



# A Guide to NGOs

A primer about private, voluntary, non-governmental organizations that operate in humanitarian emergencies globally.

(For Instructional Purpose)



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## About CDHAM

### A world center advancing medicine in humanitarian and disaster relief

**The mission** of the Center for Disaster and Humanitarian Assistance Medicine (CDHAM) is exactly what its name implies—to be the focal point for medical aspects of disaster relief and humanitarian assistance. Other centers—namely United States Pacific Command’s Center of Excellence in Disaster Management & Humanitarian Assistance, based in Hawaii, and the Center for Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance, based at both Tulane University and the University of South Florida in support of United States Southern Command—operate within the realm of humanitarian relief. However, they are focused on the broader issue of disaster management. By specializing in medicine and health-related topics worldwide, CDHAM compliments the work of these centers, as well as many other organizations that are improving the provision of relief and international health care.

**The origin** of CDHAM (pronounced “SID-am”) predates the current emphasis on military medical support of operations other than war by more than a decade. The CDHAM is organized within the Department of Military and Emergency Medicine at the Uniformed Services University of Health Sciences (USUHS). The Department Chair, along with the Dean, the President, and key faculty at the University, recognized early on the evolving role of military forces in shaping an uncertain world. CDHAM was formally established at USUHS by the Defense Appropriations Act of 1999 as the Department of Defense’s focal point for medicine in the nontraditional military operations and missions that have become more common in the new millennium.

**The role of CDHAM** extends beyond simply conducting studies. Our goal is to analyze, develop conclusions, determine lessons learned, and translate these into learning opportunities and improvement. Publications, lectures, symposia, and other media developed as a result of this work will become tools for educating graduate and medical students at USUHS, as well as advancing the broad spectrum of military medicine. CDHAM uses training, technology, and best management practices to improve military medicine capabilities and readiness for humanitarian missions, especially in partnership with the inter-Agency process, the international medical community, and the host nations’ medical infrastructure and beneficiary populations.

### Comments and questions are invited.

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For questions, feedback, suggestions or additions, he can be gladly reached at [gfrandsen@cdham.org](mailto:gfrandsen@cdham.org).

## Introduction to this Publication

This book is about non-governmental organizations. Often called “NGOs”, as they are in this book, or often referred to as “PVOs”, “nonprofits”, “charities” and “aid organizations”, among many other references, this book is about NGOs that operate in humanitarian emergencies globally, and that are operational in multiple emergencies in various locations.

This book, above all, has been designed to orient a wide range of readers with NGOs, their operations, strengths and limitations, budgets, practices and other characteristics that make them unique actors in a very large and dynamic humanitarian community. This book, as well, places a large emphasis on readability and ease-of-use for the reader to provide a wide range of information that will help establish a firm orientation with NGOs specifically, and the NGO community generally. This is a tall order, and this book does not pretend to be all-inclusive, the “final word” or even completely unbiased. It has been written with the intention of laying out various segments of the NGO community and NGO organization in a clear and detailed manner, but without becoming bogged down in accounting for such a high level of variance among the NGO community and NGOs themselves.

If there is one common theme throughout the NGO community that is identifiable, it is that every NGO is unique, and that no two NGOs share exactly the same objectives, missions, operating procedures or capacities. This book is sensitive to this fact. To provide a cohesive body of information, generalizations are often made and detail may be sacrificed. To prevent the loss of accuracy, specific notations or exceptions are highlighted when there are gross generalizations or comments that may glaze over an otherwise complicated issue.

Although this book is designed for a wide range of readers, this book has been produced for two very distinct reading populations: uniformed services personnel and government and international organizational employees. This book spends a considerable amount of time focusing on issues such as coordination, collaboration, logistics, communications and technology use because these are important elements to understand when operating, collaborating or communicating with NGOs.

In line with the objective of this book, it is essential to make NGOs understandable. For those that must work with NGOs intimately or that must understand NGOs for their job or mission, making NGOs “understandable” also means discussing and highlighting various strengths and weaknesses, practices and capacities that NGOs have in the areas that will make sense to those that must engage NGOs in the field or at the HQ level. Coordination, collaboration, logistics, communications and technology coverage will hopefully facilitate understanding, but will also provide a base knowledge that will enable military and government personnel to engage NGOs for more specific – and often critical – coordination and collaboration.

This book does not only focus on these areas, though. NGO programmatic activities span over a wide range of sectors and services, and there are very few sectors in emergencies in which NGOs do not participate directly. Specific attention is given to the health, water, shelter, food and nutrition and protection sectors, and each chapter highlights the ways in which NGOs interact with other members of the international community (military or otherwise) to bring back the insight of sectoral NGO activity into the light of coordination and communication with non-NGO entities.

The last chapter of this book focuses on NGOs and the military. This is a sensitive topic, and because the author of this publication has not been in the military, there is a reliance on a broad sweep of literature and findings from NGO-military collaboration reports, sentiments, field experience and interviews to paint a picture of how NGOs view militaries and vice versa. The sentiments included in this chapter are not those of the author, and included quotes are taken from material that is widely available. Sentiment and perceptions of entire communities or populations are hard to capture, and this chapter does not shy away from making generalizations to at least demonstrate common sentiments and those that may be of value to those completely unfamiliar with many of the struggles that have existed between NGOs and militaries in recent decades. Relations between NGOs and militaries are now much more professional, and this book includes “lessons learned” for both communities that incorporates feedback from

a number of sources. The reader should read this chapter with care, and should not take away definitive statements or ideas because they are only samples of what exist in today's current literature. Feedback, of course, is always welcome.

The annexes in this book play an important part in constructing an understanding of NGOs and the NGO community. Annex 1 covers the basics for 30 NGOs that are commonly found in humanitarian emergencies around the world. They were chosen for their range in size, sectoral activity, HQ location, focus and budget size. This publication could have included hundreds of NGOs and still would be short of describing fully the types of variance and uniqueness that exist between these types of organizations. Still, the 30 NGOs that are listed should be taken to represent a cross-section of the international relief-oriented NGO community.

Annexes 2 and 3 are for the reader's reference and referral, highlighting only a sample of websites and publications that are valuable in daily humanitarian operations, further research or for background reading. Annexes 4 through 8 are useful for understanding the larger NGO world, focusing on NGO principles of conduct, NGO security problems (only one example), the US government aid system, the Red Cross and Red Crescent system, and other key humanitarian aid agencies. The annexes should not be read word-for-word but instead used for gathering information when essential for further research or understanding of the international aid community.

Terminology in this book is not overly complex, and acronyms are often drawn out more than once to keep the reader oriented in what can often be a sea of complex names, organizational relationships and titles. As well, this book often defaults to simple language and sometimes uses terminology more often found in email or in personal communication. The intent is not "dumb-down" this topic, but to keep it flowing and readable. Future versions may exclude more of this type of language depending on the types of responses we receive.

This publication was written in the spring and summer of 2002, and reflects research conducted in over 20 countries, three complex humanitarian emergencies, and interviews conducted with over 40 NGOs, UN agencies, international organizations, embassies, government officials, and hundreds of NGO and military staff members. As well, recent literature on NGOs and humanitarian operations and culture has been included in either the annexes or in the text. For more information on sources and acknowledgements, the reader can find a comprehensive list in the Sources section of this book. Unfortunately, not all encounters, experiences and interviews can be included here as so many of them took place in the backs of rovers on dusty and bumpy roads, on the edges of landmine fields, in small cafes, airports, airstrips, helicopters and in refugee camps.

This book has been funded and published by the Center for Disaster and Humanitarian Assistance Medicine (CDHAM), and it does not express the opinion, findings or position of CDHAM, the Uniformed Services University system or the US Department of Defense.

## Acronyms

Note: not all of these terms are used in this manual. Many of these terms are used in this manual, but many are general humanitarian community terms that are useful to know while studying or working in any of the fields related to humanitarian assistance.

<b>ACRONYM</b>	<b>NAME OR MEANING</b>
ADRA	Adventist Development and Relief Agency
ACF	Action Contre la Faim (Action Against Hunger)
AFCENT	Allied Forces Central Europe
AFDRU	Austrian Forces Disaster Relief Unit
ARC	American Refugee Committee
AOR	Area of Responsibility
ASD	Assistant Secretary of Defense
BHR	Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance
CAP	Consolidated Appeal Process
CARE	CARE – one of world’s most active NGOs
CCP	Comprehensive Campaign Plan
CDC	U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CHW	Community Health Worker
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CIDI	Center for International Disaster Information
CMO	Civil-military operations
CMOC	Civil-military operations center
CMR	Crude Mortality Rate
CMPT	Consequence management planning team
COOPI	Cooperazione Internazionale
COTS	Commercial Off-the-Shelf (technology)
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
CTS	Commodity Tracking System
CWS	Church World Service
DALIS	Disaster Assistance Logistics Information System
DART	Disaster Assistance Response Team, of OFDA
DASD (PK/HA)	Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Peacekeeping/Humanitarian Assistance)
DCHA USAID	Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
DHA UN	Department of Humanitarian Affairs (Note: changed to “Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) on January 1st, 1998.)
DLA	Defense Logistics Agency
DoD	US Department of Defense
DODD	Department of Defense Directive
DPT	Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus vaccine
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
DRI	Direct Relief International
ECHO	European Commission Humanitarian Office



FAA	Foreign Assistance Act
FAM	Food Aid Management
FFP	USAID BHR “Food for Peace”
FOG	Foreign Operations Guide
GTZ	Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (Germany)
HA	The full spectrum of humanitarian assistance provided by any organization
HACC	Humanitarian assistance coordination center
HAO	Humanitarian assistance operation
HAST	Humanitarian assistance survey team
HA/SOLIC	Humanitarian Assistance/Special Operations, Low Intensity Conflict
HCA	Humanitarian and civic assistance
HRO	Humanitarian relief organizations
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
IASC	UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee
ICDO	International Civil Defense Organization
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
ICVA	International Council of Voluntary Agencies
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IDRA	International disaster relief assistance
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IO	Intergovernmental organization or International organization (denoted in text)
IMC	International Medical Corps
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INSARAG	International Search and Rescue Advisory Group
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IQC	Indefinite quantity contract
IRC	International Rescue Committee
IRIN	Integrated Regional Information Network
IRT	International Relief Teams
IWG	Interagency Working Group
JFC	Joint force commander
JLOC	Joint logistics operations center
JTF-CM	Joint task force-consequence management
KAP	Knowledge, Attitudes and Practice
LEMA	Local Emergency Management Authority
LOC	Logistics operations center
LNO	Liaison officer
LWR	Lutheran World Relief
MCDA	Military Civil Defense Assets
MCI	Mercy Corps International
MCDU	Military Civil Defense Unit of OCHA
MDM	Medicins du Monde (Doctors of the World)
MPDL	Movement for Peace, Disarmament and Freedom

MSF	Medicins sans Frontieres (Doctors without Borders)
MOOTW	Military operations other than war
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NATO	North American Treaty Organization
NERS	National Emergency Relief Services
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
OASD/(SO/LIC)	Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict)
OCHA	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OFDA	USAID BHR Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance
PAHO	Pan American Health Organization
PDD	Presidential Decision Directive
PRM	Refugee, Population and Migration Bureau of US Department of State
RCB	Relief Coordination Branch
RI	Relief International or Refugees International (Denoted in text)
SAR	Search and rescue
SCF	Save the Children Fund
SCHR	Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response
SecDef	Secretary of Defense
SHAPE	Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe
SO/LIC	Special operations, Low-intensity conflict
SOP S	tanding operating procedures
TBA	Traditional birth attendant
UMCOR	United Methodist Committee on Relief
UN	United Nations
UNDAC	United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination Stand-by Team
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNDRO	Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Coordinator (now DHA)
UNEP	United Nations Environmental Program
UNFPA	United Nations Family Planning Agency
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNOPS	United Nations Office of Project Services
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
USD	US Dollar
USG	United States Government
USTRANSCOM	United States Transportation Command
VITA	Volunteers in Technical Assistance
VOICE	Voluntary Organizations in Cooperation in Emergencies
WFP	World Food Program
WHO	World Health Organization
WVI	World Vision International

# Section 1

## NGO Structures and Themes

### Chapters 1 – 7

## Chapter 1

### Introduction to NGOs

#### Chapter Summary

- This book is about non-government organizations (NGOs) that operate in humanitarian emergencies around the world. While the NGO “community” is extremely diverse, this manual covers the select few that operate internationally in various regions and capacities.
- NGOs respond to all types of complex humanitarian emergencies and natural disasters.
- No two NGOs are the same: each NGO has its own mission, objectives, specialty and funding sources.
- Understanding NGOs is extremely vital in today’s complex world of humanitarian emergencies and humanitarian assistance operations. Government and military personnel come into contact with NGOs in most humanitarian operations, and effective communications and working relations are essential to the success of operations on multiple levels.

#### A. “NGOs.”

A *non-governmental organization* (“NGO”) can easily be defined as any organization that is not a governmental entity. In today’s world, though, the term “NGO” actually carries with it a considerable amount of specific meaning, normally notating an organization run by private citizens that focuses on providing some type of specialized service to governmental agencies, victims of emergencies (man-made and natural), and regions in need of relief and/or development. With hundreds of NGOs in the US and thousands more internationally, there is an incredible list of activities, services, strengths, expertise, abilities, capacities and policies that make up this varied and dynamic field. Today, large, professional NGOs with substantial operating budgets and emergency response capacity are shedding the “corner charity” image and are becoming major technical agents of humanitarian assistance operations (HAOs).

Civilian capacity to mitigate, manage and respond to humanitarian emergencies has grown rapidly in the last 30 years. Established and substantial NGOs today have operations in numerous countries, major coordination mechanisms, strong governing structures and partnerships with government, military and other international actors. Some NGOs have lobbying arms devoted to influencing policy making and national foreign assistance levels. NGOs rely on substantial organizational infrastructure to maintain numerous emergency operations around the world, and it is becoming apparent that *NGOs are now more important than ever*.

#### B. The NGO “Community”

The global community of NGOs encompasses a wide-range of organizations. The term “NGO” is widely used in relief and development sectors to describe civilian organizations that seek funding to support their varied humanitarian activities. Realistically it refers to a few types of organizations that share similar structures, activities and objectives. For the scope of this manual, NGOs are assumed to have the following characteristics:

- **NGOs are civilian organizations.** NGOs are founded and developed by civilians. As well, NGOs are managed by civilians from different backgrounds, training, nationality and culture. This means that within a wide range of variance in management styles and structures, NGOs are unique actors within the “private sector” that are largely independent of external governing structures (national and international laws apply, of course). Many chapters in this manual will draw specific references to differences in military and civilian organizational capabilities and “styles” of management.
- **NGOs are not-for-profit (“non-profit”).** NGOs are not-for-profit organizations that require funding from external sources to design, implement and manage their programming. NGOs obtain funding from numerous sources including government agencies, private foundation grants and private contributions or “gifts-in-kind” from companies or other organizations. Donations of cash, material or even services (legal, technological, etc) to NGOs normally qualify as “charitable” gifts and can be used to lower tax liability for the donor. In the United

States, legal charitable status for an organization is granted by the federal government under the classification of 501(c)(3) that enables the charity to receive tax-deductible donations from individuals or corporations. This will be covered in-depth in chapter 3.

- **NGOs are unique.** Thousands of NGOs and hundreds of thousands of “non-profits” exist around the world. A smaller number exist that focus primarily on international humanitarian emergencies. Still, the types, sizes and capacities of these organizations are extreme, and any one specific organization often times has no similar organization from which to compare itself. Large differences in location, funding sources, technical or specialized advantages, missions and orientations are all pertinent and all make difficult the categorization of NGO capacities and/or operational factors, but none-the-less are valuable characteristics of the NGO community.
- **NGOs share many similarities.** While unique, NGOs – by very nature of their existence – share a common desire to serve the “public,” beneficiaries, needy populations, “constituencies” or target groups that have been affected by some emergency, disaster or massive reduction of livelihood. To become a “not-for-profit” organization, an NGO must be charitable in its mission, managed and accounted for by a board of directors with no financial interest in the programs or operations of the organization, and must maintain financial accounting methods that are fully open to the public at all times. All activities that an NGO undertakes are intended to serve needs that a donor feels appropriate. NGOs that operate in humanitarian emergencies share this general similarity. NGOs share a relatively small labor pool of emergency, relief and humanitarian assistance workers, and often times share personnel practices, customs and norms. NGOs have many of the same donors (especially UN and large government grant types), and have to be financially accountable in many of the same ways. And because NGOs operate in similar locations there are many other similarities that exist informally that will be discussed throughout this manual.
- **NGOs coordinate.** While often deemed a loose and chaotic community of independent and private actors by those outside of the NGO sector, the NGO community does coordinate internally and externally. *Internal coordination*, while not always formal, is a main way that the civilian sector organizes its many features in humanitarian emergency responses. When over 100 organizations are present in a specific region responding to a specific emergency, there is an immediate rationale for pulling together coordination bodies to manage information flow, project locations and types, shared resources and combined efforts. In Kosovo and Burundi, NGOs coordinated extensively within the NGO community to manage information and even become advocacy bodies to international donors or local/regional governments.

External coordination between NGOs, militaries, governments and donor agencies has also produced a substantial amount of experience for all parties involved in coordinating, communicating and generally interfacing with one another. In places like Somalia, northern Iraq, Bosnia, Kosovo and Afghanistan, NGOs and militaries have coordinated closely by sharing information, strategies, criticisms and even logistical and service capacities.

- **NGOs have capacity.** While a few NGOs are small, fly-by-night organizations that are established to attract attention or funding to one specific issue or place, the NGOs included in this manual are experienced and professional organizations. NGOs have major global procurement capabilities for relief supplies, technical and capital assets, vehicles and other material that can be used to respond to humanitarian emergencies. Many NGOs have large human resource databases that keep emergency personnel on call. As well, they have emergency response teams that are ready to be deployed in a moment’s notice to any place on earth. NGO personnel are often highly skilled, trained and/or educated in disaster management, public health, logistics, technology, water and sanitation (“watsan”), communications, medicine, geology, sociology and psychology. Some NGOs maintain large communication capabilities, and often utilize the same forms of technologies that governments or military units use to communicate where there is no local infrastructure (satellite phones and “VSATs”, internet, global cell phones, etc). While the number of NGOs that have major stockpiles of relief materials is small, many NGOs have different capacities that make the diverse NGO field a collective source of many forms of relief capacity.

More involved analysis follows in the coming chapters, but these specific shared features of NGOs make it possible to understand that while diverse and large in number, there exists a specific NGO “community” or “sector” in which organizations belong to categorically. Non-profit, public serving, unique, independent and civilian features can make an organization an “NGO,” and while never uniform, many NGOs can be understood by evaluating these factors specifically. For purposes of brevity and relevance, this study will only evaluate those NGOs that work in countries besides that in which it is headquartered, within humanitarian emergencies, and with humanitarian and not-for-profit objectives.

As the number of humanitarian emergencies increases globally, so to does the number of civilian organizations willing and able to respond to humanitarian emergencies. Over 100 organizations can often be found in any given large-scale humanitarian emergency, while now even smaller emergencies can attract large numbers of previously non-present organizations. As NGOs become large components to international responses to humanitarian emergencies and as the NGO “community” becomes more professional and capable in its duties, there is an increased amount of variance that is difficult to account for. The size, strategies, capacities, missions and objectives of each organization are often times baffling. This manual assists in sorting through many of these differences.

As well, this manual will help map the rising global culture of civilian organizations that has emerged internationally. Within the NGO community there now exists major capacity for various forms of response to international emergencies that has was previously nonexistent. With this comes shared information, “best practices”, lessons learned, coordination mechanisms, shared staffing, conferences and even social outlets for “expats.” This manual will help the reader become familiar with the major NGOs that are leaders of this “culture” and community and that are found in most emergencies worldwide. This manual will focus on providing key information about these larger organizations. These include:

- |                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Action Against Hunger             | International Rescue Committee                      |
| Action by Churches Together (ACT) | Medicines Sans Frontieres (Doctors Without Borders) |
| CARE                              | Mercy Corps International (MCI)                     |
| Catholic Relief Services (CRS)    | Oxfam   |
| Church World Service              | World Vision International and US                   |
| International Medical Corps       |   |

Smaller NGOs or those NGOs with extremely specific missions are also worth reviewing. This manual will focus on identifying and describing organizations that are smaller in capacity, staff size or funding levels but that operate in numerous locations throughout the world. Some organizations are extremely unique and focus solely on a specific sector or specialty. These include:

- |                             |                                    |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Air-Serv International      | Food for the Hungry International  |
| American Refugee Committee  | Refugees International             |
| Americares                  | Relief International               |
| Doctors of the World        | UMCOR                              |
| Direct Relief International | Volunteers In Technical Assistance |

30 NGOs are profiled in this report in an attempt to harness variety and a representative cross section of the types of organizations that can fall within the “NGO” category. The range extends from the world’s largest NGOs to smaller NGOs, but does hold steady the condition that each organization operates in humanitarian emergencies in countries other than its origin.

### C. NGOs and the Military

NGOs and the military have a special relationship in emergency settings. Unlike almost any other actors in humanitarian assistance operations, both NGOs and militaries are almost 100% operational. NGOs and the US military, for example, are now quite familiar with each other’s existence and have had numerous and sustained interaction in humanitarian emergencies. This has led to an increase in understanding and general coordination capabilities

between the two communities in major humanitarian assistance operations, NGOs and the US military have worked together and in coordination to maximize advantages, reduce confusion and enhance the ability of both entities to work more efficiently.

While these increased levels of interaction have led to more familiar understandings between NGO and military “sectors,” though, there still exist major technical gaps and large thematic differences between NGO and military methods of operating in emergency settings. This is not surprising, but the relevance of attempting to understand these differences has never been more pertinent in Chris Seiple’s work,<sup>1</sup> it is suggested that “old mindsets” of both the NGO and military communities are “rarely appropriate” in today’s responses to humanitarian emergencies. Both need to adopt new methods of working together:

...The NGOs, for example, must comprehend the crying need for a comprehensive and integrated response, even if this sometimes requires subjugating their charter for the good of the overall effort. On the other hand, a linear military mindset is also insufficient. With no two crises exactly the same, the only way to address any given situation is to use a conceptual checklist only as a reference point, and to be fully prepared to throw it away if it does not work. Humanitarian intervention is not a matter of “X” amount of input, for “Y” amount of days, to achieve the definable and finite “Z”.<sup>2</sup>

When NGOs and US military units meet in the “field”, there have been a number of experiences recorded that range from positive to extremely difficult or frustrating for both sides. Military attitudes often hold that NGOs are whimsical, small and lacking of capacity to act in a cohesive or independent manner. For NGOs, the military is cumbersome, risk-averse and restricted by its policies or force protection needs. When working within a humanitarian emergency, it often appears that the military and NGOs speak different languages and have widely varying and potentially incompatible missions, capacities and knowledge. This is not a necessarily true, and opinions are changing on both “sides”. This relationship between military and civilian NGO personnel will be explored further in chapter 16.

#### D. Defining “Emergencies”

This manual uses a number of terms to describe the events that NGOs respond to, work in or attempt to mitigate. As well, there are a number of terms or definitions that are essential to NGO “language”.

NGOs work in and respond to “humanitarian emergencies.” This is a generic term, and can normally mean an emergency that stems from a natural disaster or man-made condition that negatively impact human populations. To prevent confusion, the UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee delineates the differences between emergencies and disasters:

- **Emergency:** An emergency is “an extraordinary situation in which people are unable to meet their basic survival needs, or there are serious and immediate threats to human life and well-being”. Events and processes that can cause disasters do not always do so, and disasters do not always result in emergencies. Thus, droughts or outbreaks of migratory pests may or may not result in widespread crop failure, a disaster that may or may not have consequences grave and immediate enough to warrant the declaration of an emergency.
- **Disaster:** A disaster is “the occurrence of a sudden or major misfortune which disrupts the basic fabric and normal functioning of a society (or a community). An event or a series of events which give rise to casualties and/or damage or loss of property, infrastructure, essential services or means of livelihood on a scale which is beyond the normal capacity of the affected communities to cope with unaided.”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Seiple, Chris. The US Military/NGO Relationship in Humanitarian Intervention. Peacekeeping Institute, Center for Strategic Leadership, US Army War College, 1996.

<sup>2</sup> Seiple, Page 5.

<sup>3</sup> UN Food and Agricultural Organization. FAO's Emergency Activities: Technical Handbook Series. Available at <http://www.fao.org/DOCREP/003/X6868E/x6868e00.htm#e>.

While both of these categories set forth by the UN will in this manual be considered “*humanitarian emergencies*,” it is valuable to note these differences. This manual will delineate the differences should it be pertinent. Two major types of emergencies and disasters – complex humanitarian emergencies and natural disasters – are referred to constantly in this manual:

- **Natural disasters:** Natural disasters come in many forms and have many different effects on populations. Floods, droughts, earthquakes, landslides, tornadoes and hurricanes are all types of natural disasters that effect populations. NGOs respond to the needs of communities that are affected by natural disasters, and often tie longer-term development programs into relief activities. Natural disasters can be devastating to a country or region in a variety of ways, including the destruction of infrastructure, health systems, water and sanitation systems, local economics, crops and the onset of high disease and mortality rates. Depending on the type and size of natural disaster, the affects on a population are highly variable.
- **Complex humanitarian emergencies:** Complex humanitarian emergencies are also variable in their effect on populations, and can be found in various forms throughout the world. Termed “CHEs” by CHART literature,<sup>4</sup> it is defined by the UN as “a humanitarian crisis in a country, region or society where there is a total or considerable breakdown of authority resulting from internal or external conflict and which requires an international response that goes beyond the mandate or capacity of any single agency and/or the ongoing UN country program.”<sup>5</sup> The term “complex humanitarian emergency” gained popularity in the early 1990s between senior foreign policy and disaster managers to describe events and ongoing conflict areas that had dire and disruptive impacts on regional populations. Natsios, former Director of the US Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) and now current Administrator for USAID highlights five characteristics that can be considered the ‘anatomy’ of a humanitarian emergency:
  - Civil conflict that [that] is rooted in traditional ethnic, tribal and religious animosities and accompanied by widespread atrocities;
  - Deterioration of national governmental authority to a point where public services disappear. Political control is passed to warlords, provincial governors over whom the central government has “lost control”, and occasionally primordial or local-level traditional leaders;
  - Mass population movements as a result of the desire/need to escape civil and political conflict and the necessity for food and water;
  - A disturbed or destroyed economy that suffers from hyperinflation and destruction (or complete devaluation) of currency, large declines in the gross national product, depression-level unemployment, and the full collapse of markets;
  - A general decline in food security (possibly as a result of or exacerbation of drought), which quickly leads to severe malnutrition that may quickly lead to massive starvation.<sup>6</sup>

A CHE is completely disruptive to a society. Natsios suggests that “complex humanitarian emergencies are more lethal, destructive and insidious than any other form of conflict because the entire society is so completely traumatized.”

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<sup>4</sup> CHART – the Combined Humanitarian Assistance Response Training is a training course hosted by the Center for Excellence in Hawaii. With Congressional funding, it is the WHO designated training facility for Collaborating Center for Humanitarian Civil-Military Cooperation. <http://www.coe-dmha.org/>.

<sup>5</sup> [FAO's Emergency Activities: Technical Handbook Series](#).

<sup>6</sup> Natsios, Andrew. [US Foreign Policy and the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse. Humanitarian Relief in Complex Emergencies](#). Connecticut: Praeger, 1997.



Kimberly Maynard points to “identity conflicts” as a new and unpredictable root of humanitarian emergency. This form, she argues, does not only include political identities and struggles with emerging or retreating regimes, conditions or changes, but includes the “full spectrum of societal interaction.”<sup>7</sup> A quest to form identities often times spurs whole societies to become involved in disparate acts or devastating activities. NGOs respond to complex humanitarian emergencies now on a normal basis, often dealing with large-scale effects of the emergency that include massive population movements, food production and distribution problems, disease, lack of water, injuries and large death tolls caused by any or each of these symptoms.

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has listed over 25 countries and regions that are “complex humanitarian emergencies.”<sup>8</sup> The wide-ranging list of countries demonstrates the various forms of humanitarian emergencies that exist. From Afghanistan’s state of political collapse and major conflict to Central Africa’s recent history of genocide and continuing civil wars, most are experiencing large levels of displacement and/or mortality rates, violence, malnutrition and disease. The following are a list of countries the UN defines as complex emergencies:

Afghanistan	Rwanda
Angola	Uganda
The Balkans (i.e. Bosnia, Kosovo)	The Horn of Africa
The Caucasus (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia)	Indonesia – Maluku
Colombia	Iraq
The Democratic Republic of the Congo	Palestinian Territories/Israel
DPR Korea	Chechnya (Russian territory)
East Timor (now independent)	Sierra Leone
Eritrea	Somalia
Ethiopia	Sudan
Burundi	Tajikistan

NGOs do not only respond to natural disasters or complex humanitarian emergencies. NGOs respond to man-made disasters, epidemics, technological or industrial accidents and regional or neighboring crises that also affect large populations worldwide. For this manual, though, major categorization of humanitarian emergencies – and the resulting humanitarian assistance operations targeting the effected populations – will be filed under the two main headings of “disasters” and “complex humanitarian emergencies”, and will assume that in most emergencies, populations are displaced or under physical, social, psychological, political or economic duress.<sup>9</sup>

Military or US Department of Defense personnel may be more familiar with the terms “foreign disaster” and “foreign disaster relief,” defined clearly in a DOD Directive published in 1975. The document’s language puts forth these meanings that are still largely applicable today:

**“Foreign disaster relief”:** Prompt aid which can be used to alleviate the suffering of foreign disaster victims. (Normally, it includes humanitarian services and transportation; the provision of food, clothing, medicines, beds and bedding, temporary shelter and housing; the furnishing of medical materiel, medical and technical personnel; and making repairs to essential services.)

<sup>7</sup> Maynard, Kimberly. *Healing Communities in Conflict: International Assistance in Complex Emergencies*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1999. Also available at <https://www.cc.columbia.edu/sec/dlc/ciao/access/maynard/maynar>.

<sup>8</sup> UN/OCHA data on complex humanitarian emergencies is available at <http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/WCE?OpenForm>

<sup>9</sup> Defining humanitarian emergencies and reviewing the reasoning for various terminology or categorization requires at least an entire chapter for itself. For the purposes of this manual, “emergencies”, be they complex or natural, are events or conditions that effect human populations negatively as indicated in the definitions covered above. There may be room for debate, but the value here is in understanding the types of emergencies that NGOs respond to, and how different emergencies may require different types of responses.

**“Foreign disaster”:** An act of nature (such as a flood, drought, fire, hurricane, earthquake, volcanic eruption, or epidemic) or an act of man (such as riot, violence, civil strife, explosion, fire, or epidemic) which is or threatens to be of sufficient severity and magnitude to warrant United States’ foreign disaster relief to a foreign country or foreign persons or to an international organization.<sup>10</sup>

The acronym “EP” will be used to describe an “*emergency-affected person*,” a victim of humanitarian emergencies caused by either natural disasters or complex humanitarian emergencies. EPs are victims of earthquakes, famine, severe drought, floods, civil and intrastate wars, human rights abuses and dire economic conditions. EPs become “refugees” when they cross international borders, and EPs are “internally displaced persons” (“IDPs”) when they are displaced but within their country of origin. The term “humanitarian community” in general refers to the body of organizations and individuals that are dedicated to providing assistance to people in need internationally. Organizations that are not an NGO or a government agency (civilian or military) are “international organizations” (“IOs”) and will normally be indicated by name. IOs are international bodies like the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) or the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO), the World Food Program (WFP) and other independent UN agencies. These will be given special attention throughout the manual as well.

## E. Conclusion: Literature References

This manual is being produced in light of a multitude of resources recently published with varying degrees of relevance to the objective of this manual. There are a few specifically valuable military-civilian studies and comparisons in humanitarian assistance operations have been done, and more recently a series of reports that focus on understanding humanitarian assistance operations in “complex humanitarian emergencies” (see inset). Two recent publications have specific relevance to the production of this manual. First, the “*Guide to IGOs, NGOs and the Military in Peace and Relief Operations*”<sup>11</sup> is a light review of international organizations, NGOs and military activity in peace and relief operations, while leaving aside many details or technical description of specific agencies or sectoral capacity. It is purportedly designed for “field staff of IGOs, NGOs and peacekeeping forces.” It is easy to read but not specifically advantageous for reference or practical analysis.

The second publication of some value to this manual is the report that was commissioned by the Office of Peacekeeping and Humanitarian Affairs/Department of Defense that was developed by The Cuny Center and ANSER entitled “*Greater Efficiency in Humanitarian Assistance Operations: A Comparison of Military and Civilian Capabilities*”. This study is a technical review of the differences between military and civilian humanitarian assistance operation capabilities, as the title suggests, and provides extensive data, useful sectoral analysis and comparisons between civilian and military capacities in humanitarian assistance operations. This report also provides a large series of annexes that include organizational profiles, book reviews, references, acronyms and critical documents that are pertinent to this field. While providing strong analysis concerning the differences in military and civilian capacities in humanitarian assistance operations, it does not focus entirely on what NGOs are, how they operate and why.

Both of these publications provide useful information and are good corollaries to this manual. Neither is specifically geared to the specific needs of uniformed services personnel or those seeking orientation with NGOs in field or practical settings, though, and this manual should fill this technical and thematic void for those seeking pertinent insight into the NGO world. This manual will be a mixture of detailed information, quick-reference organization and presentation, and insights for operating with and within the NGO community. It is not all inclusive, and does make generalizations. While attempting to be wide-ranging and inclusive, some detail is sacrificed for brevity and usefulness to those that may not require the most detailed of explanations. There are other sources available for more in-depth analysis, and of course, experience is the most valuable method of learning about NGOs. The reader

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<sup>10</sup> Reference to DOD Directive NUMBER 5100.46, December 4, 1975. “SUBJECT: Foreign Disaster Relief.”

<sup>11</sup> Pamela Aall, D Miltenberger, Thomas Weiss, Guide to IGOs, NGOs and the Military in Peace and Relief Operations. Washington DC: USIP, 2000.

should enjoy this manual, refer to it often, and find that after reading through this manual, he or she will have a better understanding of NGOs, the NGO community, and how NGOs fit into the larger sphere of international humanitarian operations.

### **Sources on the Basics of Humanitarian Assistance**

Aall, Pamela, D Miltenberger, Thomas Weiss. *Guide to IGOs, NGOs and the Military in Peace and Relief Operations*. Washington DC: USIP, 2000.

Auf der Heide, Erik. *Disaster and Response: Principles of Preparation and Preparedness*. Available through the Center for Excellence: <http://216.202.128.19/dr/index.htm>.

Hoy, Paula. *Players and Issues in International Aid*. Kumarian Press, 1998.

Refugee Policy Group. "Civilian and Military Means of Providing and Supporting Humanitarian Assistance During Conflict: A Comparative Analysis." 1997.

Seiple, Chris. *The US Military/NGO Relationship in Humanitarian Interventions*. Peacekeeping Institute, US Army War College, 1996.

The Cuny Center/ANSER. "Greater Efficiency in Humanitarian Assistance Operations: A Comparison of Military and Civilian Capabilities." Commissioned by ANSER and the Department of Defense, February 2002.

## Chapter 2

### What is an NGO?

#### Chapter Summary

- Organizations that are considered “NGOs” are extremely diverse.
- This manual covers NGOs that are internationally-operating, mostly Europe or US-based nonprofit organizations that deliver some form of humanitarian assistance during humanitarian emergencies around the world.
- This chapter explores the relationship between development and relief NGOs and those NGOs that participate in both relief and development activities.
- Other types of NGOs are also important, but are not included in this manual. NGOs that focus on human rights, conflict mitigation and resolution and education are becoming more visible and active and are often part of humanitarian emergency responses in a number of ways.
- NGOs are operational in almost every emergency around the world.
- NGOs need external financial support in most cases, and require various forms of technical, logistical and/or programmatic support from donor agencies, governments, militaries or the private sector.

#### Quick Reference

There is no one source that lists all NGOs and nonprofits worldwide, but for quick online reference for many NGOs see the following sites:

<http://www.interaction.org> - US-based international NGO consortium .

<http://www.ngovoice.org/> - European-based international NGO consortium.

<http://www.guidestar.com> - guide to financial reports or almost every US-based non-profit organization.

<http://www.reliefweb.int> - relief and development portal that lists various NGO updates, sources and news.

NGOs come in many forms, sizes and types. Many NGOs are religiously oriented, regionally based, technically specialized or community-based organizations. Most NGOs are small, while the more popular NGOs are worldwide entities with international umbrellas and national “chapters.” NGOs can be found in every country, and while the NGOs studied in this manual are primarily “international” in orientation and mostly headquartered in western countries, most of the thousands of NGOs globally are “local” or “indigenous” civil society organizations that operate in similar ways that “non-profits” do within the United States. Recent reports suggest that there are over 16,000 NGOs internationally, with approximately 50% of these representing various western-based organizations that are working in developing countries.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> This statistic was referred to by Pamel Aall et al on page 89 and 90. Aall cites the Union of International Associations “Yearbook of International Associations, 1999.”

NGOs can be categorized in five generalizing ways:<sup>13</sup>

- *International relief and development organizations*
- Democracy promotion/electoral support, human rights and good governance organizations
- Conflict mitigation, management and resolution organizations
- Civil society support, community-based service organizations
- Education, medical and state service replacement organizations that traditionally are formed locally to substitute or enhance lacking or non-existing government services

This manual focuses on *international relief organizations* found in numerous places internationally and that are constantly responding to humanitarian emergencies. Of course, depending on the location and type of emergency that the reader is considering, the number and type of organizations involved with vary. Local NGOs and the various other forms of organizations that exist are often found in humanitarian emergencies, and are used as partners, facilitators or guides to international NGOs and IOs that deliver emergency services.

International NGOs are now prominent features in international responses to humanitarian emergencies globally. The US and other governments have come to rely heavily on NGOs and their vast network of local and international connections. Because NGOs have extensive ground-level experience and are many times present before humanitarian emergencies arise, there exists an immediate capacity and knowledge of what needs to be done to respond to humanitarian needs. NGOs – both locally and internationally – focus their work in a ground-up fashion that uses local capacity, local and regional organizations, familiarity and intimate relations with the community to implement programs. This is one of the primary advantages that NGOs have when compared with government/military agencies intending to respond to the same type of emergency. Instead of duplicating efforts or having to establish new programs from scratch, donors now use the NGO community as an extension of capacity, and often as partners in formulating regional-level responses or policy.

### **A. Where and When NGOs Are Encountered Overseas**

NGOs are found in most overseas disaster and emergency settings. NGOs are present in all phases of the emergency. This includes NGO activity in

- The onset of the emergency (acute phase), normally lasting for approximately one month in new emergencies. NGOs deliver all forms of emergency services, including emergency medical assistance, water and sanitation services, displaced population management, food and water provisions and the like.
- The recovery stage, including the period normally just after the chaos of the first stage, in which expanded relief efforts are implemented. More assessments, detailed analysis and extended and more far-reaching services can be delivered once security is better and NGOs and the donor community have identified priorities.
- The rehabilitation and development stages, normally taking hold after six months, when the Crude Mortality Rate (CMR) is close to baseline, and populations have been repatriated or settled and longer-term programs are designed and initiated.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> While these are generalizations, this list encompasses the primary differences between international and local organizations, and those organizations that exist to operate in humanitarian emergencies and those that operate in more long-term development settings.

<sup>14</sup> See lecture presentation by LTC Michael J Roy, MD, MPH, entitled “Humanitarian Assistance: Introduction to Key Topics” in the [Military Medical Humanitarian Assistance Course for Internal Medicine](#), sponsored by the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, Bethesda, Maryland. March 26-28, 2001.

The primary objectives of most NGOs responding to emergencies are to reduce the CMR, lower the level of physical, emotional and psychological suffering, provide stable food and clean water sources, provide for services of displaced populations and to generally assist national governmental or international efforts to stem large-scale suffering and humanitarian tragedy. This suggests that NGOs are often the first international organizations into an area during or after a humanitarian emergency, and often remain the only form of international presence in areas that are especially rough. US military forces often encounter NGOs that have been in-country for years and that have specialized or in-depth knowledge of the country's or region's culture, politics, demographics and terrain and other pertinent forms of familiarity that comes with time and experience.

InterAction, the US consortium of US-based international NGOs, claims that their 160+ member organizations are operating in “every developing country” in the world.<sup>15</sup> That assures that in any operation in a developing country, government or military units will find a US-based NGO on the ground. This may be an aggressive statement and not always true at any given moment, but it is highly likely that international NGOs based in Europe and the US will be present in humanitarian emergencies.

Many NGOs sustain multiple programs in more than one country at a time. Larger NGOs like CARE, Save the Children, Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and World Vision specialize in responding to numerous emergencies simultaneously, often using leverage from one emergency to respond to another, or utilizing an extensive network of national “chapter” organizations to establish a footing in an emergency. Smaller organizations will also often respond to more than one emergency at a time, but have to choose their responses more selectively. Relief International (RI), for example, operates an annual global budget of under \$5 million and has offices in more than 5 countries and 3 regions. Responding to an emergency in locations inside a region that RI is currently operating in is much easier, and meager resources like trucks, excess food and supply inventory, tents, piping, generators and other goods can be quickly transferred. In emergencies outside of a current emergency, organizations like RI are more challenged because their reach becomes limited. Larger NGOs too will face problems of moving resources because shipping and logistical management is expensive, but have more of a capacity that do smaller NGOs for sharing resources between regions.

## **B. What NGOs Do**

In most responses to humanitarian emergencies there are four major objectives held commonly by the international community, by NGOs and by military units participating in HAOs:

- Reduce excess mortality
- Reduce/minimize excess disease, disability and unstable health conditions generally
- Provide infrastructure rehabilitation (including healthcare facilities, water and sanitation systems, roads, telecommunication systems, etc.)
- Assure and protecting return passage for displaced populations (refugees and IDPs)

As mentioned, many NGOs specialize. Some NGOs focus on providing emergency response services including primary and emergency medicine, refugee transportation, camp management/temporary structure rehabilitation, and water and sanitation services. Other NGOs pride themselves in establishing long-term programs in developing countries that focus on economic rehabilitation, human rights, political development or agricultural and livestock development. There is a large thematic division between those NGOs that focus on disaster/emergency response

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<sup>15</sup> InterAction, or “The American Council of Voluntary International Action” is based in Washington, DC and is the leading US consortium of internationally operating US NGOs. It serves as a coordinating mechanism that primarily advocates to US and other governmental institutions and international donors on behalf of its membership. Information can be found at <http://www.interaction.org>.

and those that focus on longer-term, community-based development. But while there is a distinct cultural difference between many of these NGOs that specialize in specific services (primarily highlighting the stark differences in practices that stem from either emergency and disaster response and longer-term development), it is not too uncommon to find organizations that do both longer-term and shorter term programming in disaster-affected areas or developing regions/countries.

**Disaster/Emergency Response NGOs.** Many NGOs are only disaster response focused. This means that some NGOs, like Medicines Sans Frontiers (MSF), arrive at the earliest possible time during or after an emergency, implement emergency response programs (in MSF's case, this is primary and emergency medical care) and then leave shortly after the first stages of an emergency are complete. NGOs focus on being light, nimble and efficient with very little red tape to prevent immediate action. NGOs that provide medical assistance like MSF pride themselves in being specific in their mission and efficient in their capacity to deal with emergency health matters.

Organizations that maintain disaster response capacities can respond immediately to humanitarian emergencies and are often part of a team of organizations that will arrive in an emergency setting before any other agencies or organizations. Albania and Kosovo, East Timor, Turkey's earthquake in 1999, the floods in Mozambique of 2000 and 2001, Afghanistan and other places showed that civilian capacity to muster resources and deliver emergency, search and rescue and engineering specialists to the impacted regions was indeed impressive. In many cases, NGOs were either already operational on the ground at the onset of the emergency or were the first responders, delivering relief personnel often only hours after the onset of an emergency.

Larger organizations have disaster response teams ready to respond to man-made and natural disasters on a moments notice, and while normally reliant on private sector means of transportation, they can be deployed with considerably speed and resource to manage portions of the initial stages of the emergency. For those organizations that can afford to have on call a series of doctors, engineers, coordinators and other general relief specialists on-call, there is often a roster of people from which the organization can call upon to "ship out" to an emergency-affected region. By preparing pre-packaged emergency "kits", emergency personnel can be deployed from any major airport with a few pieces of luggage that contain medical supplies, information and tools that can stem the immediate problems that exist at the onset of the emergency and that can be used to establish

**Long-Term Development NGOs.** Other organizations shy away from relief and disaster response specialties (either solely or entirely) and focus on providing longer-term assistance to populations effected by complex humanitarian emergencies that have existed for long periods of time, or in generally desperate conditions in very poor countries. Some NGOs do both relief and development, but those NGOs that focus solely on development are often sensitive about the delineation between how their activities are distinct from emergency responses or "temporary fixes." With devotion to working closely with the host community, region and/or country, a development-focused NGO establishes stable projects that focus on economic development, health care system enhancement, infrastructure rehabilitation and other longer-term and thematic programs. While NGOs that do development work also often have emergency relief capacity, these two types of programs are often found in humanitarian emergency settings.

Many development-oriented NGOs are primed to provide emergency services in its area of operation. The NGO may not have specific emergency response strategies, but NGOs that have been in a country or region for a long period of time have an advantage of having large capacity and knowledge of a region's workings, terrain and culture. When a humanitarian emergency hits, many development NGOs can easily harness resources to be the first responder, or to serve as source of information for donors and emergency response NGOs that will soon arrive.

NGOs like Winrock International<sup>16</sup> do not normally participate in emergency response activities even though they may be present in an area that experiences a humanitarian emergency. Winrock International is a development

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<sup>16</sup> Winrock International is a US-based NGO headquartered in Arkansas and Virginia. It says that "Achieving a sustainable balance between the need for food and income and environmental quality is the most effective approach to improving living standards of rural people and ensuring resources for the future." More information can be found at <http://www.winrock.org>.

NGO that specifically provides support for economic development in developing communities. It has no capacity to respond to emergency needs outside of providing information to other NGOs about the area, people, resources and other pertinent information. Because it does not normally utilize trucks, warehouses, local procurement channels for large commodities or emergency networks for specific emergency or urgent responses to humanitarian emergencies, it would not be a prime candidate to shift its programming to an emergency response oriented framework should an emergency hit in its country of operation.

On the other hand, programs that CARE, World Vision or Food for the Hungry, International manage that are development oriented do not necessarily put it out of the running for being capable of responding to a humanitarian emergency. Each of these organizations has extensive worldwide networks of emergency response capacities and personnel, and has comprehensive policies and experience in responding to humanitarian emergencies. While participating in development-oriented exercises in, say, Kenya, these organizations can quickly alter their capacities and become a viable humanitarian emergency response entity should Kenya experience some form of humanitarian emergency.

This differentiation of the two major types of international NGOs here is essential. Both have value and should be understood as part of the NGO community, but they are often different in objectives, missions and capacities. Multi-sectoral NGOs that participate in global relief and development activities serve as valuable entities in an emergency because of their unique blend of ground-level knowledge of an area that has been obtained through development projects, and a significant know-how of emergency response obtained through numerous emergency response missions worldwide. Development-oriented NGOs that hold specific to their objectives of being a “development” organization are valuable in that they can provide an extensive body of knowledge and understanding for the international NGOs and donor organizations that arrive to respond specifically to a new emergency. A development NGO can easily provide information that would normally not be readily available.

**Case: Albania, 1999.** During the Kosovo Albanian refugee crisis of 1999, Albania was flooded with refugees from Kosovo that far exceeded the capacity of that Albania’s emergency response and health care capacities, security and food needs. After the Albanians appealed to the international community for assistance (and with plenty of attention being given to the NATO air campaign being conducted over Kosovo and Serbia), the international donor community mobilized an almost immediate rationale to deliver humanitarian aid to the refugees in Albania, Macedonia, Greece and elsewhere. Within weeks, hundreds of NGOs arrived in Albania’s capital to forge out programs in collaboration with those NGOs that had been operational in Albania prior to the emergency. Various US, European and UN agencies identified immediate priorities using much of the data obtained by NGO partner assessment teams, and distributed funding and established “implementing partnerships” for work throughout the region through pre-existing NGO networks. While western military forces had been active in the region for some time, it was not until massive population displacement in Kosovo that provided a large-scale NGO response rationale.

