delivery in the Third World, Health Care for Resettled Refugees, and Ethical Dilemmas in Refugee Relief. The proceedings of the meeting will be published in a special edition of the American Journal of Medicine.

For further information please contact: Ms Melissa M. Lankler,
Georgetown University Medical Centre,
Department of Physiology,
3900 Reservoir Road, N.W.,
Washington, D.C. 20007,
U.S.A.
Telephone (202) 687-1049

International Symposium at Oxford: The Refugee Crisis:
British and Canadian responses. 1 - 7 January 1989.

The Refugee Studies Programme, Queen Elizabeth House, in cooperation with the Refugee Documentation Project at York University in Canada will be holding an international symposium in Oxford, 4 - 7 January 1989 to examine the effectiveness of policies for the resettlement of refugees in the United Kingdom and Canada from the perspective of governments, academics, and the refugees themselves.

Those interested please contact:

Mrs Shelagh Ranger
Refugee Studies Programme
Queen Elizabeth House
21 St Giles
Oxford OX1 3LA
U.K.

Henri Van Nispen, a Dutch anthropologist, hopes to write a paper on the theory and praxis of relief. He is looking for examples of 'failed relief programmes' from which he can begin to analyse some of the principles which influence success and failure. Network members are encouraged to write and send materials directly to him. His address is:

Boutershemstraat 5,
4611 KA Bergen op zoom,
The Netherlands.

A meeting will be held by the UNHCR on Protection in Geneva on 15 January 1988. For further information contact:

UNHCR
Palais des Nations
CH-1211 Geneva 10
Switzerland

Maknun Gamaledin-Ashami, the Network editor, would be grateful for notice of future conferences, workshops, publications etc. for inclusion in future newsletters.





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