In the first stages of the refugee crisis and before any major assessments could be conducted, many NGOs sent emergency response personnel to neighboring Greece or Italy, who then would take taxis, buses or ferries into Albania. Once inside, NGO personnel would find “fixers,” or Albanian nationals who could translate and guide the NGO team or individuals through the workings of the road and transportation system, immediate hotel or housing needs, food, currency, communications and all of the immediate needs that an expat team carries with it. Expats fanned throughout the country and began assisting UN and donor agencies in their assessments, carried out assessments themselves, and proposed to donor agencies programs that they thought were essential.

Later, NGOs imported vehicles and supplies, but for the most part the UN provided the implementing partner NGOs with the larger capital assets needed to carry out relief programs. NGOs served as the primary instrument of delivering different types of aid while NATO and other military units provided much of the transport and maintenance of larger goods or major convoys.



NGOs and NATO military personnel established normal communications and meeting forums to share information. At a large, pyramid-shaped building in downtown Tirana, Albania, there were weekly meetings that would attract representatives from a majority of the NGOs, IOs, donor agencies (including OFDA/USAID, the US State Department, ECHO, etc.) and military personnel to discuss, share and coordinate plans and experiences. The coordination center, called the Humanitarian Information Center (HIC), provided landmine and UXO awareness seminars, maps and data on refugee conditions, numbers and patterns, and even notified NGOs of weather changes and vendors that were offering specific services.<sup>17</sup>

The HIC brought together NGOs and military personnel in a close and coordinated format that provided access for both communities. For the military, it was a specific forum in which they could learn about the multiple and often eclectic NGO activity that was happening all around the country. The military could ask questions, indicate preferences and generally decipher where to plug-in to engage the civilian community. For the NGO community, the benefits were similar. By understanding what the military was intending, foreseeing or demanding there were fewer disputes in the field and less vagueness about how to handle specific actions or priorities that may have differed between NGOs and the military.

The HIC was formed for emergency response coordination in April, 1999, and in the later part of August it became primarily a place for extended coordination of development activities and as a backstop to NGO activities in Kosovo. It is a good example of how emergency coordination can be fostered between various types of organizations and how after an emergency stage has passed, NGOs find a multitude of coordination requirements that are often less involved in nature. As well, civilian-military cooperation in logistics and refugee protection during the refugee crisis served as a prime example of how military and the NGO community shared similar short-term goals and capacity to meet separate long-term objectives. By working together during the emergency phase, military and NGOs accomplished their respective goals of creating and maintaining peace and for caring for and then returning refugees to their homes.

The below table distinguishes comparative advantages, weaknesses and other characteristics between emergency response NGOs, development NGOs and those that are active in both sectors. While not comprehensive, it can be useful for understanding the various dynamics of each type of NGO.

	<b>Emergency Response NGOs</b>	<b>Development NGOs</b>	<b>Multi-sectoral NGO</b>
<b>Comparative Advantage/ Strength</b>	Extensive expertise in logistics, communications and coordination; rapid deployment; specialized capacity to handle emergency health, infrastructure, etc.	Extensive ground-level knowledge of a region's people, culture, language, economy, society, political atmosphere; close relationships and networks with local NGOs, other civil society organizations, government.	Extensive knowledge of the "ground" with the capacity to shift operational strength to emergency response; support of an international network of emergency response individuals, programs and policies; "ready for anything"; sensitive to needy population's needs, strengths and capacities.

<sup>17</sup> The Humanitarian Information Center (HIC) in Albania was established in April, 1999, and would serve over 180 NGOs operational in the region. During the emergency in Albania, it would serve approximately 2000 people per month, and was the host of major coordination efforts between the government of Albania, international NGOs, NATO, the Emergency Management Group, donors and UN agencies. The HIC now serves as the coordination point for NGOs that are focusing on development activities within Albania. Information can be found at <http://www.al.undp.org/projects/hic.htm>.

<b>Weaknesses</b>	Often lack knowledge of needy population's culture and/or politico-economic atmosphere; often unaware or not knowledgeable about region's transportation, communications structures, etc. Often have to establish new systems and programs from scratch, requiring set-up and learning-curve time.	Often lack capacity to handle multiple stages of humanitarian suffering; often limited by narrow mission and/or project scope.	Sometimes not strong enough in any one sector or programming area; potentially weak in coordination efforts with other relief or development NGOs.
<b>Value to an Emergency</b>	Provide emergency relief and humanitarian assistance; concentrated expertise and capacity to provide immediate services; normally host to emergency specialists, medical personnel and an efficient logistics system to complete assessments, coordinate and deliver HA.	Provides body of knowledge and extensive networks between local NGOs, governments and donors that can be shared with emergency response entities, donors and militaries.	Can immediately harness knowledge of local conditions and atmosphere for most appropriate forms of emergency response; can leverage the strength of local entities and relationships; has large sense of credibility in eyes of local populations as not an "outsider".
<b>NGO Examples</b>	Medicine San Frontiers (MSF), International Rescue Committee (IRC), International Medical Corps (IMC), Doctors of the World, Air-Serv International	Winrock International Catholic Relief Services UMCOR	World Vision International, Catholic Relief Services, CARE, Oxfam, Relief International, Save the Children
<b>Where They'll be Found</b>	At the onset of an emergency; immediately after large-scale fighting has stopped or natural disaster; after peace agreements and cease-fires; during conflict (variable – depending on scale, accessibility); up to 6 months after an emergency.	In poor or post-emergency countries and/or regions; in rural and urban areas with substantial offices and presence in specific areas of operation; 3-6 months after an emergency.	In both development and emergency settings, often utilizing an existing development project in an emergency-affected country to launch emergency HAOs.
<b>What They Look Like</b>	Small teams with little luggage/material; normally entering into an emergency via commercial airliner or UN transport to a neighboring and safe area, and then by car, helicopter, smaller aircraft (rented or borrowed, mostly), and sometimes by animal or foot; often wearing medic symbols (if in conflict region) or symbols of neutrality; for larger food or refugee management NGOs, large trucks and commodity movements are usual from neighboring regions; white four-wheel drive vehicles after the initial onset with UN or NGO logos.	Variable. Normal people in offices; often with vehicles or property marked with the NGO's logo.	Variable.

<b>Duration</b>	1 week to 6 months for natural disasters and post-conflict response; indefinite for complex emergencies and continuing humanitarian emergencies.	Indefinite, often lasting more than 20 years in a specific region; normally provides programming until donor priorities shift.	Indefinite.
<b>Size</b>	Variable.	Variable.	Variable.
<b>Constituency</b>	The victims of a humanitarian emergency.	Poor and poverty-stricken populations.	A combination of the previous two.
<b>Donors</b>	Governments, UN agencies, private contributions and NGO savings that have been set aside for emergency spending.	Foundations, governments, development oriented UN agencies, churches/mosques and religious organizations, corporations, etc.	Variable.

### C. Why NGOs are Encountered Overseas

Answering the question of “why” NGOs are found in humanitarian emergencies requires a vague answer. Most NGO personnel would suggest that the NGO they work for is dedicated to alleviating human suffering, improving livelihoods and providing assistance where no assistance is present. NGO executives answer similarly, suggesting that their NGO was founded with specific principles and objectives dedicated to meeting the needs of specific populations or conditions. There are three primary reasons an NGO can be found in international humanitarian emergencies that may be more specific than these answers:

- *An NGO has a comparative advantage* in responding to a specific emergency. This could mean that it has current operations in the area that precede the emergency, or that it has specific capacity nearby that could be utilized in the emergency. It could also mean that an NGO has a specific expertise or strength in the impacted region or emergency type.
- *An NGO has a specific interest in the area*, suggesting that the NGO was formed to serve a specific population or region, and any emergency within that population or region would naturally warrant a response of some sort.
- *An NGO targets a specific type of victim*, and when an emergency or situation creates victims of this type, the NGO is a natural responder. Many NGOs focus specifically or primarily on landmine victims, victims of human rights abuses, disabled persons, displaced persons, ex-combatants, children, women, youth, minority groups and the like.

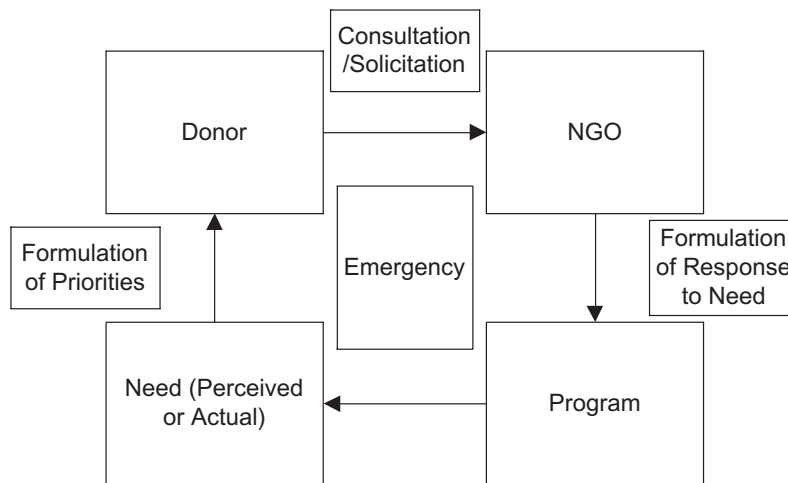
When an NGO is created it establishes a mission, a series of objectives and goals that guide it as an organization. If an NGO is founded with the mission of responding to disaster victims that are children, it will seek to raise funds, capacity and know-how to deliver programming to assist victims of a disaster that are children. The focus may also be regional, country specific or service specific. Military and other entities that begin operations in humanitarian emergencies will find various types of NGOs in the area that focus on many different types of services. There is often overlap, and sometimes an organization will specialize in general sectors that may or may not be needed in a specific emergency. In any case, NGOs will be encountered during different types of HAOs, and in most cases every NGO has a different mission or reason for being in that area.

### D. Conclusion: NGO Constituencies and the Emergencies NGOs Respond To

The international community generally, and the NGO community specifically, does not respond to every humanitarian emergency. Mercurial political considerations, special interest pressures, national security concerns or general humanitarian interests often guide international humanitarian assistance responses. To those emergencies that international organizations do respond to, the level, types, duration and strategy that are implemented differ greatly in every emergency.

NGOs are only part of international responses to humanitarian emergencies. Governments and militaries, private individuals, corporations and companies and loosely banded civilian volunteer groups often contribute in various ways to humanitarian emergencies. NGOs normally require external funding sources to participate in HAOs, and while some NGOs can afford to establish emergency operations for short periods of time without specific external support, many NGOs eventually turn to UN funding, US, UK or other government grants, private contributions from foundations, communities or individuals, or umbrella organizations that distribute funding on behalf of another agency or organization.

As mentioned, some NGOs respond only to emergencies, while some only are involved in development programming. In any case, NGOs spend a significant amount of time fundraising and raising awareness about their programs and mission with various communities, populations, target audiences and potential supporters. NGOs come from “communities” and often have constituencies that support an NGO’s work over a period of time. Catholic Relief Services (CRS) is governed by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, and is supported by Catholic churches worldwide with funding and relief supplies. While its budget primarily relies on government grants, over one-third of its funding comes from private contributions. Direct Relief International (DRI) is based in Santa Barbara, California. DRI staff members have suggested that they rely heavily on contributions from the surrounding community and companies based in the area, making their location extremely important in deciphering what types of programs DRI initiates or supports. To move out of the area would be to stem much of the support for its programs and activities, or potentially alter the vision of DRI to fit that of another community.<sup>18</sup> As shown in the diagram below, an NGO often relies heavily on donor intent and support. NGOs, while catering specifically to EP needs, must also take into consideration the desires and intent of specific donors or donor communities. While in many cases they do not necessarily conflict, many NGOs must often find a balance between the needs of the EPs and the willingness or desire of what a specific donor may want to fund or support.



NGOs depend heavily on donors. Because NGOs are nonprofit and lack (for the most part) revenue streams or fee-for-service systems, NGOs can only operate in emergency settings for a minimal amount of time before requiring support from a donor or donors. Often depending on the scope or scale of a specific emergencies, even large NGOs must solidify funding after the initial phases of an emergency if it plans to continue with its programming. . Some NGOs do maintain emergency response funds that are saved specifically for use during an emergency. World Vision, CRS, MCI and other large NGOs make this a priority, and are known for their unique ability to muster resources immediately during an emergency without first obtaining donor support for their activities. Most NGOs do not have large emergency funds for use during emergencies, and unfortunately, external funding availability often determines the type, place, duration and scale of NGO emergency response activities.

<sup>18</sup> Personal interviews (by phone) with Susan Fowler (Direct Relief International, October 19, 2001), Rachel Granger (Americares, October 16, 2001), Richard Walden (via email, Operation USA, October 8, 2001), “Susan” (MAP, September 18, 2001).

## Chapter 3

### NGO Origins, Authority and Mandates

#### Chapter Summary

- NGOs come from religious, community, interest, expertise or hobby backgrounds, often starting when a few people get together and decide to help others.
- NGOs are government-registered, legal entities with management structures and financial reporting requirements.
- The NGO community has adopted standards and codes of conduct that many of the more professional NGOs sign and abide by. Because of the growth in the number of NGOs in the humanitarian assistance field, there have been firm attempts to create standards, protocols, rules and “best practices” to protect EPs and to professionalize the diverse NGO community. Not all NGOs participate in these attempts, and some of these attempts have been more successful than others.

NGOs are legal entities established within a regulated and legal framework normally hosted by a mixture of national and local government structures. Depending on where the NGO is established (US, UK, etc), there are different rules and laws that govern how the organization can accept donations, how it must report its financial data, and to whom it is accountable.

#### A. Where NGOs Come From

NGOs emerge from communities, civil society organizations, collective activities, religious organizations, universities and individual initiatives. Often started as small volunteer projects, NGOs are sometimes referred to as “grassroots” organizations, voluntary organizations, charities or nonprofits, all names that denote the voluntary, public service and community orientation that NGOs have. In legal and organizational terms, there is little difference between an “NGO” and a “nonprofit” or not-for-profit organization in the US. Nonprofits and NGOs are the same thing, and only when nonprofits extend their activities overseas are they popularly called NGOs or “private voluntary organizations” (PVOs).<sup>19</sup> The term “NGO” denotes an organization that is based nationally (or “locally”) but that raises money and organizational capacity to participate in international relief and development activities. This, of course, is only sensitive to organizations based in Western or “donor” countries that extend services through NGOs in developing countries. Nonprofit organizations in developing countries are also often called NGOs but are defined as “local NGOs” when deciphering differences between international and indigenous organizations that work locally.

NGOs have “constituencies” and develop specialties or areas of interest in which its programming, solicitations, fundraising and growth is oriented. When NGOs are met in the “field”, there are wide variances in size, appearance, activity and expertise. It is crucial to understand that when various NGOs are operating in a specific emergency, there are large but often subtle differences between them.

International NGOs that are covered in this manual normally have headquarters in a “Western” country. With an office in Washington, DC, Los Angeles, Seattle, Atlanta, New Haven, Brussels, London, Paris, Geneva, Rome or Tokyo, NGOs come from a variety of places and bring with them a variety of sources of support.

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<sup>19</sup> For purposes of this manual, the term “NGO” will be used widely when referring to any nonprofit organization that operates overseas. The term “PVO” is normally used by the US relief industry to describe US-based organizations and companies that act under contract with USAID and the State Department. The term “NGO” is more widely known internationally, and includes “PVOs” and nonprofits that act internationally.

## B. NGO Foundations and Structure

When looking back to the beginnings of many NGOs, it appears that anyone can start an NGO. A person or persons that are specifically interested in institutionalizing an interest, public service or program can create a nonprofit organization. NGOs that are founded within the US for purposes of serving populations outside of the US fall under the same rubric that national-based and locally serving organizations do. An NGO is an incorporated or organized body that abides by laws, can make contracts, employ people, make legally binding relationships with other entities and generally operate as a corporation within the country or state of origin. For those NGOs based in the US, each state has different regulations for nonprofit organizations, although most require that the organization

- Establish and maintain a mission and/or charter, and articles of incorporation or association
- Establish a board of directors or trustees that assume responsibility for the organization's financial, operational and general well-being and legal status
- Establish tax-exempt status from both the federal government (IRS) and the appropriate state government entities should the organization want to accept tax-deductible and to remain somewhat free of federal and state taxes themselves
- Maintain audited and accredited financial records
- Remain financially, legally and organizationally sound, abiding by specific rules or guidelines set forth by both federal and state law.

Most NGOs are incorporated organizations that are structured to protect its founders, employees and board members from personal liability. As well, the incorporation process serves as the premise of establishing bank accounts, contracts, ability to accept donations, purchasing abilities, insurance, relationships with other organizations and governments or other entities. As an organization, the NGO is the embodiment of its mission and of the articles of incorporation/association.

The Board of Directors serves as the trustee body of the NGO, normally part of the large-scale decision-making process and thematic issues of the organization. There is no financial benefit or reward for board membership, and members have no financial interest in the organization's programming (at least in principle). Boards are valuable in that they extend the organization's resources into various communities and encapsulate personalities that are not specifically significant in daily operations but that lend credibility to the organization as a whole. Many NGO boards are packed with celebrities, former government officials, experts, academics and community leaders with the intention of attaining recognition or publicity that would not otherwise be attainable. During emergency appeals, NGOs will often wheel out their board members to make public statements, write newspaper or journal editorials, make speeches or interviews with media to spark attention and knowledge about the organization's work and needs in responding to that emergency.

NGO boards come in a wide variety of styles. Some boards are very active, often establishing close relationships with the NGO's officers and staff, programmatic planning processes and fundraising. Some boards are largely fundraising entities that focus not on providing the NGO's leadership with technical guidance or mentorship, but to solicit for funds, lend names to former government or donor contacts, and to possibly lend credibility to an organization's fundraising practices. And again, some boards are mostly symbolic, giving way to an NGO's strong leadership, and only fulfilling the legal requirements of meeting a specific number of times each year and of certifying financial obligations.

An NGO's board is legally liable for the organization. In some states within the US, and in some other countries, this liability differs. Generally, though, the board is the pinnacle of oversight of the organization's direction, mission, articles of incorporation or association and executive leadership. A board is normally involved in larger thematic decision-making and guidance, and does not normally involve itself in the daily workings of the NGO. In daily field operations, board structure and board members often mean very little. Occasionally a board member will

tour an NGO’s programming in the field, but will normally leave everything else to the NGO’s staff and officers. It is important to understand that NGOs are governed internally by a board structure, though, and that much of the thematic direction, funding and organizational capacity stems from the type of board that the NGO maintains. NGOs often have board members that were once colleagues or government and military officials, and understanding that boards generally have a large level of influence or involvement with the NGO is essential to understanding what type of tact or approach is appropriate when attempting to work with, coordinate, guide or understand NGOs. The following table draws out a few of the differences between various types of boards that NGOs may have.

Various Board Features or Characteristics	Benefit	Drawbacks
A board comprised of well-known individuals	Assists the NGO with credibility should the NGO alone be unknown, small or new. Also provides the NGO with “star power” or the ability to raise money when associated with a popular or well-respected “mentor”.	Sometimes unwieldy to manage; top level NGO personnel spend significant time managing board meetings, functions, travel plans, coordination, message and needs while not utilizing time for NGO activities.
A technically-oriented board	Can assist the NGO officers and staff with know-how, regional knowledge, donor identification and management experience. Often valuable for NGOs that are new or that are seeking guidance in a new sector or region.	Often cannot offer substantial credibility with the general public; potentially limited and stems the board’s innate function of spreading the NGO’s presence into difference communities.
A removed board	Often valuable if NGO has strong officer and staff base. Gives NGO personnel room to operate, and only serves the minimum requirements established by law.	Often offers no guidance or allows NGO to veer from mission and/or charter; can often become too removed and lose influence over NGO officers and staff. Dangerous and potentially damaging if poor decision-making becomes common.
A large board	Extends the NGOs reach into various communities and is a sign that something is being done right; also provides increased levels of leverage and of sources of knowledge.	Often unwieldy and difficult to manage; potentially removed and difficult to find firm decision-making or unified opinions.
A small board	Easy to manage and involve in decision-making; NGO personnel can form close relationships with the board and can utilize the board’s functions easily. Easier to find consensus for decision-making and thematic issues (although not always the case).	Potentially weak or limited in scope of outreach possible; number of “board hours” that board members contribute to the NGO aggregate to less. Potential for negative signal to donors or public.

### C. NGO Codes and Standards

Practically speaking, NGOs are not governed by any specific international law. They are free to participate in international operations as a unique and independent actor, and while neutrality laws or other specific guidelines protect their activities often, they are largely unaccountable to any entity that the NGO is not under contract with (a specific donor, government or company). Instead, the collective NGO community is governed by a series of self-initiated or externally-imposed legal and ethical structures. They include:

- Restrictions within the legal structure of the NGO’s country of origin. This could include tax laws, donor restrictions, accountability and transparency standards, political or geographical limitations, etc.

- Guidelines, rules or stipulations of the donor agency/source. While receiving funding from a donor, NGOs will often be subject to the special requirements set forth by a donor agency. For large government donors (USAID, DFID, CIDA, etc), restrictions on religious activity while implementing programs, geographical limitations, safety requirements, reporting procedures, accounting methods, and even technical stipulations are often placed on the NGO. An NGO will have an interest in operating within the guidelines of any donor requirements when it has an overarching interest to either maintain positive relations with the donor, or when EPs are in need of some type of programming that is outside of the rubric of the donor's structural agreement with the NGO (dire emergencies may call for NGOs to deviate from their agreements or requirements).
- Restrictions within the legal structure of the country in which the NGO operates. When an NGO operates in any country, it must normally register with the central or provincial/state government authorities, and must normally continue throughout the emergency to report its activities, whereabouts, materials it uses, funds it receives and the types of materials imported (assuming that there is still some form of central government authority). NGOs must abide by local, state, national and international laws generally, and during emergencies must remain accountable to the donor community, to its constituencies, and to the national government or lead governing authority in the region.

There is currently an increasing trend for NGOs to join or propose coordination mechanisms. As more NGOs are entering into the field of humanitarian assistance, it is becoming increasingly difficult to determine which NGOs are capable of providing services to EPs, and how to manage differences in programmatic support and capabilities. Pressures from donors continue to mount on NGOs to maintain credible, accountable and transparent programming while providing emergency services, and NGOs are attempting to bind together a series of standards and best practices that will help improve the overall quality of NGO programming and also the consistency and fluidity of NGO programming worldwide. This is helpful for outside agencies that have to deal with NGOs, for NGOs themselves, and ultimately for the EPs that are the recipients of NGO programming.

The Sphere Project was initiated in light of an increase in the number of NGOs operating in any one emergency, and with heavier demands from donors and governments for more programmatic standardization and streamlined management protocol. The Sphere Project is a feat in that it has successfully brought together an international forum of NGOs to participate in the development of formal commitments and recognition of the Convention on Refugees, on International Humanitarian Law (the Geneva Conventions), and on the UN Declaration on Human Rights. Hundreds of NGOs have "signed on" to the Project, and it serves as a significant indicator that civil society and civilian sector activities are now becoming more professionalized in service provision, theme and intent.

The Sphere Project text is available online without charge. The website also lists upcoming training courses and other resources useful for NGOs. The Sphere Manual, the staple of the project, presents technical standards in five sectors: (1) nutrition, (2) food, (3) health, (4) shelter and camp design, and (5) water and sanitation. The Sphere Project has been formally endorsed by the US Department of State (PRM), USAID (OFDA), UNHCR and the IASC. The manual is used in training around the world, and focus in the last two years has been primarily on outreach, international training, security and minimum standards. New developments within the Sphere signatory community has suggested that "basic education," "protection," and "food security" may be the next sectors for which Sphere will attempt to create standards.<sup>20</sup>

#### **Case Study from Sphere's Website:**

For Albania to be better prepared for disasters, CARE recognized that local authorities, NGOs and community-based organizations needed to have a common understanding of disaster preparedness and management methods. Just as importantly, they also needed to understand each others' roles and to be able to work together. These needs were addressed by CARE through the disaster preparedness and planning (DPP) project which by providing information and training aimed to increase the capacity of these organizations to respond rapidly and effectively to disasters....

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<sup>20</sup> Information about SPHERE can be found at SPHERE's website: <http://www.Sphereproject.org>.



**How Sphere was used.** A key objective of the DPP project was to introduce current disaster management methods to decision-makers and social service providers in strategic areas in Albania. CARE chose the Sphere handbook as the main resource for the training. Since the handbook had to be easily accessible, it was first translated into Albanian and published locally – with the first draft the focus of discussion in a four-day conference with representatives of local and international NGOs....

...In the year following the close of project activities, CARE continued to distribute the Sphere handbook to professionals and volunteers involved in relief in Albania....[Copies were distributed] at coordinated meetings and NGO fairs to partners with non-relief mandates but which were nonetheless active in emergency preparedness....<sup>21</sup>

The Sphere Project, as mentioned, has created a series of standardized material that NGOs worldwide can refer to. This assists in the interaction between NGOs, between NGOs and national governments and militaries, and between any form of partnership or collaboration during an emergency.

The “Principles of Conduct for The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Response Programs” is also a staple reference document for many NGOs.<sup>22</sup> While not universally accepted, these norms normally are accepted by US, Canadian and EU-based NGOs and provide the language for what most NGOs feel is their creed or most basic elements of service to EPs. The language is general and includes the primary theme that every human on earth deserves and should receive humanitarian assistance when needed. As well, it suggests that aid should be given impartially and without stipulation or restriction, and that beneficiaries are humans and should be treated as such. Please see Annex 4 for the full text of the Principles of Conduct.

As well, InterAction has a series of PVO standards that each of its member NGOs must follow. InterAction’s “PVO Standards” are compiled in an extensive document that serves as a guiding tool for NGO management. By covering everything from budgetary allotments, gender balance on governing boards, financial accountability and hiring practices, it provides a base-line series of standards in management activities to promote professionalism and accountability among the InterAction members. InterAction’s PVO standards were

Intended to ensure and strengthen public confidence in the integrity, quality and effectiveness of member organizations and their programs, the standards were created when the overseas work of PVOs was dramatically increasing in scope and significance. Defining the financial, operational and ethical code of conduct for InterAction and its member agencies, these high and objective standards, self-applied, set InterAction members apart from many other charitable organizations. Indeed, in various aspects, the InterAction PVO Standards exceed the prevailing standards of the Better Business Bureau and the National Charities Information Bureau.<sup>23</sup>

#### **D. Conclusion: The More Standardization, the Better**

A large part of the international NGO community promotes standardization and protocols because it ensures that such a wide-ranging body of organizations operating in such critical settings have some form of accountability. Major questions arise, though:

- If there are too many “standards” or protocols, does it effect the way NGOs do business? NGOs have traditionally enjoyed their independent status, forming a bond with EPs and not governing structures, and standardization of program methods may mean a wrinkle for those NGOs that see their expertise as sacred and independent.

<sup>21</sup> Available at [http://www.sphereproject.org/practice/cs\\_alb.htm](http://www.sphereproject.org/practice/cs_alb.htm)

<sup>22</sup> The full text and explanation of the “Principles of Conduct” can be found at <http://www.ifrc.org/publicat/conduct/code.asp>. See Annex 4 for the full text.

<sup>23</sup> <http://www.interaction.org>.

- What does it mean to have a series of humanitarian requirements or codes of conduct with conditions can change rapidly? How can standards be universal?
- Who will enforce these standards?

These are all tough questions that are not new. NGOs, for the most part, have shown a preference for creating some form of transparency and accountability among the community, and few have suggested that assuring an EP's universal human rights is cramping on programmatic style. Most NGOs are professional bodies and demand that other NGOs act in similar ways so EPs are not hurt and that humanitarian assistance remains credible and efficient.

## Chapter 4

### NGO Personnel and Policies

#### Chapter Summary

- NGOs employ many types of people, but are normally managed by senior-level emergency management professionals that come from years of NGO, government, military or private sector careers.
- NGOs rely heavily on volunteers and interns, but have developed experienced staff ranks that manage daily relief operations and humanitarian assistance efforts.
- NGO management structures are unique, but generally replicate a loose-structured, ground-up system that permit field staff to make fast and critical decisions without depending on major approval processes.
- NGOs hire and employ full time, part-time, contractors for short and long-term projects, consultants, volunteers, interns and outside vendors.
- Training for NGO personnel is becoming more available, enabling NGOs to train their work force in technical and general relief management techniques.

Because NGOs are so varied in their mission and capacities, regions of operation or constituencies, NGO staff too are varied in their composition and characteristics. It is safe to say, though, that there has been created an NGO “culture” worldwide that permeates a unique blend of international expertise and sheer hard work.

When military and NGO personnel come into contact, there is often a mixture of curiosity and frustration that emerges from two very different cultures. While military personnel are normally part of a stringent and well-defined hierarchy, NGO personnel are part of a largely decentralized organizational structure, often tasked with responding to the needs of the NGO’s beneficiaries (EPs) before their organization’s need. NGO staff members are from all different backgrounds, and have extensive experience in conflict regions, disaster areas, hostile living conditions, emergency settings and in danger. NGO staff members carry long histories of involvement in these types of settings, and also often develop highly valuable skills and abilities that outweigh those of government, military or international organization capabilities in many cases.

Coordinating with NGOs. When military or government personnel must coordinate or communicate with NGO representatives, they must understand that NGO staff members are a part of a larger organization but with a specific, sometimes autonomous and essential job function. When identifying who to refer to as the point person, special attention should be given to the TYPE of coordination needed, the SECTOR that this coordination will concern, and the SCALE of operation. To identify the appropriate person to coordinate with, these points may help:

- **TYPE:** do identify with NGO staff members what types of things you’ll need to coordinate. Refugee movement? Water supply? Air transport? This will give you an idea of what NGO staff type and level you’ll need to be coordinating with.
- **SECTOR:** do identify with NGO staff members the sector or area of service provision you’ll need to coordinate within. Medical and health service sector coordination will require working with different NGO personnel than would refugee protection or transportation.
- **SCALE:** for smaller coordination activities, military staff members may find it most useful and efficient to coordinate with lower-level NGO program officers and staff members dealing with specific tasks. For larger scale activities, NGOs will often appoint a military liaison staff member or office, or work with the UN to do establish either a CMOC or coordination mechanism like this.

There is also a flow of personnel between government, military and NGOs. Government officials often retire from USAID, the Department of State or the Department of Defense and join an NGO to serve as a senior level manager or consultant. Military personnel also often find themselves cycling out of active duty and entering into the service of an NGO doing similar jobs that they had in the military. NGO personnel as well often move from the private sector into the government or UN (less to the military). With this labor pool that is largely shared between organizations in HAOs, there exist artificial boundaries, AORs, a hierarchy and understanding of each sectors' capability. While NGO staff members are often young and inexperienced and often thought of as unprofessional, today's real NGO staff labor pool is highly professional and skilled.

NGO "professionalism" has only really been present for a few decades, suggests Paul Thompson. As NGOs started gaining ground as primary actors in emergencies during the 1980s and 1990s, NGO personnel also started gaining expertise and credibility. Today, thousands of NGO employees travel, live and work worldwide and have dedicated their careers and lives to serving within NGOs or more specifically to providing services to EPs. While not always the "good life", there is now a class of relief workers that dominate the way the international community responds to emergencies. Information about these people are covered in this chapter.

### **A. Who Works for an NGO?**

NGOs employ all types of people. There is no one type of personality, profession or capability that an NGO staff member has, and while it is common to find people with similar desires and experiences, most often there are few patterns that could be found. For military and government personnel not used to working with NGO staff, a few generalizing characteristics can potentially be helpful. NGO personnel are often

- Graduates of advanced degree programs often in public health, international relations, medicine, social work, engineering, political science and communications;
- Highly professional, with memberships in professional associations, certificates and specialized training;
- Well-traveled and multi-lingual, having worked, lived or studied in international destinations for extended periods of time;
- Extremely knowledgeable about the emergency affected regions they work in after living, working or knowing the types of emergencies that the region is affected by;
- Highly motivated, often volunteering for long periods of time with minimal pay, or voluntarily working in harsh conditions.
- Dedicated to the people that they are serving (more often the latter if the employing NGO does not share the same mission) and to the NGO that the individual works within;
- Humanitarians, but with specialized military, government, political, technical or cultural knowledge and capacity equal or greater than those found in the private or public sectors.

Looking at a few standard candidate requirements for new hires can also help. Below are shortened mid-level job candidate requirements from the International Rescue Committee (IRC), the International Medical Corps (IMC), Oxfam Great Britain and ACTED.

<p><b>IRC Job Announcement: Regional Director, East Africa</b></p> <p>Qualifications Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Seven years international work experience, preferably in a refugee or displaced person setting;</li> <li>▪ Three years experience at senior management level, including at least two years experience as country director;</li> <li>▪ Proven experience as a strong manager and negotiator;</li> <li>▪ Previous budget and fiscal oversight responsibilities;</li> <li>▪ Experience working with the UN, EU, US and other government agencies a plus;</li> <li>▪ Graduate degree in relevant field preferred. Must be computer literate; Must be self-reliant, the Regional Coordinator will have at most one local support staff person;</li> <li>▪ Must be willing to travel 25% - 35% of time.</li> </ul>	<p><b>IMC Job Announcement: Country Director positions</b></p> <p>Qualifications Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Knowledge of donor practices, the program proposal process, and humanitarian or development program solicitations and applications ·</li> <li>▪ Ability to conduct and or supervise new program assessments and write cogent proposals and budgets ·</li> <li>▪ Familiarity with international humanitarian operations, coordination structures, and the mandates of donors, UN agencies, and other NGOs ·</li> <li>▪ 5+ years of field experience in humanitarian relief or development programs focused on primary health care and public health in insecure settings.</li> <li>▪ Qualifications: Graduate degree in Public Health, Public Policy, or related field · Fluency in English required; second language skills (i.e., working knowledge of French, Spanish, Portuguese, Swahili, etc.) a plus ·</li> <li>▪ Strong written and oral communication skills necessary · Ability to analyze and prioritize needs · Proven organizational and supervisory skills.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Oxfam Job Announcement: Humanitarian Co-ordinator</b></p> <p>Qualifications Required</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proven analytical and planning skills</li> <li>• Leadership and management skills of multi-disciplinary teams operating within complex matrix management frameworks</li> <li>• Experience and knowledge of the international humanitarian sector, sufficient to advise staff on the legal and institutional framework within which humanitarian action takes place.</li> <li>• Three years field experience of emergency and developmental work and a continuing commitment to humanitarian action.</li> <li>• An understanding of public health principles and preferably experience of at least one of Oxfam's areas of distinctive competence in humanitarian response.</li> <li>• A understanding of and active commitment to promoting gender and diversity issues in all aspects of Oxfam GB's work</li> <li>• Representational, advocacy and diplomatic skills to enable the post holder to operate effectively within Oxfam and in external networks.</li> <li>• Competence in written and spoken English</li> <li>• Ability to travel up to 12 weeks per year.</li> </ul>	<p><b>ACTED Job Announcement (Afghanistan): Road Programs Manager</b></p> <p>Qualification required :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of non asphalted road networks,</li> <li>• proven experience in a related field</li> <li>• professional English</li> <li>• control of the data-processing tools</li> <li>• necessary qualities: autonomy, rigour, direction of the contact</li> </ul>

The qualification requirements are widely varied, as are the types of position each NGO is soliciting. For general management positions, qualifications for ideal candidates will normally include wide-ranging, management-oriented experiences, while more sectoral-focused positions will demand expertise and extensive experience with a specific trade or project type.

## B. Types of NGO Staff Positions

From ex-military, government or UN executives to young volunteers or fresh college graduates, NGOs employ a wide range of talent, labor and abilities to manage and staff the NGO's diverse programs. And while the type of employees found working for NGOs worldwide is as diverse as the NGO community itself, it is valuable to understand how an NGO manages its staffing and programs overseas. For the purposes of this manual, NGO staff member positions can be identified within six groupings: general support staff (normally at HQ), general international field staff (younger, less-experienced but skilled expats), senior international field staff (country and program directors, senior-level officials, senior management), experts, local staff and executive management.

**General Support Staff.** General support staff members are NGO employees or volunteers that are most often found at the NGO's headquarters somewhere in Western Europe or the US. As generalists, these people focus on providing the backstopping and support services for NGO field operations. Significant time is given to providing logistical support for shipping, procurement, personnel travel and other programmatic assistance needs. As well, general support staff members normally are charged with human resource duties (hiring, recruiting, managing healthcare, insurance, often travel and other benefits), fundraising and publicity (solicitation, fundraiser event planning, gifts-in-kind organization, media relations and advertising), accounting, board relations and recruitment, information technology (IT) support (rare for smaller organizations) and the like. Larger organizations will have specialized staff members for website development and technology support, warehouse and shipping staff, specialized fundraisers and lobbyists. Many organizations utilize a seemingly endless source of labor that stems from universities: interns often populate NGO headquarter locations and provide research, media monitoring, general administrative duties and clerical tasks.

General staff at headquarters are normally low to mid-level, excluding senior human resource personnel and accounting staff. While not necessarily part of the decision making process, general staff assure that much of what the executive management and board members plan is put into action. General staff are normally valuable for their knowledge of an organization's overall programmatic strategies and capabilities, and are large storehouses of information. Rifts often are created between international and HQ staff, but proper management can normally reduce tension by assuring that proper communication and realistic expectations are maintained about what HQ and field staff can each manage at one time.

**General International Field Staff.** These NGO expat staff members make up a large portion of an NGO's international staff base, normally filling mid-level management positions and participating in general programmatic oversight, creation, logistical services and implementation. Without specific specialized skills or expertise, general expats still find roles that are extremely important within an HAO. Normally younger men and women that are just starting in the field or that have up to 5 years of experience will find themselves assisting program managers in various duties, managing local staff, managing logistical services or shipments, participating in refugee/IDP camp management and establishment, and will often write reports or proposals with the guidance of more senior level staff.

General international field staff members serve as the backbone of any international NGO operation, and normally fulfill some of the more unpopular tasks or demands that are placed on NGOs that work in underdeveloped, conflict or emergency affected areas. Striving to find a place in the international NGO community, these staff members are normally extremely enthusiastic, ambitious and willing to take a heavy workload in bad working conditions. In emergency settings, 20 to 24 hour workdays are common, and poor food, bad traveling conditions, personal danger and major health risks are all part of the job.

Normally with at least an undergraduate degree and often with an advanced degree in international relations, public health, communications, engineering or social work, general expats are often paid poorly and given little credit for their work. Fatigue, depression and know-it-all attitudes are common among this group. The ability to speak more than one language is common.

Many general international field staff members are employed or volunteer under a specified time contract. Ranging from 3 months to a more common one or two year contract, they are often required to move from one job to another, changing organizations, countries and job functions numerous times. While not specifically efficient, there exists a labor pool of “NGO workers” that move from one emergency to another, taking up similar roles in each organization they work for. It is not uncommon to meet the same people in different emergencies in different countries, regions or continents. By traveling light and by working hard, these expats are valuable and carry with them experiences that can translate into more efficient methods of executing humanitarian assistance programs.

**Senior International Field Staff.** This group includes expats with an expertise and that are employed to manage entire countrywide or regional programs for an NGO. Sometimes referred to as “Country Director”, “Regional Director”, “Senior Advisor” or “Coordinator”, these personnel have worked in the humanitarian assistance field for career-length spans. Older in age and often with 20, 30 and even 40 years of experience, these expats manage other international staff members, local staff members, and are charged with assuring that programs are implemented appropriately. As the senior-most NGO staff person in a specific region or country, this senior staff member controls budgets, grant processes, personnel, logistics, relations with the host country and donor organizations, military units and other NGOs. With a good level of autonomy, these people are relied upon for their sound judgment, experience and contacts within the international aid community.

Senior staff members normally have extensive knowledge of the donor and aid community, and have close friends and peers within the UN, the US government and the US military. Senior NGO staff will be found in recurring emergencies, and often travel to start new projects in a newly affected area. Once to the “senior” level (varies in pay grade, title and duties for each NGO), an NGO staff member is somewhat of a permanent fixture, and fewer changes between NGO employers occurs.

Senior field staff often will phase out of an international location, and will be brought back to HQ for a more managerial role. It is not uncommon for NGO personnel to cycle to HQ after long stints in the field, or to take more permanent senior-level HQ roles that will help the organization connect field and HQ programs more efficiently.

**Experts.** NGOs often employ medical doctors, engineers, psychologists, pilots, water sanitation specialists, transportation and logistical specialists, agricultural or economic specialists on short to medium-term contracts or assignments. Because EPs have such a wide variety of needs and post-conflict or post-emergency settings are so varied, NGOs keep rosters of deployable experts that can be dispatched in a relatively short period of time. These experts are deployed to the affected region to begin work in their specialized field. Normally supported by the general international field and local staff, experts focus on providing their services without much involvement in the normal daily NGO functions (fundraising, management, accounting, logistics).

Emergency medicine specialists are often the first NGO personnel to arrive in a disaster or emergency affected area. With a limited but important series of medical supplies and tools, medical personnel can make a world of difference by curbing infectious disease outbreaks and by curing simple ills that can easily become epidemics. After an initial response at the onset of the emergency, emergency medical personnel normally leave. Water sanitation specialists also play a vital role in emergency response, providing refugee/IDP camps with clean water and sanitation conditions that prevent disease outbreaks.

Experts are normally employed on short-term contracts, although they may work for the same NGO consistently. Many medical doctors enjoy time off from normal private practice or hospital duties while serving with an NGO in a humanitarian emergency, utilizing their skills for a short period before returning to their normal job. Many NGOs keep emergency rosters with updated lists of people that are willing to go on short notice, and what their specialty and requirements are.

**Local Staff.** Local NGO staff members are hired in country and are often victims of the humanitarian emergency that an NGO responds to. Chosen from the local population, local staff fill a wide variety of job functions and are essential to the success of any NGO program. From car and truck drivers, security guards, cooks, storehouse managers and administrative clerks to medical doctors, program managers, translators and experts, locally based staff members are extremely valuable to international NGOs.

When first arriving in an emergency affected area, NGOs normally attempt to hire “fixers” (translators and drivers combined) that can quickly orient the expats and secure housing, food and the basic resources needed for opening an operation. The fixer serves as a link to the local population and market. He or she can help exchange money, open local bank accounts, move shipments through ports or borders help an international NGO become registered with the local government, find additional staff members and keep the NGO personnel safe.

Once programs are initiated, NGOs employ local staff to perform all forms of job functions. Most often, NGOs are incorporated into all aspects of the management, leaving aside larger organizational issues that are dealt with by senior management and/or international topics for the NGO.<sup>24</sup>

NGOs pride themselves on empowering local populations with the skills and resources to manage effective assistance programs themselves. By “training trainers” and by incorporating local staff into most processes during the HAO, NGOs create local capacity to respond to and manage future emergencies.

While differing between NGOs, local staff employed by an NGO normally outweighs in number the amount of international staff within an emergency effected region. Smaller NGO operations will sometimes have one, two or maybe three expats, while employing between 10 and 50 local staff members.

**Executive Management.** Executive management for NGOs is also varies widely. Most management teams are comprised of professional, senior-level executives coming from a variety of fields. As mentioned, former government, military, private sector and long-term NGO professionals find themselves well suited for management positions, often bringing a unique blend of outside management experience or connections with other sectors that may prove valuable for an NGO’s programmatic and fundraising endeavors.

For larger NGOs, senior management plays a direct role in developing, managing and guiding an NGO’s growth and activity. An NGO executive focuses on assuring that the NGO’s programming and emergency response efforts fit into the NGO’s mission and capacities, and activities are funded, coordinated and that they are part of a larger international picture. Program oversight, fundraising, lobbying, advocacy, coordination and general organizational management fill up most parts of the day for senior managers. NGO executives also spend large levels of time and resources managing, growing and engaging the NGO’s board of directors. While “running” the NGO, an executive also must plan for future growth, challenges, setbacks, legal issues, budgets, competition, employee loyalty and moral, risks and donor relations.

Many of the same tasks exist for executives of smaller NGOs. For smaller NGOs, senior management personnel are normally founders or an inside hire, and often are engaged in every part of the organization as a direct contributor. Some CEOs and Presidents find themselves making their own travel arrangements, making photocopies, writing proposals and other activities that are normally relegated to staff members.

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<sup>24</sup> The pay levels that local NGO staff members receive have been a contentious issue for some time within the NGO and donor community. Because expats receive “western” level salaries, per diems, travel allowances, COLAs and other benefits, local staff members’ receive minimal fractions when salaries are compared. Farshad Rastegar, Executive Director of *Relief International*, suggests that this is not necessarily bad. Local staff members should be paid appropriately, taking the job function, market and economic conditions into account of the host country. Incentive enough to attract the best candidates but without disturbing local economic and employment patterns, local NGO staff pay should be relevant to local economic and labor market conditions. Otherwise, damage to local wages and currency value could occur.



In all cases, an NGO's success within its mission, its capabilities, direction and funding are heavily dependent on the NGO's leadership. With a strong and flexible board of directors, an executive can manage effective humanitarian assistance programming, can assure that program implementation is sound and appropriate, and can make sure that the NGO's growth potential or strengths are maximized (growth may not be desired).

### C. Hierarchy and Staff Management

NGOs are structured in different ways. Most, though, depend on a structured but loose organization centered on locations, programs and a hierarchical relationship between HQ and field offices, emergency teams that are dispatched to new crises, and partnerships agencies (if any). NGOs face many of the same problems that private companies, government agencies and militaries have when dealing with management issues, and are often burdened by the lack of financial or material resources, technical support or personnel security. Communication between offices, staff members and programs is always difficult, and while many NGOs have established national chapters or umbrella organizations to manage worldwide coordinated fundraising, public relations and public appeals, most NGOs deal with the challenges of being everywhere at once.

For almost every form of NGO, the board of directors is the ultimate decision-making body that is accountable for the well being of the NGO. The Executive Director, President or CEO is the manager of the organization, and normally fulfills two types of functions, encapsulating board management and general organizational management. Below the Executive Director is an array of senior officer positions, normally each with a portfolio, sector or section of the organization to manage (Assistant Director of Finance, Vice President of Operations, Program Manager, etc). These managers provide the daily, hands-on management of NGO staff members worldwide, and are normally part of the Executive Director's planning body, strategy makers and proponents of the organization's core objectives and mission.

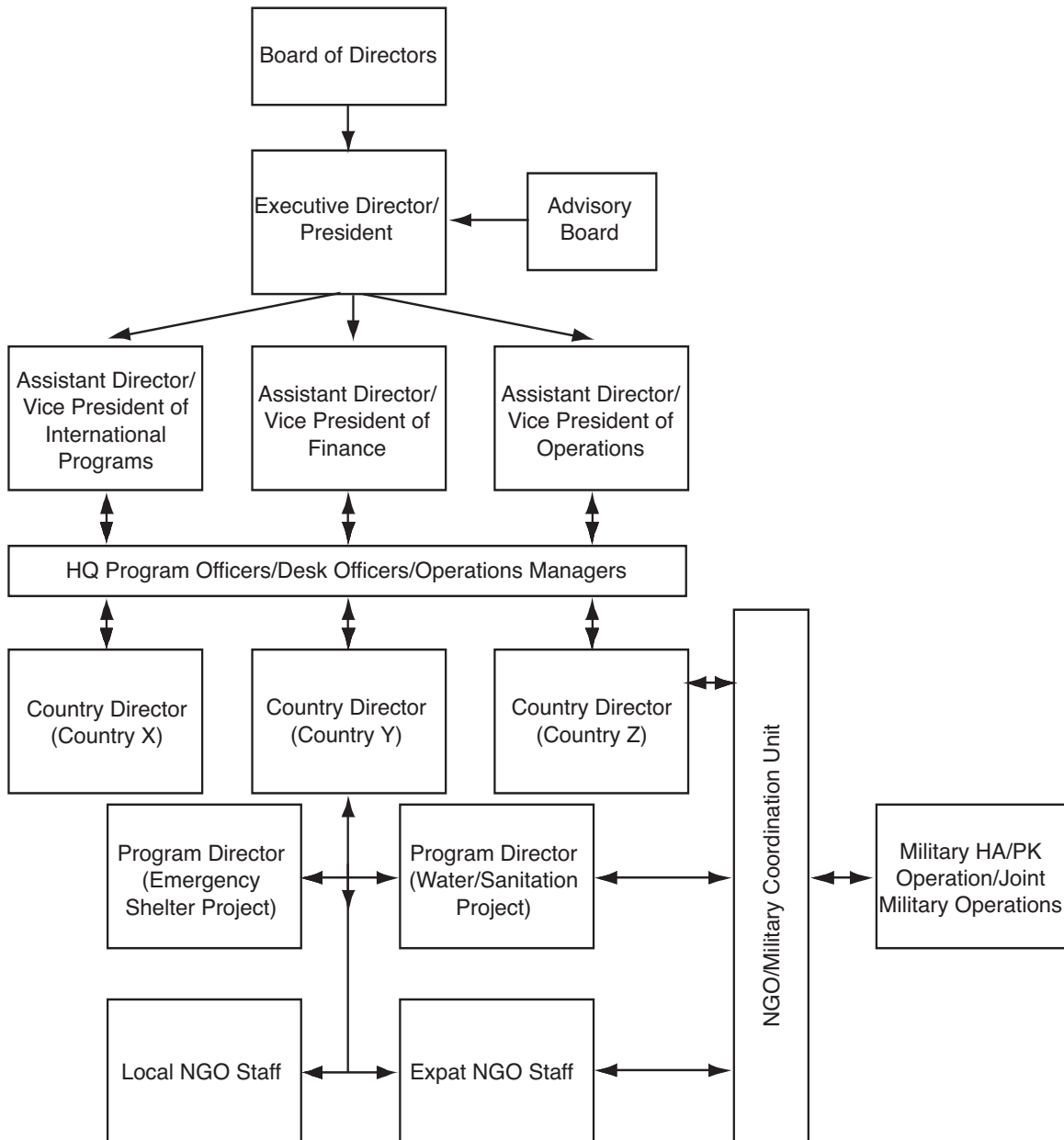
Many NGOs are flexible in their hierarchy. This translates to a loose-fitted decision-making structure that normally places heavy emphasis on making decisions at the lowest possible level. For an organization with permanent offices in various countries, this means that a country director or regional manager will normally be the ultimate authority for each country. Decisions concerning personnel, budget use and reporting, personnel safety and the like are all major areas of responsibility of a country director or regional manager.

While in close coordination with the Executive Director and senior officers at HQ, NGO staff members will establish a hierarchy within each program that sits within a specific country. A country director will normally be the manager of multiple programs that the NGO is operating in the area of concern, and is responsible for assuring that the organization's reporting process is implemented appropriately. Financial, programmatic and personnel reports are filed with HQ often, and it is the duty of the program officer at HQ to liaise with senior staff and officers to assure that all is being run in accordance with the principles of the organization and within the guidelines of the grant.

Because large portions of an NGO's funding come from grants, NGO personnel are given tasks and responsibilities within the proposal and grant framework. This makes each program, ideally, a well-mapped project that requires minimal oversight. This is not always the case, though, and more often than NGOs find themselves in difficult working conditions and in situations that require review or alteration of the original program. With flexible staff members with wide-ranging abilities, this means very little. For smaller organizations with minimal capacity, this could be an impeding challenge that may be crippling to program implementation.

The below diagram shows a sample "organigram" that helps one understand how an NGO may structure itself. While it is not holistic or standard for every organization, it shows the relationships between various levels within the organization, and how military or external entities may find entry points for coordination or collaboration. Military units and other external entities normally will coordinate with field-based staff members of an NGO. Little to no contact with an NGO's HQ is standard, and most communication is done either on the country director level or on the programmatic level, where a program manager or officer will be the point person for the NGO. For example, an NGO may have various programs within a country or region. While all of these programs fall under one country or regional director, a program manager or director that reports to the country or regional director normally manages each program.

In the below diagram, there are three lines connecting the NGO/Military Coordination unit with portions of the NGO staff structure. This identifies a common theme among NGOs operating in humanitarian emergencies and that operate multiple programs: depending on the size of the organization and the scale of the specific program the NGO may be implementing, the lead coordinating staff member may be the country director, the program director or manager, or one of the expat staff members within the project. As mentioned, there are normally clear lines that indicate who has responsibility for what aspects of the NGO's operations, but it will vary greatly as to who will be the lead person that will serve as a contact point for the military and outside entities. Larger NGOs will often have civil-military affairs staff member solely dedicated to liaising with the military in specific regions or countries.



#### D. NGO Hiring and Contracts

NGOs use various methods to hire staff members. Many NGOs that operate in emergencies maintain short-term contracts with their employees because of the nature of their work: short, intense and unsure conditions that require immediate response and that may end relatively quickly. When a new emergency arises, NGOs are under intense pressure to deploy current staff to establish programs, and to hire new regional, sectoral or general experts

to join the teams immediately. When the NGO identifies that it can and should respond to an emergency, funding and donations often will dictate how many new-hires can be made, and what level of experience can be afforded.<sup>25</sup>

Larger NGOs have a professional human resources (HR) office that is a key ingredient to properly staffing NGO activities overseas, to maintaining a safe and professional work force, and in passing on the NGO's image and professionalism to new-hires or contractors.

HR offices within larger NGOs and sometimes a single HR officer for a smaller NGO normally keeps a database of CVs that are kept on file for a certain period of time, and that can be searched by category, sector or expertise when the need arises. Because emergencies are relatively unpredictable, it is in this light that hiring and employment practices of NGOs are often challenging. Some challenges that NGOs face when hiring and keeping a professional work force include:

Limited funding for the maintenance of full-time professional staff levels;

Short-term needs for experts during emergencies, but no longer-term (and thus job security) for experts;

The inability to compete with private-sector or government salaries<sup>26</sup>;

Harsh working conditions, lack of safety or personal comforts, stressful conditions, long hours, often depressing or psychologically challenging work environments, etc.

Many NGO "lifers" have grown accustomed to this lifestyle. NGO contractors will often bounce between different NGOs in different emergencies around the world, holding three, six or twelve month contracts before moving on to the next assignment. Larger organizations like World Vision International are focusing on hiring and keeping personnel by increasing benefits, personal comforts and other incentives for staying on board between emergencies or even during prolonged NGO programs.

For example, an anonymous World Vision Australia staff member is a good example of how many NGO staffers are becoming more permanent members of international emergency response teams and the NGO community in general. This staff member is currently stationed in Afghanistan.<sup>27</sup> He started in southern Sudan in Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS) as a logistics officer, moved to East Timor for a similar position, and then was sent to Kosovo and then to his current assignment. While enjoying his work, he has benefited from World Vision personnel policies and practices that make his ability to work, live and have a life within emergency settings tolerable. With ample vacation time, travel allowances, vacation stipends, excellent health and processes that assure his satisfaction and job utility, he and many other World Vision staff members are breaking the traditional mold of "Contractor" lifestyles that would see upwards of three or four employers per year in various emergency settings.

In hiring practices, HR offices and representatives are faced with making fast decisions and often do not meet the contractor in person. NGOs often employ people that are already in the area of concern, or people that are on assignment in some other region. By reviewing a candidate's credentials, referring to references and background data, and by attempting to know the person's reputation, an HR office often makes a hiring decision without critical data or assessment that other sectors would cringe at.

People who are seeking employment with NGOs have a few resources at their disposal. Sometimes fresh out of undergraduate or graduate school, current employment with another NGO or some other profession, people can utilize the Internet, email and publications to learn which positions are open, what each position requires, the terms, and how to apply. Most applications today are submitted electronically via email or website form.

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<sup>25</sup> Despite popular opinion, most NGO staff members are not volunteers.

<sup>26</sup> This disparity between wages in different sectors is changing for the better, though.

<sup>27</sup> Personal Interview with World Vision staff member (via satellite phone), 6.17.2002.

## NGO Employment Sites

There are a number of websites that potential NGO employees use to learn about and apply to open positions within an NGO. While none are completely exhaustive, there is a trend for many NGOs to use these online employment sites to spread the word of their openings.

Reliefweb Humanitarian Vacancies: <http://www.reliefweb.int/vacancies/>

InterAction Employment Pages: <http://www.interaction.org/jobs/>

OneWorld.net: <http://www.oneworld.org/jobs/index.html/>

Idealist.org: <http://www.idealist.org/>

International Career Employment Center: <http://www.internationaljobs.org/>

Collection of links for UN vacancies: <http://146.115.72.186:8181/un/un.cfm>

Other general sites that are often used: <http://www.monster.com/> and <http://www.hotjobs.com/>

## E. NGO Personnel Policies

Many of the religiously-based NGOs require employees to sign a faith-compliance or acknowledgement of religious beliefs, policies or orientation that the NGO maintains. For some potential employment candidates, these types or requirements are deterrents. In efforts to remain neutral or non-biased, many humanitarian workers strive to remain independent and/or free from any association with a larger cause. While the days of handing out bibles and food together to beneficiaries are largely over, there are still major overtones of proselytizing with some organizations.

NGO personnel policies are normally very basic and straightforward. Policies normally include safety procedures, neutrality and NGO Code of Conduct acknowledgements, descriptions of duties, appropriate behavior in specific areas, and sometimes a confidentiality agreement. Many NGOs have new-hires sign a form that suggests they have read the Red Cross Code of Conduct, and that they agree, understand and will abide by its elements.

Many organizations attach specific policies to specific positions. For World Vision positions open in Afghanistan, candidates are told that strict behavior restrictions exist, and that religious sensitivity must be maintained at all times. A warning about the use of alcohol is given as well.<sup>28</sup>

## F. NGO Training Sources

As NGOs and the NGO community become more professional and established, so too are resources that assist NGOs to manage, operate and implement programs more effectively. Most of the training programs that exist are focused on providing humanitarian personnel with training in specific sectors, topics or themes. InterWorks and RedR are two organizations that exist for the sole reason of training NGO personnel.

RedR, founded initially as “Registered Engineers for Disaster Relief,” is now a leading organization that provides not only an extensive roster of professionals that can be called on by partner agencies, but also a significant level of training to NGO personnel globally. Founded in England in 1979, it now has offices in more than five countries.

InterWorks in Madison, Wisconsin also provides NGO personnel and organizational training to a variety of clients. Specific seminars, distances learning options and direct consulting services are ways that InterWorks helps NGO personnel develop professional, technical and general skills that are of use in the field. From the InterWorks website:

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<sup>28</sup> World Vision International employment solicitations for positions open in Afghanistan. Available at <http://wvioaptus.wvi.org/webjobs.nsf/WebPublished/00B804C5204C09C988256B6F00746A24?OpenDocument>.

InterWorks provides customized training, distance learning and consulting services that enhance our client's efforts to reduce disaster risks, prepare and respond to humanitarian emergencies and build peaceful and sustainable societies.... InterWorks provides...solutions to [the] United Nations, NGOs, governmental, academic and military organizations involved in international development, disaster management and humanitarian emergency response. We are dedicated to addressing your particular priorities, opportunities and constraints, and delivering our services when and where you need them. To date, our staff have worked in more than 60 countries.<sup>29</sup>

### **NGO Training Organizations/Thinktanks**

Despite the fact that NGOs are often strapped for cash, time and personnel, many NGOs do train and equip their staff members with knowledge and know-how. At least Four organizations are dedicated solely to providing NGOs with contract services, free or specialized training for improving technical capacity and professionalism:

**InterWorks:** <http://www.interworksmadison.com/>

**RedR:** <http://www.redr.org/>

**Alnap:** <http://www.alnap.org/>

**The Cuny Center:** <http://www.thecunycenter.org/>

Training and consulting services that InterWorks provides are primary indicators that HAOs are becoming increasingly complex and professional. Still, gaps exist between NGOs and other agencies, potentially because of management structure and the lines of work associated with NGO operations. While the number of NGOs increases, there is not necessarily a significant shift in the level of professionalism and know-how. Paul Thompson, Executive Director and co-founder of InterWorks, suggests that while some sectors are increasing in capability, many sectors still have not progressed from levels of capacity and know-how obtained in the 1980s.<sup>30</sup> This is troubling, says Thompson. "Many NGOs are staffing their projects with generalists," he says, "and that means that an NGO doing a shelter project after a conflict or earthquake can manage materials and the logistics of the program, but may not know the appropriate materials, structures, geometry or plumbing to use for that region. Kosovo was a good example. Of the more than 10 NGOs that were executing emergency shelter programs, only three or four were competent and had shelter or construction experts.

NGOs also depend largely on training conferences and courses that are held at various times of the year by different hosts. For an extensive list of training conferences, classes and programs, Reliefweb is most likely the most comprehensive database available online. It lists numerous training programs for humanitarian assistance management, logistics, telecommunications, sectors and many other topics.<sup>31</sup> The HELP, IDHA and CHART courses are examples of civil-military relations programs, specific "humanitarian assistance" and medical response training.

### **G. NGOs and Inter and Intra-NGO Relations**

NGOs are just like other organizations. There are good managers, bad managers, rivalries, weaknesses, deficiencies, staff shortages and other problems. Of specific value to mention in this manual are two types of conflict: field-headquarter conflicts within an NGO, and NGO-to-NGO conflicts between organizations.

Many NGOs experience ongoing conflict between field and HQ offices. While the root of the conflict may lie in various explanations, there is plain evidence that HQ personnel continually feel left out of field-based decision-making, and that field personnel feel continually pressured and burdened by HQ demands and processes. Field staff

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<sup>29</sup> InterWorks website text, available at <http://www.interworksmadison.com/ourwork.html>.

<sup>30</sup> Personal Interviews (by phone and email) with Paul Thompson (InterWorks, Summer, 2002) and Donald Krumm (USAID, Winter and Spring, 2002).

<sup>31</sup> <http://www.reliefweb.int/training/>.

members are often experts in their trade and are able to make decisions quickly. HQ staffers often attempt to put more “management” into the decision-making process because of specific donor regulations or senior-level director management style. In any case, this straddling for position often creates tension between those staff members that feel the urgency of the moment (field level) and those that have to archive and account for field operations from a safe and comfortable HQ location. Some NGOs experience more conflict than others, and it is safe to say that most NGOs manage their internal conflict effectively. In fact, the word “conflict” may be too strong a word in many cases. Instead, tension or unease may explain more effectively the relationship between field and HQ staff members.

The NGO community hosts a strange series of internal rivalries between individual NGOs. Many NGOs develop institutional relationships with other NGOs, creating bonds in some cases and tension in others. Without citing examples, the conditions are obviously ripe for organizational tension: many NGOs are dependent on external funding from the same few donor agencies. When vying for the same grant award, NGOs must often compete with each other to obtain the grant. While it is not always that the “lowest bidder” gets the grant, it is true that NGOs must jostle and position for funding in very tense environments. NGO operations often depend on it. Without “that grant”, NGOs may have to pack up and go home which would require the laying off of personnel and capacity. These types of situations make many emergency response settings ripe for institutional competition.

In any case, tensions within and between NGOs are not major factors in gauging an NGO’s capacity and often can be a sign of institutional credibility and performance. If an NGO’s personnel have low morale and negative attitudes towards their work and their employer, it might signal a specific weakness in management or organizational culture. If an NGO has a bad reputation throughout the NGO community, it may be a signal of poor programming or practices. Still, like other organizations and communities or sectors, NGOs handle conflict and tension and move on. Like all types of organizations, most NGOs do have problems, and most navigate through them successfully.

## **H. Conclusion: NGO Staff are “Good to Go”**

NGO staff members are hard to categorize. More than ever, NGOs are depending on a solid class of professional, experienced and senior-level disaster and emergency managers that have worked in the most severe, harsh and challenging environments in the world. The days of witnessing untrained and young “humanitarians” attempting to get involved in humanitarian assistance are not over, but now more than ever value is placed on professional operations, protocol, training and capacity to handle extremely technical tasks in difficult working environments. Advanced degrees and program specialties are major rank indicators, and most mainstream NGOs found operating in humanitarian emergencies can be trusted to meet their objectives.

## Chapter 5

### NGO Funding

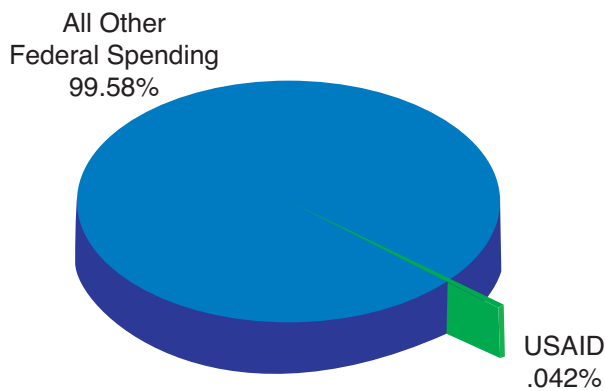
#### Chapter Summary

- NGO funding comes from a variety of sources: the UN, the US or EU governments, private citizens and foundations.
- Because NGOs are dependent on funding to become and remain operational, NGOs must spend a considerable amount of time preparing funding proposals and solicitations.
- The humanitarian relief industry is huge, but still a tiny percentage of total international spending by the US and countries within the EU.
- NGOs spend billions of dollars every year in humanitarian assistance activities, far outspending any other agency or organization globally.

#### A. International Humanitarian Assistance and NGO Funding

NGOs receive money, material, technical tools and other types of donations from external sources. This includes the US and EU governments, the UN, private donors, large foundations, corporations and individuals. Most NGOs that operate in humanitarian emergencies have some form of government support, normally in the form of a grant. It is estimated that the NGO community implements over \$6 billion worth of grants that are used in relief and development projects worldwide. This amount is mostly raised from private resources and is greater than the official development assistance (ODA) given by the World Bank and is comparable to the entire annual budgets of many UN agencies.

Actual aid delivered by NGOs has increased exponentially from the early 1970s. In 1970, NGOs provided only .2% of international ODA. Currently, the NGO contribution to relief and development programs and efforts is approximately 10%. In addition to these large amounts,



NGOs also serve as implementing partners for governmental agencies such as the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the US Department of State. In Africa, NGOs today manage nearly \$3.5 billion in external aid, compared to less than \$1 billion in 1990.<sup>32,33</sup> While these are considerable sums when viewed in light of significant increases, total US government funding for USAID programs that are largely implemented by NGOs only total to less than one percent of total US federal spending (see inset).<sup>34</sup>

NGOs receive funding from numerous sources, but the US government is one of the largest donors to US-based NGOs that operate in international humanitarian emergencies. The Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) within USAID is one of the leading US agencies that specialize in rapid assessments of humanitarian emergencies, NGO coordination and funding, and the coordination of US government efforts in these emergencies. Working

<sup>32</sup> Burnell, Peter. *Foreign Aid in a Changing World*. Philadelphia: Open University Press, 1997.

<sup>33</sup> Chege, Sam. "Donors Shift More Aid to NGOs." United Nations Department of Public Information. June, 1999.

<sup>34</sup> US Agency for International Development. Factsheet. Available at [www.info.usaid.gov](http://www.info.usaid.gov).

closely with NGOs in the field, and by providing information and often times actual relief commodities for the emergency, OFDA plays a major role in enabling NGOs to operate effectively. In numerous emergencies throughout the 1990s, OFDA was a major conduit between NGOs, between the NGO community and other US government and UN agencies, and has solidified a presence in the emergency response sector as a nimble and “ready-to-fund” arm of USAID. In general, the US government fills a unique role in providing NGOs and the international community with leadership, funding and capacity that is largely unmatched in scale.<sup>35</sup> USAID and its associated agencies will be referred to often in this manual, and where pertinent, sources will be provided to allow the reader to learn more about how the US operates its complex and large relief and development “industry.” See Annex 6 for more detail on how the US government manages humanitarian aid.

NGOs also receive major funding from the United Nations (UN). In many emergency settings, the lead agency for refugee assistance programming is the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR). UNHCR provides NGOs with coordinating mechanisms and funding for programs ranging from refugee camp management to housing rehabilitation. NGO funding also comes from other UN agencies, private foundations, individuals and other governments.

For pharmaceutical NGOs that specialize in providing other NGOs and partner agencies with medicine and medical supplies, donations of actual medicine and medical supplies come from established relationships with large pharmaceutical supply companies that want to rid of excess inventory, reduce tax liability or rid of soon-to-expire material. For many religiously oriented NGOs, funding comes from churches, mosques and other local entities that want to “sponsor” or support a specific cause.

Because most NGOs require funding from outside sources, the source of funding and support is as variable as the NGO community itself. The most definable donors for international humanitarian emergencies are western governments and the various UN agencies concerned with humanitarian assistance, food aid or development. The US, the UK, Scandinavian countries, the Netherlands, France, Japan and Australia are all known for being primary donors to humanitarian emergencies in some form. Countries will often provide direct grants to NGOs or to governments of countries affected by emergencies, or may provide the UN with funding to make these types of decisions or actions. The UN is dependent on contributions from specific member nations for specific funds and campaigns, and while the UN is not normally fully funded, it still is operational in most large-scale humanitarian emergencies worldwide. The UN serves as the primary distributor and manager of much of the funding that countries provide for humanitarian emergencies, and while in the affected region, it can distribute funding, coordination frameworks and general strategy with, to and through NGOs.

For many of the larger NGOs, funding sources are diverse and do not rely heavily on any one source. Instead, large percentages come from private donations from individuals, grants from governments, the UN, foundations and corporations. The following snapshots of a few NGOs here show the differences in NGO funding sources and size:

NGO	Government Funding	Private Contributions	Total FY 2000 Budget (incl. misc. not indicated here)
World Vision International (US)	\$90,174,000	\$372,045,000	\$468,045,000
Save the Children, US	\$67,852,976	\$69,835,504	\$143,067,886
Mercy Corps International, US	\$78,335,208	\$34,250,282	\$112,915,339
Air-Serv International	\$5,096,595	\$1,082,602	\$8,320,290
Relief International	\$2,142,705	\$150,930	\$2,292,843

<sup>35</sup> It is widely known and often cited by non-Americans that the contribution per capita of the US is considerably low compared to Western European country donations per capita. Still, the total aggregate level of humanitarian assistance that is provided by the US outweighs that of most other countries.



Often with more diverse funding, NGOs can be flexible in their programming and more capable of mustering resources for emergencies without having to solicit for funding in the initial stages of an emergency. This will be discussed further in following chapters. It should be noted here that when the term “donor” is used in phrases like “donor strategy”, “donor intent”, “the donor community” and the like, it means countries and international organizations (including the UN) that will be funding NGOs for their work in humanitarian emergencies.

To highlight the variance in the way that NGOs receive funding and in the size of NGOs financially, it is valuable to explore a few financial summaries. The following three NGOs have very different financial characteristics and have been chosen for their diverse programmatic focus and history. Using three organizations is sufficient for this small example, while more in-depth research on financial history and status can easily be made with resources provided in this chapter and in Annex 1. The following tables show for each organization the types of revenue and expenses during FY 2000. All data reflects revenue and expenses reported to the IRS for the fiscal year ending on September 30, 2000.<sup>36</sup> Annex 1 also has similar financial information on many other NGOs.

*International Medical Corps (IMC).* IMC, based in Los Angeles and primarily a provider of medical professionals and public health programming in emergency settings, has a larger private contribution level than it does government grants or contracts. As well, it makes over \$100,000 of its revenue in investments and over \$23 million in “sales.”

Contributions	\$14,304,453	Program Services	\$22,124,993
Government Grants	\$9,474,225	Administration	\$1,636,521
Program Services	\$0	Other	\$262,266
Investments	\$105,508	<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$24,023,780</b>
Special Events	\$6,916		
Sales	\$23,891,152		
Other	\$0		
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$23,891,152</b>	<b>NET GAIN/LOSS</b>	<b>\$(132,628)</b>

*Save the Children, US (Save).* Save the Children US, a multi-faceted and large NGO based in Connecticut, is considerably larger than IMC and displays an almost even balance between government grants and private contributions. Organizations like “Save” combine government grants and private contributions to maximize budget potential.

Contributions	\$69,835,504	Program Services	\$112,503,849
Government Grants	\$67,852,976	Administration	\$7,632,785
Program Services	\$918,454	Other	\$14,753,619
Investments	\$3,845,798	<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$134,890,253</b>
Special Events	\$4,894		
Sales	\$433,936		
Other	\$176,324		
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$143,067,886</b>	<b>NET GAIN/LOSS</b>	<b>\$8,177,633</b>

<sup>36</sup> Financial data on select NGOs is provided by GuideStar (<http://www.guidestar.com>).

*Cooperative Housing Foundation (CHF)*. CHF, a housing and emergency shelter agency, accepts no government grants and receives private contributions and beneficiary contributions to the sustainable development programs it provides. Emergency services are funded through a variety of contributions and service fees CHF collects.

Contributions	\$994,038	Program Services	\$19,506,751
Government Grants	\$0	Administration	\$3,846,357
Program Services	\$26,300,795	Other	\$0
Investments	\$232,039	<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$23,353,108</b>
Special Events	\$0		
Sales	\$0		
Other	\$54,114		
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$27,580,986</b>	<b>NET GAIN/LOSS</b>	<b>\$4,227,878</b>

Each of these NGOs is dependent on outside contributions, although CHF is the closest to maintaining self-sustaining programs. Still, when responding to emergencies, very few NGOs can afford to initiate and then sustain operations without seeking additional financial support from private contributions or government/UN grants. Each NGO employs a different strategy to provide services in humanitarian emergencies that largely depend on its mission, goals, charter, board of directors, beneficiary population and region in which it operates, and this will often determine what type of financial support an NGO will seek.

While it is safe to say that most NGOs are dependent on external funding sources, it is not safe to assume that all NGOs demand, desire or require the same types of funding. Instead, NGOs – depending on their specialty, comparative advantage or target audience – focus their fundraising efforts with specific target groups or donors. Once obtained, financial support will often help determine the scope or characteristic of an NGO’s programming. It is in this light that this chapter will explain NGO funding sources, practices and management.

## B. How NGOs Are Funded

Most NGOs rely on private sources of financial support. This includes unsolicited contributions from citizen, corporate donations or gifts-in-kind contributions, foundation or corporate grants, and religious or civil society-based funding. Some NGOs receive one or the other, limiting either government or private contributions for organizational or capacity reasons, while some NGOs combine sources of funding to maximize all potential contributions. This difference is meaningful.

**Private Contributions.** Private contributions are a primary source of funding for the NGO community. As a registered nonprofit within the US, for example, an NGO can offer for private contributors tax-deductible benefits that act as incentives for individuals or corporations to contribute to a cause or program while reducing income tax liability. Individuals, corporations, religious organizations and community groups often contribute to NGOs in the wake of an international humanitarian emergency.

Private contributions to NGOs are not always steady, nor are they always reliable. While it makes up a large portion of NGO funding worldwide, it often comes in sporadic waves. During emergencies that are publicized on local and national media outlets, individual contributions rise dramatically. For example, during the Kosovo Albanian refugee crisis in 1999, Relief International (RI) was cited on a local TV news program in San Francisco. Within 3 weeks over \$100,000 had been donated to RI by private contributors, mostly in the form of mailed checks or credit card donations over the phone.<sup>37</sup> World Vision US, CARE and other large US-based NGOs often run solicitation or awareness campaigns with various forms of media to increase private contributions to a specific or general cause.

Websites are also important for NGO fundraising. All US-based NGOs covered in this manual have websites that provide information about its programming, about its mission and objectives, and about “how one can help.” If interested, an individual could donate funds using a credit card or check transfer that is initiated online.

Private companies also contribute to NGOs. Other than cash donations, NGOs can often use older equipment, soon-to-be-expired medicines/foods, donated time or matching funds that corporations can sometimes give easily. Many NGOs use used technology that is donated by private companies. When a company upgrades office materials and supplies (including computers), it will sometimes look to a nonprofit or NGO to which it can provide a “donation” of their excess goods. This can often raise the philanthropic image of the company, provide tax credit, or is simply an easy way to get rid of excess material that is no longer needed. Corporations also often create “matching grants” or “gifts in kind” that match other grants or contributions (and that often serve as a challenge), or that provide material that can be used in the NGO’s overseas activities (food, medicine, construction material, tools, technology). Both are valuable and will be discussed in detail later.

Many pharmaceutical companies donate aging medicines and medical supplies to NGOs. In fact, a few US and EU-based NGOs have specialized in formulating relationships with medical and pharmaceutical companies to consolidate these contributions, provide tax credit to the companies, and then distribute the donated materials to partner NGOs that actually implement emergency programming.

In general, private contributions are ideal for an NGO. While each donor is different and will often donate small sums individually, there are relatively few restrictions or requirements placed on the NGO concerning each donation. There are no stipulations about how to spend the donation, or about complex reporting requirements. Of course, every NGO strives to prove that it is accountable and that its programs are worthy of further contributions. Still, private contributions are for the most part more simple to process, more immediate and come without major work requirements in the future. Those organizations that can harvest information about their donors and then utilize that information for targeted fundraising efforts during future emergencies will benefit from continued private contribution, and even form a sense of loyalty among the contributors.

Foundations are another source of financial support for NGOs. While there are tens of thousands of foundations that provide funding to nonprofits and NGOs, very few provide funding for humanitarian emergencies. Foundations normally provide funding for visible, community-building and long-lasting programs and do not necessarily fund emergency response efforts. Large foundations like the Ford Foundation (<http://www.fordfound.org>) and the Andrew Mellon Foundation (<http://www.mellon.org/>) have funded programs that focus on promoting NGO performance in emergencies, evaluation programs, and university-NGO collaboration projects that often yield valuable data and conclusions on NGO activity.

The Conrad N Hilton Foundation ([www.hiltonfoundation.org](http://www.hiltonfoundation.org)) provides annual awards to NGOs that have outstanding track records. With a \$1 million cash prize for the winner, the Hilton award attempts to reward those NGOs with extremely professional, transparent and successful program management practices. By doing so, it hopes to encourage other NGOs to replicate the practices of the winning NGO. This award is very prestigious and highly competitive. MSF won in 1999, and would then go on later to win the Nobel Peace Prize.

Other foundations provide various forms of assistance. Many foundations provide funding for research, disease eradication, public health and education programs. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation is the largest of this kind, giving hundreds of millions of dollars directly to the UN, to NGOs, to national governments, to universities and to think tanks in support of these types of programs.

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<sup>37</sup> Personal interview with Farshad Rastegar (via telephone, Relief International, June 25, 2002).

**USAID and US State Department Information**

**USAID index:** <http://www.usaid.gov>

**USAID OFDA website:** [www.usaid.gov/hum\\_response/ofda/](http://www.usaid.gov/hum_response/ofda/)

**USAID Field Operations Guide (“FOG”):** <http://www.usaid.gov/ofda/fog/>

**USAID Africa Bureau website:** <http://www.usaid.gov/regions/afr/>

**Phone and Email Listings for the Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance:**  
<http://gemini.info.usaid.gov/directory/pbResults.cfm?urlOrganization=DCHA>

**State Dept index:** <http://www.state.gov>

**State Dept Bureau websites:** <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/rls/dos/1718.htm>

**State Dept BPRM:** <http://www.state.gov/g/prm/>

**Government/UN Grants and Contracts.** NGOs receive contracts and grants from many different government and UN agencies. USAID, the State Department (see inset), the European Commission for Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO) and UNHCR are primary donor agencies that consistently provide funds to NGOs operating in emergencies.

US-based NGOs receive funding from two major government sources: the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and the US Department of State, Bureau of Populations, Refugees and Migration (PRM). USAID is the US government’s primary humanitarian assistance agency that was created under the Kennedy administration. It provides funding, coordination, assessment, implementation and procurement services in humanitarian emergencies worldwide. Through the USAID Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA), USAID is one of the main players in an HAO and provides a wide spectrum of leadership in all aspects of emergency response. From USAID’s OFDA website:

The largest percentage of USAID/OFDA’s assistance goes to relief and rehabilitation project grants managed by Private Voluntary Organizations (PVOs), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), and International Organizations (IOs). Relief projects include airlifting relief supplies to affected populations in remote locations, managing primary health care and supplementary feeding centers, and providing shelter materials to disaster evacuees and displaced persons....The goal of each project is to meet the humanitarian needs of the affected population, with the aim of returning the population to self-sufficiency. The “notwithstanding” clause of Section 491 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 states that no statutory or regulatory requirements shall restrict USAID/OFDA’s ability to respond to the needs of disaster victims in a timely fashion. USAID/OFDA follows the standard USAID procedures for routine procurements, but utilizes expedited or modified procedures when necessary to achieve its disaster response objectives. The first principle in disaster response accountability is to ensure that appropriate assistance gets to the neediest victims in time to minimize death and suffering. Procurement and accounting procedures may be expedited, but must include effective systems of internal control.<sup>38</sup>

USAID claims that 71% of its funding each year is distributed to PVOs or NGOs<sup>39</sup> 27% of USAID’s budget is given to the UN and 2% is given to IOs. OFDA is USAID’s leading emergency response arm and is often part of a combined civil-military coordination unit.<sup>40</sup> As well, OFDA DART teams are often the first responders to an emergency, and often begin to coordinate and/or identify priorities for HAOs.

<sup>38</sup> Available at [http://www.usaid.gov/hum\\_response/ofda/00annual/how.html](http://www.usaid.gov/hum_response/ofda/00annual/how.html).

<sup>39</sup> “PVO” is short for “private voluntary organization”, a term USAID uses to define US-based NGOs that receive US government funding.

The USAID Administrator reports to the State Department, although USAID receives its money specifically from the US Congress. Andrew Natsios, current USAID Administrator, was at one point an employee of World Vision International, the world's largest NGO at the time of writing. He has dedicated significant effort to working more closely with the NGO community in emergency responses. USAID and the Administrator is the central point of coordination for most US international aid. With numerous bureaus, offices and departments, it is capable of managing all types of foreign assistance that range from economic development, democracy and governance issues, emergency response and longer-term agricultural development. USAID's Administrator, appointed by the US President, is given the task of being the inter-agency coordinator for international emergencies.

The State Department's BPRM is the US government agency that deals primarily with population movements and settlement/migration issues. PRM officials can be found in all stages of an emergency, and normally work closely with other US officials (USAID/OFDA/DART team members, US military, etc.). From the PRM website:

(PRM) has primary responsibility within the U.S. Government for formulating U.S. foreign policy on population, refugees, and migration, and for administering U.S. refugee assistance and admissions programs. In this capacity, it has the lead role within the State Department in responding to complex humanitarian emergencies around the world. The Bureau is also responsible for policy leadership on the U.S. Government's international population policies and programs, and it serves as the focal point within the U.S. Government for multilateral coordination of international migration policies and programs.<sup>41</sup>

With only a \$670 million budget, PRM is quite small when compared to USAID. Like USAID, though, PRM provides grants to NGOs and IOs operating in emergencies. Table 5.1 displays those grants disturbed in May 2002. PRM provides more funding to IOs than does USAID, but still provides a significant amount of funding to NGOs for refugee management issues, protection, health, immigration and resettlement programming.

Both of these agencies make up a large portion of financial resource for NGOs operating in humanitarian emergencies. Both USAID and PRM within the State Department work closely with NGOs and serve as focal points of new humanitarian practices, thinking and standards.

An organization that seeks funding from either USAID or PRM must be in good standing, have audited and accountable financial records from previous years, fall within the mission scope of the US government's contracting and/or grant-making process and generally be credible. To become an implementing partner for USAID, PRM and other donor agencies like UNHCR, there is an exhaustive process that an NGO must go through to be eligible to receive government funding. Once approved as a "partner," NGOs normally find themselves working closely with PRM and USAID staff members in the emergency affected region, and often develop close partnerships or relationships in responding to the needs of the EPs.

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<sup>40</sup> See the USAID Field Operations Guide for Disaster Assessment and Response, Version 3.0, published by OFDA. Known to those within USAID and the NGO community as the "FOG" ("Field Operations Guide"), it is a reference guide for personnel that are part of Disaster Assistance Response Teams (DARTs). It has a useful section on civil-military coordination entitled "Working with the Military in the Field" (Reference VI-33). Because OFDA is often the first responder to an emergency, it plays a vital role in connecting and coordinating the various elements of an international humanitarian response. DART teams begin organizing the US government's response to an emergency, and OFDA is then authorized to begin delivering aid immediately in various ways. By distributing materials itself or by working through implementing UN agencies or NGOs, it delivers cash, relief supplies and logistical services that are extremely valuable.

<sup>41</sup> Available at <http://www.state.gov/g/prm/fund/2002/rpts/7075.htm>.

When the US government does formulate its policies and/or priorities for the region, it provides the NGO community with a series of guidelines and inferences concerning agency priorities (what they will accept proposals for). NGOs will normally propose various programs that require US (or other) government funding, will respond to the RFP issued by USAID or PRM, or will often propose new programs that require financial support from one of the donor agencies.

### C. Other Funding Sources<sup>42</sup>

Other important donor agencies that fund NGOs include the following UNHCR and ECHO:

UNHCR works closely with NGOs in many ways, from direct funding of emergency response programs, to refugee camp management or logistical coordination of relief activities within a region. The term “implementing partner” is often used by UNHCR to explain their relationships with NGOs. UNHCR works on a contract basis with each NGO it funds, and provides financial and material support to NGOs working in refugee settings. Based in Geneva, UNHCR is the UN’s lead agency in managing refugee crises and humanitarian responses to large population displacements (and often IDPs). In the 1990s, its activities grew to include negotiating and protecting safe passage and return/resettlement for refugee populations. Due to political and financial constraints, UNHCR has been in the middle of the fiery debate about which agency should care for IDPs. UNHCR provides various forms of support ranging from direct implementation of relief programs and logistical support for other donor/UN agencies, to NGO contracts and international response coordination. UNHCR has roughly 300 NGO partners.<sup>43</sup>

ECHO is the European Union’s primary humanitarian aid agency and at one time in the 1990s had a \$1 billion budget. Residing in Brussels and under the umbrella of the European Commission (EC), ECHO was founded in the 1990s and with over a \$1 billion budget it was for a while the largest provider of humanitarian aid in the world. It is for the EU what USAID’s OFDA is for the US. ECHO does not, by political principle, fund any US NGOs (there are exceptions). For those NGOs based in the US but that have incorporated partner or affiliate agencies in the EU, ECHO funding is available. World Vision, CARE, ADRA, CRS, Save the Children and others are examples of US-based organizations (not necessarily founded in the US) that receive ECHO funding.<sup>44</sup>

ECHO, UNHCR, USAID and PRM staff members normally coordinate the types of programs that they will fund with the emergency-affected host government or with other donor agencies. Staff members sort through NGO proposals and approve those that fall within the priorities and funding capabilities of the donor agency, the host government and other donor communities. When donor agencies coordinate there is often a distribution of sectors and/or priorities that each donor will assume. One donor country like the US may assume the lead role in supporting activities in the northern portion of some country, refugee camp management, logistics or primary health. Other donor agencies will take other sectors or regions, thereby increasing the breadth and depth of humanitarian activity support that the donor community as a whole can provide. For NGOs that operate in a specific region or sector funding may come from a specific donor that is charged with managing that specific region or sector.

Each of these organizations will be mentioned throughout this manual and should be familiar to the reader as powerful members of the donor community that support NGO activities in humanitarian emergencies.

The following table lists contributions from donors to specific sectors that have been reported to UN OCHA for the period between January 1, 2001 to October 5, 2001. It is information available on OCHA’s website, and includes funds that have been distributed to NGOs, IOs, specific local government or regional associations. Debt relief and larger economic assistance packages are not covered in this data.

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<sup>42</sup> See Annex 8 for descriptions of UN donor agencies.

<sup>43</sup> UNHCR’s website is informative and includes updates, financial data and news. <http://www.unhcr.ch>.

<sup>44</sup> ECHO’s website, too, is informative and useful for becoming familiar with how Europe’s leading aid agency operates. [http://europa.eu.int/comm/echo/en/index\\_en.html](http://europa.eu.int/comm/echo/en/index_en.html).

Sector	USD	% Total
No sector specified	76,434,981	7.57%
Agriculture	12,388,419	1.23%
Coordination and Support Services	33,767,461	3.35%
Economic Recovery and Infrastructure	6,825,266	0.68%
Education	6,157,029	0.61%
Family Shelter and Non-food Items	13,724,256	1.36%
Food	605,190,709	59.96%
Health	54,303,101	5.38%
Mine Action	5,493,683	0.54%
Multi-Sector	177,012,738	17.54%
Protection/Human Rights	9,465,688	0.94%
Security	2,584,095	0.26%
Water and Sanitation	5,897,546	0.58%
Grand Total:	1,009,244,972	100.00%

Food aid is by far the largest single sector for donor contributions, reaching to almost 60% of all aid given to the listed sectors. The second largest category outside of multi-sectoral aid is health, with just over 5%.

#### D. Funding Processes

NGOs must compete for funding from each of these donor agencies, and even for public donations that are not solicited. While there are restrictions, prerequisites or previously established relationships with many donor agencies, each NGO must follow a specific process to obtain funding for its humanitarian assistance projects. A large portion of all funding that comes into an emergency is provided by government and UN agencies and it is popular, to say the least.

Many NGOs compete for limited funds that each government donor agency has allotted for an individual emergency. While donor priorities may be formulated within the assessment phase, there is still a large level of jostling, cajoling, competing and lobbying that NGOs participate in to obtain grants or contracts. Much like private sector contracting for government agencies, NGOs “bid” on humanitarian programs or projects with proposals that can be extensive and thorough documents or fast and to-the-point program summaries. Obviously, for larger funding levels, more effort is required to signal to the donor agency that the submitting NGO has the appropriate technical capacity and expertise (or stronger than other NGOs that may be competing for the same grant or contract). For large refugee camp management programs, water and sanitation, communication, infrastructural and medical projects, proposals often include blueprints, partner organization proposals, geological surveys, and specialized research and consultant reports. Depending on the donor agency, and on the urgency of the humanitarian operation, proposal processes and funding releases differ greatly.

NGOs submit project proposals in what is normally a very competitive process. NGOs will often provide numerous project proposals to the same agency during the same emergency. As well, NGOs will often submit the same proposal to various donor agencies during the same emergency. Should an NGO have large capacity or expertise in a region or sector, it may have numerous contracts with numerous donor agencies. It is not uncommon for an NGO to manage various grants from different sources within a region, and it is often the case that many NGOs become umbrella organizations for a donor agency. This means that an NGO will receive a large chunk of funding from a specific donor agency and then distribute and manage smaller grants to other NGOs. This removes the administrative pressure from donor agencies and allows an NGO that is more familiar with the needs of the EPs and region to choose, administer and evaluate specific programs that it chooses to fund.

For an NGO that seeks government or UN funding to implement relief programs, the process starts at the onset of the emergency. Should an organization be in good standing with the required financial accountability levels established by annual reports and proper accounting standards, an NGO can compete for funding once on the ground or immediately before arriving in the emergency-affected region. When an emergency hits, an NGO will often send a small assessment staff to survey the emergency and identify what population requirements and resource needs are

most essential. These assessment crews will normally work closely or come in to contact with government and UN assessment teams, and will often together formulate a plan or strategy to begin implementing emergency response activities. For the NGO community, donor funds are sought through a proposal process after a donor agency releases a “Request for Proposal” (RFP). The RFP reflects the priorities and strategies of the donor agency and suggests to NGOs what it feels are the most important elements of a specific program or response.

During the first phases of an emergency, funds are often released to NGOs to initiate services to EPs immediately. If humanitarian conditions are extremely dire, funding may be distributed with a series of “instructions” or program plans to NGOs for immediate action. If an RFP is released, the NGO community scrambles to collect the appropriate data, location, target EPs and capacity for a program that would be acceptable to the donor and more competitive than other NGO proposals. It is an extremely competitive process, and the word “scramble” appropriately describes the method often times employed by NGOs when major funding amounts are available from a specific donor.

Initial response teams often arrive in the emergency setting with their own capacity, and many larger NGOs will shift resources hosted in neighboring regions to the new emergency for use in emergency programming. Trucks, communication equipment, immediate medical supplies, some technical water and sanitation equipment and program knowledge normally arrive within an emergency setting immediately, often preceding any grant or contract with a donor agency.

## **E. Conclusion: How NGOs Manage Money**

NGOs that accept government grants from agencies like USAID become bound by USAID’s financial reporting and programmatic policies. There is normally a high level of mandatory financial reporting and regulations that govern the way the NGO can operate within an emergency once an NGO becomes a contracting partner of a donor agency. While grants from USAID, UNHCR, ECHO and other donor agencies are somewhat flexible, NGOs spend a considerable amount of time and energy assuring that their financial management systems are transparent and accountable.

Each NGO manages money in different ways, but all strive to keep accountable and transparent record keeping. By law, US and EU-based NGOs are required to maintain specific types of accounting measures, and often are required to have a diversified donor base. National and local tax procedures must be followed closely, and audited statements of financial well-being must be conducted. InterAction members, for example, must maintain a high level of financial accountability, and each member is required to have audited statements submitted to the association annually.

Small NGOs often have only one person to manage finances. By using simple accounting methods, a smaller NGO can easily track incoming donations or funding and outgoing expenditures. When donation levels and/or programmatic involvement increase for an NGO, accounting becomes more complicated. Each new emergency that an NGO responds to, for example, often requires a separate accounting system. If an NGO has operations in Honduras, for example, and then is successful in obtaining funds for operations in Afghanistan, accounting systems must now be able to manage finances for two distinct programs. For each new government or UN donor an NGO must keep separate, clear and itemized accounting records.

Larger NGOs have an elaborate financial management system and at least one staff member assigned to financial management and maybe even fundraising and general “business development.” Many larger NGOs have mastered the art of fundraising by balancing the need to serve EPs with the need to continually raise money to fund future programs. This has been a challenging cycle for many small NGO.

In general, internationally-operating NGOs have strong organizational structures that allow them to manage various programmatic activities and have the financial systems required to successfully implement them. While not without problems or challenges, successful NGOs have solidified, for the most part, responses to the challenging task of managing multiple, global budgets.



## Chapter 6

### NGO Coordination and Community

#### Chapter Summary

- NGOs coordinate and are part of a “community” of organizations dedicated to alleviating the suffering of EPs worldwide. The numbers of internationally-operating NGOs are relatively small, each is different in composition, size, funding and abilities. While often extremely varied, NGOs do share specific challenges, mandates and missions.
- NGO “associations” are valuable in providing a common forum for NGOs to manage discussion and debate, to coordinate a common “voice” and advocacy efforts, and serve as the host of professional and technical standards. The International NGO Council, InterAction and VOICE are the leading NGO consortiums/associations globally. Smaller regional-level associations are also valuable in practical terms for coordination and resource-sharing efforts.
- NGOs coordinate during emergencies on a regional or country-level, and often share resources, information and capabilities. As well, NGOs coordinate heavily with IOs, militaries, the UN and governments.
- NGOs and militaries are now used to coordinating with each other, but culture shock still exists when the two very distinct communities come together in new emergencies. Continued and constant contact makes life easier for those charged with coordinating activities on both sides.

While NGOs do have challenges, rivalries and cut-throat competition between one another, there is an over-arching demand during an emergency to operate somewhat cohesively. Some NGOs are better at coordinating than others, and some NGOs don’t coordinate at all. Still, coordination is turning out to be an extremely important part of international relief activities and many NGOs are finding that to not coordinate is to sacrifice operational efficiency. This is a delicate matter for many NGO personnel and can be argued vigorously in a variety of ways.

NGOs do coordinate, and despite the common belief that many NGOs have no regard for planning, campaigns or cooperation with non-NGO entities, NGOs spend much of their time coordinating and relating to other organizations. NGOs are highly dependent on the NGO “community” in any specific emergency, as NGOs often have limited resources and the need to piggy-back transportation, communication and security elements of their programming. NGOs also must often coordinate with military units. By communicating and sharing information about various regions, hotspots or dangers that may exist within a military’s AOR, NGOs can understand more fully where they can deliver humanitarian assistance. NGOs also seek geographical data, satellite imagery, airlift support, logistical assistance, landmine removal services and other forms of assistance from militaries.

Because most international NGOs that respond to international emergencies are funded by the same UN and government donor agencies, it is often the case that donors will mandate or require each of its implementing partners to cooperate and coordinate their activities. As well, many NGOs operating within the same programmatic sector or within the same region find themselves coordinating activities, transportation, security protocol and advocacy efforts.

#### A. NGO-to-NGO Coordination

Coordination within the NGO sector can be found globally. In almost every humanitarian emergency, NGOs will seek to immediately establish some form of coordination mechanism, often in the form of an NGO council, an association, a weekly meeting, and email listserv or a website. Because NGOs are often the first to respond to a humanitarian emergency, this “body” may be the only manner of coordinating that the international community has during the initial stages of an emergency. As emergency response efforts progress during an emergency, this coordinating “body” (often extremely informal) often serves, then, as the contact point for military, government and donor agencies to the NGO community in general.

Most NGOs participate in at least some form of coordination during an emergency. This does not mean that NGOs give up autonomy or share programming advantages: NGOs remain independent and guard their privacy and programmatic specialties, regions, proposals, funding sources and ideas closely. It does mean that because NGOs are private organizations with limited capacity, there is benefit to connecting to a large ensemble of organizations with varying specialties and similar operating structures. By speaking the same “language”, these private organizations can benefit from pooling resources (transport cost sharing, logistics services, safety and security, communications infrastructure, etc), sharing experiences, setting standards and organizing “campaigns” in responding to a humanitarian emergency. Many smaller and medium-sized NGOs (and even large NGOs with expansive programming and capacity) find it necessary to participate and contribute to coordinating bodies that share information and services. Smaller NGOs often do not have the staff power or know-how when it comes to civil-military relations, de-mining or emergency communication set-ups. Smaller NGOs can often piggy-back with larger NGOs during convoys into dangerous areas, onto Internet networks, power generators, expat safety and similar services. Larger NGOs too often seek the skills or technical expertise that specialized NGOs have. A larger NGO may seek out VITA for technology consulting on low-earth orbiting satellites or Air-Serv for air transport to remote locations.

Coordinating efforts are partly a manifestation of NGO communities that exist internationally. Internationally operating NGOs are part of a “community” that often share knowledge, advocacy efforts, positions, opinions, resources and labor pools. While some partake in “community” efforts more than others, most NGOs find some form of camaraderie with other NGOs and reasons to communicate and/or share resources and information. Many NGOs responding to emergencies today face similar challenges and resource restraints, and it is not uncommon for NGOs in the field to share housing, warehousing, equipment and sometimes staff.<sup>45</sup>

In sum, NGOs coordinate with other NGOs to:

- Increase logistical and service capacity
- Share and obtain new information pertinent to a humanitarian operation
- Increase the weight of NGO community suggestions and appeals
- Reduce operational costs
- Increase security
- Enhance efficiency and transparency.

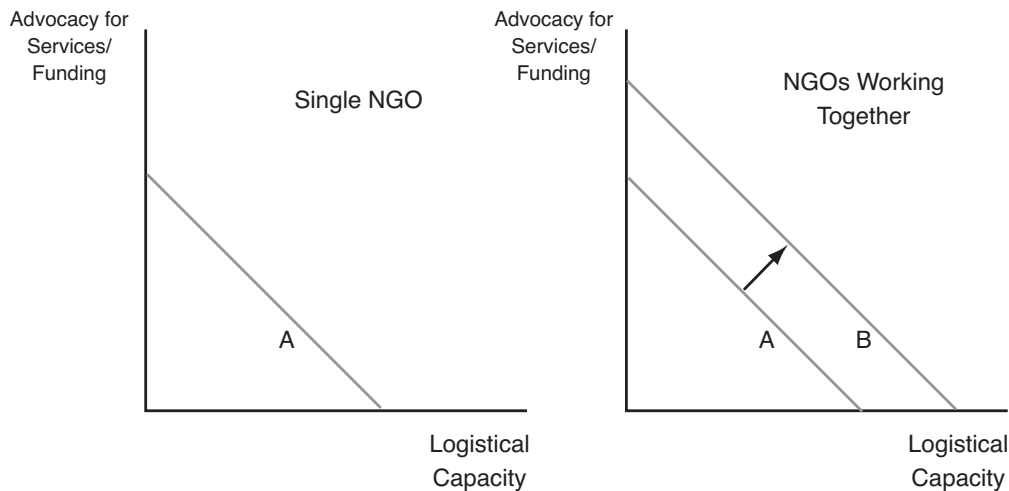
Below are two graphs that crudely but simplistically show how and NGO can increase both its message and, for example here, its logistical capacity.<sup>46</sup> If NGO “A” decides to work alone within an emergency and conduct its own programming in refugee camp design and management, it will depend entirely on its own resources. Without any organization willing to share equipment, expertise, staff or information, this NGO will be relatively isolated in its programming, most likely aloof to any major regional changes in condition, new practices or developments in refugee care, and other similar programs other NGOs are conducting. If an NGO chooses not to coordinate at the initial onset of an emergency, it could potentially waste valuable time in conducting assessments that others may have already conducted, or attempt to design or propose programs that have already been designed or proposed.

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<sup>45</sup> Some NGOs exist to provide personnel or some other service to other NGOs. Air-Serv and VITA, as mentioned, both exist to provide other NGOs with technical services. This is not necessarily staff sharing, but it is a form of coordination and collaboration during an emergency. Both Air-Serv and VITA are funded by donors with the mandate to provide other relief and development organizations with specific services.

<sup>46</sup> This variable chosen for its simplistic characteristic. If an NGO has no trucks and does not coordinate, it has no opportunity to obtain the services of a truck when it may need one. If an NGO has no trucks and DOES coordinate, it may have the chance to utilize the services of another NGO’s truck (s) should there be need and an agreement.

If NGO “B” coordinates with other NGOs in the region of concern, it can join together in a consolidated “appeal” to donors and governments that are involved in the specific emergency. When speaking together with other NGOs, NGO “B” is increasing its capacity to advocate for the programs it thinks are most valuable during the emergency. Using the “logistical capacity” variable to express benefits for working together, it can be seen that when NGO “B” joins together with other NGOs, it can utilize shared convoy and cargo space, warehouses, information that may flow other NGOs working in various surrounding regions, communication equipment and the like. When more NGOs work together per-NGO operation costs are reduced and more (efficient) services can be delivered. The graph on the right shows an increase in both advocacy strength and logistical capacity.<sup>47</sup>



**Case: NGO Coordination in Burundi.** Today, Burundi is suffering from almost every malady that could plague a country. With over 1 million of its citizens classified as refugees in Tanzania, over 300,000 killed in the last decade, warring political and militant factions constantly draining resources and livelihood, and general humanitarian conditions worsening, Burundi’s 9 years of war provides an incredible story for such a small and beautiful country. Major developments in obtaining peace for Burundi reached a pinnacle in August, 2000, as former South African president Nelson Mandela brought together 19 warring factions to Arusha, Tanzania, to sign a peace treaty that would solidify a process to end violence and to put in place those mechanisms that would lead distrustful opponents to become parts of a peaceful and democratic Burundi.

In humanitarian terms, Burundi is facing drastic conditions that continue to worsen. With approximately 380,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs), and over 1 million refugees outside of Burundi,<sup>48</sup> political and economic stability is far from being accomplished. Infant mortality has risen, life expectancy is greatly reduced and persons that are considered “food insecure” are now numbering over 1 million.<sup>49</sup> As conflict continues- both politically and militarily – Burundi is losing the capacity to offer its citizens even the most basic services. Health care, education,

<sup>47</sup> The term “advocacy” is popular among NGOs. While traditionally used by those organizations “advocating” for populations or individuals suffering from human rights abuses, abject poverty or political oppression, “advocacy” now is used in the context of consolidating NGO messages, demands or desires when communicating with donor agencies and government entities. NGO associations, like InterAction (explained in more depth below), tout that advocacy is a major program benefit for members. By advocating for funding, standards, safety, working conditions and respect, the US NGO consortium is benefiting its members. Single NGOs do not have the access, resources or luxury to lobby, advocate or consolidate strong messages from many organizations.

<sup>48</sup> OCHA, “Affected Populations in the Great Lakes Region” (as of 30 April 2001). OCHA Great Lakes Regional Office, Nairobi, Kenya.

<sup>49</sup> UNHCR. “Burundian Refugees Return Home Despite Clashes.” Press Release. 8 April 2002.

water and sanitation are all sectors that have seen heavy neglect or systemic destruction. According to the most recent OCHA report on Burundi's humanitarian conditions, school attendance is down to only 37%, vaccination rates for measles have dropped to 47% and maternal mortality has risen to 800 of every 100,000 births. Food insecurity also plagues many parts of the country and continues to affect the movements, health and general well being of Burundi's population.

While the international community has attempted to respond to many of Burundi's needs, international humanitarian activity has access to only approximately 70% of the country. Large restrictions on movements, supply chains, logistics and communications have hampered even the most robust international efforts at supplying basic and primary medical, food and material needs. Burundi's economy is devastated: GNP, exports and imports are all down<sup>50</sup>. Burundi's agricultural sector has been victim to droughts, population impacts and general neglect due to lack of resources or labor. And while Burundi is poor and getting poorer, and as conflict continues, few international donors have ventured into actually providing large-scale development assistance that normally comes with established bi-lateral ties and some requirements. Relief continues to dominate the assistance packages that are allotted, and there seems to be no general or significant change in the scenario for the near future.

Conflict in Burundi has become detrimental to its future, and a Donor's Conference in Paris was but one attempt to alter the course of the conflict. It is important, though, to realize that not only was the Conference of major scale, but that the resources and power that the international community put behind an attempted peace settlement were and currently are extremely large. The succession of events – from the August, 2000 signing of the Arusha Accord, relapses into major conflict, the Paris Conference in December and through the November, 2001 start-date for the implementation and to today's continued fighting – has been dramatic, to say the least. To understand what effect the international community's conference in Paris had on the peace process and Burundi's general well-being, a closer look should be given to the Conference, to the actors and to the specific reasons that Mandela's strategy did not work as intended.

The international NGOs that are delivering much of Burundi's assistance play a large role in how the peace process in general has evolved. NGO representatives were present at the Paris Conference and outlined, in a brief speech made by Nigel Watt of Christian Aid, a series of points that clearly indicate their belief that there would be "no peace without development".<sup>51</sup> Unlike other regions, Burundi's NGO community has focused on organizing and coordinating their activities in a common forum. This forum, entitled "RESO", is comprised of almost 40 NGOs and they meet to discuss activities, concerns, safety, shared security and operational issues, etc. RESO activities have moved further from simple discussions about local tax laws and which roads are clear to take. Now, says CARE's Burundi Country Director<sup>52</sup>, RESO is taking up "advocacy" as a primary task, and is working closely with the government of Burundi, international agencies, donors and others to assure that their combined levels of experience on the ground are becoming known and are, hopefully, being taken into consideration with those that are seeking to find an end to the humanitarian emergency.

NGOs in Burundi also face a series of difficult decisions that are closely related to their missions and mandates and the ability for them to effectively obtain their objectives. Because security is at all times unsure, and because violence and corruption are daily events for those operating HAOs in Burundi, many NGOs have to weigh the benefits of staying operational in Burundi. An OXFAM representative indicated that no matter what levels of corruption, of difficulty with the government, and of other challenges, there is a humanitarian mandate that guides these NGOs to alleviate suffering, in what ever way and quantity possible. "People are dying and are suffering," she says, and "this means that we will work"<sup>53</sup> This does not mean that NGOs are turning from realizing that much aid is being manipulated, and that a heavy percentage (although an even approximate percentage is unknown) is being

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<sup>50</sup> World Bank. "Burundi at a Glance". Available at <http://www.worldbank.org/afr/bi2.htm>.

<sup>51</sup> RESO Document submitted to the attendees of the Paris Conference, December 11, 12 2000.

<sup>52</sup> Personal Interview. Country Director, CARE Burundi. May 18th, 2001. Nairobi, Kenya.

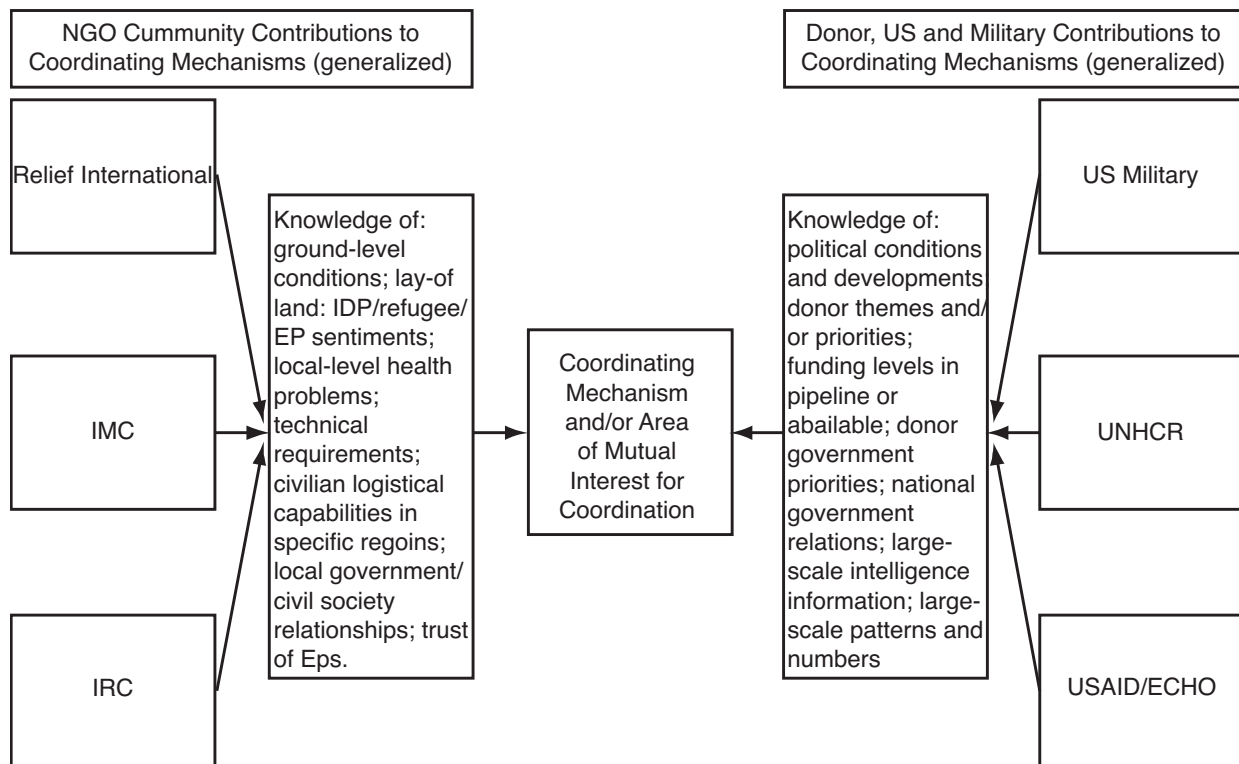
<sup>53</sup> Personal Interview. OXFAM Staff Member. May 22nd, 2001. Nairobi, Kenya.

stolen, sold or used for fueling conflict. It simply means that NGOs have chosen to operate, and continue to do so, in conditions that are less-than optimal for assisting humans in need. Donors have taken this into consideration, and representatives from donor offices such as the US Office for Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) have indicated that as long as NGOs will work in those conditions, “we’ll fund them”. There is human need, says an OFDA representative<sup>54</sup>, “and we will respond to it.”

**B. NGO-to-Donor/Government Agency Coordination.**

As well as coordinating within the NGO community, NGOs constantly coordinate with lead UN agencies, government agencies and other international organizations. While an NGO may be required to work closely with the organization that is funding its programming, information sharing between the NGO community and the national government and UN agencies is also valuable to all organizations involved. Every organization is dependent on information during an emergency, and because no one organization (NGO, IO or otherwise) can obtain or manage all pertinent information in every specific sector, NGOs, donors, IOs and the UN tend to provide and receive information in formal or informal relationships with each other constantly. The UN, IOs and government agencies all have access to large levels of information, normally dealing with funding, political settings, large-scale refugee movements, repatriation patterns and region-wide public health concerns. NGOs, on the other hand, have very specific on-the-ground data, understand refugee/IDP/EP sentiments, can detect community or sub-regional health dangers or outbreaks, and “know” the lay of the land when actually implementing relief or development activities.

The diagram below shows in a very general way those types of information that both the NGO and the UN/Donor/Military communities have. Because there is such a large difference in the type of information that is obtained throughout an emergency by NGOs and UN/Donor/Military entities, there is a large “market” of information that is valuable to each party. The US military will want to participate in a coordinating mechanism –

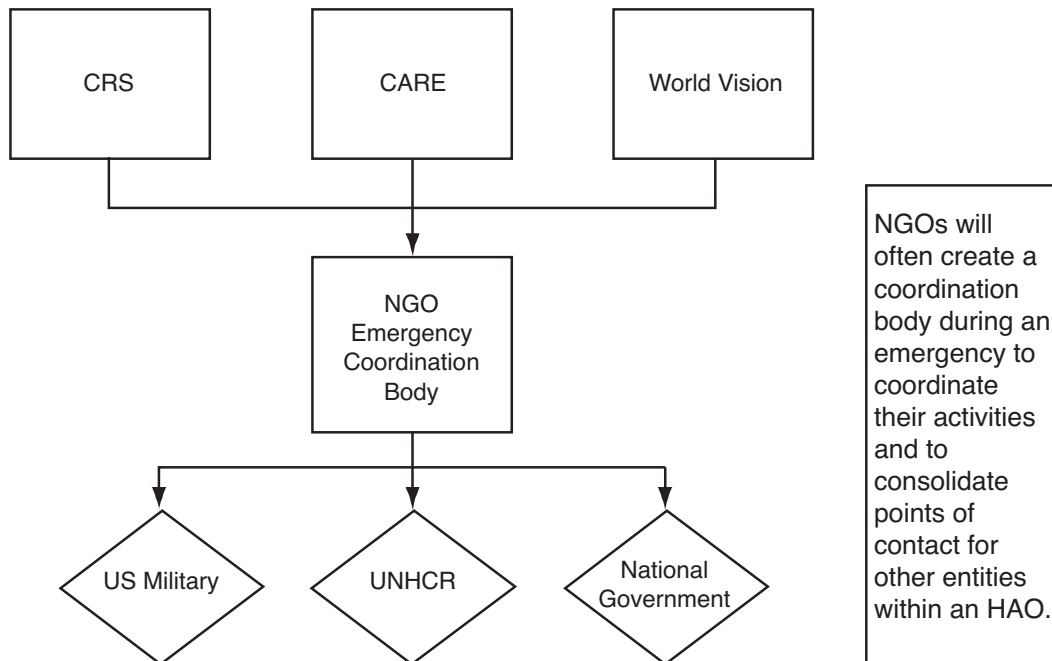


<sup>54</sup> Personal Interview. USAID/OFDA Regional Senior Emergency Advisor Greg Gottlieb. May 14th, 2001. Nairobi, Kenya.

formal or informal – to obtain ground-level information and potentially valuable sub-regional population movement numbers, health problems, and ground-level themes otherwise not obtainable by military personnel. NGO’s normally want to obtain information about funding sources, political and economic events and/or occurrences, donor priorities, macro-scale intelligence and other information not normally obtainable by any NGO personnel or private civilian organization.

By working together all types of entities can pool resources and walk away from coordination meetings with more information than was contributed.

As mentioned, NGOs will often create coordinating bodies only within the NGO community. This normally includes a number NGOs participating in an information exchange forum and then advocating decisions, demands or ideas on behalf of the group. While not completely undermining each member NGO’s autonomy, the association makes each voice stronger, and allows the NGO community to garner a larger presence when dealing with other large bureaucratic entities (the UN, militaries, government agencies, etc). The following diagram shows how NGOs often work together in a common forum or coordinating mechanism that then serves as a direct advocate or contact point for other entities within an emergency setting.



In an organization like RESO, NGOs can coordinate internally about program issues, AORs, lessons learned, potential health or safety hazards, but they can also utilize a strong and cohesive voice that comes from many NGOs working together. In Burundi, RESO serves as a contact point for various agencies (not necessarily any of the entities shown in the diagram), and has also been recognized as a major “player” in the political process (as noted in the case study above).

In northern Iraq in the early 1990s (US military “Operation Provide Comfort”), NGOs found it necessary to create a coordinating mechanism for one of the first times in their operational history. At no time had military forces been so involved in international relief activities, and neither had there been such a need to coordinate so many NGOs, donors and IOs in the same region. NGOs formed the NGO Coordinating Committee for Northern Iraq (NCCNI), which then served as the “NGO Emergency Coordinating Body” that is shown in the diagram above. It was the foundation for communications with a diverse set of donors, military units, government agencies, refugee and IDP councils and IOs that all were participating in HAOs in some facet.

## Where to Go to Coordinate with NGOs:

**The NGOs Themselves.** NGOs can almost always be approached in person, by telephone or email. In the field, NGO personnel can be spoken to directly, and are often very friendly. Coordination centers or NGO associations are often valuable places to coordinate or liaise with NGOs during an emergency as well. There may not be a physical location, but many NGO employees will be able to indicate where, when or how (maybe by email or mail) the NGOs coordinate amongst themselves. Military personnel are often guided to the NGO coordination body or association. This body normally has information or contact points for member NGOs, and can serve as a guide to understanding what NGOs are doing in the region, and which NGOs are active in specific sectors. Military personnel or NGO outsiders will want to request the names and contact information for specific country directors, program officers, logistics officers and other NGO staff, taking into account that within an NGO's regional operations, there may exist numerous program officers that deal with different projects. As well, smaller NGOs will often assign one person multiple tasks, so a communications officer may also be a logistician or program specialist. Language barriers will often exist, so it always pays to be polite and to know a few greetings or salutations in a few languages.

**HICs.** As well, the UN often sets up *Humanitarian Information Centers* (HICs) that also serve as central coordination points. Many times NGOs are either "required" or voluntarily register with an HIC to keep updated on meetings, regional news and developments. HICs are normally located in central activity areas, often close to UN offices or where the international community stakes out an unofficial headquarters

**Civil Military Operations Centers (CMOCs) or HOCs (Humanitarian Operations Centers).** HOCs are often established as the official coordinating center between NGOs, the UN, governments, IOs and the military.

**On-Site Operations Coordination Centers (OSOCC).** The term OSOCC was used in Rwanda, and essentially fulfilled the same role as the HOCs did in Somalia. It was a place for official coordination between NGOs, the UN, donors, other IOs and the military.

**The Internet.** Two previously mentioned websites and two new websites can be used to find NGOs that are operating in specific emergencies.

## C. NGO Coordination with Militaries

NGOs and militaries around the world are now familiar with each other. During the 1990s and through today, international NGOs and the US military came into constant contact and often worked together extensively in hotspots like Somalia, Bosnia, northern Iraq, Albania, Kosovo and now Afghanistan. Chris Seiple's work<sup>55</sup> is still to-date the most comprehensive research done on US military and NGO coordination and cooperation. And while it predates some very important civil-military experiences (it was published in 1996), it provides a solid sense of the types of challenges and successes that both the NGO and military communities experienced during their relationships in the early 1990s. In general, Seiple's work points to the fact that NGO-military relationships are necessary, are often challenging, but are largely rewarding for all parties involved. Extra effort, patience and understanding is often required to understand the different "languages" that both the NGO community and militaries use.

NGO-military relationships are special and warrant "special" attention. NGOs and militaries are often the only implementing, active organizations in a humanitarian emergency. NGOs and military units do and will bump into each other frequently. Both are physically active within an emergency-affected region, and are most often tasked with logistical duties and/or requirements in managing their programs. So how do NGOs coordinate with military units?

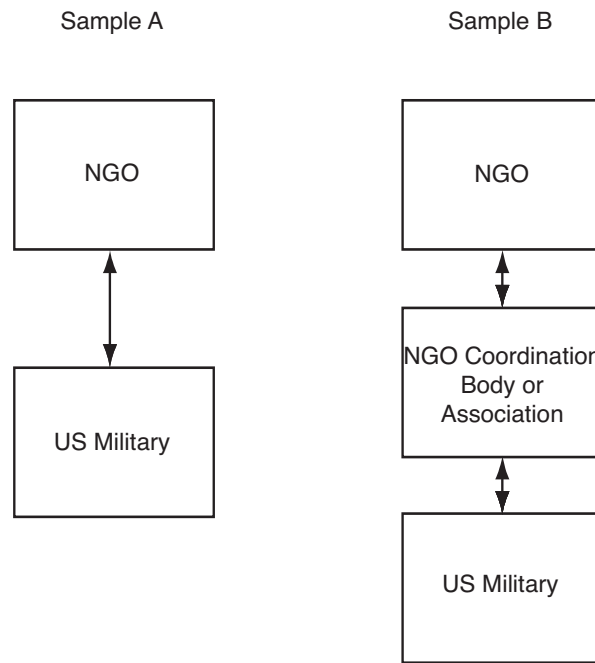
Larger NGOs will often have a military liaison staff member to manage military interface (see Sample A below). World Vision, CARE, CRS and other large NGOs will often employ specialists or retired military personnel to assist

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<sup>55</sup> Previously referenced: Seiple, Chris. [The US Military/NGO Relationship in Humanitarian Interventions](#). Peacekeeping Institute/Center for Strategic Leadership: US Army War College, 1996.

in managing relations and activities that require interface with the US or other military entities. These are valuable positions because language and operational differences between NGO and militaries is often overwhelming for all parties involved. An NGO staff person who understands how to work with military personnel will make a working relationship much more productive and feasible.

This is not to say that having a military expert or liaison expert on an NGO's staff is required. This is not all that common, and more likely an NGO will depend on an NGO coordination body or regional association in the emergencyaffected area or region to provide some framework or order to relationships between the military and the NGO community (see Sample B in the table below).



For more formal coordination, Humanitarian Operations Centers (HOCs), Civilian Military Operations Centers (CMOCs), On-Site Operations Coordination Centers (OSOCCs) and Humanitarian Affairs Centers (HACs) are organizational forums that have been formed in Haiti, Somalia and Rwanda, Albania, Kosovo, Afghanistan and elsewhere to officially organize activities among the many organizations involved in various humanitarian operations aspects. For NGOs, these are places to liaise with UN and military operations staff members and to learn of pertinent information regarding political and military developments. For UN and donor agencies, they serve as places do obtain ground-level information from NGOs and military units. While not always extremely successful in coordinating humanitarian activities, they have in the past been successful at developing an overall picture of the humanitarian crisis, coordinating funding and donor activity and logistical and military operational support for humanitarian activities.

In late spring in Kosovo, 1999, NGOs and NATO military officers would spend considerable amounts of time coordinating and informing each other of various developments, needs or experiences. For general coordination meetings on daily (and later on weekly) occurrences, NGOs would send representatives to meet with the various KFOR commanders or officers at specific locations (often hosted by UNHCR, UNDP or other larger agencies). Depending on the sector of military activity within Kosovo and the style or host of the meeting, NATO officers would give updates about de-mining activities, equipment or troop movements, violence and/or violent occurrences, and descriptions of safe areas, security protocol and other issues relating to the movement and/or safety of international organization and NGO personnel in specific areas. NGOs and IO personnel would also normally share their individual project developments, challenges, questions, plans and vision. After a round of questions and clarifications, the meeting would disperse.



In the 1990s, and through various occurrences, general lessons about NGOs have been learned:

1. NGOs are generally capable organizations but lack communication and logistical capacities.
2. NGOs are civilian organizations that do not fall into a military-style command structure, and there is an acute sense of determination to keep programs, activities and image as independent as possible.
3. NGOs can work effectively and efficiently during an emergency, often with a comparative advantage in specific sectors or regions.
4. **Routine and informal meetings between the NGO community, UN agencies and the military can cut through a lot of stress, tension and misunderstanding.**<sup>56</sup>

The military has taken note of this last lesson. Since the stunning success in northern Iraq and Operation Provide Comfort and for ongoing coordination purposes, US military doctrine now provides for the creation of Civilian-Military Operation Centers, or “CMOCs”. Originating with Operation Provide Comfort, CMOCs are now a standard platform of interaction between the US military and the humanitarian community in emergencies, emphasizing coordination activities prior and during humanitarian emergencies between military units and specific NGOs and humanitarian agencies active in certain emergencies. CMOCs are valuable entities and have enjoyed large NGO support in many emergencies since 1991, and aim to provide coordination and support services to NGOs and other humanitarian organizations. NATO supports Civil-Military Cooperation Centers (“CIMICs”) that serve the same purpose as US CMOCs.<sup>57</sup>

NGOs have found that they too must heed some major lessons to make working with militaries more effective and efficient. While working to alleviate suffering and to remain neutral at all times, many NGOs feel that close collaboration with the military would compromise their neutrality or humanitarian image. Many NGO personnel feel as if military objectives, goals, systems and organizational direction are puzzling or not integrative with humanitarian principles. This is changing, but still many NGO personnel use this to argue that militaries have little or no role in humanitarian assistance. While the number of people that hold these opinions seems to be diminishing, it is still an important facet for military and government representatives to keep in mind when dealing with a diverse NGO staff body.

In many cases, NGOs will allow OFDA to serve as the broker for humanitarian coordination between the military and the NGO community. OFDA is often respected as a government agency and has resources to expend when operating in an emergency. Military officers often have given preference to dealing with one government agency over many independent NGOs. OFDA is not a direct representative for NGOs to the military or other entities, but OFDA staff members often secure places at coordination tables for NGO personnel and in many instances advocate for their inclusion or support. OFDA funds many NGO activities during emergencies and can utilize its government and donor status combined with its pre-existing relationship with military units to make sure that NGO needs, requests and ideas are heard at the table. NGO-military relationships are now smoothing because of a good history of operational contact (now well over 10 years), and because both communities have taken lessons from failures and successes in the last decade. Concerning the military, NGOs have learned a great deal. Some of the more operational lessons include:

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<sup>56</sup> Conclusions supported by Seiple (pages 40-43) and others including Aal, Davidson, Hayes and Landond (see Sources section).

<sup>57</sup> For a general discussion of NGO and military coordination in emergencies, see Humanitarian and Peace Operations: NGOs and the Military in the Interagency Process by Lisa Witzig Davidson, Margaret Daly Hayes, James J Landon. Washington, DC: NDU Press Book, December, 1996. Chapter 3 and 4 cover successes and failures of NGO-military interaction.

- Military units can provide unprecedented and unequalled logistical and communication services for the humanitarian assistance community (military or not).
- Military units normally have a monopoly on the use of force and are normally the only equipped entities capable of providing safe zones and stability in conflict regions.
- During humanitarian emergencies, personnel in both the military and NGO camps are pressed to assist EPs in the best way possible.
- Although the military may speak a different cultural or operational language, alleviating suffering and providing stability in emergency settings are goals that are shared by both communities.<sup>58</sup>
- Working with the military does not necessarily mean a sacrifice of neutrality or transparency, and that often the benefits of working with the military far outweigh the costs.

NGOs and military units both have large incentives to coordinate and collaborate. As inferred above, NGOs need many things from the military: logistical assistance, communications, intelligence and protection are but a few things specifically. The military, too, has found it valuable to coordinate with NGOs for understanding ground-level activity, to manage population movements and assistance projects and general humanitarian activities. Both groups – whether originally desired for or not – find that coordination is essential.

### Quick Reference

These sites were listed earlier in chapter 2, but are valuable to list again.

<http://www.interaction.org> - US-based international NGO consortium (listing 156+).

<http://www.ngovoice.org/> - European-based international NGO consortium (listing 90+).

<http://www.guidestar.com> - guide to financial reports or almost every US-based non-profit organization.

<http://www.reliefweb.int> - relief and development portal that lists various NGO updates, sources and news.

### D. NGO Coordination at “Home”

Much of the coordination that occurs within the NGO community happens in major capitals in “western” countries. While most of an NGO’s staff are deployed in emergency or development programs around the globe, experts, policymakers, academics and NGO leaders are working with each other to strengthen performance, awareness and funding levels for humanitarian affairs. More simply, NGOs come together to think, to advertise and to lobby.

By sharing “lessons-learned”, experiences, challenges and reports, NGOs have been able to work on creating standards (Sphere Project) and an body of work that comprises significant amounts of data and information. NGOs have come together to create annual conferences on specific humanitarian assistance related topics, and also have developed a slew of courses and certificate courses in humanitarian assistance. Books (possibly like this one), manuals and field guides are also popular items. Each effort by the NGO community to collect information and agree on shared principles is an attempt to professionalize the field of humanitarian assistance, and to strengthen the capacity to serve EPs. Because every NGO is independent, efforts to standardize or to create performance standards are a major feat. The Sphere Project is one of the larger examples, and represents years of work to get NGOs to agree on similar terminology and “language” when responding to emergencies.

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<sup>58</sup> See Minear, Larry and Ted Van Baarda and Marc Sommers. NATO and Humanitarian Action in the Kosovo Crisis. Occasional Paper #36. Thomas J Watson Jr Institute for International Studies and the Humanitarian Law Consultancy. Providence, Rhode Island. 2000. Pages 57-73 provide thorough discussion of the difference in cultures between the NGO community and the military. See chapter 18 for a full analysis of how NGOs view, work with and need militaries in complex humanitarian emergencies.

Two specific coordinating bodies that are important outside of an immediate emergency setting are InterAction and VOICE. Both of these organizations serve as consortiums of internationally-operating NGOs, and provide a range of services to their members.

**InterAction** – <http://www.interaction.org>

InterAction is a consortium of US-based NGOs and NPOs that operate internationally. There are over 156 members. Some of the largest and smallest NGOs in the world are members of InterAction, with annual operating budgets ranging from less than \$1 million to over \$400,000,000. From specific child-rights advocacy NGOs to the larger emergency response NGOs, InterAction is the central place where many of the leading NGOs in the US congregate and visit for information, access and assistance. Specifically, only 63 member organizations list programming activities in disaster relief, and another 38 list programs in refugee and migration sectors. InterAction hosts forums, working committees, coordinates closely with the US government, US military and the UN, and provides a large body of technical resource for member NGOs. Located in Washington, DC, it spends a considerable amount of energy “lobbying” specific government agencies for more attention, funding and support for international assistance programming. InterAction is a large supporter and contributor to the Sphere Project.

**VOICE** – <http://www.ngovoice.org/>

VOICE (Volunteer Organizations in Cooperation in Emergencies) is the European counterpart of InterAction that is based in Brussels, Belgium. With fewer members (over 90), it is Europe’s central NGO coordination point and center of NGO thought and activity. Its website provides listings of all members, their websites, and countries of operation. VOICE publishes a widely-read journal entitled *The Humanitarian Review* (published every two months) that normally finds its way to the hands of many relief workers, disaster specialists, policy-makers and think-tank employees. 14 of VOICE’s members are also members of InterAction, normally as national chapter organizations or parts of the same umbrella organization.

**ICVA** – <http://www.icva.ch/>

The International Council of Volunteer Associations is a European-based and international-targeting association that provides many of the same services InterAction and VOICE do, but with a wider and more varied membership list. With beginnings in 1962, it has a wide-range of member organizations that are involved in human rights and legal issues, advocacy, refugee and migration work, education, democracy and governance issues and other sectors not specifically covered in this manual.

Both InterAction and VOICE provide their member NGOs with an extensive array of services. These two bodies differ from regional NGO associations because they conduct business as an organization with independent missions, objectives and activities that may not be directly from a member NGO. More clearly, NGO associations normally are only ephemeral coordination bodies in which NGOs can come together to express their intent or desires. InterAction and VOICE are organizations in and of themselves that exist to serve their members, but that also carry on activities aimed at promoting the organization and those objectives set forth upon foundation.

Why the fuss about these organizations? They represent member NGOs and serve as pools of thinking and resource for the NGO community, but also as stark proponents of specific efforts that normally include increasing government foreign aid budgets and levels of awareness for specific emergencies. InterAction and VOICE (InterAction in this context) are major players in Washington, DC and European capitals, and are now integral parts of how western governments craft their foreign assistance budgets and priorities. As well, they serve as conduits of information to the public, often sponsoring advertisements or awareness campaigns nationally to promote proper donation contributions or support for their member NGOs internationally.

## E. Conclusion: How do NGOs Coordinate?

This chapter has reviewed four main types of coordination:

**NGO-to-NGO Coordination.** NGOs will meet often with each other during an emergency to coordinate, advocate, share and plan services for EPs. By using email, daily or weekly meetings, mail, phones, satellite phones and other communication devices like shortwave radios or CBs, NGOs coordinate in hectic, chaotic environments. Some emergencies see an extremely well coordinated NGO community, while others don't.

**NGO-to-Donor/UN/Government Coordination.** NGOs constantly liaise with donor agencies, and often are required to coordinate with lead UN agencies or local governments. By planning, accommodating and supplementing local aid initiatives, NGOs must integrate themselves with the the spectrum of local community needs and international community priorities and funding levels. NGOs attend donor and government meetings, UN coordination centers (HICs) and normally stay connected in weekly or daily assemblies of NGO, donor, UN and government coordination meetings.

**NGO-to-Military Coordination.** NGOs and militaries need each other. By establishing contact quickly and constantly, NGOs can break through the military culture of force protection and the military can begin to navigate the large field of private NGOs that are seemingly unaccountable to anyone. NGOs can help the military understand ground-level needs and can implement humanitarian assistance more effectively than any other types of organization. The military can help NGOs with major logistical services like food transport, refugee/IDP security, water and sanitation services, construction projects and intelligence of political/conflict developments.

**NGO Coordination at Home.** NGOs coordinate at the HQ level throughout the US and Western Europe to develop standards, best-practices, public and political awareness of humanitarian issues outside of the US and Europe, and to lobby government and donor agencies for more funding. Meetings, conferences, publications, websites and training all occur at the HQ level to make NGO practices and capabilities more efficient and more appropriate for today's humanitarian emergencies.

## Chapter 7

### NGO Identification and Presence

#### Chapter Summary

- NGOs don't "look" like anything specifically. NGOs are staffed by expatriates (expats) and local citizens, and often drive land rovers, trucks and cars in emergency settings.
- NGOs often use flags or large stickers to display their logo on places they work, live or store material, signaling their presence, neutrality and maybe "turf".
- NGO staff members are normal people from varied backgrounds. NGOs employ local civilians during emergencies, too, that are often hard to distinguish from EPs.

#### A. Identifying NGOs

NGOs, NGO personnel and NGO operations don't "look" like anything in particular. Sometimes identifiable with their trucks, logos, staff or flags, NGOs are civilian organizations and don't require any form of specific uniform or standard presence. Some may argue this point, though, and suggest that NGOs are extremely sensitive to identifying themselves as major actors within an emergency, and in "staking-out territory" where they operate their programs. Many NGOs do indeed attempt to delineate themselves from other NGOs, from combating parties, and almost always attempt to remain distinct from any non-neutral entities within the region of operation.

NGOs that participate in HAOs are visible to US or international peacekeeping forces when transporting goods, managing refugee or IDP populations, providing medical assistance and/or when the NGO community collectively or individually attempts to coordinate with military forces. Because there are so many different NGOs, military personnel often become confused or pessimistic about working with specific NGOs, citing too many differences between aid organizations, or an inability to tell one from another. This is normally short-sited, and a brief review of how an NGO identifies itself in a large pool of international actors is important.

An NGO will often attempt to brand itself and make itself visible by using logos, flags, stickers, labels, websites, t-shirts and jackets. While not normally a formal area of study or even of concern, it is here thought to be essential to at least identify the more common NGO icons that are now somewhat common in humanitarian emergencies and HAO environments.

The most identifiable aspect of an NGO is the NGO's logo. NGOs often use their logo on their office doors or compounds, on their personnel vehicles, trucks and containers, on letterhead and correspondence and sometimes on flags. The logo, while often deemed trivial, is an NGO's way of staking out "territory," of indicating to other NGOs and agencies their presence, and generally a way to indicate location for coordination purposes, beneficiary benefit or donor sight.

Some of the more common logos seen on the side of vehicles, on flags or on stickers that are often placed on boxes:

Organization	Logo/Emblem	Organization	Logo/Emblem
Oxfam		World Vision International	
Medicines San Frontiers (MSF)		Action Against Hunger	
Catholic Relief Services (CRS)		International Medical Corps (IMC)	
International Rescue Committee (IRC)		Danish Refugee Council	
CARE		Relief International	

## B. Identifying NGO Personnel and Equipment

With very few exceptions, NGOs traditionally have not used uniforms and normally do not impose a dress code on their employees/volunteers. Many NGO employees will wear their NGO’s logo on shirts, coats or hats, and often will wear an arm-band or some other form of insignia that separates them from local populations or other international staff in the same area. “Expats” – or international staff that still fall under the rubric of “expatriate,” are also often visible if their physical features differ from that of the local population of the country or region in question.

So, there is no precise way to identify NGO personnel. Instead, and to generalize grossly, many NGO personnel wear a now-famous look of a multi-pocketed vest (normally tan or black), khaki pants, chukka boots and sometimes a badge that hangs from their neck that holds an ID card or insignia. Medical personnel often wear or tote a fanny-pack filled with essential tools and medicines, and engineers and logisticians often carry a small tool belt. Again, these are generalizations, but it holds truth in that often times Expats are largely identifiable by their clothing, physical stature differences, skin color differences and association with other similar expats. Please refer to chapter 5 for a more in-depth and valuable discussion of who staffs, manages and trains NGO personnel.

NGO personnel almost always require personal transportation within the emergency-affected region. Smaller organizations often rent local cars or hire a taxi for an extended period of time during the assessment or initial onset period. In traveling between cities or rural areas, programs or regions, smaller NGOs find major challenges in providing the most basic of transportation for its personnel. Larger NGOs with more capacity will often bring in large four-wheel drive vehicles or rent vehicles locally. Some NGOs will also hire individuals locally to drive the vehicles and care for them (maintenance, security at night).

NGOs use many of the same types of vehicles. Obtained from the UN when implementing UN-funded projects, and sometimes purchased or leased, four-wheel drive vehicles are popular for rugged and sometimes not-so-rugged areas. The diagram below shows different vehicles that represent a few of the vehicle types that NGOs use in many emergencies.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>59</sup> These pictures were taken directly from the Bukkehave Corporation website. Bukkehave is one of the largest providers of vehicles to the UN in HAOs, and many of the vehicles that come from Bukkehave are given directly to the implementing partner NGO. Bukkehave’s website has complete catalogues of the vehicles they supply. Their website is <http://www.bukkehave.com>. Images, trademarks, names and copyright ownership belong to Bukkehave.



Hi-Lux being used by NGO with logos on side panels.



NGO-owned refueling truck.

Other types of vehicles are used as well. NGOs often buy used vehicles on the local market, rent local vehicles, or hire drivers and their vehicle for periods of time. Many cited cases show that NGOs will pay drivers more than national medical staff during periods of an emergency because keeping a good and flexible driver is essential to the health of any program. Drivers are often more than chauffeurs. Serving as guides, translators and junior logisticians, they become essential to any new NGO program during an emergency.

Depending on the type of HAO and conditions of the region, NGOs often will set up at least two distinct locations within an area of potential operation: one location for working and/or storing material, and the other for residential quartering. By renting a house, office space, a hotel room or often by putting up a tent or temporary structure, NGOs “set up shop” where the staff will work, coordinate, communicate and store material. A second location is often established to house the NGO personnel. While sometimes office and living space are one and the same, it is not too uncommon for an NGO to set up a separate living quarters to support an operation. This is a large generalization, and depending on the size of the NGO and the type of program that is established, an NGO can easily have more than two offices and numerous living quarters. If the NGO is operating programs that distribute material, storehouses or warehouses are used, and are most often rented from local real estate owners.

In Kosovo in 1999, a number of NGOs and IOs established living and working quarters in a few specific residential areas just outside of the downtown area of Pristina (Kosovo’s provincial capital). Immediately after NATO forces moved in and made the environment somewhat safe for NGOs to operate in more actively, NGOs began setting up office and living quarters in the same areas. NGOs would hire Kosovar Albanians to assist in finding and then negotiating the terms for a leased house or office space, and Albanian families would often willingly move out of their homes to take advantage of the high rent prices they could charge the international NGOs. NGO logos began popping up on gates outside of the homes and on garages, and soon larger four-wheel drive vehicles and NGO personnel dominated this portion of the city.

### **C. Conclusion: NGO Staff Levels are “Positively” Diverse**

NGO personnel are from all backgrounds, cultures, races, of both sexes, and often times spread from very young to very old in age. NGO personnel are variable and hard to categorize. Most NGO staff members are competent and dedicated to their mission. While NGOs do often employ young staff members, there is normally a management structure that is in tact and accountable.

An NGO’s diversity is often one of its primary assets. With a level of diversity, an NGO may be able to take advantage of multiple points of view, shared experiences, regional and language expertise and a generally adaptable work force. With a number of nationalities, an NGO can move into more emergencies in different regions with confidence that any one of its staff members has a deeper understanding of some aspect of the emergency operation, the population in need, the climate, UN politics or economy, and that this will reflect positively in the NGO’s operation.

Many people outside of the NGO community are critical of the perceived lack of accountability or management structures NGOs use, and while often valid with many smaller NGOs, most established NGOs are well-staffed and capable of coordinating and operating in emergency settings.

## **Section 2**

# **NGO Capacities and Services**

## **Chapters 8 – 13**



## Chapter 8

### NGO Emergency Deployment and Response

#### Chapter Summary

- NGOs participate in all facets of an emergency, ranging from before an emergency occurs to after an emergency is long-gone.
- Different NGOs specialize in responding to various stages of humanitarian emergencies. Some focus on early warning, advocacy, human rights and information collection/dissemination, and some focus on emergency response or post-emergency development. A few larger NGOs participate in all facets of an emergency.
- NGOs are quick, nimble and largely free-roaming organizations strapped only by their budgets and/or self-imposed mandates. Often NGOs require immediate funding from donor agencies at the onset of an emergency to prepare and then implement their programming.
- NGOs don't always have full capacities to manage major logistical tasks, large population movements, major food or water provisions and/or communication tasks. They often require assistance from donor, government or military agencies.

NGOs participate in all facets of an emergency, stemming from involvement in development and early warning activities before an emergency, immediate and relief-oriented activities during an emergency, and post-emergency development and reconstruction efforts. This chapter outlines briefly various elements of an NGO emergency deployment and activity throughout the stages of an emergency.

This manual uses the term “emergency” loosely, but it is valuable to define various stages of an emergency for understanding where NGOs fit in. Whether it is a natural disaster (earthquake, tropical storm), ongoing civil war, new conflict, full-scale intra-state war or major poverty, NGOs approach emergencies in various ways, and often according to the stage of an emergency. For the purposes of this manual, there will be a turn away from more technical literature concerning “stages” of an emergency, and more emphasis on the clear periods of NGO involvement with humanitarian emergencies. The three phases of emergencies, simplistically, that NGOs are involved in are:

- the pre-emergency/Pre or Initial Onset phase
- the emergency phase
- the post-emergency phase

NGOs respond and are involved in each stage.

#### A. NGOs and the Pre-Emergency Phase

International NGOs that respond to humanitarian emergencies also often are involved in development projects or programming in a region or country that experiences a humanitarian emergency. Whether a country is a victim of a natural disaster or war, chances are that a few international NGOs at least are familiar with its territory, populations and problems.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Debate rages over what to call poor countries. “Developing” country is used most here, whereas in other publications, the terms “3rd World”, “Highly Indebted Poor Countries” (HIPC) or the “South” are used to denote countries that are poor or that do not experience the economic growth rates, production or well-being of those countries in the “West”, the “North” or “Developed” community of states.

Poverty-stricken countries and regions are hit most heavily by large-scale disaster and conflict. While a developing country may be able to effectively manage and limit the loss of life or physical damage during an emergency, poorer countries often experience large-scale population displacements, disease outbreak, the reduction of existing infrastructure to rubble, and the halt or destruction of political and economic developments during and after an emergency.

Before an emergency-occurring event happens, development activities play a key role in defining NGO responses to humanitarian emergencies. NGOs are particularly active in poorer countries and regions, and because poor countries are often hit the hardest by natural disasters or conflicts, development NGOs are often the strongest agents of relief delivery and solid emergency response programming once conditions turn into “emergency” level conditions.

NGOs that operate in a country or region that is “developing” are often involved in numerous forms of development activity before an emergency occurs. A short list includes

- Developing a region, country or community’s public health infrastructure, including the rehabilitation or building of health clinics and hospitals, training doctors and medical personnel, upgrading equipment or fixing old equipment, providing for public health education, etc.
- Building a region, country or community’s educational infrastructure, often building or repairing schools, developing curriculum, providing school materials, etc.
- Supporting or enhancing a region, country or community’s infrastructure including roads, water, sewage and electrical systems.
- Developing state or community-level legal infrastructure, human rights education, political party capacity building, etc.

Much of the work that international NGOs do is a portion of development assistance packages provided to the host country by other developed countries or international agencies. Development NGOs – often the same NGOs that respond to emergencies – develop capacity, tools, knowledge, trust and a working fluency of ground-level conditions before a humanitarian emergency emerges. These NGOs can easily transfer their knowledge and much of their capacity into an emergency response mode. If organizations like CARE, CRS, World Vision, Relief International, Church World Service and others are implementing development projects in a region that may suddenly experience catastrophic events or a major deterioration of human conditions, they can utilize their organization’s expertise internationally to develop emergency responses and to consolidate resources quickly. Their development programs may be managed by different departments, offices or even country-level chapter organizations, but they can draw from the NGO’s best-practices, personnel, equipment and logistical expertise.

As well, the use of trucks that may have been part of a rural farming development project or an intricate knowledge of the region’s border and/or importing procedures can greatly ease or facilitate incoming international relief responses. These NGOs, as well, have relationships with donors that can easily be leveraged to expedite the funding process for new emergency programming. Foundations, government agencies and UN departments often take months (or longer) to initiate an “implementing partner” agreement for any type of grant or contract award. If an NGO already has a working relationship with a donor, it can easily assess, confer and then apply for funding in short periods of time.

Development NGOs and NGOs that are active in pre-emergency settings are also valuable for early-warning activities. NGOs operate at the ground-level of a region or country, and often are the first organizations to witness or experience activity or an event that may lead to more serious conditions in the future. Whether it be ethnic or religious violence, storm conditions, food security or drought information, NGOs can relay information to coordinating agencies, the local government, the UN and donors this information as it arrives. Through NGO associations, early warning information can be collated and organized, and can then be passed off to other pertinent entities as a more comprehensive body of data.

There is a considerable amount of attention now being paid to early warning activities. Because there exists an extensive network of NGOs that can feed information into central bodies of data for coordination and consolidation, the international relief and development community can obtain a fair idea of what problems currently exist, and where problems may turn in to larger humanitarian emergencies. Many websites have been developed for monitoring and publishing information that may be pertinent to early warning analysis and activity.<sup>61</sup>

Name	Description
The Global Information and Early Warning System on Food and Agriculture (GIEWS)	Available at <a href="http://www.fao.org/WAICENT/faoinfo/economic/giews/english/giewse.htm">http://www.fao.org/WAICENT/faoinfo/economic/giews/english/giewse.htm</a> and is a major source of information for NGO personnel managing early warning activities and potential trouble-spot monitoring. It is supported by the UN Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO).
Early Warning System (FEWS)	Can be found at <a href="http://www.fews.net/">http://www.fews.net/</a> . This too is a resource for individuals seeking information on food levels, weather, news and resources for famine and CHE effects on food levels and food security. FEWS is supported by USAID.
The Forum on Early Warning and Response (FEWER)	It is a lesser-used website, but deals with humanitarian conditions and conflict early warning and conflict prevention. It is an association of NGOs. <a href="http://www.fewer.org/">http://www.fewer.org/</a> .
The Carter Center	<a href="http://www.cc.emory.edu/CARTER_CENTER">http://www.cc.emory.edu/CARTER_CENTER</a> . Provides information on Carter Center news and information, as well as some updates on which conflicts are being dealt with by the Center.
INCORE	<a href="http://www.incore.ulst.ac.uk/cds/countries/index.html">http://www.incore.ulst.ac.uk/cds/countries/index.html</a> . A good online source for INCORE's information on activities, publications and events.
International Crisis Group (ICG)	<a href="http://www.crisisweb.org">http://www.crisisweb.org</a> . A leading thinktank that publishes periodically on international conflict. Extremely thorough and in-depth, with all reports free to the public.
Minorities at Risk Project	<a href="http://www.bsos.umd.edu:80/cidcm/mar/">http://www.bsos.umd.edu:80/cidcm/mar/</a> . A more academic-oriented set of data is the Minorities at Risk, hosted at the University of Maryland, that tracks substantial amounts of information throughout the world to create an index of the level of suffering and development benefit minorities receive worldwide.
African Conflict Journal	<a href="http://www.africanconflict.org">http://www.africanconflict.org</a> – an online resource for news and information on current and developing conflict in Africa.
The OFDA/CRED Database	<a href="http://www.cred.be">http://www.cred.be</a> – a site dedicated to providing data on over 12,000 disasters. Normal users include national governments, NGOs, UN agencies and academic institutions.
The WHO Emergency and Humanitarian Action Website	<a href="http://www.who.int/disasters">http://www.who.int/disasters</a> - this site is also a popular destination for not only early warning information, but for disaster and emergency information. Sponsored and hosted by the World Health Organization (WHO).

<sup>61</sup> See Annex 2 for selected humanitarian-oriented websites. Some of these websites are included, but there is a more extensive list in the annex.

Surveys and assessments are also key elements during the pre-emergency phase. While many will suggest that assessments are primarily done after an emergency has been declared or is apparent, many organizations include surveys and assessments in pre-emergency settings.

Some emergencies are not predictable, but others are. Large-scale famines, food shortages and often conflict or ethnic strife can be predicted to some degree, and early warning activities often can alert the international community of the need for action.<sup>62</sup> What happens then?

NGOs respond to many pre-emergency and emergency settings with assessment or exploration teams. If a country or region is thought to be slipping into a large-scale humanitarian emergency, many NGOs will send small groups of experts to identify the root causes of the emergency, specific infrastructural and technical information, population movements, food and water resources, roads, ports, airstrips and bridges that can serve as relief supply hubs and other activities that help identify need, capabilities, challenges and potential focus for the international community.

While the assessment phase is actually quite complex and the focus of much professional consideration and debate, NGOs use assessments to do a few things:

1. Identify types, numbers and places of needy populations;
2. Identify specific requirements for needy populations;
3. Identify general political, economic, cultural, ethnic, religious, geographical and climate information that may be pertinent to an international response;
4. Define areas of most need;
5. Define relationships with national and local government entities, Ministries of Health and/or Interior, local NGOs and civil society groups and other portions of the EP population that may be of assistance during a response;
6. Define appropriate resource levels, methods for implementation and general requirements for NGO-specific or international community-wide deployment of aid programs.

#### **A Few Top Reference Publications that NGOs Use (not ordered)**

UNHCR. Handbook for Emergencies, Second Edition. 1999.

USAID/OFDA Field Operations Guide. Version 3.0, 1999.

Cuny, Fred. Disasters and Development. (Intertext Press: Dallas), 1994.

The Sphere Project. <http://www.sphereproject.org>

Most recently, USAID has convened a technical working session for the Standardized Monitoring and Assessment of Relief Transition (SMART) group. While it focused primarily on food security and nutritional surveys, it reveals a few important points. First, NGOs, government and UN agencies are all striving aggressively for a series of standardizations for collecting data. This means that until now, NGOs and other agencies that have conducted

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<sup>62</sup> The digestion of early warning data is another story, and it is often difficult to estimate the success of various early warning programs. Rwanda is the perfect case for criticizing early warning capabilities. Many critics of the international community's response to Rwanda suggest that early warning data can be clear and solid and still illicit no international response. Politics matter, and if the international community either a) fails to act on data obtained, b) not make sense of the data obtained, or c) ignore the data obtained (for any specific reason), little use of the early warning system is had. With clear calls from NGOs, religious organizations, government and military agencies, the UN, US and many EU nations did little to prevent genocide in 1994 in which up to (and potentially over) 800,000 people were killed.

initial surveys during humanitarian emergencies have been using different “languages” to report their findings. As well, by attempting to create standards and by using central store-houses of data, NGOs and other agencies may be able to cut down the amount of redundancy, inaccuracy or variations in the types of methods that are used to collect data during surveys or surveillance studies. When a disaster hits, EPs need assistance. When multiple NGOs are attempting to survey the same area or conditions, and then use drastically different methods of collecting data and in reporting their findings, it can be complicated and wasteful.

NGOs are effective at doing rapid assessments, coordinating information with donor and UN agencies, and then turning information into implementation for specific humanitarian operations. Information sharing between NGOs is often another story, and will be covered in more depth in later chapters. This is not always the case with larger bureaucratic systems. Information is digested and distributed to appropriate NGO staff members, and within a few non-hierarchical days, an appropriate plan can be created. During the pre-emergency phase, assessments often are carried out to be prepared for further emergency conditions in that country or region. NGO assessments are often used by USAID and other government agencies, and NGOs will often piggy-back on OFDA/DART assessments.

When a country or region becomes an emergency setting, NGOs are often prepared and capable of acting immediately due to their activity in the pre-emergency phases. NGO activity within the emergency phase, as well, can often be well thought-out, practical and effective.

## **B. NGOs and the Emergency Phase**

As military and government officials now know, NGOs will be found operating in humanitarian emergencies. Even when conditions are at their worst, civilian-led efforts to provide for EPs dominate the landscape of CHEs, disaster settings and generally bad places. NGOs have responded to almost every humanitarian emergency around the globe (including disasters within the US), and very few CHEs are severe enough to keep out relief workers. Chechnya, parts of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), parts of Colombia, the Timors and Sri Lanka are a few places that are known for their “no-man’s land” status for NGOs and are difficult to work in. This is not to say that NGOs don’t work there; it is to say that one may be hard-pressed to see a range rover, chukka boots, a tan vest or a generally expat-looking relief worker often, although they’re most likely nearby.

When an emergency strikes (be in natural or man-made), NGOs respond in various forms. Some responses include:

- The immediate deployment of medical teams and basic medical supplies to treat the most severely affected persons;
- The deployment of assessment teams to survey the damage, to take count of potential needs, and to report back in an immediate fashions the needs of the EPs;
- Attempts at establishing communication systems for NGO personnel (often done by UN or IO agencies specializing in this field);
- The immediate delivery of various relief supplies, including food, medical equipment and medicines;
- The initiation of public information campaigns “at home” to raise money and awareness about the current crisis;
- Coordination efforts with other agencies and organizations within the emergency-affected area, including the participation in CMOCs, HICs and associations; grant other funding agreements, etc;
- The establishment of “territory” or sectoral strong-holds in specific areas throughout the emergency-affected area for funding purposes and to spread out specific comparative advantages.

Larger NGOs often bring in their own supplies from nearby programs in neighboring regions. This can include trucks, generators, relief materials, tents, nets, cans and sometimes food. Smaller NGOs often have to solicit for funds first to procure relief material within the region or from outside sources during the emergency.

Depending on whether the emergency is a rapid or emerging onset, NGOs will react in various ways.

**Rapid Onset.** If an emergency takes the form of an earthquake, tsunami or hurricane, disaster effects are immediate. Populations are displaced, infrastructure is damaged and the means of meeting primary needs have often been removed as a result of the disaster. NGOs respond by arriving, quickly assessing humanitarian conditions (“rapid assessments”) and then distributing immediate services aimed at alleviating the most dire of affected areas and those primary needs that have been stripped away. Primary medical care, food rations, water and temporary shelter are normally key foci of an immediate emergency response while damage is surveyed and cleaned or repaired.

Fred Cuny suggested that any international humanitarian response to emergencies should aim at providing the local population with skills and capacity to rebuild their lives themselves – both during and after an emergency.<sup>63</sup> While international resources and some expertise may be required in many instances, Cuny suggested that local NGO staff should be trained and equipped with the knowledge to continue the development process after the initial emergency response period ends.

Rapid onset emergencies are obviously more difficult to deal with. Humanitarian needs of the EP populations are difficult to assess in tight timeframes. NGOs are pressured to arrive, orient themselves and then immediately figure out what needs to be done, while at the same time somehow delivering services. This is not always the case, and when NGOs or humanitarian agencies are familiar with the lay of the land, there is less of a learning curve. Still, NGOs face difficult tasks. With help from government and donor agencies, NGOs can normally begin providing services that are of immediate concern, while performing assessments and surveys for larger or more intricate projects.

**Gradual Onset.** If the emergency is of a gradual onset type, NGOs have a harder time mustering resources for full-scale responses. The term “gradual onset emergencies” can often be synonymous with “complex humanitarian emergencies,” noting a deterioration of humanitarian conditions over time: CMRs increase slowly, no major political or natural events occur to spark attention, and the deterioration of humanitarian conditions are often the result of complex conflicts, civil wars and/or civil strife. This often makes it hard for NGOs to access all portions of the needy populations.

NGOs participate in gradual onset emergencies by often utilizing a part-relief and part-development approach to delivering humanitarian services. This type of assistance is much different than the assistance rendered in rapid onset emergencies. Relief that is implemented for rapid onset disasters comes in the form of relief supplies, immediate rehabilitation projects, market interventions and/or support, the distribution of supplies and the establishment of temporary services that only need to last for a specific period of time while damaged or nonexistent permanent services are established. In gradual onset emergencies, NGOs are faced with the challenge of needing to provide for various EP populations while conflict and/or continuing emergency conditions make it impossible to establish some form of permanent relief and/or development structure.

More clearly, in gradual onset emergencies, NGOs must face the difficult tasks of working with a *continuing* emergency. A rapid onset emergency normally comes and goes, and while it may happen again or while the effects may be felt for some time in various ways, gradual onset emergencies continue to grind down humanitarian conditions without respite. NGOs face the challenge of providing for needy populations, staying politically neutral and developing sustainable ways of maintaining programs. Donor fatigue often kicks in, and operation fatigue often chokes an NGO’s willingness to pay the high costs of operating in unsure or unsafe conditions. Chechnya is an example of a place that very little humanitarian assistance can penetrate. Because violence still has a grip-hold on the entire region surrounding Chechnya, relief agencies have had a difficult time providing emergency services to the populations within Chechnya, and in establishing solid networks and structures for continued humanitarian

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<sup>64</sup> Cuny, Fred. *Disasters and Development*. Dallas: Intertect Press, 1994.

assistance. NGO employees often get burned, injured, demoralized and often professionally frustrated in these types of conditions, which makes an operation that much harder.

Still, in most CHEs and gradual onset emergencies, NGOs have done anything but given up. With incredible stubbornness and an incredible display of dedication to the beneficiaries of their services, NGOs have operated in places like Sudan, Angola, Chechnya, Burma (Myanmar), Cambodia, Colombia and other places most would think of as the last place to visit or work in with diligence. In many instances, the NGO sector has developed a system of specialization in which many participating NGOs work with the community of NGOs to delineate tasks depending on specialization, levels of expertise or capacity, or size. For example, the continued and harsh working conditions of southern Sudan have forced NGOs to work closely together and with donors to establish AORs and methods to spread out the capacity of the civilian sector.

In places like Somalia, Albania, Kosovo and Iraq, NGOs have worked side-by-side with military units, have been directly engaged in the planning process and have provided implementation of humanitarian assistance while violence continued. NGO personnel, in many places globally, are in danger every day, and often are victims or targets of violence or the generally harsh conditions of an emergency setting.

NGOs that do focus on providing long-term emergency assistance are, as mentioned, challenged with keeping streams of project funding in the funding pipeline. Because longer-term emergencies are often forgotten in the wake of a new or more urgent emergency elsewhere in the world, NGOs have to struggle to keep donors engaged and willing to expend funds. This is a large challenge.

NGOs have come up with various methods to get around the seemingly insurmountable challenges that are faced during a gradual onset or complex emergency. A few include:

- Establishing strong NGO networks to share lessons, experiences, infrastructure, capacity and security within an emergency-affected region;
- Continually waging public relations campaigns concerning specific and often forgotten emergencies, both from the field and from headquarters locations;
- Establishing regional capacity, often keeping staff, equipment and relief supplies in close proximity to beneficiaries that may be inaccessible areas, ready for delivery upon a break of violence or the conditions that would normally prevent the immediate delivery of humanitarian assistance;
- Provide strong and unified lobbying efforts to the UN and other governments, often by giving reports and/or accounts of what is happening “on the ground.”

### **C. NGOs and the Post-Emergency Phase**

After the most devastating and chaotic stages of an emergency are past, conditions settle into a normal “buzz” of activity. NGOs focus on the management of their EP assistance programs, and begin to tailor specific programs for specific sub-groups of the affected population. Women, children, elderly and minority groups are given special attention often. NGOs also begin to do more in-depth assessments and surveillance and continue to advocate for more international support for the specific emergency in question.

The international response normally begins to taper off after the height of an emergency, and while CNN and other media sources may begin to look elsewhere for exciting footage, NGOs normally stay the course. While focusing at first on emergency programs, many NGOs have specialized in providing services to EPs that will extend into development-oriented programming. Local capacity building, specific training, education and economic development are all potential positive externalities that stem from NGO activity during and immediately after an emergency.

NGOs that specialize only in emergency response will often leave. MSF, for example, will leave soon after the height of the emergency, as it focuses primarily on immediate emergency medical services. Other NGOs will potentially scale back their emergency teams and capacity and will start focusing on shifting emergency programs to more

development-oriented programs that will assist the community in the future. Albania is a perfect case for this: NGOs arrived to provide Kosovar Albanians assistance while they were refugees in Albania. Once they returned to Kosovo, many relief agencies remained in Albania and used their newly-established capacity to help rehabilitate hospitals and clinics, schools, water systems and roads. Many NGOs are “multi-sectoral” and deliver humanitarian assistance during emergencies while also providing development assistance to EPs in the same or similar settings.

Often NGOs are limited by the type of donations they receive. For those NGOs that operate on private donations only, the time and scope of activity is limited only by the amount of time the NGO can and wants to operate in a specific emergency (and then afterwards). For NGOs that are grant-dependent, funding may dry up after the emergency is over and the NGO may have to pack up and go home. This often occurs, as many UN, US and EU grants to NGOs for emergencies are short-term, and provide funding for those types of programs that are only emergency-response oriented. NGOs that want to remain in the emergency-affected region must establish new relations with new donors (often the same donor agency but in a different office or department) and get funding for post-emergency or development programs. This transition is often hard.

#### D. Sample Deployment Schedule

NGOs are often the first humanitarian organizations that arrive in a humanitarian emergency. Once an emergency hits – should it be a new emergency and rapid onset – an NGO can utilize many means of transportation to get a small team of personnel inside the affected area. Government agencies and military units are hard pressed to meet this agility, and many times military or government personnel will find that upon their arrival, they’re greeted with NGO staff members that have been in-country for some time. This is an obvious advantage to having a small organization, few rules or regulations governing deployment or travel, and flexible staff members that are devoted to a profession of responding to emergencies.

Should an emergency hit an unsuspecting population, or if a CHE gets dramatically worse, NGO deployment may look something like this:

Stages	NGO Action	Day
Emergency Onset or Rapid Deterioration of CHE Announced/ Information Made Public	<p>NGO obtains information about emergency from public and/or normal information channels (CNN, the Internet, email listservs, newspapers, field reports) and convenes meeting of senior-level staff (directors, program-specific officers, regional officers and managers).</p> <p>Analysis of situation, information briefings and discussion on what can and should be done.</p> <p>Establishment of working group and key staff members that will steer NGO’s activity for this emergency.</p> <p>Maps and country data compiled by lower program officers and contact with donors, other NGOs and field offices (if applicable) are made to get more information.</p>	1
Emergency Onset or Rapid Deterioration of CHE	<p>Review of assets in region or that are available generally if the NGO has nearby programs. Contact with program directors/country directors of NGO’s programs in area is made; initial assessments given over email/phone about what the NGO can do for this specific emergency and what assets can be used to deploy to new emergency.</p>	1 and 2 (time differences often must be considered)



<p>Onset settles into “Humanitarian Emergency”, Displaced Populations and EPs Large in Number; International community sets in motion assessment International Community Response</p>	<p>NGO decides to either send assessment and initial response teams or not from HQ or regional area; if the NGO decides “yes”, personnel on-staff or contracting specialists will be contacted and oriented and dispatched with various equipment (often a tote bag or container with medical equipment, a satellite phone, field guides and other general purpose equipment).</p> <p>Donor or other NGO assessment reports may be released to the NGO community NGO personnel enter emergency-affected area and begin assessments.</p> <p>NGO personnel attempt to coordinate activities with HICs, other NGOs and government/donor agencies. If military units are involved, interaction with CMOCs or liaisons is also a priority.</p> <p>Housing established for NGO personnel; drivers and translators hired; assessment teams hired; often local medical personnel hired or recruited for service with NGOs; NGO assessments for logistical access made and reported to HQ or regional office.</p>	<p>2 and 3</p> <p>4, 5 and 6</p>
<p>More International Response</p>	<p>NGO establishes AOR or sector specialty within emergency, often liaising with donor agencies (UNHCR, USAID, ECHO, etc) and writing proposals for funding.</p> <p>NGOs coordinate with HQ and private donors, often launching PR campaigns to raise awareness of cause and to raise funds from communities and/or the American/European public.</p> <p>NGOs coordinate with local NGO partners, or establish new partnerships with local NGOs that deliver specific services.</p>	<p>7-14</p>
<p>Funding and Programs</p>	<p>NGOs begin to receive donor funding and begin implementing larger programs (and replace the smaller, emergency-response oriented programs with refugee camp design and management, large-scale public and primary health programs, water and sanitation, transportation, food and nutritional support, etc) .<sup>64</sup></p>	<p>7-14</p>
<p>Logistical Challenges</p>	<p>International aid begins to flood into emergency-effect area; ports and airports are back-stocked with relief supplies, food and material, and NGOs and UN agencies are hard-pressed to get relief material out of the ports and to distribution points.</p> <p>NGOs still soliciting for new programs and are still implementing relief in many cases.</p>	<p>7-21</p>

<sup>64</sup> NGOs begin providing services almost immediately upon arrival in an emergency-affected area. Often NGO personnel will take all they can when traveling to the region, and many times NGO personnel will come from other areas or regions with specific supplies. Most common are medical supplies, communications equipment,

Emergency Management, Rehabilitation	<p>NGOs settle into program implementation and management, monitoring and assessing new needs or the change of conditions, often implementing smaller programs for smaller communities (minorities, women, children, disabled, elderly) and being selective with program targets.</p> <p>Main large-scale emergency now potentially under control, and population movement has been stabilized, as has been the logistical supply of relief supplies, food, security and information.</p> <p>The international community is working together with military units (if applicable), national governments and with EP leadership and/or representative councils/committees.</p> <p>Emergency teams are often removed, and longer-term NGO personnel are contracted, hired or transferred to manage current emergency-oriented programs, and the development of new development or longer-term relief programs.</p>	21-?
Rehabilitation and Repatriation	NGOs now assist with the facilitation of repatriation, and programs begin closing. Often NGOs will transfer capital assets or remaining material to new emergencies, or to development programs in post-emergency settings.	?

There is no standard timeline or operational mechanism for NGOs that governs their responses to emergencies. In fact, every NGO is different in how it responds to emergencies. For those NGOs that have operations close to a region that experiences an emergency onset, materials and personnel can be transferred with minimal thought. Regional know-how and connections make it easier for these NGOs to arrive and begin implementing programs immediately.

For NGOs without programs close to or in an area that experiences a new emergency onset, it takes more time and effort to establish programs. It requires the mobilization of new or far-removed staff, materials, donor relations and regional know-how. It increases the amount of money used for overhead, as an NGO new to an area must ship or procure locally everything for both implementing and supporting emergency programs. Still, many NGOs (often larger NGOs) have “slush funds” or emergency accounts that are saved for emergencies. These funds represent a small portion of the NGO’s annual expenditures totally, and are kept to be used as cash to establish new emergency response programs. The bigger NGOs have large cash accounts that can be used, and smaller NGOs, obviously, often have very small amounts. Still, NGOs attempt to prepare for emergencies in the future, and by getting themselves established in an emergency setting before requiring donor funds for operations, it gives credibility and operational freedom to their existence within an emergency-affected area. Larger NGOs traditionally have a solid donor foundation, whether primary support from donor agencies or from private donations, and are often the most capable agencies to deliver the primary phases of a humanitarian response.

For small NGOs without regional capacity it is especially hard to respond to new emergencies; it must use limited resources to transport people to the new area while attempting to establish some relationship with donors. And, without knowing the region well, the NGO is highly dependent on donor funds immediately. This means that a small NGO must arrive in an emergency-affected area, establish its footings, and then start writing and submitting project proposals. Contracted experts often make up a large percentage of a small NGO’s operations and ideally bring to the NGO their experience as emergency managers or sectoral specialists. If a smaller NGO has positive relations with a donor from other regions, it may expedite the funding process in the new emergency.

## E. NGO Needs During Deployment

NGOs cannot do everything themselves. They may be on the ground first and they may have technical capabilities, the freedom and regional knowledge to begin programs immediately, but they do not have major logistical capacities to move large levels of commodities, large water quantities, communications equipment or to keep EPs safe. NGOs have three major weaknesses that can be identified in the deployment phase:

1. The lack of large-scale transportation mechanisms, including cargo aircraft, sea-faring vessels, large fuel stocks and/or appropriate ground transport mechanisms.
2. The lack of capable communications equipment and access to international bandwidth, telecommunications infrastructure and maintenance requirements.
3. The lack of independent means of establishing or maintaining operations in violent conditions, including the lack of ability to protect its personnel and operations, EPs and any type of “force protection” when operating emergency programs in war zones.<sup>65</sup>

There are more weaknesses, but these three seem to identify most of the weaknesses that curb an NGO’s ability to act completely independently of any UN, government or military agency. Because NGOs are civilian entities, they must often utilize what commercial services are available for things like communications and transportation, and must depend on military forces to provide safety and organization within conflict regions. Without the help of outside entities, NGOs would only be able to provide a fraction of their services, potentially remaining incapable of getting to the point of program implementation or distribution because of security or logistical weaknesses.

In many emergencies, US and European militaries provide large backbones of support for humanitarian emergencies. NGOs are often dependent on large-scale military intervention and support as they can turn around and provide EPs with faster, more thorough humanitarian services. The UN, too, provides its services in a number of cases when dealing with commodities and large-scale equipment movement.

Militaries have distinct advantages when responding to humanitarian emergencies. The US military, in particular, is most likely the largest “agency” with the most capacity to respond to humanitarian emergencies. Whether it be transportation, security, communications or search and rescue, military units – when transformed into humanitarian response-oriented units – can be extremely effective when working with the NGO sector. The military provides NGOs support in the form of:

- The ability to operate in both conflictual and consensual atmospheres, often allowing NGOs to operate in “safe zones” or with protection. As well, only military units can provide protection for EPs during large-scale emergencies and conflicts (UN peacekeeping units are included in this statement).
- Major logistical transportation services, including large-scale airlifts, oceanic/maritime services, road and bridge repair, control of access points, the facilitation of border crossings and the provision of access lines or “safe zones” for humanitarian supply transport.
- Communications infrastructure establishment and maintenance, often established within short time-frames and available to civilian agencies for use.

Militaries and NGOs have now had ample time to understand the others’ weaknesses, and while military units often provide essential services for NGOs and EPs directly, NGOs have strong advantages in terms of rapid and longer-term relief programs.

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<sup>65</sup> This is not to suggest that NGOs are not active in war zones. NGOs do operate in war zones, but collectively and individually lack the ability to use force or defend from violence.

## **F. Conclusion: “NGOs Lead the Way”**

In summary, NGOs can deploy quickly and efficiently and can bypass major political, organizational or structural challenges with their small teams, independent nature and specialties in specific sectors and regions. NGOs don't have large-scale logistical capacities, but can often utilize commercial transport services, the UN and militaries to move supplies into an emergency-affected region. Many NGOs have large logistical capacities in-house, and can manage the large-scale commitment of aid to EPs in the harshest conditions, but they still require the support of IOs and other entities.

NGOs are relatively small and are neutral. They focus on specific EP cohorts, sectors and/or regions, and target their services according to the direct needs of the EPs in concern. NGOs often use off-the-shelf technologies to establish communications during the onset of an emergency, and do not require major support services or security for their personnel. When NGOs respond to an emergency, they often have a good sense of what types of programs are required and that will work, and experienced and professional staff members can make quick decisions based on years of experience.

NGOs are, for sure, invaluable during an emergency. While lacking unlimited cash reserves (and sometimes any cash at all), major logistical capacities and protection capabilities, NGOs are the driving force in deploying humanitarian assistance programs. With over 50 years of experience, NGOs now know what to do, and how to farm out resources effectively to manage emergencies.

## Chapter 9

### Scale and Scope of NGO Activity

#### Chapter Summary

- NGOs come in all shapes and sizes, and can respond to emergencies in numerous ways.
- The combined capacity of NGOs collectively or individually is hard to measure. In fact, no credible method of evaluating the NGO community’s total capacity exists. Examining annual budgets, staff levels and the number of country operations there are can help, though.
- NGO staff and HQ management systems matter, and provide an NGO with make-or-break support. The stronger the HQ operation, the stronger the field programs and emergency response activities.
- NGOs don’t normally stock heavy equipment and tools. Through various procurement methods, NGOs can move in and out of private markets to obtain time-sensitive and critical equipment without the hassle of large, bureaucratic restrictions. NGOs are also often assisted by UN, government and military agencies with larger procurement or equipment tasks.

There have been a few attempts at quantifying NGO activity in specific sectors, and to understand – on an aggregate level – what the NGO community can do. No major results have been published, and it is highly unlikely that any specific quest to identify the aggregate sum of NGO activity in emergencies will come up with anything accurate.

While there are thousands of NGOs worldwide, there are only a handful of NGOs that are actually operational and capable of responding to emergencies internationally. The NGO community is large and spread-out. Only a handful have the know-how, capacity and funds to respond to international emergencies on a normal and professional basis. This chapter will for the most part consider this small group of NGOs (most of the NGOs covered and considered in this manual) as “the community” and as the embodiment of the term “NGO” or “international NGO”.

#### A. Size and Capacity – The Community

The NGO community worldwide that is involved with international humanitarian assistance is large and diverse. The Cuny Center breaks it down nicely by looking at the InterAction members that claim to be active in either “refugee and migration services” and “disaster and emergency relief”. While the data in that report is now somewhat dated, the breakdown of the 156-member body of international NGOs based in the US looks like this:

Number of InterAction members	156
Number of member NGOs that classify some or all of their work as “disaster and emergency relief”	63
Number of member NGOs that classify some or all of their work as “refugee and migration services”	38
Number of NGOs that classify some or all of their work in both previous categories	30
Total number of organizations that operate in these two sectors	71
Total number of NGOs that have annual operating budgets over \$1,000,000	Approx 25 <sup>66</sup>

<sup>66</sup> This breakdown was initially used in the Cuny Center’s *Greater Efficiency in Humanitarian Operations* publication (2002), Annex A. That report provides a clear sense of operational capabilities of the NGO community and the military in a comparative format with excellent and thorough analysis on both sectors. The information in this table has been altered somewhat, but you can find their original intentions in Annex A, entitled “The System of Civilian Humanitarian Agencies.”

The EU's VOICE has similar breakdowns with its 80+ members. Whereas there are many NGOs worldwide that do respond to humanitarian emergencies, only a handful will be encountered on a normal basis in the field, and only a smaller handful are truly capable of operating global emergency services.

This is not to suggest that many smaller international NGOs and local NGOs are not contributors to HAOs around the world. Quite the contrary: NGOs of all types and sizes are capable organizations with specialties and extremely important contributions for emergency response campaigns. And, they will be encountered in the field, but with less frequency. Many NGOs will only be found in specific regions like parts of Africa, Asia or Central America. Some NGOs enjoy comparative advantages in specific sectors: if an emergency does not require food aid, for example, an NGO that specializes in food aid may not show up.

Measurements of "community-wide" capacity are hard to quantify. NGOs can do many different things and can muster many resources, whether acting together or individually. The most important thing to keep in mind when dealing with NGOs in specific theaters is the fact that NGOs have different capacities, and that the same NGO may have a different capacity in one emergency than it does in another. This is not uncommon, and because regional or sectoral specialties may be required in one region over another, and because donor intent and/or relations with NGOs are different in various emergencies, individual NGO capacity fluctuates. In any case, NGO funding levels are often good indicators for capacity, and as well, the number of employees, offices, operations, programs and HQ personnel an NGO may have can be good clues as to how active or strong an NGO can be during an emergency.

## **B. Size and Capacity – Individual NGOs**

Individual NGOs vary in size and capacity as has been mentioned many times before in this manual. The larger NGOs (CARE, CRS, MSF, Caritas, World Vision, Lutheran World Relief, IRC, etc) all have substantial individual capacities to respond to emergencies and to manage emergency activities for extended periods of time.

To get an idea of the variety of sizes within the NGO sector, The Cuny Center's "Greater Efficiency" work gives a good glimpse into the budget types and percentages that NGOs expend during an emergency:

...the 25 operational InterAction members reported a total revenue of \$2 billion in 1998 or 1999 (the latest report for some agencies was 1998 and for the others was 1999). Very few agencies are able to identify the fraction of that amount devoted to HA. It likely falls between 1/3 and 1/2. For example, in 2000 Catholic Relief Services (CRS) spent \$151,152,000 on emergency programming out of a total annual expenditure of \$371,000,000, or 41%, while CARE's 2000 annual report shows \$58,842,000 spent on emergency programs out of a total expenditure of \$409,289,000 or 14%. Adventist Development and Relief Agency International (ADRA), an agency with a mandated emphasis on disaster relief, estimates that their average annual expenditure on emergency programs is between \$40,000,000 - 50,000,000, which is between 60% and 75% of their budget. A ballpark estimate of average annual expenditures for the principal 25 US-based NGOs is between \$5 million and \$100 million.<sup>67</sup>

NGO capacities are not necessarily measured by annual operating budgets, though. Some very small NGOs have large impacts during emergencies, while some NGOs seem to have incredible budgets but minimal programs. Many NGO capacities come "in-kind" from gifts that are made to the organization, commodities donated by government agencies, private donations of materials or equipment, medical supplies (see chapter 11), capital assets (UN contracts and loaned materials), local NGO partnerships and partnerships with companies and/or government relief agencies, off-the-shelf technology and other types of tools or resources an NGO can use to leverage its strength during an emergency. As mentioned in chapter 8, NGOs often keep reserves of cash for responses to new emergencies.

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<sup>67</sup> Cuny Center, Page 125.

NGO capacities are not necessarily limited by their non-profit status, either. NGOs can obtain “gifts” from the public, and can often create agreements with companies that may have excess materials to donate for specific causes. During the Kosovo crisis, Wal-Mart Inc. provided a few NGOs with container loads of hiking boots and clothing for distribution among the then-refugee Kosovar Albanians. The container was sent from the Eastern seaboard of the US and did not reach a Greek port until after the refugees had returned home. The container was then sent to Kosovo and after a few weeks, many Kosovars that lived in the southern part of Kosovo were wearing shiny new hiking boots.<sup>68</sup>

Some NGO capacity can be found in the UN Central Registry. In line with a UN order to create a central “register” that inventories all disaster management capabilities, OCHA has provided the UN OCHA Central Register<sup>69</sup> for any Internet user that is interested in knowing what is on-hand for emergencies. It is a portal website that archives information and organizes resources that are reported by NGOs, UN agencies and governments that are ready for deployment at the behest of a government or UN agency. Of specific interest when investigating NGO capacities are the “Emergency Stockpiles of Disaster Relief Items” section. This section lists specific inventories of NGO and IO warehouses that are kept in storage for future emergencies and while limited, it is valuable to see the limited resources currently available for emergencies, and to see how crude the inventory management system NGO sector-wide is.

Stockpiled materials that are listed within the database are to be used for international humanitarian emergencies through the UN or other partner agencies. The relief materials must comply with the following three stipulations:

1. the stocked disaster relief items can be made available for international assistance through the United Nations;
2. the disaster relief items are provided on a non-profit basis; and
3. the stockpile activity is not limited just to local relief operations (i.e. only in the country of the stockpile’s location).<sup>70</sup>

It is by far not an extensive site, and is not extremely user-friendly. It does, though, provide a visitor with information about where specific stockpiles are who runs them. MSF France manages extensive warehouses, as does USAID and other national aid agencies. It is a start, and developments have been made recently to make the site more accessible. More of this topic will be discussed in chapter 14.

### C. Headquarters and Staff

Much of an NGO’s capacity for responding to humanitarian emergencies stems from its headquarters management strength and from the types of people an NGO employs. Because NGOs often manage multiple emergency responses around the world at the same time, operations at HQ can be complex. Staff levels range from 2 or 3 to 100 at headquarters, and often up to 2000 in the field. The range for the top 25 or 30 NGOs based in the US for field staff is between 1000 and 2000.

Headquarters staff members often focus on a range of issues. Fundraising, programmatic backstopping, administration and accounting management, program development, public relations and government liaising are all types of activities that NGO HQ staff could be involved with. Most activities are all focused on supporting field activities and the stronger the HQ staff, the better the programs run in the field. Many HQ functions are essential to the viability of relief programs abroad. HQ staff members help manage commodity and relief material equipment and are often the central coordinating and hiring body for personnel.

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<sup>68</sup> One thrifty company provided a 20-foot container of Chap Stick for the Kosovar Albanian refugees, while a Kuwaiti company provided two truck-loads of canned and caramelized dates. These were offloaded into the black-market because no EPs or local inhabitants wanted tons of Chap Stick or dates.

<sup>69</sup> Available at <http://www.reliefweb.int/cr/>

<sup>70</sup> Available at <http://www.reliefweb.int/cr/register.asp?MenuID=1&MenuEntryID=5&SearchTypeID=1>.

## D. Equipment and Tools

NGOs typically do not have large capacities in maintaining fleets of trucks, cranes, well-digging machines, water bladders and other technical or capital assets. Instead, NGOs use a variety of methods to obtain the appropriate equipment during an emergency response. Local procurement, where appropriate and available, is the first method that NGOs may use to obtain the appropriate equipment once in an emergency-affected region. When depleted or unavailable, NGOs often use large brokers like Bukkehave that specialize in providing major shipments of trucks, cars and other hardware that may be hard to come by in emergency settings. Sometimes the UN or government agencies will bring in shipments of specific equipment and will distribute the equipment to implementing partners like NGOs or IOs.

Well-digging machines, large generators, satellite stations, specialized trucks and personnel vehicles, land-mine removal equipment, water and sanitation equipment and even some construction tools are often hard to obtain, and are often procured through coordination with NGO associations or other international agencies. NGOs normally can build the costs of required equipment and tools into a grant proposal or contract agreement with donor agencies. Costs for this type of equipment is often seen as a justified expense because the international community would not have any other way of obtaining the appropriate goods otherwise.

An NGO's primary strength in procurement comes from the ability to participate in market systems around the world. Whereas government and military entities are often strapped by procurement guidelines, purchasing restrictions or liquidity concerns, NGOs can move in and out of local and international markets to obtain the appropriate equipment and tools for their programming. NGO personnel are normally not required to procure equipment from any specific vendor, and normally can deal effectively with local business people or international companies alike. While an NGO may not have an unlimited amount of funding for any specific program (or any program!), it can procure equipment quickly and efficiently. Very little bureaucracy or regulations governing purchasing or procuring exist for an NGO, and this is a benefit during an emergency.

NGOs do not, for the most part, have access to large cargo planes, major water purification systems and communications equipment. Liaising with military offices and/or UN agencies often can alleviate these problems, but this is still a weakness.

## E. Conclusion: Where NGOs Don't Go

NGOs do not respond to some types of emergencies. NGOs have little capacity to respond to chemical, biological or nuclear incidents. Without training or the proper equipment, NGOs appear to be a ways away from developing this capacity. Still, there are very few places and types of emergencies that NGOs won't respond to. NGOs are everywhere, and will continue to find ways to meet the needs of emergency-affected peoples.



## Chapter 10

### NGOs and Health Services

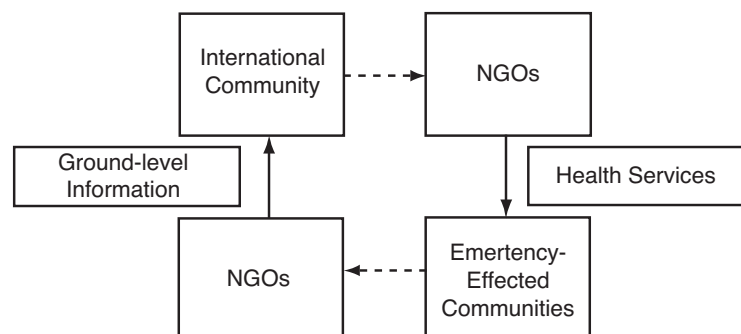
#### Chapter Summary

- NGOs work extensively in the health sector, covering emergency medical needs to longer-term public health programs.
- NGOs must prioritize when entering an emergency; health needs vary in each emergency, and priorities often shift during an emergency.
- Providing clean drinking water, immunizations and food security are always at the top of priority lists when NGOs formulate response plans.
- The most effective relief programs come after methodical and thorough surveys, assessments and analysis of the conditions that effect an emergency-affected population. Misappropriated assistance or the wrong types of assistance can be caused by lack of regional or situational understanding in an emergency.
- No single NGO can provide all the necessary medical assistance programs of a specific emergency. Even the NGO community requires assistance from militaries, governments and other agencies that can provide logistical support and technical or large-scale assistance measures.

NGOs participate in a wide spectrum of health related activities during humanitarian emergencies. Some NGOs specialize only in providing EPs emergency and developmental health services, while others do provide health services, but as part of a multi-sectoral approach to a humanitarian emergency. In general, NGOs have a large capacity for dealing with health emergencies. When working with UN agencies and IOs, NGOs serve as the front-line combatant against epidemics, large-scale malnutrition and ultimately high mortality rates.

To explain NGO activities in the health sector, it is essential to understand that some NGOs specialize in health care, and some NGOs don't. It is also essential to understand that NGOs don't normally work alone in the health sector. There is a considerable amount of coordination (while, of course, there are calls for even more) within and outside of the NGO community, and UN agencies like the World Health Organization (WHO), Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO), UNHCR and UNICEF are key leaders and partners in assisting NGOs with their missions and capabilities. NGOs provide ground-level information about health needs of EP populations, and are also the implementing agent for health programs, while the WHO and UNICEF are often the backbone of support for shipments, surveillance, comprehensive data compilation, guidelines and technical services. These will be discussed more below, but it is important to understand immediately that, unlike almost every other sector, **NGOs most often do not work alone in the health sector.**

The “health sector” in this and in following chapters incorporates a large swath of sectoral activities. NGOs are often the first actors into an emergency setting, and are often the last to leave. NGOs provide valuable ground-level information for the international community, and also provide the ground-level implementation of health services for EPs. The following diagram shows that there is a circular relationship between the NGO community, the international community and the emergency-affected population.



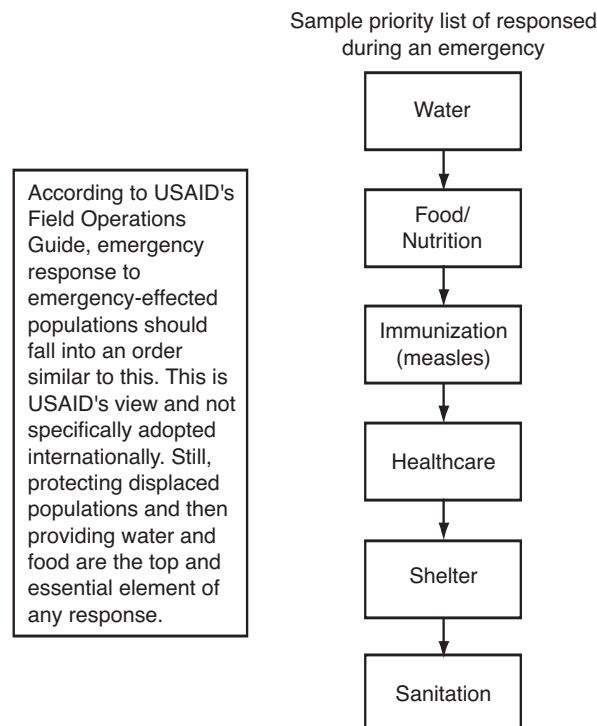
The diagram shows (albeit crudely) how NGOs are placed in two primary roles during an emergency. Because NGOs are often first on the ground in a humanitarian emergency, or are often active in the health sector in a region prior to an emergency, they are often best suited to respond to the many health needs of an emergency-affected population. Once an emergency hits, the NGO community can normally collect assessment data, surveillance systems and program proposals before the international community can gear up to implement programs. Once the international community and larger agencies (UN, government) are ready to begin implementing or funding programs, the NGO community serves as an orienting body or partner for creating a comprehensive, emergency-wide health program (the solid arrows from the lower “NGO” box to the “International Community” box). NGOs report to the international community, NGOs then implement programs directly to EPs with financial and technical support from organizations like WHO, UNICEF, OCHA, USAID and CIDA (represented by the lateral dotted lines between the “International Community” box and the top “NGO” box, and the “Emergency-Effected Communities” to the lower “NGO” box).

NGOs are by far not the only operating agencies in the health sector during an emergency. UNICEF, CDC, OFDA/DART teams, WFP and other larger agencies often have operational wings that can implement programs just as NGOs do (and sometimes with larger scale or technical capacity). Still, NGOs provide the bulk of emergency health programming during an emergency, and are normally the implementing agents for donor and coordinating agencies during an emergency.

### A. Health Priorities in an Emergency

When NGOs and the international community respond to a humanitarian emergency, health services provisions are generally at the top of the list of programs that need to be implemented immediately. While major, rapid onset emergencies require a series of immediate humanitarian assistance responses, less-than-rapid onset emergencies often provide enough time for the international community to measure and methodically map out the types of services that a population may need to curb excess mortality and general human suffering. Still, in both cases, priorities need to be established so that scarce resources can meet the time-sensitive needs of an emergency-affected population.

The international community target specific tasks in humanitarian emergencies, and often order priorities during an emergency response. According to USAID’s Field Operation Guide (FOG), the order of response priorities can be arranged in the following way:



The diagram suggests that water is one of the top priorities. As well, vaccinations against measles are also an essential priority, particularly with young children. Do not let this diagram be misleading. The international community prepares an array of responses in every emergency, and every emergency is different. Ideally, priorities are established with the assistance and input of many assessments, surveys and surveillance along with local and international experts, historical lessons and an array of other variables.

NGOs take painstaking steps to prioritize and assess emergency settings because too broad a response can mean resource depletion, a thinning of available staff and expertise and ultimately a non-effective assistance program. While many NGOs can and do manage multiple programs, it is more common that an NGO specialize and focus its efforts in a specific sector. In health programs specifically, NGOs carve out niches, territories or specific forms of services so as not to overlap with other NGOs, to maximize donor funding, and to minimize the amount of waste and inefficiencies created by attempting to manage multiple programs at the same time.

## **B. NGOs and Surveillance/Surveys**

Before an NGO begins a health program in an emergency-affected area, it must either conduct or be privy to assessment data, surveillance results and indicators of the population in that affected area. Many NGOs carry out assessments and surveillance on their own, or tap into other assessments done by IOs, the UN or other NGOs. NGOs are not required to follow any specific or standard methodology when doing surveys or assessments, and this often is a detriment to emergency managers who want to create a holistic picture of the emergency with data from numerous NGOs and other agencies.

NGOs most often use proven methodologies to obtain data about emergency-affected populations, and then that data is most often used by that NGO alone. Sharing, depending on the emergency, could be seen by many NGOs as giving up comparative advantages, special data or even territory. Assessment or surveillance data is valuable to an NGO because it often holds the keys to funding and program support. NGOs have been criticized for inflating numbers and painting a grimmer picture than actually exists to increase the likelihood of funding and/or support for a particular EP group. This is not done for selfish reasons most of the time, and is normally led by an NGO's desire to deliver services to a population it feels deserves attention.

Generally there are four main indicators that are used when surveying the general health of an emergency-affected population and that help NGOs and IOs create a series of priorities. The first is the attention to a population's Crude Mortality Rate (CMR) and Under 5 Mortality Rate (U5MR). These indicate a population's death rate per 10,000 per day or month.<sup>71</sup> Death rates above 1/10,000 are considered targets of preventative or treatment programs, and CMRs below .5/10,000 are considered natural levels of death and are not specifically targeted with relief programming. There has been rigorous debate lately concerning the viability of the CMR indicator methods but no major alternative has been established to replace this method of measuring the well-being of a population. The CMR is most useful in emergencies when there is at least partially significant data from previous, pre-emergency settings. By comparing pre-emergency death rates to emergency or post-emergency death rates, NGOs can get some idea of how the population is faring and if major responses are warranted. The unfortunate part of depending on this method is that it does not specifically provide an understanding for what should be done to lower the emergency CMR.

NGOs can collect CMR data in a number of ways, and while this manual is not aiming to provide information on data collection in-depth, it is useful to know that there are many accepted methods of data collection and that the NGO and international community still have not agreed entirely on which is best. The CMR method is most widely

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<sup>71</sup> Normal CMRs are measured in months, but during emergencies, the number of deaths per 10,000 people is often measured each day to better help relief workers understand changing conditions and potential problem spots.

used, and is most likely the most accurate when no other method is available (in short or high-pressure situations).<sup>72</sup> John Seaman of Save the Children, UK, has promoted another method of measuring the effects of an emergency that are short of starvation, adding and not specifically replacing data obtained on CMRs. His method, called the “Household Economy Approach” (HEA), suggests that rural economic conditions should be taken into consideration with other information to fully understand the shock that an emergency may have on a population. By measuring the types of actions that populations take to ensure welfare (food storage, planning, sharing), the prices of local commodities and food stuffs, income, household goods and related information, surveyors can obtain a larger picture of the effects of an emergency.<sup>73</sup>

The second indicator used by NGOs to measure the wellbeing of a population during or after an emergency is the level of malnutrition levels within a population or nutritional health of populations. Mid-upper arm circumference measurements (MUAC), Weight-for-Height (or Weight-for-Length) measurements and other methods are used by NGOs to obtain information on needy populations and potential response areas for programming, focusing primarily on food needs. Malnutrition rates over 20% signal a significant emergency and are strong indicators that higher CMRs are looming.

A third method is the monitoring of communicable diseases. With knowledge of pre-emergency levels of specific diseases (HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis, dengue fever, typhoid fever), variances from normal infection rates can signal systemic or emergency-affected problems. NGOs watch closely for communicable diseases like measles or cholera because outbreaks could mean that an epidemic is forming. NGOs also watch for cases of recurring diarrhea because that, too, could signal that other things are wrong. Water or food could be bad, or parasites or other diseases may be present.

The fourth common method of gauging emergency health needs is measuring the level of health care coverage that populations have. By gauging how many people have access to what types of health care, NGOs and others can estimate changes from pre-emergency settings, pre-emergency needs, or emergency or post-emergency requirements. This is done largely informally, and very few systematic methods have been established to measure and evaluate what “coverage rates” really mean. In any case, it can give an NGO a good idea of where attention should be given, and what populations need which types of health care access.

### C. Becoming Operational in the Health Sector

NGOs face a number of challenges when first responding to an emergency. For many NGOs, as mentioned, pre-emergency theater involvement makes a transition from development programming to relief programming relatively simple. For others, a new emergency may mean establishing new programs in a new country or region. Regardless, though, most NGOs that are active in a specific emergency do participate in some form of health programming during or after an emergency. Some NGOs do general, community-level health programs, while others do population or service-specific programs that require specialization and focus.

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<sup>72</sup> In July, 2002 in Washington, DC, Paul Spiegel and others presented a case study on the Horn of Africa and methods used to obtain information on malnutrition. In cases in Ethiopia and Somalia, he suggested, NGOs were hardly reliable for many of the surveillance reports and assessments done on malnutrition. Many NGOs used different definitions of malnutrition, used different methods of measuring malnutrition rates, and ultimately were not coordinated or presented in a clear fashion. This meant that data was hard to use, and a comprehensive response to malnutrition rates could not be specifically accurate. To the NGOs, Spiegel suggests that sampling and methodology should be simple, should be coordinated with other NGOs, and should be in line with standard sampling or methodologies that are used. Ultimately, he says, policymakers and donors should be wary of data and reports provided by NGOs, and that donor or coordinating agencies should have a considerable amount of technical know-how on-hand to review NGO reports. (Presentation made at the SMART Conference, Washington, DC, July 24th, 2002).

<sup>73</sup> The HEA approach was developed by Save the Children, UK to serve as a “model of rural economy based on current quantitative economic descriptions, obtained using rapid field methods, to simulate the relationship between a shock and an outcome...the model being comprehensible to the user...not a blackbox.” (Presentation by John Seaman at the SMART Conference, Washington, DC, July 23rd, 2002).

Most NGOs hire local health workers to implement health assessments and programs. Local medical staff, doctors and/or volunteers are most often hired by NGOs because of his or her knowledge of the community and access to information and relationships within the community. NGO expats will normally “manage” programs and relations with donors, but will largely depend on local staff to implement the project and keep the program viable.

To implement health programs, assessments are critical and are normally the first step in any response to an emergency. NGOs then move into the donor-seeking stage, attempting to establish grant or contract relationships with donors that will fund its specific health program. Once funded or supported in some way (not always donor specific), NGOs begin mobilizing staff members and supplies to begin implementation. This normally includes two main phases.

First, an NGO must staff its programs with the appropriate people. Many NGOs rely on relationships established with physicians, nurses or other medical professionals in the home country (most often the US, the EU states, Australia, Canada, Japan, etc) for staffing emergency programs. Calling upon a roster of medical professionals that have indicated their interests or willingness in assisting in short-term medical programs overseas, many NGOs can staff a program in less than 48 hours. These people volunteer their time to serve in short response programs before returning home to their normal life. These personnel cost little for the NGO, and often bring a large amount of resources, experience or supplies with them. Project management staff members are also required, and depending on how large the NGO is, these staff members may come in two or more stages. If an NGO has experienced experts in assessments and pre-program/emergency management, “assessment” staff may be deployed to establish an understanding of the ground-level conditions and health needs of a population. These staff members will conduct assessments and surveys and will often establish relationships with donors. After they have done their duties, project management staff members are deployed to actually initiate and then operate funded health programs.

Project management staff members are not necessarily health or medical professionals. Often they are NGO professionals with years of experience in managing various humanitarian assistance programs. They operate the logistics, support services, relationships with donors, finance, safety and security and “community” relations with other IOs, the UN, governments and the military. They provide the structure for both local and international medical experts to work within, and keep an NGOs project moving forward.

Once staffed for health programming in an emergency setting, many NGOs face medical supply challenges. NGO personnel are responsible for understanding which drugs are essential and appropriate, where and when they’re needed, and in what quantities, but this does not mean that all the required supplies will be available or even obtainable. To combat some of the chaos that is associated with attempts at finding drugs, supplies, vaccines and other health-related materials from around the world and from thousands of donors, specific NGOs have specialized in procuring and shipping donated medical supplies to emergency settings. Pharmaceutical supply NGOs will be covered more in-depth below.

#### **D. NGOs and Immunizations**

NGOs move rapidly during or immediately after a humanitarian emergency to immunize parts or all of an emergency-affected population. Water and sanitation is a top priority for many NGOs and agencies, but so is the prevention of the rapid spread of disease. Disaster areas or CHEs are normally host to ideal conditions for the spread of disease, and common prevention strategies can easily stop large-scale infection rates. NGOs have a comparative advantage in providing immunizations because of their focus on community-level staffing and program implementation, and because of their significance in number during an emergency response.

Efforts to immunize against measles, meningitis, diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus and polio are all major priorities. Children are often immunized in mass scale prior to more specialized or outbreak-detering immunization campaigns. NGOs normally use local organization through established or temporary health clinics, or use community centers or common settlement areas to deliver immunizations.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> One of the standard texts for introducing immunizations for humanitarian emergencies is Public Health Action in Emergencies Caused by Epidemics (WHO - OMS, 1986).

NGOs do have challenges in providing many immunizations because of various barriers:

- Lack of cold-chain supply management delivery to disaster-affected areas;
- Inaccessibility to needy EPs due to weather, violence, political, cultural or religious reasons;
- Immunization shortages;
- Lack of knowledge or insufficient staff member specialty in field offices.

Still, NGOs provide leadership in the immunization field and often work in close collaboration with agencies like WHO, CDC, ICRC and PAHO. NGO activities with immunizations have to-date been extremely effective. With appropriate surveillance and monitoring methods, NGOs are normally able to contain and/or prevent major outbreaks of disease. Future challenges – and challenges that exist today within the NGO community, between NGOs and IOs and other entities – will center on standardization, early-warning methods and effective measurement practices.

### **Reproductive Health (“RH”)**

- For more information on Reproductive Health (“RH”) and how it fits into humanitarian emergencies, see a quick-read provided by the World Health Organization (WHO):
- Reproductive health during conflict and displacement - available at <http://www.who.int/reproductive-health/publications>

### **E. NGOs and Community/Public Health**

During humanitarian emergencies, NGOs employ various programs that attempt to develop health consciousness, public health levels, local medical training and primary and secondary health care capacity. With firm support from UNFPA, UNICEF, UNHCR, WHO and other larger agencies, NGOs are more than ever finding adequate sources to provide major assistance to ailing public health systems and in supporting education initiatives aimed at reducing the spread of disease and unhealthy living conditions.

NGOs, in almost all cases, rely extensively on local health care systems, personnel and workers. This “community health initiative” system empowers local health care systems during the emergency response phase of the humanitarian crisis, but with the intent of strengthening a damaged or poor healthcare system for post-emergency use. Community health initiatives normally utilize local staff members (“Community Health Workers”, or “CHWs”) to implement information campaigns, support or service programs, and NGOs also work closely with Ministries of Health to gain access to populations. So what is community or public health programming?

Community and public health programming includes a wide range of programs, most of which focus on disease or injury prevention, and the enhancement of local medical capacities. Of current interest to many NGOs are reproductive health (RH) programs that empower CHWs to provide forms of birth control, education and medical services to women and children, and other programs that encourage healthy community planning and public health services. These programs place large emphasis on a woman’s right to choose, public information campaigns about rape, HIV/AIDS, other STDs and other forms of family and community planning.

Post-war or conflict rehabilitation often include public health programming because a society’s community health infrastructure has been dilapidated, destroyed or were non-existent to begin with. For NGOs, the post-conflict wake of reconstruction activities opens the door to providing services like these with local buy-in and international support. NGOs will often introduce new programs unseen before by the affected population in hopes of enhancing women’s rights, community health capacities and health practices. In Albania and Kosovo (1999 and 2000), NGOs focused large efforts on introducing reproductive health programs to Muslim populations. With some resilience, Albanian and Kosovar health officials began adopting some of the new practices and theories. Condom education, birth control pill distribution and women’s rights training were not particularly well-received by some of the more traditional Muslim communities.

These activities are not always seen as emergency-oriented, but NGO activity throughout all phases of an emergency in this sector is extremely important, especially when protecting women and children or supplementing collapsed or non-existent community health centers.

### F. NGOs and Medical/Pharmaceutical Supply

Unlike NGO activity in food and commodity management TO the emergency-affected area, NGOs do play a critical role in procuring and delivering pharmaceutical and medical supplies to emergency-affected areas. In fact, NGOs play a larger role than any other entity during an emergency in procuring medicines and medical supplies for programs during an emergency. Four large medical supply NGOs include Direct Relief International (DRI), Americares, MAP and Operation USA. Each of these organizations focus specifically on creating relationships with pharmaceutical and medical supply companies that can donate excess goods or overstock. The NGO receives these donated materials and then stores or ships to a partner NGO in an emergency-affected area.

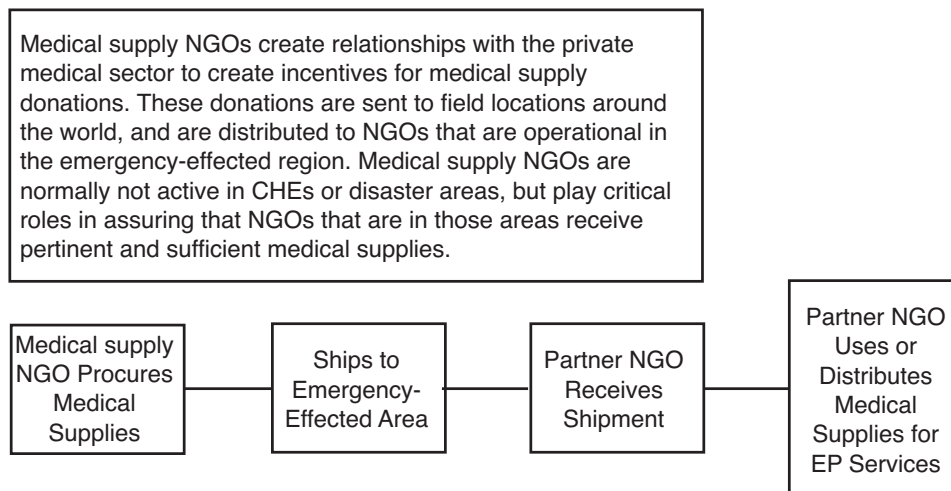
Medical supply NGOs will ship medical and pharmaceutical supplies from their US or Europe-based storage locations to emergency settings via private carrier, sometimes by air freight but mostly via ocean freight. Once into a regional port or receiving area (airport, border, etc), a partner NGO will receive the goods and begin the in-country process of distribution, use or storage.

These special NGOs provide NGOs in the field with all types of medical supplies, and are extremely useful in emergencies that cripple a poor country’s medical infrastructure and stockpiles of medicines. Medical supply NGOs can send everything from polio vaccines to dentist’s chairs or anthropometric tools.

These NGOs have specialized in the procurement and shipping aspects of responding to an emergency and are not normally operational “in the field”. By working closely with implementing NGO partners, medical supply NGOs can effectively focus on soliciting new donors, caring for existing stockpiles and the shipping process while allowing other NGOs to focus on actually distributing supplies and managing in-country challenges.

Of the four NGOs surveyed for this section, none have extensive logistical capacities that extend beyond capacity held by a normal civilian organization. While maintaining large stockpiles of medical supplies within the US or Europe, they do not use an extensive technology system, logistical tracking or management systems, and normally only rely on partner NGOs or agencies to request from them the appropriate quantities and types of medical supplies needed during an emergency.

The process often looks like the flow in this diagram:



These NGOs are scattered throughout the US and Europe, and have many implementing partners in many countries around the world.

Medical supply NGOs normally operate large warehouses where the medical supplies are received. They are sorted, dated and stored appropriately and are then sent to an emergency-affected area when a request comes from a specific partner NGO or agency. All of the medical supply NGOs in the US are relatively close to a sea port, and have close relationships with shipping forwarders or shipping brokers. Most of the medical supplies shipped are bundled with other supplies that are sent via ocean freight in 20 or 40 foot containers. In quantitative terms,

Average shipping space taken by medical supplies by these NGOs is about 1000 cubic square feet per container. MAP, based in Georgia, has shipped an average of 150 containers with an equivalent of 1000 cubic square feet per container in the last two years. Direct Relief International in FY2000 made 220 shipments. This is equivalent to 691,571 pounds of material shipped.... Once into a port and after being offloaded from a ship or aircraft, a consignee, broker or another NGO will sign for the goods, become responsible for moving it out of the port area, and then to either another storage facility or directly into a distribution pattern otherwise designed. As mentioned above, once the medical shipment reaches the port it normally is no longer the responsibility of the medical supply NGO who processed and initiated the shipment.<sup>75</sup>

## G. Conclusion: NGO Strengths and Weaknesses in the Medical Field

In general, NGOs are the most advanced organizations equipped to handle a range of technical, essential and urgent medical services to populations affected by humanitarian emergencies. This does not mean that NGOs are capable of meeting ALL the needs of an emergency-affected-population. NGOs have both strengths and weaknesses in this sector, and here is a presentation of three major weaknesses and four major strengths.

### Weaknesses

- NGOs have limited logistical capacities. For large-scale food procurement and shipments, air transport services, cold-chain management and in-patient medical services, NGOs are at a disadvantage. Without major financial capabilities or logistical know-how or capacity, NGOs do not maintain ocean liners, large cargo aircraft, and stockpiles of food commodities or even fleets of trucks. NGOs do not have the power to procure millions of tons of food for a specific emergency or airlift them if they did have the supply, and must rely on military, government or UN agencies to support large-scale transportation and logistical services in many emergencies.
- NGOs are a community and not a cohesive body. No matter how much coordination occurs, NGOs are still individual entities and small, private bodies that act independently during emergencies. While also deemed a unique strength for NGOs, this often means that the NGO community does not benefit from “scaling” of capacities or the sharing of duties during an operation. An NGO must re-create capacity for each program it delivers, even if another similar NGO is delivering a similar service. Instead of working together to minimize redundancy or overlap, NGOs often find themselves re-inventing the wheel to deliver new programs. This is a waste of energy, and in time-sensitive situations this is often very costly. Still, while coordination levels are increasing and NGO specialization is occurring, competitiveness and independent actor problems arise and make the NGO community weaker than it could be if it worked closely together.
- Combining the two points above, NGOs cannot provide comprehensive services alone. While many NGOs can provide a wide range of services from feeding centers to immunizations to public health programs, NGOs still rely on outside actors in many specific sectors or fields for support. NGOs, in very simple terms, lack the logistical capacity to manage full-scale medical programs. NGOs have been unable to deploy major food programs without the help of the US or US/EU governments and have had to rely heavily on militaries or other agencies to help with in-patient services, major surgical capacities, large population movements and displacement, water and sanitation provisions, access and security issues and other issues that require major technical and resource support.

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<sup>75</sup> The author of this manual provided various chapters for The Cuny Center report (“Greater Efficiency in Humanitarian Operations...” January 2002), and on medical supply NGOs specifically. This section was taken from chapter 5.



## Strengths

NGOs provide medical services during conflict and disasters and are faced with innumerable challenges that extend beyond those that a peacetime medical provisions organization would face. Within this context, NGOs have developed strategies and priorities for responding to emergencies that help define what the most urgent and important needs are of a population that has experienced or is experiencing an emergency. These priorities – whether they concern primary medical care, food, immunizations or public health – mean that not every issue is dealt with, and that not every need is met. Still, NGOs fill a vital role during international humanitarian emergencies, and their strengths outweigh their weaknesses in most cases. There are four major thematic strengths that NGOs enjoy in the medical sector.

- To combat the fact that there are resources and capacity limitations within the NGO community, many NGOs specialize. Medical supply NGOs are one example of this, and they show the advancement of the NGO community to a stage where specific NGOs are now taking specific job functions that mirror larger agencies. The NGO community may be fragmented, but with specialization, the community can begin mirroring an agency like USAID that has specific departments for managing various activities during an emergency. This is a “strong” strength of the NGO community and has potential for becoming more beneficial as more NGOs specialize in various functions during emergencies.
- NGOs within the medical sector are the most “ground-level” entities that exist. With local partnerships and an in-depth knowledge of what medical needs exist at the community level, NGOs can work closely with the international community to meet the finite needs of emergency-affected areas that would have otherwise been potentially overlooked. NGOs add specific strength to the international community’s ability to survey, assess and plan appropriate and scaled responses when EPs are in need.
- NGOs also have little overhead and bureaucratic structures to prevent immediate action in the most harsh or remote locations. NGO response teams do not require stringent force protection services, and can break down into small two or three person teams. As well, NGO staff members can adapt to local environments and travel via local means of transportation, make contracts with and hire local services, liaise with the local government and community organizations, and generally act as free agents in a very chaotic picture. This is not replicated in by any other type of actor in the medical field, and NGOs are close to perfecting the “adaptation” technique.
- NGOs use the private sector to their advantage. NGOs can use private shipping and transportation services, donated goods or financial resources, human resources and the ability to procure goods locally to an extreme benefit of the EPs and to operational efficiency. Because NGOs are often strapped for cash or other resources, NGOs must act quickly, aggressively and with end-states in mind to muster resources. With a large amount of energy used in soliciting for funding or support from the private sector, NGOs often benefit from public sympathy for EPs, donation dollars, grants, in-kind gifts and volunteers

### Two Valuable NGO Health and Nutrition Publications

CDMHC Reference Library and Toolkit for Latin America and the Caribbean. CDROM compilation of various documents, references and manuals for emergency management in Latin America and the Caribbean. Developed by the Center for Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance (CDMHA). <http://www.cdmha.org>.

Health Library for Disasters. CDROM compilation of various documents, references and manuals relating to health and medical response in emergencies. World Health Organization (WHO).

## Chapter 11

### NGOs and Food and Nutrition

#### Chapter Summary

- NGOs spend large amounts of time and resources procuring, storing and distributing food aid to emergency-affected populations. Food aid is by far one of the most common type of aid in the world.
- NGOs work closely with UN and government agencies to procure and move food into emergency-affected regions.
- WFP is the UN's food aid agency (see Annex 8) and it works closely with NGOs to reach EPs and to effectively manage food commodity and food distribution programs.

NGOs provide massive food and nutrition aid around the world. NGOs are key survey agents, providing the community of emergency responders with appropriate, ground-level data, and are also key delivery agents. NGOs often manage extensive programs in this sector, ranging from large-scale food distribution during massive famines to therapeutic or rehabilitating feeding clinics for malnourished populations. During major emergencies, NGOs work closely with and are supported by the extremely operational World Food Program (WFP) that procures and distributes food directly to needy populations, and other UN and government agencies that have the capacity to handle major logistical feats.

#### A. Food Aid and NGOs

Food aid is often tricky. While hundreds of millions of people go hungry on a daily basis around the world, hunger, malnutrition and famine is most often not caused by a lack of food. Instead, food problems come from poor distribution mechanisms, a lowering of the terms-of-trade for a specific country that can lead to the reduction of the appropriate mixes of food (normal export commodity prices are potentially dropped, making it more difficult to purchase different types of food), war and major natural disasters (entire crop rotations ruined or food stores destroyed). Food aid is often under fire by political and policy critics on two fronts:

- **Food aid disturbs markets.** Major food aid delivered by the international community from outside the target country can drastically reduce the market price of that food commodity within the target country. This can upset local market economies and the source of well-beings of particular parts of a country's population. While this is often not the concern for a country that is experiencing major famine, it is a concern when only part of a country or region is experiencing food shortages. Somalia and Operation >>> was an example of how food aid was often misused or abused with a resulting impact on lives not specifically associated with a famine or malnutrition.
- **Food aid is often misused or not understood.** Many policymakers and observers see food aid as a dangerous political tool that is wasteful, or more dangerously, that it is a "Cure-all" that will solve a country's food and humanitarian problems. Neither is the case, and although there are many examples of mis-used or abused food-aid, most food aid distributed world-wide is delivered to the intended recipient population. As well, food aid is normally only addressing hunger and it does not address the underlying conditions that led to hunger or famine. Political causes, infrastructural deficiencies, conflict or economic problems are often severe problems that external food aid can't compete with.

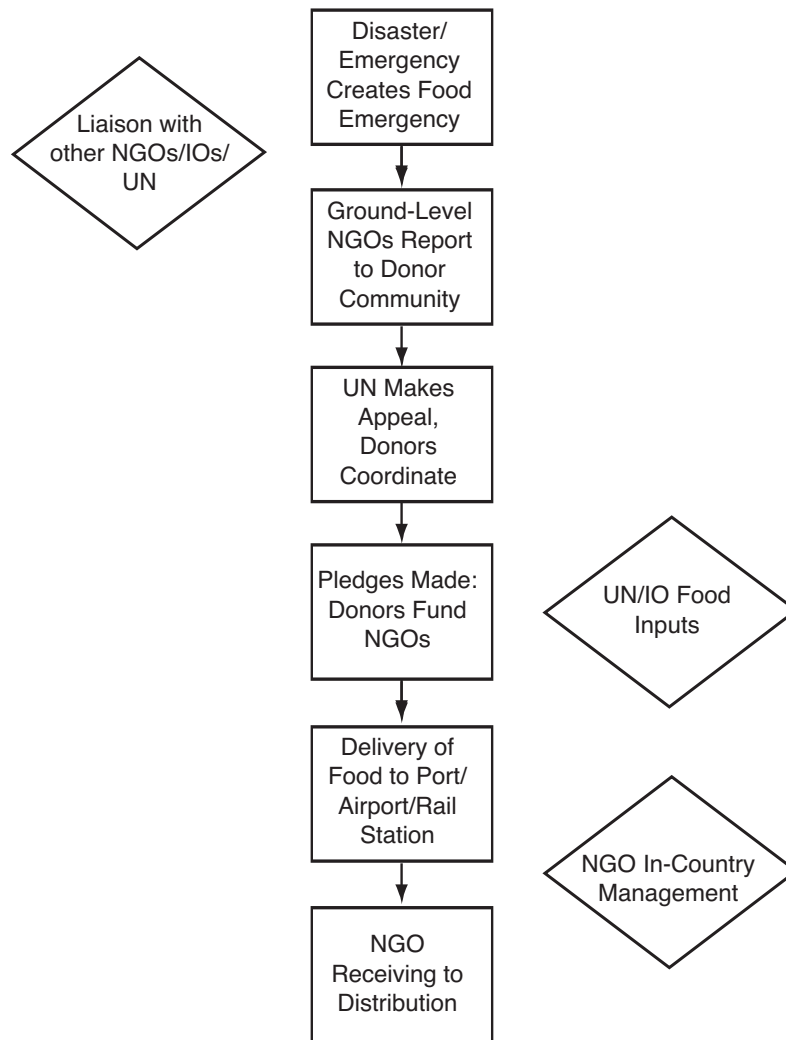
NGOs often steer clear of the debates and push for food aid when and where it is needed. Because NGOs are operational at the ground-level during emergencies, they are first-hand witnesses of how food aid is used, how it affects markets, and when it is needed and not needed.

NGOs are at the forefront of nutrition and hunger services, and are implementing partners with larger UN or government agencies in most phases of a food aid program. In meeting a population's nutrition and food needs during an emergency, an NGO and UN/government agencies are hard-pressed to begin a food delivery mechanism that is not always clear-cut, UPS-style delivery.

NGOs are responsible for most food aid distribution around the world. This means that many NGOs are involved in food aid programs, and that relief interventions during humanitarian emergencies often require intricate and involved distribution or food aid management programs.

Food aid programs often follow a flow similar to the diagram below:

Sample Process of Food Aid System



After an emergency hits, an NGO initiates food or hunger-response programs like any other program (see Chapter 8, “Emergency Deployment and Response”). Information is collected, sorted and analyzed, and the NGO identified areas of potential operation and whether it has a comparative advantage in the proposed type of operation or not. As well, the NGO must consider whether funding is available or not. For major emergencies in which major portions of the population require food aid, NGOs must normally liaise closely with UN agencies and governments. NGOs lack large logistical capacities and lift capabilities and normally cannot provide massive amounts of food from external sources without assistance. USAID and WFP are major participants in food procurement, storage and distribution to field-level NGO management teams because of their unique capabilities to acquire large quantities of food (millions of tons), ship it (via ocean, air, truck or rail), and to “keep it coming”.

As shown in the diagram above, an NGO will determine logistical requirements, liaise closely with the UN and governments to relay these perceived requirements, and will then eventually take over the inflow and distribution of food to the emergency-affected population. NGOs have or can establish extensive field-based networks with local

NGOs or communities, and are often the most efficient food-aid providers at the ground-level when compared to larger, more cumbersome agencies. WFP and USAID, for example, specialize in establishing the commodity-level logistical supply system but then need smaller agents to take truck-levels of food to points of distribution.

When dealing with sustained hunger or malnutrition rates, NGOs often create feeding centers or therapeutic feeding centers that provide children or the severely malnourished specific nutritional treatment. Caloric intake levels, types of food, appropriate delivery methods and other variables are all considered by an NGO when implementing a program. Household, community or regional level approaches as well are variable and will alter the types of programs that the international community will employ. For example, household-level programs also must take into consideration the fact that malnutrition is not necessarily caused by a lack of food. Care, access to appropriate foods, regularity and sustainability are all factors that can influence a population's nutritional health.

## NGO Food Programs

NGOs will deploy programs depending on the size, place, intensity and scope of a nutritional crisis.

**General Food Distribution (GFD).** When food insecurity is prevalent, sustainable economic and health development programs are often appropriate, targeting the most vulnerable populations specifically. This is not a blanket coverage, and is most likely not used in large-scale emergencies.

**Blanket Feeding.** This is deployed normally during a severe food crisis and also targets specific populations, normally extending non-discriminatory feeding programs for pregnant mothers, under-5 children, elderly and the sick, whether they are facing malnourishment or not.

**Supplementary Feeding Program (SFP).** When malnutrition rates extend over 15% and populations still need assistance to fill gaps and in treating specific target groups, NGOs will provide SFPs during the day to provide warm meals, appropriate nutrients and special foods for various parts of the effected population.

**Therapeutic Feeding Programs (TFP).** TFPs are established to treat severely malnourished people, and to provide immediate relief to those parts of an emergency-effected population that are in danger of dying due to lack of food. Ideally, TFPs are 24-hour stations. In emergency settings, though, staff and supply limitations will often prevent 24-hour operation.

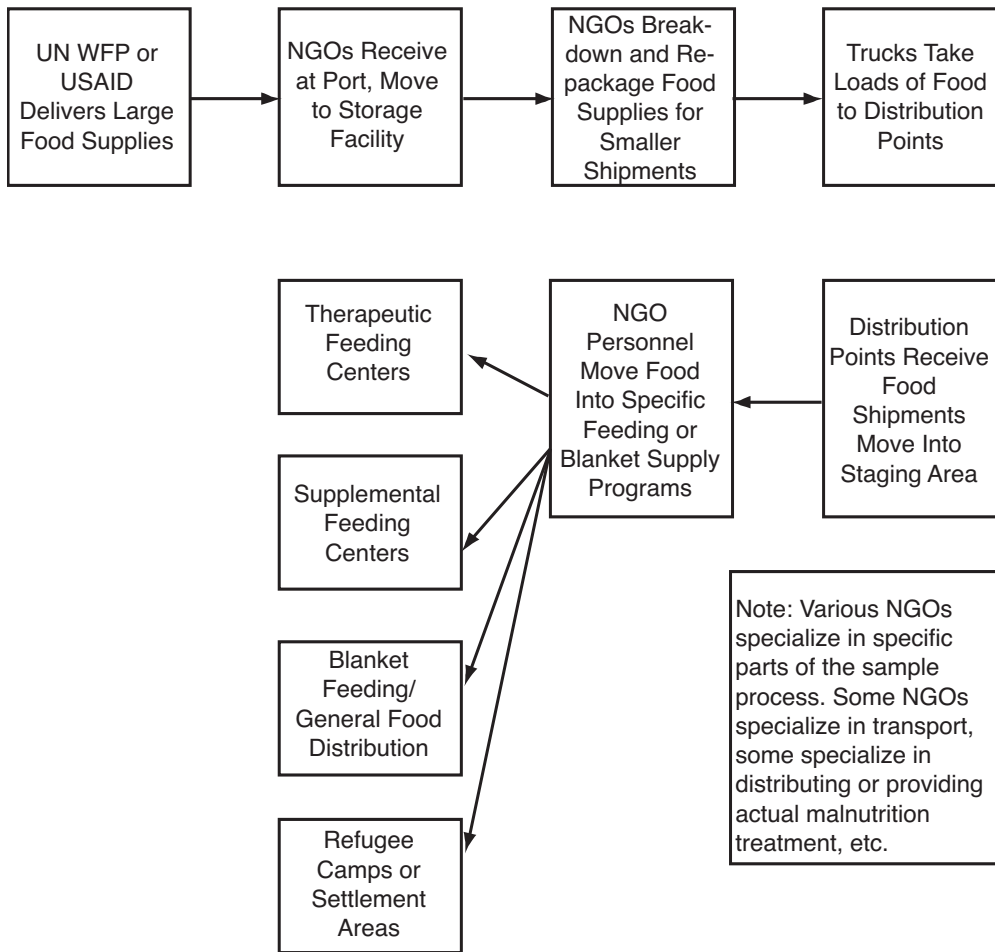
Some specific programs are included in the following table.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> See the [UNHCR Handbook for Emergencies](#) (2000), page 196 and 197 for a clear presentation of “Selective Feeding Programs” and “Types of Selective Feeding Programs.”

A more in-depth, emergency-setting specific operations flow could include the following processes:

A Sample of NGO Food Operations



**B. Conclusion: Players in the Food Aid Sector**

The international community has created a specific and resourceful community that deals with food aid and nutritional emergencies around the world, and NGOs play an important part. The main actors in food aid include the following:

World Food Program (WFP)	<a href="http://www.wfp.org">http://www.wfp.org</a>
Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO)	<a href="http://www.fao.org">http://www.fao.org</a>
Food Aid Management (FAM) <sup>77</sup>	<a href="http://www.foodaidmanagement.org">http://www.foodaidmanagement.org</a>
Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO)	<a href="http://www.paho.org">http://www.paho.org</a>
USAID/Food for Peace	<a href="http://www.usaid.gov/hum_response/ffp">www.usaid.gov/hum_response/ffp</a>
US Department of Agriculture	<a href="http://www.fas.usda.gov/food-aid.html">www.fas.usda.gov/food-aid.html</a>
CARE	<a href="http://www.care.org">http://www.care.org</a>
Catholic Relief Services (CRS)	<a href="http://www.catholicrelief.org">http://www.catholicrelief.org</a>
Lutheran World Federation/Relief	<a href="http://www.lutheranrelief.org">http://www.lutheranrelief.org</a>
World Vision	<a href="http://www.wvi.org">http://www.wvi.org</a>
Food for the Hungry (FHI)	<a href="http://www.fh.org">http://www.fh.org</a>
Caritas	<a href="http://www.caritas.org">http://www.caritas.org</a>
EuronAid <sup>78</sup>	<a href="http://www.euronaid.dl">http://www.euronaid.dl</a>

Chapter 8 and Annex 2 lists various websites used by the NGO and international community for obtaining information on early-warning, emergencies and disasters, and three sites are specifically related to nutrition and food aid (listed here again). They are

The Global Information and Early Warning System on Food and Agriculture (GIEWS)	Available at <a href="http://www.fao.org/WAICENT/faoinfo/economic/giews/english/giewse.htm">http://www.fao.org/WAICENT/faoinfo/economic/giews/english/giewse.htm</a> and is a major source of information for NGO personnel managing early warning activities and potential trouble-spot monitoring. It is supported by the UN Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO).
Early Warning System (FEWS)	Can be found at <a href="http://www.fews.net/">http://www.fews.net/</a> . This too is a resource for individuals seeking information on food levels, weather, news and resources for famine and CHE effects on food levels and food security. FEWS is supported by USAID.
The Forum on Early Warning and Response (FEWER)	It is a lesser-used website, but deals with humanitarian conditions and conflict early warning and conflict prevention. It is an association of NGOs. <a href="http://www.fewer.org/">http://www.fewer.org/</a> .

<sup>77</sup> Food Aid Management, based in Washington, DC, is a consortium of NGOs and agencies that focus on food aid and nutrition. It has become a central location for thinking and storing information on nutrition and emergencies.

<sup>78</sup> EuronAid is a European-based NGO consortium that is larger than FAM, and that actually acts more like the US-based InterAction. Information is available at <http://www.euronaid.dl>.

No discussion of humanitarian food aid would be complete without mention of the World Food Program (WFP). WFP is an operational UN agency that provides most likely the largest quantities of food aid around the world. With internal logistical infrastructure, ships, trucks, planes, experts and field offices, WFP offers direct support to EPs and also provides support to NGOs when appropriate. See Annex 2 for more detail on the WFP, WHO and UNICEF.

The Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) is a lead player in food aid, but is sometimes quiet during emergencies. With a mission of providing large-scale development assistance in food sectors and agricultural economies, the UN agency based in Rome has created some progressive tools for the international community when dealing with preventing or responding to nutritional emergencies. Of specific interest to many government and military personnel is the use of satellite and imagery technology for monitoring food supplies. Now superseded by even more advanced technology, FAO created the Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS) Workstation. It employs the use of satellites and GIS services. An FAO description follows:

FAO uses the Meteosat-based estimates of rainfall and the NOAA/AVHRR-based assessments of vegetation cover as one of the key inputs for operational monitoring of crop conditions by the FAO Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS). Assessment of crop growing conditions and related food production outlook is based on agrometeorological observations combined with remote sensing and other relevant socio-economic information. The development of models to integrate satellite and agrometeorological data with socio-economic and nutritional information, using GIS technology, is currently being finalized under the GIEWS Risk Mapping Project. This Project is implemented by FAO in partnership with the Save the Children Fund (SCF-UK) in London and executed by ESCG/GIEWS with financial assistance from the European Union.

Since early 1992, GIEWS is implementing the project “System Definition and Development of a Computer Workstation for GIEWS” with funding from the EU. The objective of the project is to develop a tool to better integrate image and graphic data especially the socio-economic and nutritional indicators with the satellite-based ARTEMIS products and field agro-meteorological data in the analysis and reporting process of the GIEWS analysts. The University of Arizona has been contracted to develop the GIEWS workstation. A Prototype was installed and tested at FAO Rome in June/July 1993. The development of an advanced version of the Workstation started in September 1993, along with the establishment of databases. Work on this version was finalized in 1995 and is now fully operational at FAO Headquarters. Its applications development at the regional levels is now being undertaken within the framework of the Regional Early Warning System in the SADC region through the FAO/SADC Regional Remote Sensing Project.<sup>79</sup>

Another development that has stemmed from NGO and private sector cooperation is the FACTS software system. FACTS, short for “Food and Commodity Tracking System”<sup>80</sup>, was created by Microsoft in 2001 in collaboration with Mercy Corps International (MCI) and Save the Children US. It is an online-based commodity management system that allows NGOs to monitor and track shipments from the port of entry to the point of distribution. At this point very few NGOs have used it, and MCI and Save the Children are still in beta stages of testing. Advanced stages of this software, say Microsoft and testing NGO personnel, will allow NGOs to use hand-held devices, utilize real-time data on relief programs, and the use of this software with minimal amounts of bandwidth. It is still in beginning stages but represents a significant amount of energy devoted to attempting to standardize software and logistical systems.

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<sup>79</sup> FAO information on GIEWS available at <http://www.fao.org/sd/eidirect/eire0007.htm>.

<sup>80</sup> See a ReliefWeb press release about FACTS at <http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/6686f45896f15dbc852567ae00530132/55b7763982a96cb949256bcf00065923?OpenDocument>.

## Chapter 12

### NGOs and Water, Sanitation and Shelter

#### Chapter Summary

- Water and sanitation services are often the most essential relief activities that can be deployed at the onset of any emergency. Having clean and safe water supplies and sanitary living conditions can mean the prevention of disease, malnutrition and sometimes conflict.
- NGOs manage various types of water and sanitation programs in emergencies, ranging from emergency water provision to latrine building, filtration plant construction or well boring.
- Other agencies are involved in water services too, but while managing refugee camps and IDP settlements, NGOs are normally the lead agency for specific water services.
- Water is often the hardest material to introduce into an emergency setting, as it is heavy, fragile and must be secured at all times from unsafe or unsanitary conditions. In many instances, NGOs need assistance when implementing water programs.
- NGOs often empower local communities with water conservation knowledge, sanitation practices and sustainable equipment during and after emergencies.
- NGO activity in the shelter sector is extensive. NGOs provide emergency housing, refugee camp establishment and management, and provide longer-term housing as well.

People can live longer without food than they can without water, and NGOs normally are mindful of a population's water needs when creating a strategy for displaced population settlements, medical facilities and transportation or general relief activities. Water is essential to all relief operations and is often the most technical and difficult to provide because of the fragile and often limited capacity to move water, keep it clean, or to prevent dangers that can arise when water is not managed properly.

#### A. NGO "Watsan" Activity

Water is closely related to sanitation and when NGO personnel speak of "watsan", they normally are referring to the "sector" that includes water and sanitation services that are closely related. UNHCR's [Water Manual for Refugee Situations](#) and UNHCR's [Handbook for Emergencies](#) are two useful publications that include a range of technical data and programmatic requirements for programming personnel in the field (see Publications at the end of this publication). The [Water Manual](#) provides an excellent summary of only some of the various needs that NGOs must meet during an emergency:

During the first days of an emergency, the refugees will be using surface water or, less often, groundwater from wells or springs. They will normally use whatever water is available, regardless of its quality. *Start by organizing the refugee community and by making them aware of the possibilities and dangers of existing water sources.* To do this, get immediately in contact with as many refugee community leaders as necessary or possible. Convey to them the idea of trying to prevent further pollution of these sources by excreta and the need to follow simple rules to achieve this goal, such as drawing water in the upstream portions of flowing rivers, creeks or canals, allocating areas for laundry or body washing downstream of the drinking water intake areas, or watering animals at the extreme downstream portion of flowing water bodies. All these areas could be fenced off, if necessary, to minimize monitoring requirements and to ensure full effectiveness of these measures.<sup>81</sup>

<sup>81</sup> [Water Manual for Refugee Situations](#) (UNHCR, 1992).



The Sphere Project also outlines numerous standards that NGOs must follow, and that serve as benchmarks for providing services to EPs. NGOs strive, as do other operational IOs and UN agencies, to meet a series of basic needs for populations that have been displaced or that have experienced a disruption in normal water and sanitation systems.<sup>82</sup>

In dire emergencies in which original infrastructure is ruined or in which large population movements occur, these are stringent requirements. NGOs often respond with an immediate, blanket strategy for providing watsan services at the onset of an emergency, but then must dig in for a more technical, methodical delivery of watsan services.

NGOs are challenged with two major tasks in the watsan area: assuring that EPs have access to water, and that the water they use and drink is clean. NGOs have specialized some of their activities in this sector and have often been able to avert further humanitarian crises by combining new technologies (sanitation devices, plumbing, etc) and local capacity (training, know-how and knowledge, management). During humanitarian emergencies, an agenda might look like this:

1. The assessment of water and sanitation conditions, sources, supply/quantity and distribution.
2. The provision of emergency water rations (not intended for sustained use)
3. The establishment of proper sanitation outlets and the management of fecal matter (preventing human or animal feces or excrement from entering drinking and cooking water sources)
4. The provision of water systems, including sanitation systems to manage human waste and the disposal of used water sources.

This list is obviously very short and general, and not to be taken as a catch-all plan outline. Different emergencies require various levels of intervention within the watsan sector, and all are closely linked with providing clean and safe water in the appropriate quantities and that poor water or sanitation management do not create other health problems. NGOs cover the span of activity within this sector, and often find that challenges arise from meeting extremely technical and stringent requirements with limited resources and in harsh conditions.

All water programs must start with hydrogeological surveys and surveys about the water needs of the emergency-affected populations. In places with no or insufficient quantities of water, NGOs can create wells or infiltration galleries with some medium-sized equipment and a variety of methods. Dug wells, boreholes and infiltration galleries are expensive, and are often hard to create in harsh conditions. Special equipment is needed and is not always available. NGOs often do not have the capacity to obtain or manage well-digging trucks, and sometimes if equipment is available, the characteristics of the geological location may not be friendly to that specific type of digging mechanism.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> The Sphere Project - Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (IFRC, 2000) outlines some of these requirements: The Sphere Project outlines a few of these “basics”. There should be, for example:

- At least 15 liters of water per person per day...;
- Flow at each water collection point is at least 0.125 liters per second;
- There is at least 1 water point per 250 people;
- The maximum distance from any shelter to the nearest water point is 500 meters;
- There are no more than 10 fecal coliforms per 100 ml at the point of delivery for non-disinfected supplies

<sup>83</sup> See Water Manual for Refugee Situations (UNHCR, 1992), as mentioned, and also [Technical notes: Special Considerations for Programming in Unstable Situations](#) (UNICEF, 2000): Chapter 17 - Annex 2: Water Sources (Exploitation and Rehabilitation) for in-depth understanding of what the requirements are in digging wells and generally seeking water sources where there is little or no water.

For water quality improvement and management, NGOs can employ a vast array of services. Because water quality issues often require less structural involvement, public health education, sanitation, appropriate water source selection and/or water bladder maintenance are ways that NGOs can combat improper uses of water and the drinking or use of poor-quality water. NGOs focus much of their attention on sanitation issues when thinking about providing sound water for EPs. Managing latrines, spatial relationships with rivers, streams or standing bodies of water and education about how to keep refugee camps or EP settlement areas safe are all key elements to managing a successful relief program in the watsan arena.

Water problems in humanitarian emergencies also extend into vector or environmental dangers. Standing water and flooded areas, for example, breed infectious-disease carrying insects which can deteriorate health conditions without relation to the quality or amount of drinking water available.

NGOs are active in this sector in almost all emergencies. Community level programs are most common, and community-inclusive programs are becoming more popular. Depending on the scale of activity (light interventions for small resettlement camps versus 5000-person refugee camps), NGOs will often join in collaboration with local governments, other international NGOs, local NGOs and donor or larger IO agencies. NGO activities in this sector span a large spectrum:

- Management of water sources and delivery mechanisms, including plumbing, regulation and diversion of water sources;
- Sanitizing water sources with calcium hypochlorite or other forms of sanitation chemical elements;
- Setting up latrines and washing sections in settlement areas in appropriate places and managing their cleanliness and use;
- Digging wells;
- Informing EPs about clean-water use, cooking and fecal management;
- Providing clean water from trucks or water bladders;
- Managing entire water and sanitation systems in large refugee camps;
- Cleaning up human feces on roads and near rivers or streams;

In many emergency settings, water is hard to come by. EPs often suffer from the absence of water during the emergency. But EPs may also suffer from the long-term effects of ruined water and sanitation infrastructure. Water drainage systems, human refuse and trash collection methods, water delivery services and other facets are often destroyed by war or disaster. When this is the case, NGOs often require large-scale assistance from national government agencies or larger international donors. Large equipment, engineering and policies may be needed. To establish a longer-term water and sanitation development program after an emergency, NGOs often turn over programs to governments or private companies that can

In comparison with other agencies that may be active in this sector, NGO activity in this sector is essential. It often must accompany larger-scale support, though, from large UN agencies (UNHCR specifically) and US and some European militaries that have the logistical capacity to support large machinery, water bladders, piping projects, drainage and vector control, and large pumping facilities or machinery. Militaries have more logistical capacity than any other actor within a humanitarian emergency, but is largely incapable of providing thorough, start-to-finish watsan assistance in humanitarian emergencies. Force protection issues, appropriate equipment, mission, lack of knowledge or cultural sensitivities and related issues make military forces helpful support agents but weakened service providers in this sector.

## B. Other Actors in the Water and Sanitation Sector

The Cuny Center report on civilian and military capacities in emergency settings devotes a considerable amount of time to the watsan sector, and a section will be used here to describe the broad range of actors that are active in this sector. NGOs do not go it alone and rely on a number of actors to assure that watsan programs are designed and implemented appropriately. Here is a discussion of each of the primary actors in watsan programs taken directly from the Cuny Center report:

- **The disaster-affected population:** The disaster-affected population is clearly the most important actor in the crisis – people themselves, their resilience and creativity, are their own most reliable resource, especially when it comes to water. They are the primary counterpart for external agencies: local leaders, community groups, neighborhood groups, families and individuals themselves. While the crisis may upset existing communal structures, communities re-organize very rapidly, either along traditional lines or in new fashion or in a blend of the two. If their programs are to have any effect on environmental health issues, external actors must tap into the structures of the affected population.
- **Local communities:** In displaced population crises, host communities – the community in the midst of which the displaced population now finds itself – are critical, as their water resources may be stretched by the crisis, and their attitude to the displaced is critical to the well-being of the latter. Local staff are a key point of interaction between external actors and the local community.
- **Local NGOs:** Local development and advocacy NGOs are essential counterparts for external actors because of their knowledge of the local society and their contacts within it. Some may have emergency watsan experience (e.g., local Red Cross or Red Crescent chapters), and some may be involved in longer-term water and environment health issues.
- **Local authorities:** These may include local civilian and military authorities in the broader sense, local offices of ministries or departments of public works, water resources, and humanitarian and refugee affairs, local water board authorities, etc. These authorities have the legal responsibility for the well being of the affected population, be it local or displaced. The levels of competence, accountability and local acceptability of these local authorities vary widely from situation to situation.
- **International relief agencies (non-governmental and red cross-affiliated organizations):** International relief agencies vary from technically proficient and experienced to fly-by-night outfits attracted by the large amounts of funding that go with disasters. Oxfam and the ICRC are recognized as leaders in the water and sanitation. Among those that have a strong track record (e.g., ICRC, Oxfam, MSF, ACF, IRC, Care, CRS, and many others), some are more community-oriented and others focus solely on the emergency needs. The latter are less likely to be effective in achieving a lasting impact on the health of refugees.
- **UN agencies:** The UN agencies that have the most to do with water and sanitation and environmental health are the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UNICEF, the World Health Organization (WHO), and sometimes the UN Development Programme (UNDP) – the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (OCHA) often takes a lead in assessments and coordination, but seldom engages in sectoral coordination. UNHCR is often the lead agency in displaced population situations and the main counterpart of the government with regard to camps. All these agencies can mobilize experienced technical personnel who are valuable resources on the ground. But, in terms of watsan interventions per se, UN agencies are often too far removed from the community to be effective.
- **Foreign military forces:** Peacekeeping units, stabilization forces and other intervention forces may bring significant resources, but inherent limitations often curtail their effectiveness (see below).<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> From the Cuny Center report entitled *Greater Efficiency in Humanitarian Emergencies* (2002).

NGOs play a major role in providing EPs with water services, as do other entities discussed above. For emergency water systems and provisions, NGOs often have clear advantages when operating on local levels and with populations that have been displaced. Because of their size and flexibility, NGOs can often gain access to remote areas or in to emergency-affected areas quickly and can make fast decisions about what types of water services are required, and how best water services can be implemented. In large refugee settlements, water systems are carefully planned and engineered, and often must be dealt with when providing shelter services to EPs. The next section discusses shelter services, and it should be kept in mind that water and sanitation services are related to providing emergency living conditions for EPs, and that while not always implemented together, water services, sanitation services and shelter services are often batched together in settlement and rehabilitation projects.

### **C. NGOs and Shelter**

Many NGOs have developed expertise and large capacities for providing emergency housing and shelter needs for EPs. After disasters and during CHEs, shelter is particularly important for EPs for safety, psycho-social wellbeing and for general living capabilities. In cold-weather climates, shelter services are extremely important and are dealt with as a top priority. NGOs implement a few types of shelter programs.

NGO activities in the shelter sector include:

- The construction of temporary shelters for EPs in a safe and secure location.
- The provision of “warm rooms” for EPs in cold-weather climates that secure at least one room in a damaged or partially-destroyed home.
- The creation of refugee or settlement camps with tents or temporary structures.
- The rebuilding of damaged homes or other shelter structures.
- The arrangement for large structures to be used for shelter (stadiums, gymnasiums, train stations, airport hangers, etc).

Shelter activity can be varied, and depending on the size, scope and climate of an emergency-affected region, EPs may have different needs. Many shelter programs place importance on providing safe and organized living conditions for EPs while they are displaced or in danger. For example, creating refugee camps has become a very organized and methodical process and many NGO representatives have expertise in utilizing specific design features for maximizing safety, efficiency and community within the camp.

NGOs are normally the lead agencies on shelter projects, as it requires intricate community involvement and often challenging and local-level procurement activities. When an NGO assists a local community in rebuilding houses, for example, it will almost always use local labor and local supplies (when possible). For large-scale housing needs, NGOs often have to coordinate with other agencies and organizations for the procurement and storage stages of the operation. For Kosovo, NGOs had to import material from neighboring countries and used local labor to implement the projects.

In general, NGOs spend a considerable amount of time arranging, creating or improving shelter for EPs. Shelter is a critical element of keeping populations healthy and safe, and NGOs participate in shelter activities as part of a spectrum of responding to EP needs.

### **D. Conclusion**

NGOs, with the assistance of local government offices, IOs, the UN, donor governments and militaries, can provide water and sanitation and shelter services to needy populations during or after an emergency. Depending on the size and scope of need, NGOs may be best suited to deliver fast, efficient emergency water supplies or sanitation systems or shelter. In refugee or IDP camp management, NGOs surely are the best entities to manage water and sanitation systems because of their large knowledge and intricate relationships with EPs.

## Chapter 13

### NGOs and Protection

By Steven Hansch and Grey Frandsen

#### Chapter Summary

- EP “protection” means “helping populations avoid being targeted for persecution or attacks.
- NGOs participate in protection activities in a variety of ways.
- The military is the most capable of providing protection services to EPs, but NGOs fill major gaps when military protection is not available, and when protection means relocation, advocacy, migration issues and asylum needs.
- Emergency response NGOs often partake in protection activities without specifically highlighting it in their program descriptions: shelter services, advocacy and transportation services are often part of protecting a population from discrimination or danger.

Unfortunately, the sector commonly called “Protection” has a broad and fuzzy, or poorly-defined, meaning. In the parlance of aid agencies, “protection” is distinct from “assistance.” Where assistance takes the form of the provision of raw commodities (food) or services (health care attention), protection refers to something more subtle: helping populations avoid being targeted for persecution or attacks. The core concept is to prevent any EP from being killed or harmed during or immediately after an emergency. Longer term protection roles also arise for populations that have been displaced for extended periods of time, or for those that may permanently alienated from their home after war or genocide.

Protection implies action – doing something to stop or reduce a genocide, massacres or systematic rape. Increasingly in the community of NGOs there has grown a sense that each agency has an unavoidable responsibility to report what they observe, often meaning to report to external authorities, the UN, western governments or the news media.

Most humanitarian aid agencies do not refer to their work as protection, even if they ‘deliver protection’ as an ancillary aspect of their operations. For example, while IRC, IMC, World Vision and dozens of traditional aid NGOs focus on food, water and health care, they are also providing protection through their presence, observation and reporting. But they don’t advertise this aspect of their work.

The NGOs who do recognize that protection is a central basis of their work are primarily NGOs who do “human rights.” That is, they monitor and report on human rights problems, though they don’t deliver any direct services. These include NGOs that emphasize “voice” over implementation, who publish reports, meet directly with leaders and policy-makers. Among them:

- Amnesty International
- Human Rights Watch
- Lawyers Committee for Human Rights
- Physicians for Human Rights
- Refugees International

#### A. Differing Interpretations of “Protection”

There is no common agreement among NGOs about what are the overlapping elements of Human Rights, Justice, Equality, IHL, Common Law, Peace, War-Crimes trials and enforcement of protection.

Several key civilian agencies view protection as being composed primarily of observing, or “documenting” human rights abuses in the field, and then “reporting” — arguing with governmental authorities, sometimes in outrage. Other NGOs add on to this a list of other “practical” activities that can be undertaken to rescue EPs.

The following are examples of protection activities undertaken by NGOs and IOs:

1. Legal action or lobbying to enjoin a government to allow asylum-seekers to stay in a country — i.e. not to be forcibly returned to the country they fled where, if returned, they might be killed. This would be an example of reference to refugee conventions and the principle of non-refoulement.
2. Advocacy and lobbying by the ICRC or Human Rights Watch, to ask warring factions not to fire weapons (such as mortars) into civilian population areas, which would be a violation of the laws of war and Geneva Conventions.
3. Generating international attention to attacks on civilians, in the hopes of stopping killings through international embarrassment or by the intercession of governments. For example, if an advocacy group like Refugees International calls attention to killings in the Democratic Republic of Congo, they expect that the media highlight or attention will compel armed killers to back off.
4. Providing refugees with identification so that they have some legal status, or record, that will help them to be remembered and to claim some rights as citizens, perhaps later in time when returning home, an activity many agencies helped with for example when Kosovars fled to Albania in 1999.
5. Helping to smuggle populations in danger out of areas where they are being persecuted, a common activity of protection groups working with Jews during World War II.
6. Creating and enforcing “safe areas” where civilians won’t be targeted is a common tactic, often unsuccessful. Aid agencies help displaced families in Sri Lanka in these “open assistance camps”, or in enclaves in Bosnia, or IDP camps in Burundi.
7. Reporting rights violations as part of public health monitoring. For example, the American Refugee Committee, in charge of health surveillance for the Cambodian refugees in Thailand (in the largest camp, Kao I Dang), added physical violence to their list of reportable health events, allowing aid agencies and authorities to begin to track down and reduce cases of political persecution within refugee communities.
8. Just being there. Aid agencies achieve enormous protection effects indirectly, by just living and working with emergency-affected populations. Just before he was killed in Chechnya, Fred Cuny called upon more NGOs to join him there, pointing out that expatriate presence in Grozny, by itself, had kept the Russians from aerial bombing. Cuny was concerned about the less-mobile, urban-based elderly who would have been killed.

## **B. International Organizations Lead in Protection**

The two agencies who see protection as their own responsibility are UNHCR (in refugee settings) and ICRC (in war-zones), and both agencies primarily view their job as requiring them to intercede with municipal, military or other government offices to bring rights problems to their attention and to point out to them the international laws that need to be followed to correct the situation.

Many NGOs view the work of UNHCR and ICRC as good, but insufficient. Instead, NGOs feel that both UNHCR and ICRC are compromised by being inter-government organizations who must, ultimately, be polite with the government authorities. For example, they will not publicly shame the governments for the abuses that occur. Secondly, NGOs feel that both groups are unwilling to risk taking any more direct action. Because both organizations feel they must ensure their continued presence in country, to coordinate a range of efforts, they won’t take bold steps to achieve protection.

If factions or governments have already made up their mind to kill people, suggestions made by UN diplomats in

capital cities may do little good.

Some may argue that the most important protection that NGOs achieve for EPs is simply through the NGO's presence, in pursuit of more mundane programs. In the course of providing food deliveries, public health and education services, NGOs bring in expatriates who cannot or do not help physically but observe the local conditions, potentially preventing massacres.

### C. Shortfalls

NGOs have been prominent in bringing human rights abuses to international communication and news channels. But NGOs have been less effective at taking more practical actions in field locations — monitoring or negotiating security for EPs, or providing security with force.

One useful example has been the militarization of many refugee camps. In numerous camps of refugees and IDPs in the Horn of Africa, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Indochina, and Central America, the social structures, economics and population movements are controlled by refugee/IDP leaders who exert their own credible threats over the refugees with the threat or use of force (often with bandit or gang-like groups).

Because some refugee camps may exist for many years, armed factions in conflicts are able to draw on them for recruitment, allowing their military effort to survive or grow. Even where the warrior community lives apart from the women and children, they remain linked. The refugee community provides a pool for recruitment, it serves as a buffer population against attack, it serves as a political symbol of the failure of the opposing faction, and it legitimizes the warrior community. The Khmer Rouge army drove a large civilian population along with them when they retreated from Cambodia to the Thai border in 1979. Many among that Cambodian population became refugees because they were instructed to do so, and remained in exile for over a decade due to the strategic needs of the Khmer Rouge warrior faction.<sup>85</sup> The case is similar to the situation of Palestinians. Writing of the Palestinian refugees, Zolberg argues that they

“are not merely a passive group of dependent refugees but represent highly conscious refugee communities with a political leadership structure and armed sections engaged in warfare for a political objective, be it to recapture the homeland, change the regime, or secure a separate state. In recognition of their nature as being both dependent objects and actor-subjects in their own right, we have called them refugee-warrior communities. Their existence raises problems not merely of obtaining sufficient relief money, as the UNHCR notes, but also of posing profound ethical and policy dilemmas that the UNHCR, because of its dependent position, cannot confront.”<sup>86</sup>

The problem of warrior communities has not been solved by donors or the U.N. Armed refugees have not been disarmed in any recent crisis. Afghan refugees in Pakistan and Somali refugees in Kenya remained heavily armed, though there were no threats to them while in these countries of asylum. The Rwandan Hutu refugees, in contrast, have used their period of exile in Zaire to re-arm and retrain. In recent years, success stories of defusing warrior communities have come where political negotiations have included the leaders of each faction and peace accords have laid clear steps for demobilization and integration. Limited success has been seen in Mozambique, El Salvador, and South Africa. Even with peace agreements, however, demobilization and disarming may not happen, as seen Angola.

### D. Conclusion: Profiles of Protection NGOs

Five protection-oriented NGOs are profiled here as they're not profiled in Annex 1 of this manual. These are not specifically “emergency response NGOs”, but they are active in emergencies in a variety of ways.

<sup>85</sup> For a detailed account of the events that led to the Khmer Rouge setting up warrior camps in Thailand, see Shawcross W. *The Quality of Mercy* N.Y.: Simon and Schuster, 1984.

<sup>86</sup> Zolberg A, Suhrke A, Aguayo S. *Escape From Violence: Conflict and the Refugee Crisis in the Developing World*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1989. Pgs. 275-277.

**Profile: Human Rights Watch**

Human Rights Watch may be the largest and most published of all agencies that report on human rights problems. They not only cover every country in the world, they also have specialized programs that track issues like landmines, arms-trade, refugee asylum, torture, slavery, and the rule of law.

The Human Rights Watch network grew out of Helsinki Watch, which was established as a mechanism to promote human rights across the Iron Curtain.

**Profile: Amnesty International**

Because of its extensive networks of chapters around the world, particularly the United States and England, Amnesty International is the best known reporting agency. Like HRW, AI does not specialize in large-scale crises, but has traditionally focused on smaller sets of “prisoners of conscience” – persons jailed or tortured for their political views. As an extension of this work, AI has observed patterns and trends that tip them off to larger problems, growing refugee flows, etc.

**Profile: United States Committee for Refugees (USCR)**

The U.S. Committee for Refugees (USCR), based in Washington, DC, is best known for publishing an annual survey that tallies the numbers of refugees and internally displaced persons in each crisis around the world. USCR advocates for the right to asylum and testifies before Congress to encourage funding for refugee protection and assistance. They release special reports from time to time, in an effort to call attention to neglected crises. But USCR is best known for its annual, the *World Refugee Survey*, which is the single standard for data and analysis about the numbers of refugees and internally displaced and the political circumstances affecting their plight in the past year.

**Profile: Physicians for Human Rights**

The Physicians for Human Rights, based in Boston, is a small American NGO but with a large network of concerned members, largely but not exclusively doctors. Some members volunteer their time to travel on missions, typically to apply scientific methods of inquiry and documentation to document the problems in crisis zones, for example reporting on the numbers of un-armed civilians harmed in Palestine, Kosovo or Rwanda.

Along with ICRC and the Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation (another NGO), PHR catalyzed the international movement to ban landmines which resulted in the landmine-ban treaty, for which it won the Nobel Peace Prize.

Increasingly PHR has developed a capacity for forensics in war-zones, applying both archaeology (unearthing graves) and forensic detective work to human rights documentation. PHR teams, among others, documented the numbers of people executed, found in mass graves in Kosovo and in Srebrenica, Bosnia.<sup>87</sup>

**Profile: Cultural Survival**

Like its British counterpart, Survival International, the Cambridge-Massachusetts-based Cultural Survival strives to protect small minority groups. They focus particularly on tribes that speak unique and endangered languages, are not well integrated into modern economies, and are ignored or persecuted by the governments of the countries where they live. Most of Cultural Survival’s work is in the Andes, Amazon forest, Guatemala, West Africa and South Pacific islands. They raise money from the public to run small ongoing centers for local language and culture documentation and training. They are the operational extension of much of the academic research done by anthropology departments of universities. Cultural Survival is closely tied to Harvard University’s department of anthropology and museum of Anthropology.

It’s journal, the *Cultural Survival Quarterly*, appears on newsstands across the U.S. and deals with themes such as refugees, land-use rights, tourism and conflict.

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<sup>87</sup> The world was aware that 7,000 men were killed in Srebrenica shortly after the massacre, based on journalist research. PHR forensics research later provided more accurate data, that over 8,000 had been killed.



# **Section 3**

# **NGO Operations**

## **Chapters 14 – 16**

## Chapter 14 – NGO Logistics

### Chapter Summary

- NGOs use efficient, private and often ad hoc logistical systems during emergencies.
- NGO operations during emergencies often face major logistical obstacles, and logistical systems are often reflections of the fact that areas of operation are harsh, violent, resource-less and not conducive to smooth operations.
- Logistical systems are required for relief operations and emergency responses, and each NGO has a different way of managing its logistical requirements.
- Most NGOs farm out logistical tasks to the private sector or rely heavily on government or military support for major logistical tasks (air lifts, commodity procurement, etc).
- NGOs often act independently during emergency operations and sometimes waste energy or efforts by not coordinating with other entities that may have some asset or resource to share.
- Small NGOs that respond to emergencies are often the largest victims of not producing or preparing logistical systems or protocol. By extending themselves into an emergency, they often become overwhelmed by the requirements or responsibilities placed on them by the international community.
- Larger NGOs have, in the past few years, been extremely diligent in discussing and testing logistical systems that will span across agencies and organizations, and that will make emergency operations more efficient.
- The bottom line for NGO logistics: NGOs almost always need some form of logistical assistance during emergencies. People that must work with NGO logistical operations must keep in mind that while some NGOs do have major capacity, many do not. NGOs vary in logistical capacity, and for this reason cannot be typified or explained in a holistic manner.
- The Department of Defense and the UN are the largest logistical service providers in the world, outside of the combined capacity of the private sector. They assist NGOs in emergency settings often.

NGOs “do” logistics, but not always in the way that larger governmental, military or private companies handle logistics. NGOs are private, independent actors with limited capacity to keep major logistical capacities on-board when no emergency operations are required. While many larger NGOs are now hiring logistics professionals, technology specialists and operations support staff, many NGOs are still stuck with very little logistical know-how or capacity.

So what does this mean? What is “NGO logistics”, and how to NGOs get stuff done?

The definition of logistics for the purpose of this book is two-fold. First, “logistics” can be defined as the practices and activities that an organization will use to implement humanitarian assistance programming. More specifically, logistics are the activities that enable an organization to support field-based or remote activities during humanitarian emergencies. This can include procurement, shipping, communications, transportation, safety, material provision, storage and distribution. A second definition is more general: A descriptive word explaining the activities and processes of managing relief or development operations.

Logistical activities in emergency settings are critical to NGO and other agency missions. Because emergency-affected populations are often dependent on external food supply, emergency medicine, communications or other forms of resource support, logistics plays a primary role in facilitating the supply of relief material and services in short time-periods and in harsh conditions.

NGO logistics can be broken down into five main topical areas:

1. Pre-emergency logistical systems
2. Procurement and Storage
3. Shipping
4. Distribution
5. Management

While small and large NGOs have completely different ways of managing logistical processes and tasks, all NGOs face very similar requirements and conditions in the field. This means that no matter the scale of activity, NGO logistics must be coordinated to meet the needs of EPs urgently and efficiently while maintaining a fair amount of transparency to donors and other operating agencies. Because NGOs are not government or military entities they must participate on the private “market” in many cases, and are often limited by the types of conditions they must work with. Private shipping companies, for example, may be glad to take an NGO contract for shipping thousands of tons of relief supplies, but may deny service if it must go into dangerous emergency settings or into war zones and CHEs. This chapter discusses the five topical areas concerning NGO logistics while keeping in mind that NGO logistical practices are widely varied and sometimes sporadic.

### **A. Pre-Emergency Logistical Systems and Capacity**

Before emergencies hits, NGOs often have very minimal logistical infrastructure in place. Instead, many NGOs focus on maintaining the capability to expand logistical operations quickly and specifically after choosing to respond to a specific emergency. This is a general statement, though, and it should be noted that many NGOs specialize in various types of logistical services, and many NGOs manage in-house logistical systems that rival private or government sector systems in terms of efficiency and capacity. Unlike government agencies, the UN and other entities, NGOs do not normally stockpile logistical infrastructure or relief materials because the time, place and type of the next emergency is often unknown. For smaller NGOs, regional logistical capacities are often useless and expensive to maintain. So what do NGOs do to prepare logistical systems for the next emergencies? What types of “logistical infrastructure” is used?

Many NGOs have developed in-house logistical systems from years of experience of operating in humanitarian emergencies, war zones and disaster settings. . By compiling lessons learned from all the various emergencies the NGO has responded to, NGO staff members settle in to routines, patterns and practices without thinking specifically about defining them as “logistical processes”. For example, Relief International (RI) does not have a specific logistical handbook or series of procedures formally recorded or followed in each emergency to which it responds. It does have operating procedures and staff expertise in specific areas, and “logistical tasks” are carried out by able staff members that know what needs to be done during the initial phases of an emergency. When an emergency hits, RI staff members use contracts with shipping companies already established for the movement of material into the emergency-affected region, use travel agencies that specialize in hard-to-find overseas transport for sending staff members to the region, and call upon material or commodity donors that RI has worked with in the past for the actual material it will be sending.

Because RI is a relatively small operation, logistics are not necessarily operational feats nor major challenges at the HQ level. One of the most important logistical functions provided at HQ is the management of information and decision-making for program operations in the field. NGO HQs are often equipped with multiple telephone lines, fast internet connections, supporting literature and references for technical programming (water and sanitation, health, construction, etc). NGOs often focus on beefing up capacity for emergency operations. Some NGOs will have spare rooms attached to their main offices for use during emergencies as “war rooms” or over-flow space for increased levels of staffing or volunteers that may help out during an emergency. Relationships established with shipping, communications, travel and donors before an emergency are all essential tasks that make emergency logistics more efficient.

NGOs do prepare various types of equipment for emergency deployment. By having cases of communication equipment, short-term but critical relief supplies and other tools ready to go with emergency staff members, some of the logistical tasks for managing initial assessment or relief operations in an emergency can be made more simple. The contents of a tote case or emergency kit – and thus the beginning of logistical operations – often include:

Satellite phone (VSAT)	Medical manuals/CDROM compilations
Primary emergency medical kit (bandages, ointments, sanitizers, ORS packets, pain medication, etc)	Flashlights
Maps and language books	Weather kit (poncho, all-weather blanket, hat, sunscreen, etc)
Laptop with mini printer (for proposals, email), modem and potential external disk drives	Small set of tools
Compass and leveler	NGO stickers, t-shirts or other things with NGO insignia
NGO annual report, operation procedures, etc	Small office supplies
MREs or other food stuffs for staff	Cash
A GPS unit (seldom)	Maybe a hand-held technology device (Palm Pilot, IPAQ, etc)
Hand-held radios and/or HF radio units	VHF units for short-range communications

When NGO employees are dispatched to an emergency from the US, they'll have this minimal equipment ready to help them do their job once in-theater. NGOs also may consider training activities, contract establishment and technology systems part of their pre-emergency logistical system capacity or capacity building activities.

For an NGO that has operations in a region that may experience an emergency in the future, much of its material, equipment and operating procedures can be translated into emergency capacities and logistical tools. Trucks, radios, office space, local staff, relationships with local contractors or companies, road and transport knowledge and structures and communication systems (inter and intra-regional) can all be easily turned into emergency logistical tools, and can provide an NGO with a comparative advantage in responding to the needs of EPs. Without specifically planning for emergencies, those NGOs that are flexible can easily convert operations to emergency responses and can rely on solid logistical capacity to ease into relief activities.

Planning stages also are often included in the pre-emergency phases of an organization's logistical activities. Medium and large sized NGOs often attempt to create a series of policies or standard operating procedures for emergency response initiatives, making logistical systems for many potential scenarios. CARE and World Vision both have emergency response units that pride themselves on being able to command large logistical capacities for delivering humanitarian relief in very short periods of time. This may include shifting resources from a nearby region, delivering trucks or technical equipment within a few days or dispatching program and logistics teams to the affected region.

## B. Procurement and Storage

The procurement process during any emergency is often one of the most important variables that will lead to either success or failure of a relief operation. Procurement is the practice of getting important "stuff" into an emergency-affected region that is useful, timely and appropriate for the needs of the population in concern. NGOs are good at procuring almost all material needed for an effective humanitarian response, and for the purposes of this manual it is useful to highlight two types of procurement: *local* and *international*.

Most relief supplies and material in recent emergencies have been procured locally. This means that once an emergency hits and an NGO establishes operations and funding for programs on the ground in the emergency setting, many of the relief materials are purchased and obtained locally or regionally for market prices (sometimes

inflated). When a natural disaster hits, for example, most building supplies and materials can be found in nearby areas that have not been hit so severely by the cause of the emergency. Medical supplies, too, are often stockpiled by the effected country's Ministry of Health and can be tapped for use in extraordinary conditions. Trucks, as used by both the NGO community and the UN and government agencies, are often rented, leased or purchased locally, as are water trucks, generators, local communication equipment and sometimes even technology equipment. It is often surprising to NGO personnel and others how many resources can be found on local markets in an emergency-affected region.

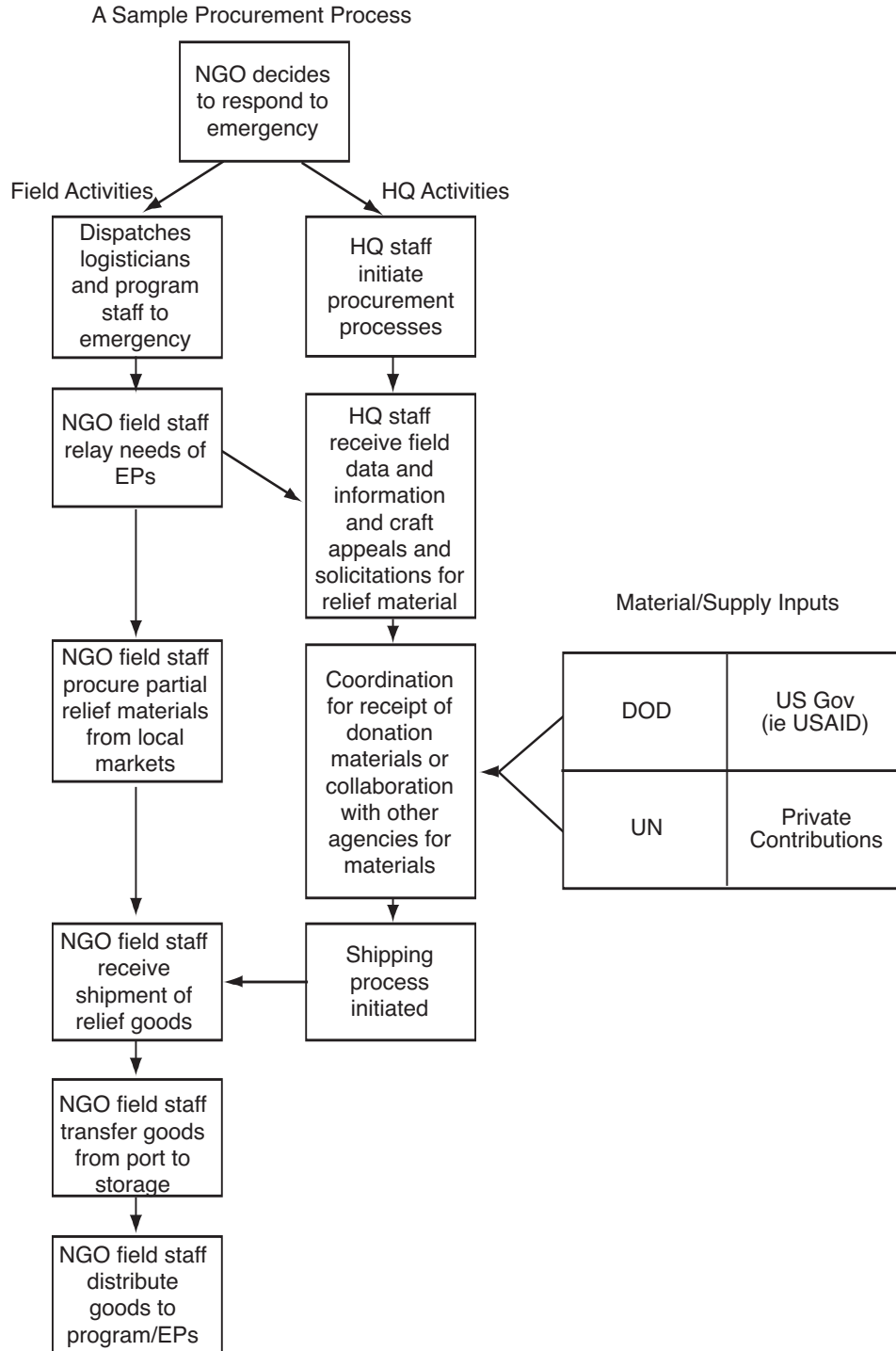
International procurement is also necessary in humanitarian emergencies. Some emergencies wipe out a country or region's food stocks, medical facilities, housing and housing materials and technical systems, and thus demand a response that will include the replacement and/or supplement of these goods. Technology equipment is often procured outside of an emergency-affected area, as is advanced medical equipment, large quantities of immunizations, special vehicles, land-mine removal equipment and food.

Food is a special case. When a country loses the ability to produce food for parts or all of its population, it often means political problems or economic failure prevent food from being produced efficiently or from getting to the right places. It does not always mean that there is a lack of food. Food aid, therefore, is often challenging to deliver because political, economic or social conditions that originally created a malnutrition or hunger problem may not be completely repaired. This means that external food sources must be tapped and that precautions and extra attention must be given to the logistical processes of delivering food, taking into consideration the safety of staff members, security of equipment and food stores, potential food and equipment loss, chaos and potential failure of mission.

International procurement happens in a variety of ways. For many NGOs, relationships are established prior to any specific emergency with local US or EU-based companies and organizations that will donate goods for a "good cause" or during an emergency. Pharmaceutical and medical supply companies, as covered earlier in the health chapter, are excellent examples of companies that seek to offload excess inventory or soon-to-expire material for a good cause. NGOs often only have to organize the shipment directly to the region of concern, bypassing any HQ-side storage requirements. Other NGOs keep stockpiles of relief supplies and materials on the HQ-side (in the US or EU, primarily) that are ready for deployment. This normally means that then NGO has an established relationship with a shipping forwarder or shipping consolidator in a nearby port or airport.

NGOs also have established relationships with the US and European governments and the UN. Government agencies like USAID, CIDA, ECHO and DFID manage food commodity systems that allow for the distribution, diversion or purchasing of large quantities of food for specific emergencies. Instead of stockpiling, these agencies now depend on a global capacity that is shared between different agencies and countries to call upon grain and other food reserves on short notice. NGOs coordinate closely with these agencies in many cases, and often assist these agencies with assessments and recommendations for the amount and types of material that is required. NGOs then pick up the ground-level programming within the emergency-affected region by accepting large shipments or coordinating the distribution to field storage or distribution points.

The following diagram shows a sample procurement process. When an NGO's management (at both field and HQ levels) decides that it is well-primed to respond to a new emergency, it either utilizes a team in the region already (often the case) or dispatches a new team altogether. In either case, there are two simultaneous tracks of operations. For the field staff, relaying information and setting ground-work for logistical systems are primary duties. For HQ staff, liaising and coordinating with large government, military and UN agencies are primary tasks to get large levels of commodities moving toward the emergency. Whether it be a private shipment or large-scale food shipment, the NGO will then receive the goods at a port and move the material into local storage facilities before distribution. At the same time, NGO field staff members do simultaneous procurement in-country, obtaining all those supplies, materials and tools that can be purchased on the private markets or from other agencies or organizations in the country or region.



NGOs and other relief agencies are now more than ever depending on contracts with the private sector that determine – before an emergency – the types of equipment and materials that may be needed during an emergency. Many of these contracts are with companies in Europe or the US and guarantee that the company will provide specific supplies and/or services within 48 hours of request. Building material companies, communications and technology companies, shipping and transport companies are all types of private sector firms that seek relief contracts and business with NGOs and government or UN agencies during emergencies. The private sector is ideally suited for much of this work because it can ramp up production in short periods of time, and in the short-term can divert resources for a profit motive away from other activities that may not be so profitable. For an NGO,

it is often difficult to divert attention away from other life-sensitive engagements when a new emergency erupts when required to manage procurement processes on its own. Surely it is cheaper to purchase supplies when needed than to store materials in locations that may or may not be useful.

The humanitarian industry has created a number of warehouses and stockpiles of relief materials and equipment. They are strategically located in parts of the US, Europe and parts of Africa and Central America to help buffer response times and material requirements. ReliefWeb/OCHA holds a central registry of this information but it is a bit difficult to fully gauge what materials are actually on hand totally.<sup>88</sup> The website lists information about locations and partial levels of material. Here is a partial list of organizations with emergency stockpiles and their locations.<sup>99</sup>

NGO, IO and UN Agencies with Storage Facilities	Location of Storage Facilities
Doctors Without Borders	San Jose, Costa Rica, and Bordeaux, France
International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies	Geneva, Switzerland
OXFAM UK	Oxford, United Kingdom
Swedish Red Cross Society	Stockholm, Sweden
Field Administration and Logistical Division of UN Department of Peace-Keeping Operations	New York, United States
Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs Geneva	Geneva, Switzerland
United Nations Children's Fund, Supply Division	Copenhagen, Denmark
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	Geneva Switzerland
World Health Organization	Geneva Switzerland

These organizations store all sorts of goods ranging from jerry cans to blankets and tents to hoses to cotton swabs. Again, most procurement occurs at local levels, and it is not until a very severe disaster hits or that a country is extremely poor that many of these relief supplies are actually needed.

### C. Shipping and Transportation

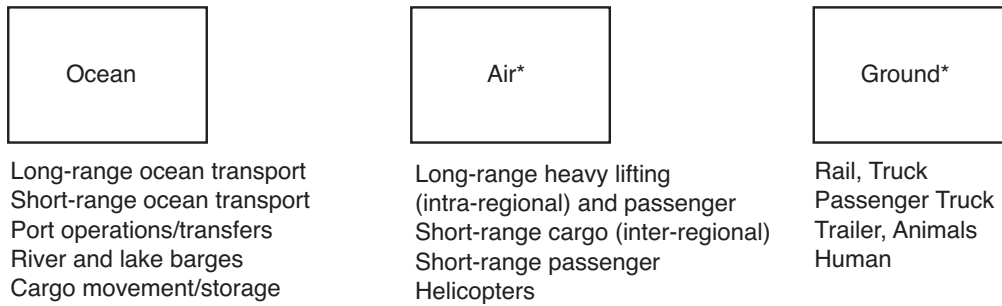
Although now understood that NGOs procure supplies and materials both locally and internationally and obviously that NGOs ship independently or in collaboration with other NGOs or large agencies, a specific focus on how NGOs ship goods and how they transport materials is warranted.

NGOs use a variety of shipping methods for moving goods from the point of origin to the point of distribution in an emergency setting.

<sup>88</sup> <http://www.reliefweb.int/cr/>

<sup>99</sup> The OCHA registry website states that the “[r]egister of Emergency Stockpiles of Disaster Relief Items (Register of Stockpiles) contains information on emergency stockpiles which are run by different humanitarian organizations and primarily oriented towards providing disaster relief items, by these organizations directly or on their behalf, free of charge to a disaster-stricken country.” Available at <http://www.reliefweb.int/cr/register.asp?MenuID=1&MenuEntryID=5&SearchTypeID=1>.

Categories of Transportation

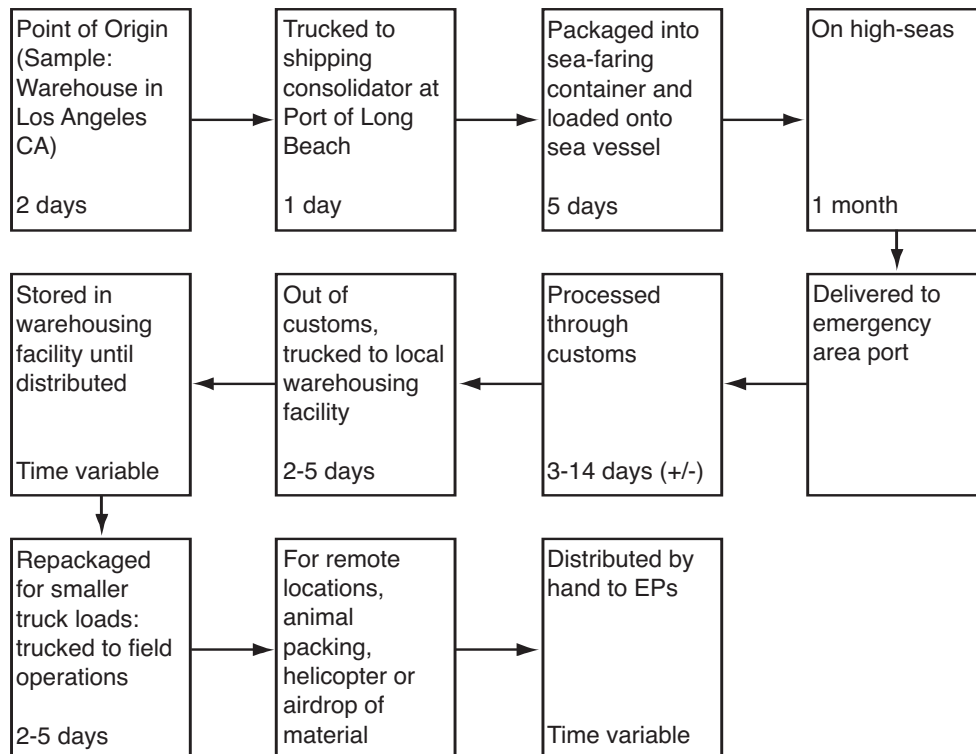


The “Air” and “Ground” transport boxes are starred because these are the most common methods of transportation that NGOs use in a hands-on fashion. Large ocean shipments are often coordinated by government or UN agencies and then offloaded into NGO management, but NGOs do not own large ocean-faring vessels.

Ocean-faring commodity shipments are the most inexpensive method of shipping major quantities of goods overseas. In emergency settings, air and ground shipments are often first employed to deliver first rounds of aid for immediate EP needs and/or for publicity. Shipping services are also hired, but depending on the origin of goods being shipped, trans-oceanic transport can often take weeks and even months to arrive in the closest port in the area of concern. For NGOs this means that a heavy reliance on local commodities, regional commodities and even some air transport is primary, while moving the second level of food aid or relief supplies/material by ship is secondary. This can be argued on technical terms, but theoretically it makes sense. For long-lasting emergencies (like CHEs), constant ocean shipments may be common as the international community may have had an opportunity to create a constant supply and delivery structure.

The range of the types of transportation used in any one supply chain can be numerous. Here, for example, is a sample 11-stage transportation process that an NGO based in Los Angeles, California might use to get a relief item or shipment from its local storage facility in Los Angeles to an emergency-affected area. All times, of course, are variable, and this diagram expresses a flow beginning after an item has been procured. An “item” could be medical supplies, a computer for NGO field staff or building materials. Ocean freight is particularly slow.

Sample Relief Item Transportation Flow





Once to a port of import in an emergency-affected region, NGOs depend largely on local staff to assist in packing, repackaging, sorting, stacking and loading the relief materials. It takes approximately 10 minutes to load a one-ton truck, 2-4 hours to load a 20 ton truck, and an ocean liner can often be offloaded in less than a day.

It is useful to know that NGOs do depend on private shipping companies and large government, UN or military agencies that have large logistical capacities for shipping relief and technical equipment to emergency settings. The US Department of Defense is by far the largest logistical service provider in many emergencies that it chooses to become involved with because of its incredible trans-continental airlift capacity, its unique short-range airlift capacity, and its ability to muster technical, communication and transportation systems almost immediately upon the onset of an emergency. It is often challenging to work with the DOD because it does not become involved in every emergency and is often restrained by other priorities or concerns (like force protection, mission-creep, etc).

For in-country operations, transportation is done with trucks, lighter aircraft, and even by animal or human packing. Most transportation is done with trucks. Trucks can carry large loads (up to 30 metric tons), can be leased and cared for on local markets in most regions around the world, and are versatile. Forklifts, special loading equipment and warehousing tools are not always available, but in replacement there is often an abundance of cheap local labor that an NGO can use to load and unload relief materials into and out of trucks, ships, warehouses and planes.

During the peak of an emergency, NGOs will often use any method of transportation possible for their staff members and for transporting relief materials and equipment to project sites or distribution points. NGOs often have to hire local taxi vans, small box vans and even cars at the onset of an emergency. The UN often provides vehicles for partner NGOs by bringing in bulk shipments of cars directly from the manufacturer or a vehicle broker (like Bukkehave), but these will normally come into the emergency setting a few weeks (at the soonest) after NGOs and other international emergency managers arrive in the region.

NGO logisticians will often hire fleets of trucks to carry food aid, and will often coordinate or share transportation costs or coordination with other NGOs that may be programming in the same areas or moving similar equipment. Large trailer trucks can range from \$100 per day to \$1000 per day, and depending on the local market, fuel costs can be extremely high or extremely low. Repairs, replacement and spare parts, too, are often priced at incredibly high rates after or during an emergency because of a perception that international staff may be able to pay more, or because shortages make the goods more valuable.

NGOs have shown a steady demand for collaboration in transportation sectors as transportation is often the most expensive and logistically challenging component of a relief operation. Keeping relief supplies or materials safe and stored properly, shipping them in a timely fashion and then assuring that the supplies or materials are distributed properly is a tough job, especially when faced with other obstacles like civil strife, ruined infrastructure, disease, a shortage of fuel or replacement parts and bad weather.



Transportation and shipments by air – both internationally and in-country – are significant topics precisely because air freight costs are often prohibitively high for most NGOs. While very few NGOs actually own their own aircraft, airplanes and Air-Services are used during emergencies.

Still, many NGOs operating in emergencies benefit from transportation and cargo movement by air while delivering services within and between regions affected by emergencies. UN-sponsored small and medium sized aircraft are normally present in emergency settings to shuttle relief personnel and experts through regions for assessments and for immediate medicine deliveries. Medical teams are often the first people that

enter disaster regions and are many times transported with time-sensitive or fragile medicines by small aircraft. NGOs like Air-Serv or Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF) will provide NGO, UN, government and Red Cross personnel daily to places inaccessible by road.

For those regions isolated from truck transports, aircraft are used by NGOs to deliver food and supplies, often with the help of military aircraft (helicopters or cargo-drops from cargo planes). A range of planes sized from small Cessnas to larger Buffalo cargo planes are utilized for their flexible take-off and landing abilities, but also for the range of cargo that they can carry. For smaller planes that can carry fewer people and a limited amount of emergency supplies, NGOs can turn to a few different sources. Air-Serv International is an NGO that specializes in providing air transport to NGOs or anyone else requiring an aircraft utility during humanitarian emergencies. The number of aircraft Air-Serv operates is completely dependent on the size of the demand in each specific region they operate. Fast leasing arrangements can supplement excess in demand for Air-Services when their original capacity is insufficient. Mission Aviation Fellowship is a US-based agency that owns over 70 small-sized aircraft worldwide. They specialize in providing Air-Services primarily to Christian missions and projects, but provide other secular NGOs Air-Services when needed, and when the need arises in their area of normal operation.

For large, heavy-lift transport, the NGO community is normally dependent on one of four sources for aircraft, expertise and funding. First, the United Nations provides large humanitarian cargo lifts when necessary with C-130s or IL-75s. The cost is covered by the participating UN agency, with normal backing from a donor government that has pledged funding for that specific activity. These are somewhat rare, as most food and material aid in large quantities are transported over ground. The UN also provides funding for air transport in occasion.

Second, NGOs can utilize donated aircraft and air-lift services that include cargo space among a shared transport, an entire airplane, or through contracts established by the NGO itself (often times with Air-Serv). NGOs are often “given” an aircraft for specific time duration and then are able to use it for general programming purposes. Air-Serv is constantly called upon to operate these donated aircraft, as most NGOs do not have a technical capacity to care or operate aircraft.

Third, military forces may offer services for airlift and Air-Services for personnel and supplies, but this is extremely rare as militaries are normally tasked with carrying out government policy. Military logistical and supply capacity is high, but normally excludes shared activities with private actors or entities. Exceptions can be seen in Albania, Kosovo and Macedonia (1999-2001) where NATO forces established close relations with NGOs and supported NGO activity as an activity of its own (more below on military air capacity and NGOs).

Fourth, NGOs can enlist private-sector services for either renting aircraft or for shipping humanitarian relief material. Normal cargo services often provide transport of medicines and pharmaceutical supplies, but at relatively high costs per pound or kilo. During large emergencies, commercial airliners often times donate cargo space and seats to NGOs to move material and personnel from their HQ country to the emergency-affected region. During the Balkan crisis Swiss Air provided numerous US and European-based NGOs with seats for personnel and cargo space on international flights for time-sensitive medicines and other humanitarian goods.

Of all the types and quantities of supplies that are harvested and delivered to needy populations during humanitarian emergencies, very little is transported through air. In fact, there is little trans-Atlantic or trans-continental cargo that originates outside of emergency-affected regions receiving international assistance. Exceptions often exist, but for the most part relief and development supplies are purchased, stored, transported and delivered within the same region.

Renting aircraft - normally arranged by brokers - can be extremely costly but is often times the only way in which an organization like Air-Serv can increase transport capacity immediately. Aircraft ranging from small Cessna or Beechcraft-type personnel carriers to large Allucian or C-130 type cargo carriers are all normally available worldwide in less than 24 hours. When an NGO or an air-transport specialist like Air-Serv needs aircraft, they can contact a series of “brokers” that specialize in maintaining worldwide contacts with private aircraft owners and companies that manage fleets of aircraft for rental or lease use. Large, Russian-made IL-76s can transport up to 40 tons each trip, and can cost up to \$10,000 per hour. American made C-130s can carry half that capacity and cost somewhat less.

Leasing, as indicated earlier, can range from \$1,500 per hour for small aircraft leasing, and up to \$40,000 per hour for larger-lift aircraft. To own an aircraft, though, requires technical capability, established supply and fuel lines, maintenance personnel and a place to house it. These are all factors normally outside of an NGO's budget and capacity.

### **NGO Highlight: Air-Serv International (<http://www.air-serv.org>)**

Air-Serv International is operational only in Africa but is providing services completely unique to the nonprofit, non-governmental community. Air-Serv, with 10 owned aircraft and 15 pilots, flies planes with various capacities in different regions. Air-Serv carries all forms of cargo ranging from humanitarian supplies (medicines, food, etc) to survey personnel, equipment, etc. Because it owns only 9 aircraft it is dependent on leasing agreements with other companies, organizations or agencies to increase its capacity during periods of high demand. During the Mozambique floods in 2000, Air-Serv was the primary personnel and cargo transport with over 25 planes under its operational management. Most of the planes were leased or were on loan from other relief organizations, companies or church agencies in the region.

Air-Serv is currently moving to Virginia from Southern California. Air-Serv is a branch-off from Mission Aviation Ministry.

Air-Serv staff members are primarily field based. Each pilot on average has over 7000 hours of flight experience, while the junior officers traditionally have over 1000. They hire no pilot with under 400 hours of flying experience. To date, no flights or personnel have been lost in operations.

When asked about levels of cargo moved per year, Al Graham, Chief Operations Officer suggested that they do not measure by weight. Instead, he says, they quantify their services by number of flights and number of flight hours. Often cargo is human or otherwise extremely valuable material for the well being of a specific population and cannot be expressed or appreciated in "tonnage" terms.

When asked about funding levels, Graham indicated that not only are they funded by governmental or UN agencies, but that they are often times party to cost-sharing agreements between NGOs or other agencies.

Air-Serv currently has a plane in West Africa that is not being used. Although it is a 1 million dollar aircraft, it is not being used because no donor is currently funding its operation. Because Air-Serv funding is often from the UN, specific governments have to pledge amounts to cover these specific costs. Air-Serv is a nonprofit organization that is licensed by the US FAA to serve as air transport for humans and cargo.

Air-Serv operates in most parts of Sub Saharan Africa, including the Horn of Africa and northern parts of West Africa. Air-Serv was founded in Florida in 1985 and has a relatively small operating budget. Most of its asset listings are valued in terms of aircraft owned.

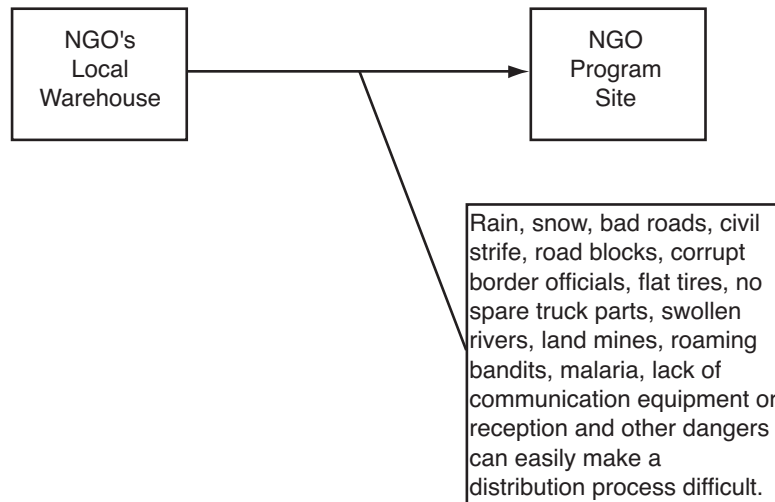
## **D. Distribution**

Once relief material or equipment makes it into an emergency-affected area, it is put in cue for "distribution."<sup>90</sup> Food is stored and then re-distributed with quick turn-around times to prevent spoilage and waste. Medical supplies that require cold-chain management (mainly immunizations) must be kept cold and must be distributed quickly to target EPs. Customs hold-ups or shipping delays often mean the expiration or spoilage of relief supplies, or could mean the difference between timely delivery and loss of life. The following diagram is a simple schematic of the point-to-point process that NGOs manage during an emergency when delivering relief supplies and materials to emergency-affected communities and it highlights a few of the challenges that make a seemingly simple transfer of goods from a warehouse or staging location to a distribution point surprisingly difficult.

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<sup>90</sup> The term "distribution" is often used generically to mean any form of program delivery. "Delivery" could include the provision of food aid, medical services, counseling, the delivery of building materials, technical water equipment or computers to EPs. "Distribution", then, really means "the delivery of humanitarian services" to EPs. It does not necessarily mean that one is actually delivering or distributing an actual object.

## NGO Field-Level Logistics: Not A Simple Process



With food aid, NGOs will normally distribute immediately to prevent spoilage or damage. By establishing feeding centers, distribution points and often by using local health structures or community leadership as close as possible to food storage locations or access roads or points, NGOs can distribute needed food and relief supplies to needy EPs more efficiently. For reconstruction or settlement activities, NGOs will often work and center their storage capacities in program areas and encourage local inhabitants to participate and be part of the decision-making process for site selections and types of materials used.

NGO logisticians are extremely involved in the distribution process. Depending on the type of distribution, though, logisticians may only provide transportation, security or other services related to moving and storing materials and supplies. NGO program staff members are normally on the front-lines of distribution – whether it be health materials, food, water or building supplies – and are often trained in a specific sector. Within smaller NGOs it is harder to differentiate between logisticians and program staff because they're often the same staff member. For larger NGOs, logisticians provide logistical support services to program staff and program staff actually “do” the programming or sectoral activities while serving EPs.

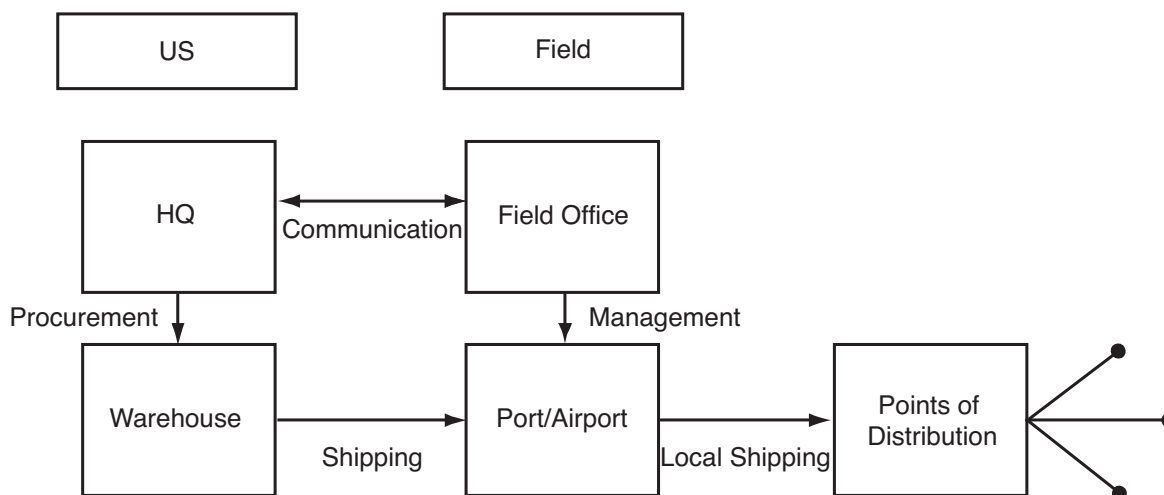
NGOs often request help from military and government agencies when delivering humanitarian assistance. Some conditions make outside help essential:

- Extremely dangerous, unstable or violent areas make military assistance a valuable asset for the NGO community. Convoy security, the quelling of civil strife or crowd control and the general defense of humanitarian personnel and assets from gangs, combatants, thieves or violent crowds cannot be done by NGOs alone.
- Extreme weather or terrain conditions may require the assistance of technical government or military agencies (US Army Corps of Engineers or the German aid agency “GTZ”). Damaged bridges, destroyed roads, impassable objects, snow, mud or sand make transportation difficult for NGOs, and the use of large, technical assistance make some of these obstacles passable.
- Most humanitarian assistance NGOs do not have landmine removal capacities and depend on militaries, UN agencies or private companies to make suspect areas safe from landmines and UXOs.
- Harsh and limiting political climates may prevent the delivery of humanitarian aid to specific populations (Sudan, Northern Iraq, Nigeria/Biafra) and international or government engagements may create space for humanitarian operations to exist. When NGOs find themselves in trouble in a specific country they often depend on consular or political services offered by US or EU embassies for intervention with the host government.

Other conditions that NGOs require assistance with surely can arise, but these are four areas (conflict/violence, weather, landmines and politics) that are often encountered. Military units in CHEs will often receive requests for assistance from NGOs in similar scenarios and should understand that NGOs will be unable to perform many of their essential humanitarian tasks without assistance.

## E. NGO Logistical Management

When an emergency hits and an NGO decides to respond, it must immediately do a few things. Before everything, the NGO must understand what type of emergency it has to deal with, what assets it has to mobilize immediately, what types of responses it is fitted to deploy, and who will fund it. Once these major questions are addressed and a response is deemed appropriate, an NGO is set to move into the initial stages of logistical planning. The diagram below displays the intimate relationship between an NGO's HQ and field offices, the procurement process and the distribution of the goods to EPs at the end of the line.



During procurement and storage activities and when NGO personnel land on the ground, a few tasks are essential. The NGO staff members must establish a working location or space that is safe and that offers shelter from a variety of external conditions.<sup>91</sup> This is needed to set up a laptop, a sleeping bag or bed and to prepare food and requirements vary. Next, the NGO staff members must establish a working relationship with local community members for translation, needs assessments, transportation, customs, cultural assistance and other areas that may be tricky to navigate in a foreign country. The next steps normally move directly into logistical tasks that will either prepare “the ground” for other incoming NGO staff members or that will enable immediate relief programming. These tasks may include dealing with the following:

- **Translators and Drivers.** Hiring translators and drivers for expat staff members and establishing a working network of local community members to expedite customs clearances, contracts and further programming needs. Translators and drivers, as mentioned in earlier chapters, are essential to NGOs in all operations because they serve as guides but also as community anchors, allowing an NGO to understand the moods and social structures of an emergency. Local staff members often become good friends and advisors to international staff members, and are often the key element of good NGO programming.

<sup>90</sup> In CHEs or during war, this is often the most difficult task for NGO staff members. In natural disasters and in extremely poor areas, NGO staff members are often hard pressed to find clean and sanitary living conditions.

- **Warehouses and Infrastructure.** If an NGO will be procuring and storing materials from local or international sources in an emergency-affected location (“local” location), logisticians will often immediately set up contracts with local property owners for warehouse space, office space and living quarters for incoming staff members. Warehousing is especially critical, as it needs to be secure, in-tact (preventing weather effects on inventory) and in a program-efficient place in the emergency-affected region. In dangerous regions or in the informal economy, written contracts are sought but are often violated by either party in some manner. NGOs traditionally have to follow a rigid reporting and purchasing process for spending money, while local property owners may have a different method of doing business. This often makes for a challenging mix of practices that result in misunderstanding or problems if a logistician does not act carefully.
- **Trucks, Fuel and Supplies.** As different from “drivers”, trucks may be required to move relief supplies, water, building materials and equipment to and from internal locations within the emergency-affected area, or from outside of the area. A truck can transport up to 30 metric tons, and are relatively cheap to maintain and fuel. Trucks are a vital tool, and 98% of the time trucks are leased, not purchased. Fleets of trucks can be organized quickly by NGO logisticians by offering cash payments to the drivers or owners. Fuel supplies are of constant concern for NGO logisticians, and in very remote areas, much attention may be afforded to truck and equipment fuel. Even though trucks are mostly leased, replacement parts are required. The local economy may not have the appropriate supply chain for needed replacement parts or even any inventory at all. NGO truck tires, in rough conditions, can often last between 10,000 and 15,000 miles, but then must be replaced. Larger NGOs can take this into account in incoming inventory supply requests, while smaller NGOs may have to operate at the mercy of the local economy and the parts that are available for fixing broken vehicles.
- **Importing Materials and Ports.** Logisticians will often make immediate efforts to solidify relationships with officials at ports, airports and border crossings within the emergency-affected area. Because many relief supplies often come from external sources, NGO staff members must know how to navigate the customs process, taxing and duties, regulations and the politics of importing goods. Whether it be through normal channels, through a military operation or on the black market, logisticians must be able to receive imported goods and equipment and then move it out of port and into field-based storage facilities.
- **Security.** The procurement and storage process is often tricky in emergency settings because social, political and economic structures often collapse. This means that high levels of crime, violence and corruption may be rampant. For NGO personnel, this means that extra care must be given to providing security for international and local staff members and for the assets and commodities the NGO is using for its programs. Local security is most often hired to monitor expat housing compounds, warehouses, car or truck lots and other equipment that may be exposed. Large levels of loss are often due to stealing and graft, so paperwork, inventory, redundancy and trust are all key components a logistician must take into consideration when hiring local staff members and when situating the components of a logistical system.

The list can continue. NGO logisticians are tasked with a large list of duties to perform, all of which are essential to the successful delivery of humanitarian assistance in a specific humanitarian emergency.

New advancements are being made in the logistical services front, and some NGOs are beginning to adopt new forms of technologies that make logistics more easily managed. The previously-mentioned Microsoft FACTS system, the aging SUMA system and a new series of services provided by PICnet, Inc.,<sup>92</sup> are focusing on providing technology solutions to many of the normal logistical challenges faced in humanitarian emergencies. PICnet, Inc. modules and the FACTS system focus on online portals that allow logisticians, managers and program officers to track inventory, register shipping movements and generally manage the flow of goods from various NGO locations to points of distribution.

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<sup>92</sup> PICnet, Inc. is a Washington, DC-based company that is providing technology services to NGOs.  
<http://www.picnet.net>.

The FACTS system focuses on providing tracking and inventory systems between the port of import and the point of distribution. While not yet widely used, it is a solid advancement in the way NGOs can account for vast quantities of food, agricultural products and equipment. FACTS is a type of replacement for a SUMA system, except that it focuses primarily on a single NGO's activities. SUMA is normally used as a campaign-wide inventory management system. A new SUMA version is being discussed and planned at the time of writing this chapter.

PICnet, Inc. is also producing software for NGO logistics management, but is focusing on bringing together personnel resources and system-wide logistical management tools. By using online applications that PICnet provides, an NGO can manage the location of personnel, shipments, what inventory is in what field or HQ location, and what capital assets are being used or need replacing. SUMA is free, and FACTS and PICnet, Inc. services require monthly hosting fees.

Outside of online software, many NGOs employ the use of COTS technologies to manage their logistics. Because communication is often the most essential factor of logistical operations, NGO staff members often use laptops, web-based email (Hotmail, Yahoo!) and cell or satphones to coordinate activities and report to HQ. Microsoft Access and Excel are used extensively by thousands of NGO employees worldwide to manage in and outflow of inventory, budgets, personnel and other operations in the field.

COTS technology is cheap and efficient for smaller and medium-sized NGOs. For larger NGOs, specialized software is often developed to manage specific in-house logistical tasks. More on NGO communications and technology will be covered in the next chapter.

## **F. NGO Logistical Priorities**

In the face of harsh conditions and less-than-perfect working conditions, NGOs must prioritize their activities. While discussed briefly in previous sections of this chapter, NGO priorities must quickly be established in any emergency setting. For a logistician or for an NGO's first responders to an emergency, the priorities could look something like this:

If first arriving into a new country:

First, get equipment out of the port or airport area and through customs. Exchange currencies, find a taxi into town and attempt to connect with other aid agencies, the UN information office or fellow NGO staffers.

Second, find a "fixer" or local employee that can drive and guide through urban, rural and emergency settings. Attempt to solidify semi-permanent housing and/or work space and security for all NGO staff members.

Third, find communication capabilities. If there are no phones, set up satellite or cellular phone service and establish contact with HQ or regional office. Use internet (via internet cafes, UN or other NGO offices already established or satphone connection) to communicate initial information (new address for NGO's operations, phone or satphone information, etc), findings and needs. Coordinate times and places of other staff member arrivals.

Fourth, establish relations with or help create NGO coordination body and register with local government's Ministry of Health or other appropriate government body. Work with other NGOs to gather and consolidate data and knowledge of security and/or humanitarian conditions.

Fifth, begin liaising with donors and appropriate agencies about perceived needs. Potentially implement an assessment or survey of specific parts of the emergency-affected area. Find AOR or area of specialty. Begin writing proposals and/or liaising with donors for specific needs of EPs, individual aid agencies and other NGOs. Establish communication lines with HQ offices about shipments and supply procurement.

Sixth, begin implementing relief programs, including primary health care and immunizations, food aid distribution and feeding center establishments.

This list is extremely variable, but illustrates the fact that many smaller tasks in the first few days of a response do not necessarily include providing relief immediately. Staff safety, communication, coordination and information gathering are all essential items for an NGO to solidify before operations can move smoothly ahead.

Many NGOs, of course, pride themselves on extremely rapid responses and immediate service provision. MSF, for example, often equips its staff members with survival equipment and enough medical supply material to begin services immediately. No hotels, no housing requirements, and potentially no other major coordination requirements.

### **G. Who are NGO Logisticians?**

NGO logisticians are a varied group, often coming from military careers. Many logisticians have been working in the humanitarian assistance field for most of their careers, and many have been trained in the government or private sector in shipping, trucking, communications or commodity management.

Many military personnel that have worked with NGOs in the field report that working with logisticians is easier than working with other NGO staff. Logisticians often speak the same language that military planners and managers do because so much of what military managers do is logistical in nature.

NGO logisticians also serve as security advisors. Because they're responsible for moving material and keeping it safe, logisticians also often have to make sure the right security procedures are being carried out by NGO staff members. By arranging contracts with local security companies or by arranging protection with military units, logisticians fill this large void that many smaller NGOs don't have the resources for. In Somalia, for example, logisticians play a vital role in liaising with security companies and military units, other NGOs and the UN when deploying convoys or coordinating storage facilities. Ex-military personnel are best fitted for this, but even general logisticians must take safety and security into consideration in all stages of planning and implementation.

### **H. Conclusion: NGOs Have Logistical Systems that Are Not Like Military or Governmental Systems**

Like any other agency or organizations in war zones, disaster areas or harsh climates, an NGO places major emphasis on logistical activities. Whether the NGO classifies its activities as "logistical" in nature is another matter. NGO logistics can be summarized with the following points:

- NGOs have extensive logistical capacities. They don't always classify their activities as "logistical" in nature, but at almost all times are managing some form of logistical processes.
- Medium and larger-sized NGOs hire logisticians. They are often retired military or government service experts and they are tasked with the responsibility of managing equipment, material, food, tools and often personnel during humanitarian emergency responses.
- NGO logisticians – in any given day – handle hundreds of tasks. Dealing with contracts, trucks, warehousing, communications, spare parts, staff safety and other conditions, they play a vital role for any NGO that can afford specialized staff members.
- NGO logistics are often managed with off-the-shelf technology, laptops, web-based email and paperwork. Much of a logisticians' job is communication, and normal communication equipment often suffices.
- Coordination with militaries, government and UN agencies are essential for NGOs because NGOs cannot manage a full spectrum of HAO logistics. NGOs do not have the capacity to maintain fleets of cargo vessels or even use large cargo planes on a regular basis. NGOs must coordinate their activities for protection, heavy lifting, access and safety.
- Military personnel often find it difficult to understand NGO logistics because each NGO employs different logistical management systems. Some NGOs don't have any protocol while some NGOs have extensive manuals and procedures for logistics. The NGO community has not yet developed standard logistics language or protocol, and only recently have discussions been had about how to merge capacities and technical languages between the ICRC, UN, NGOs and governments.



## Chapter 15

### NGOs, Communications and Technology

#### Chapter Summary

- NGOs utilize a vast array of technology and communications systems to manage emergency operations.
- NGOs often use “commercial off-the-shelf” (COTS)<sup>93</sup> products that any civilian can purchase at any time for a minimal amount of money.
- NGOs operate field programs using satellite and cell phones, and also manage intricate -Internet networks designed specifically for multiple-office organizations.
- Software packages that specifically assist NGOs in their work are just now being developed.
- While technology is a pertinent part of daily operations for most NGOs, no two NGOs have the same communications and technology systems.
- The word “system” may be too assuming. NGOs often use what they have while trying to communicate from emergency settings. “Systems” are often put on hold or pushed aside when field conditions make it impossible to follow one.

Communications are essential for NGOs during emergencies. Because NGOs are independent entities that operate in almost every type of condition and in all stages of an emergency, NGOs depend on various types of information, including

- Information about weather and geographical conditions
- Information on political, social and economic developments in a region
- Information on market prices for commodities, transportation and shipping
- Information about other NGO, IO and UN activity
- Information on military activity, plans and/or violence
- Information on population activity, numbers, movement and trends.

All of these information needs are critical and obviously hard to come by in austere environments. Many intelligence agencies would be lucky to have all this information readily available during an emergency! To obtain all of this information and to manage it effectively, the NGO community utilizes a broad array of information management techniques, technology and systems. No two NGOs utilize the same type of technology or communications infrastructure, and no two NGOs would find it simple to adopt the same type of information and communication technology. In any case, though, a closer look at NGO communications and technology is an essential part of understanding how NGOs operate in emergency settings.

#### A. NGO Communications: “ICTs” and the Private Sector

NGOs manage a variety of programs in emergency settings. Some are small, isolated responses to specific EP needs with a handful of staff and others are intensive, wide-ranging campaigns that include hundreds of trucks, airlifts, communication hubs and security. No matter the type of operation, NGOs need information and communication technology to manage their operations effectively.

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<sup>93</sup> Also often called “Off-the-Shelf” technology, or “OTS”.

Technology is not new for the NGO community. In the earliest international responses to humanitarian emergencies, NGOs have used the same types of equipment that local governments have used during emergencies, and have even been on the forefront of technology when unique or especially challenges have arisen. Within the NGO community, the term “information and communication technologies”, or “ICTs”, has caught on to describe equipment and systems that NGOs use to manage field operations. NGOs “use” technology to communicate, and “communication technologies” are those types of technologies that are used to communicate by an NGO, essentially meaning the same thing as “ICTs”.

NGO communications and technology systems are extremely variable. Smaller NGOs depend on COTS technology, email and internet access. In an emergency setting, dependency on local communication infrastructure, maybe a satphone or HF or VHF system and borrowed or loaned equipment or access from other agencies is required. For larger NGOs, specialized internet infrastructure, satphones, wireless networks and global phone use is common. For both small and large NGOs, ICT budgets are not unlimited, and because of this many NGOs small and large depend on the private sector to provide technology that is sturdy, dependable and affordable.

Private sector technology development (and the dot-com era) in recent years has meant that NGOs can utilize new and advanced forms of technology during emergency operations for minimal amounts of money. Microsoft Windows and Exchange, satellite phones, cellular phones, personal digital assistants (PDAs), radio sets, laptops, desktops, scanners, online storage and network applications, interactive and dynamic websites and specialized technology services offered by a number of companies provide NGOs with high functionality, replacement capabilities, and easy operations adaptation. Technology that is widely-used makes it easy for an NGO to have the latest technology without having to recreate or pay top dollar for specialized equipment. For high-frequency, very-high frequency, laptops, desktops, normal modems and other forms of communication equipment, replacement parts and services can often be found in an emergency-affected area. In Kosovo, for example, NGOs relied heavily on local computer shops and expertise to establish, manage and fix computers and computer networks for NGO offices. In Nairobi, Kenya, a hub for many NGO operations in Somalia, Sudan and the Great Lakes region, numerous NGOs rely on local ISPs, computer repair companies and many technology experts available on the labor market for the NGO’s technology needs.

During emergencies and emergency responses in poverty-stricken or major emergencies, NGOs bring with them most of the equipment needed to be self-sufficient. Depending on the level of the emergency and proximity to cities that have modern economies, NGOs may vary the amount of equipment they bring as some of it may be procured locally if the emergency is not all-encompassing (where major cities being destroyed, for example).

## **B. NGO Communication Themes**

NGOs need to communicate. As mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, NGOs are independent actors that are as strong as their communication infrastructure between field offices and HQs. If little or poor communication exists between HQ and field personnel, an NGO can be victim to costly mistakes, wasteful shipping and staffing decisions and untimely poor programmatic implementation. Because most NGOs will depend somewhat on HQ support for field activities, communication needs to be clear between program officers at HQ and field officers making requests or reports about conditions in the field. This is challenging when little communication capabilities are present, or when conditions are extremely harsh.

During an emergency, HQ personnel can assist field personnel with research, shipping and commodity management, financial management, travel arrangements, coordination with other NGOs and donor relations. Field offices normally tend to rely on HQ staff members for this type of activity, and are often dependent on HQ capacities to manage relations with donors and to manage finances that exist for specific emergency programs. HQ personnel depend on field staff members to send updated information, lists of needs and conditions so managers can make the appropriate resource allocations and decisions that will best assist the field staff, and ultimately the EPs.

Many NGOs will send out all field personnel with communication equipment, or require that field staff make immediate and constant contact with HQ or regional offices about their movement and about the humanitarian

conditions on the ground. This is challenging for many NGOs, and smaller NGOs often do not have the equipment or funds to maintain constant communications between field and HQ locations.

As well, NGO field staff members need to communicate with each other, with other NGOs, UN agencies, donors and military units. This is challenging too, and differences in communication systems, styles and equipment often make this one of the more challenging tasks during an emergency. When an NGO enters an emergency, it must understand what programs are already being implemented, what areas are being covered, and what needs still exist. For an NGO new to the emergency, this may be information that will mean the difference between a successful program or a redundant program. As well, NGOs need to communicate within the NGO community to assure that resources are shared, that experiences are relayed, and that changes in humanitarian conditions are reported immediately. NGOs must communicate with donors about the needs of EPs, about capacities and about progress, and NGOs often attempt to communicate with military units to coordinate safety zones, convoy protection or logistical support.

Two main points make understanding the chaotic nature of NGO communications more feasible:

- There are no communication standards within the NGO field
- Each NGO uses different information differently

The first is simple. NGOs are independent actors and are not required to use the same equipment or communication systems that other NGOs use. As well, NGOs often have variable capacities and must use those systems and equipment that it can afford. Different emergency conditions will also be a determinant in what types of communication needs will arise for an NGO.

The second point is not so simple. While every NGO demands information during an emergency, each NGO demands different information at different times and in different quantities. A food aid NGO will demand information about roads, port and airport operations, commodity prices, warehouse security and shipment information. A healthcare NGO, in the same emergency, may demand information on EP health, immunization programs, weather, local healthcare facilities, mortality rates and medical supply stockpiles. Two different NGOs may demand two different sets of data, and will use the data in different ways. To be less general, NGOs will often demand the same information when it comes to political, economic and social stability, transportation routes and conflict information, but very different types of data for programming and operational needs.

In recent attempts to address information management and coordination practices between humanitarian agencies, OCHA has hosted a symposium on “Best Practices Humanitarian Information Management and Exchange”<sup>94</sup> (2001-2002) and continues to support dialogue about the future of information management and coordination within the humanitarian community. While the debate has been vigorous, there seems to be little consensus on how to actually implement global standards and structures for communications and information management, especially because NGOs and UN agencies, the UN and other IOs have such different management structures and capabilities. NGOs are ground-level operators that rely on fast, low-level staff decision-making, while UN and other donor agencies depend on a hierarchical structure of management with information coming from below and making its way upwards for decision-making.

As well, recommendations that arose from a USIP-sponsored conference on Civil-Military cooperation in complex emergencies suggested that NGOs adopt specific equipment and communication standards to alleviate much of the inter-operability challenges that exist between NGOs, between the NGO community and military units and other entities in emergency settings. While extremely ideal, these ideas are somewhat far-flung and far from happening because NGOs thrive with the capability of using various types of equipment and by not being burdened by protocol and/or requirements during complex, changing emergencies. This is not to suggest that NGOs and other operators in emergencies would not benefit from standardization of equipment and communications platforms:

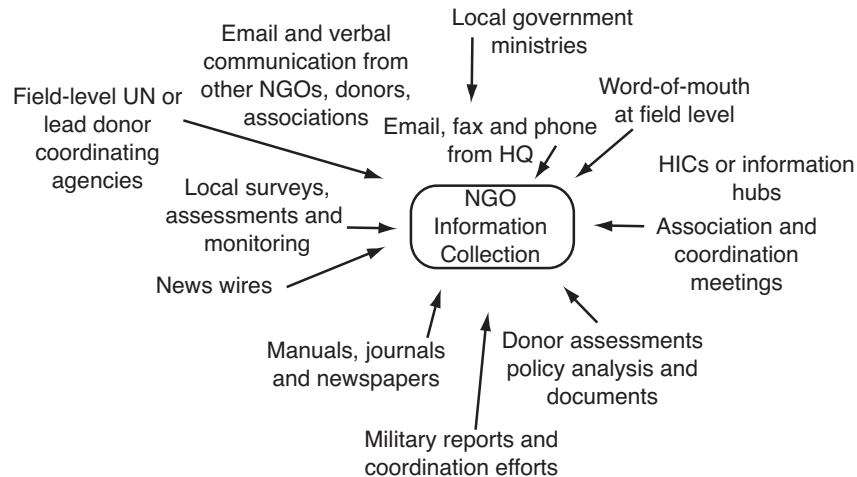
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<sup>94</sup> <http://www.reliefweb.int/symposium/>.

instead, it is suggested here that while NGOs are moving towards various forms of standardization in programmatic sectors, financial management and even forms of communication, it will be a while before NGOs completely move to a yet-to-be-determined system of standard emergency communications for the purpose of liaising with other agencies in the field.<sup>95</sup> This is coming, but not too soon in the future.<sup>96</sup>

### C. NGO Information Management

NGOs communicate to relay and receive information about constantly changing conditions, needs, operational challenges and warnings. Information is extremely pertinent in emergency operations, and when conditions are changing rapidly or when lives depend on information flow, efficient communication is critical. An NGO receives data from numerous sources, as shown in a simplified format in the below diagram:



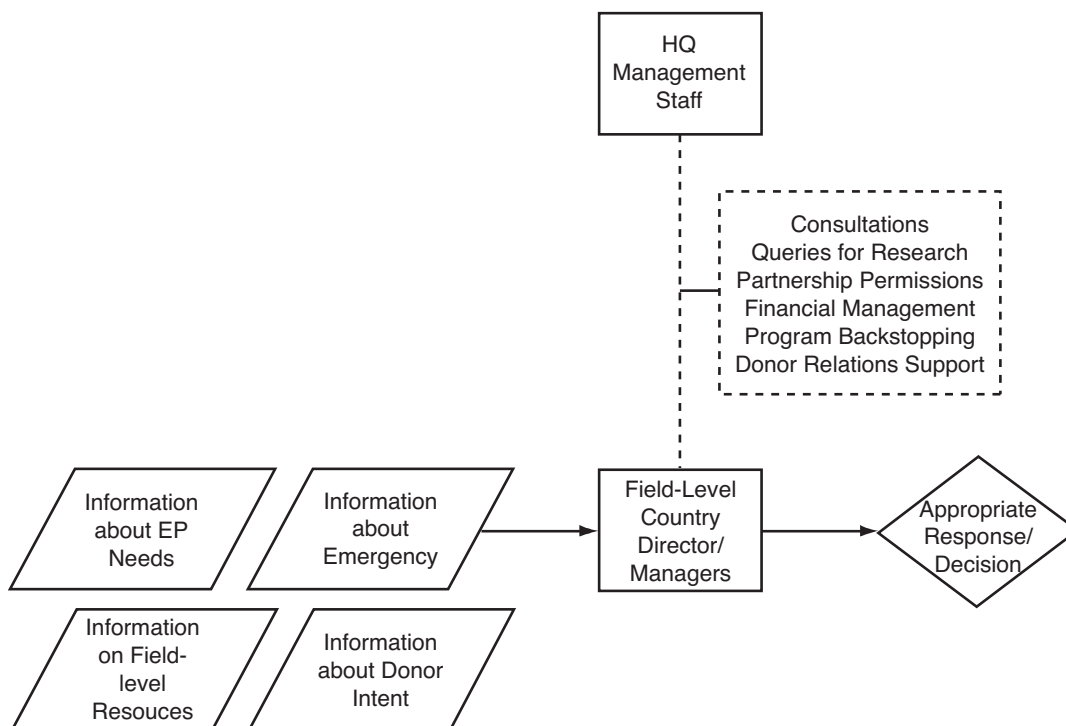
As shown above, the numbers of information inputs for a field-level NGO operation are somewhat large. Of the many types of information inputs that exist, field-level information is often the most important information an NGO can obtain, especially if humanitarian conditions are constantly changing. This information may be about population movements, epidemics, food aid movement, violence and battle between combating parties, displacement, weather and other things of value to people within an emergency setting. This information can come from other NGOs, from HICs and donor units in the field, from reporters or local government officials and from EPs themselves. Because NGOs don't normally have the ability to obtain all the data necessary independently, NGOs have an incentive to join into NGO associations precisely because it makes information flow easier between organizations and because it increases information levels for all involved.

<sup>95</sup> The USIP conference report entitled "Taking it to the Next Level: Civilian-Military Cooperation in Complex Emergencies" (August 2000) is a good and brief review of the conference proceedings that centered around understanding how civil-military relations can be improved in emergency settings. With many excellent suggestions, some of the presenters presented one-sided views without taking into consideration the operational aspect of making suggestions reality. Then again, though, this is what conferences are for. The conference report is available in the USIP website archives: <http://www.usip.org>.

<sup>96</sup> CDHAM, The Humanitarian Times, The Fritz Foundation, The Cuny Center, the Simon Fraiser University, PICnet, Inc., OCHA, Save the Children, Mercy Corps International and a few other organizations are working diligently at making advancements in emergency communications for military and civilian organizations during emergencies, but none are close to making anything "standard". It is suggested that NGOs will continue using forms of technology and communication systems that work until cooperative efforts create products or systems that can replace or complement normal, individual NGO processes. Until these products or services are powerful and efficient enough to replace currently-used systems, it will be difficult to get NGOs and IOs to begin using alternative or additional systems during emergencies.

Digesting and managing field information is often done quickly and by staff members on the ground. Information to and from HQ is also valuable as it is the lifeline of any organization that requires logistical, financial, programmatic and human resource support. Information obtained from donors, too, is critical, as it often signals where the money will be flowing and for what types of assistance projects it will be disbursed, what policies may be adopted for a specific humanitarian response, and how donor attitudes may be changing. Information from

Information is abundant in many humanitarian operations, but at issue is how valuable information is sorted from the invaluable information, and how valuable information is utilized efficiently. NGOs – like any other agency or organization operating in a humanitarian emergency – are challenged with the task of culling value from loads of information that may be only partially useful. To combat the “noise” of information that exist in humanitarian emergencies, NGOs attempt to manage organizational structures that can respond to the needs of EPs immediately. This is reflected in shallow organization structures that give high value to the decisions of field staff, and particularly a Country Director or other management-level staff person in the field. Experienced managers that are part of a solid NGO management team can make effective emergency-specific decisions for an NGO with little fuss or requirements to report to HQ managers. HQ managers often promote this type of decision-making. Field staff have the most recent news and information, are equipped with contextual knowledge and program-specific strategies and are best equipped to make fast decisions about where to move commodities, where to move staff, who to partner with, and what grants to go after. An NGO’s communication structure between the field and HQ may look something like this:



This is extremely simplified and it may not represent what every NGO would consider an ideal communication structure. It does emphasize, however, that field-level operators have access to fast-changing information and must be able to manage information appropriately and then act upon it within the scope and capacity of the organization. If a field-level NGO manager must report all information he or she receives back to HQ, it could take days, if not longer, to obtain a decisive response. Communication challenges or failures, lack of time and an overloaded HQ staff that work on numerous emergencies at one time could make overall NGO management grind to a halt.

For many military and government agency staff members, this may seem somewhat unruly. How can an organization manage field operations without constant and direct communication? How can an organization make appropriate decisions without constant back-and-forth communication? These are good questions but would

suggest that a) NGOs – and other emergency response agencies, for that matter – have constant communication capabilities; b) that field-level staff members are not equipped with the training or experience to make split-second emergency decisions; and c) that organizational structure is oriented to organizational maintenance or promotion and not oriented to the changing and dynamic needs of EPs. Each of these assumptions warrants a brief review.

To address an NGO's need for constant communication (point A), NGOs and other relief agencies do not always have direct communication to HQ or regional offices. This means that daily, field-level decisions must be allowed and trusted. Even satellite phones do not operate all of the time, and often communication costs are prohibitively high for many NGOs. As well, emergency management needs in the field may be so great that communication back and forth from HQ about every detail of the emergency means that NGO personnel are not actually participating in the emergency response. NGO field managers have to balance the information needs of managers at HQ and in other NGO regional offices with the types of information inputs available in the field. They must also balance field-level time and effort dedicated to reporting, consulting and requesting decisions from HQ during an emergency. Too much time or effort on making sure HQ is "plugged in" or in attempts to get HQ to make a decision on something could mean the loss of valuable time and resources in the field.

To address field-level management (point B), NGO field-level management is good and getting better. As indicated in chapter four, NGO staff members come from all professions, expertise levels and backgrounds, and include a solid class of senior-level emergency managers with over 20 years of experience in this line of work. When an NGO dispatches staff members to an emergency, experienced professionals lead the response teams and have established relationships with donors, other NGO staff members, government officials and other experts in the field or region. They are most often capable of making fast decisions and can manage complex operations during emergencies. This is not to say that NGO staff members are all like this, or that there is no need to report or liaise with HQ staff members, but it is suggested that NGOs now, more than ever, have a professional class of managers that make effective decisions in the field during critical periods of an emergency response operation.

Lastly, to address organizational structure (point C), NGOs have created management structures that are oriented to responding to dynamic, changing humanitarian emergency settings. By maintaining loose management structures that place emphases on field-based emergencies, NGOs can react to the changing nature of humanitarian emergencies and to the variable needs of EPs. Every emergency is different, and an emergency in East Africa will require a different response to an emergency in Albania or parts of Asia. By hosting loose management structures, new management structures are not required when a completely different series of challenges arise in a new region, country, emergency or sector. Management methods can adapt without disrupting the system, and can maintain focus on serving the needs of EPs.

NGOs rely heavily on email, internet, fax and phone services in almost every emergency. At the HQ level, NGOs normally post "desk officers" or program staff on specific emergencies to serve as the point of contact for field staff members. All communication coming from the field is often sorted through this one desk officer and is then farmed out to the appropriate HQ staff or other NGO staff members. At the field level, program officers normally take the lead in specific sectors, often either reporting to the field-based management team (or person) or directly to the HQ desk officer. Email is by far the most popular method of communication between HQ and field offices or operations after voice communication, and is quickly becoming a standard tool in even the most dire of emergencies. Email capabilities through satphones are making data exchange extremely feasible where satphones are used.

NGOs also rely on radio services in both high frequency (HF) and very high frequency (VHF) varieties. Radios are often the most efficient method of communicating on the ground with other relief agencies. Cheap and easy to set up, radio networks enable staff members to stay in touch, monitor security conditions and receive humanitarian updates often provided by a coordinating UN or government agency. HF and VHF will be discussed further below.

**NGOs manage communications to best support emergency response activities.** This includes maintaining strong field-based communication structures when possible, efficient links between HQ and field management, responsive management structures and personnel that are capable of making informed, responsible decisions at both field and HQ levels.

So it is now clear that NGOs manage communication and information in a unique way, placing emphasis on ground-level decision-making and fast response-times. How do these management structures merge with other types of management structures? How do NGOs communicate with other agencies in the same emergency?

#### D. How NGOs Communicate with Others

NGOs spend a considerable amount of time coordinating program activity within the organization. Depending on staff levels, program size, emergency severity and sectors, NGOs may have an organizational challenge to keep things running smoothly. NGOs also spend a considerable amount of time managing relationships with others. Chapter six identifies much of how organizations coordinate with others. Here, though, is an opportunity to understand how NGOs communicate with others. It is not difficult.

NGOs interface with numerous organizations during HAOs and are getting better at participating in coordination activities. Here are some examples of how NGOs may coordinate with various types of organizations found in HAOs:

Type of Organization	NGO Method of Communication	Comments
Military Units	NGOs will communicate face-to-face with militaries through CMOC officers or representatives and officer level coordination during specific joint responses or collaboration. As well, NGOs often designate a specific person or organization to represent NGO interests to the military. Phones are often used while email, fax and other data communication methods are not.	NGOs use non-secure communication equipment in the field (often COTS), and find it difficult to get military units to share information digitally or outside of secure communication lines.
Other NGOs	NGOs communicate with other NGOs face-to-face, by email, fax, mail, phone and in coordination associations. During emergencies, NGOs will create coordination bodies to share information on a normal basis. Not all NGOs participate in coordination bodies, and many NGOs prefer to work independently of any other NGO. Still, NGOs bind together to increase information levels and to gain from collective strengths.	NGOs do protect information and are concerned with “proprietary” or unique programmatic information but find more benefits to coordination and communication with other NGOs than detriment.
Donor Agencies	NGOs coordinate with donor agency officers or representatives on a face-to-face basis during emergencies if the donor agency has someone on the ground. These personnel are often in a central location with UN operation centers or offices. Phone, fax and email are also popular when available.	Many donor agencies will send representatives to do assessments and surveys, or to check in on program progress, and then remove their staff members from the emergency setting. In this case, communication is done mainly by email, fax and phone.
Local Governments	NGOs often communicate directly with local government representatives from various ministries. Depending on the sector or program area that an NGO is operating in, an NGO may liaise with specific government departments or ministries more than others. Normally a local government will coordinate closely with NGO associations and HIC units.	
EPs	NGOs communicate with EPs directly in face-to-face encounters and constant consultation.	Many NGOs dedicate much of their management structure and programmatic efforts to understanding the needs of EPs.

There are other entities that NGOs coordinate with, but these are the main entities present during an emergency. Other coordination with private and individual donors in HQ's country, private companies, diplomats and embassies (not donor agencies specifically), armed groups, rebel movements, citizen groups, civil society organizations (CSOs) and others often take up a large part of an NGO's coordination and communication activities.

A discussion of what equipment NGOs use to communicate and where information is obtained will assist in further understanding NGO communication style and capabilities.

## E. Types of Technologies NGOs Use

When NGOs respond to an emergency, many types of technologies are used to communicate and to manage information. While no two NGOs use the exact same type of information management structure, many NGOs use the same types of equipment to keep in touch with other agencies on the ground, with HQ, and within the NGO's staff ranks.

**Computers/Laptops.** A laptop is by far one of the more common tools among NGO staff members and NGO offices in an emergency-affected area. Often called "laptop warriors", NGO and UN staff members can carry significant amounts of data and processing power in brief-case sized bags. This makes it easy for an NGO staff person to carry a laptop into "the field" to record assessment data, findings, survey analysis, and then to write reports and/or analysis about humanitarian conditions. Laptops can easily be connected to the internet or to data lines with modems or network cards that can send email and documents to any location around the world. This makes an NGO staff member a vital part of a global operation, and allows different program managers to exchange information, updates and plans easily.

While not completely universal, many NGOs make regular use of Microsoft Office programs, including Microsoft Excel, Word, Outlook and Access to manage data, word processing and schedules. These seem to be the favorite of many NGOs and are by far the most widely used around the world in the private sector. All of these programs are often standard on laptops that NGOs use, and are easily used.

Laptops are relatively inexpensive, easy to procure, and are adaptable to a number of uses and conditions. They can also often be fixed or purchased on local markets. There are generally no problems entering a country with a laptop and other generic computer equipment, and NGO personnel normally do not have difficult times transporting this type of equipment within or out of an emergency-affected country or region.

**Satellite phones.** Small satellite phones are now extremely common among the NGO community. NGOs use satphones to communicate while in emergency settings, while in austere environments and when there is no other available means of local or international communication. If an NGO employee has a satellite phone, he or she can establish a voice, data or even video connection to almost any similar connection on earth. Generally, only extremely harsh weather, service failure or limited line-of-site can restrict the reception of a satellite phone. Per-minute charges are somewhat high, ranging from \$3 per minute to \$6 per minute, depending on the type of data being transmitted (voice vs data, specifically).

Satellite phones are now extremely efficient and light-weight. The Nera M-4 World Communicator is about 9 pounds with an antenna that is 13 inches by 30 inches, approximately. NGOs now use the Nera Mini-M or other similar mobile satellite stations that are much smaller and that weigh about 6 pounds.<sup>97</sup> An NGO can purchase a satphone and subscribe to airtime services for less than \$6000 in most places. Because they can be used as phones and as data-forwarding devices, NGOs use satphones for both voice communications and internet use. NGO employees will often write emails while the satphone is offline and then will send the email in bunches while connected for short periods of time. Satphones are extremely valuable, light, somewhat reasonably priced (considering that there are few other worldwide alternatives), and are somewhat easy to operate.

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<sup>97</sup> Information on NERA SatCom can be obtained at <http://www.nera.no>.



Satellite phones, unlike laptops or other generic computer equipment, must normally be registered upon entering a new country. Many countries make it illegal to import (either with a person or in cargo) technical equipment like this, and will confiscate satphones from NGO staff members at the airport or port if they are found. Still, NGO use of satphones is increasing, and their value to communications systems in the field are extremely high.

**The Internet and Email.** By connecting to the internet through satphones, local telephone lines and ISPs or through internet cafes or shared UN or specialized service connections,<sup>100</sup> NGOs can manage email, document exchange, data storage and even live communications during an emergency. In many emergency settings (some famines, rural floods or fire), urban area infrastructure is somewhat unaffected and local internet cafes offer NGO personnel plenty of access to web-based email and information management applications. Hotmail, Yahoo! and other free email providers are popular services used by NGO employees when other, more established systems don't exist.

If a city does not have an Internet Service Provider (ISP) to offer internet connections over local phone lines, NGOs must either use internet cafes (if they exist), satellite connections or long-distance connections to out-of-region ISPs that may provide service. In Kosovo, NGOs were using satphone data connections and were dialing to Macedonia for internet access much of the time until local ISPs cropped up within Kosovo. For most of Burundi's history until 2001, only one ISP existed within Burundi, and service was often down.

Email is by far the most popular form of communication for NGOs between HQ and field offices. It is extremely cheap, can include documents, graphics, data and simple text, and can be done while internet connections are not "live". Email can be stored on disks or on hard drives and then sent when a connection to the internet has been made. As well, massive amounts of email can be sent before it is debilitating on technology systems.

Currently, internet-based NGO management systems are in the works in a variety of forms. Microsoft and ASPirations, a small nonprofit dedicated to providing technology advancements for other nonprofits, have created and are now testing the FACTS system that allows NGO field and HQ staff to track and manage relief supplies and materials. Other programs are being used as well. Many NGOs create their own intranet that allows for staff members to track email, pay, job descriptions, pertinent intra-office or organizational communications and other information. Of the NGOs studied for this survey, only a handful of the largest NGOs are using intranets that are truly functional for field-based employees.

Some of the largest advancements in NGO technology will be made on the internet because it is becoming increasingly more simple to connect to the internet from remote locations, and because with new dynamic database programs, numerous office locations can utilize live data simultaneously, removing lag-time, redundant communications and mystery during emergencies.

**HF and VHF Radio.** High-frequency (HF) and Very-high Frequency (VHF) radio systems are used intensively by the NGO community during emergencies. HF radio systems are used for regional and local communication, often connecting a base-camp with refugee camp operations, a regional field office and trucks or satellite locations. Codan, PACTOR, SIRO and AMTOR are used frequently, with Codan now the more popular of services.

For shorter range communications, VHF radio systems are used. With line-of-site ranges of up to approximately 10-15 miles, NGO employees can carry small "walkie-talkies" that are battery operated and operational within a large radius of the base system. For extended distances in austere or remote locations, NGOs can extend radio reception with repeaters and relays that forward or strengthen signals. These are extremely useful during or following natural disasters when existing communication infrastructure has been destroyed, and for regional communications.

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<sup>100</sup> Telecom Sans Frontieres and VITA are organizations that provide technical services, packeted internet access and remote-location connection to internet and email services.

HF and VHF lines are not secure, and local governments often provide a portion of bandwidth for what is often called “amateur” radio or for emergency radio services. NGOs cannot normally communicate with military radio systems, and the UN will often use and administer both the HF and VHF systems during an emergency. Often the UN will set up service stations and then monitor and regulate which NGOs can use which frequency channels, and in what quantities. Depending on the type of emergency response efforts, the UN may limit radio frequency use at nighttime to allow for emergency-only communication to have priority.

If the UN or other coordinating body is managing the radio system for the humanitarian community (often the case), the UN and NGO community may use the radio to communicate new dangers, developments, meeting times and other announcements along with the daily use of inter-NGO communications. Normally at least one channel is set aside for general announcement and monitoring purposes.

Radio services are extremely efficient and operational. With very few conditions that they do not work well in, radio communications are often one of the first priorities in setting up communications infrastructure during an emergency. Whether an NGO does it alone or if the UN or other coordinating body takes the lead in establishing a radio network, it is crucial for regional, emergency-setting communications.

**Fax, Phones and Cell Phones.** NGOs also use normal telephone lines and fax machines to communicate locally and internationally. In many disasters or CHEs, local phone lines may be bad but not totally out. Local phone lines may be able to support faxes, and satphones can be used for fax and phone calls. Cell phones are now increasingly popular when available, and are sometimes a cheap and efficient alternative to satphones or bad local telephone infrastructure. Cell phones can often be procured within an emergency setting, or in cities nearby that NGOs pass through or use as a procurement and travel hub. Cell phones are often cheaper per minute, less difficult to get, and often have a significant range that covers areas affected by disasters. Cell phones procured normally often are not efficient for calling overseas or long distances. For intra-regional communication, cell phones are a good option if service is reliable and per-minute costs are below satphone costs.

**Power Supplies.** After a natural disaster or during a CHE, NGOs are often faced with a lack of electricity or power sources to keep technical equipment running (and to keep lights on or heaters working). Computer equipment, radio and satphone terminals can operate on battery power for some time but will require recharging services almost immediately. For temporary power needs that may exist on a survey outing or assessment field expedition, NGO staff members may be able to tap the battery power of the truck or land rover they’re using. With 12 volts of power in many trucks, this is enough to keep a computer, satphone or radio system working for hours at a time. With the engine running or turned on in intervals, the vehicle’s battery can stay charged and able to power other devices.

For more permanent operations in areas with no electricity, NGOs need to use generator sets. NGOs often attempt to procure power generators sets that run on diesel, and set them up in close proximity (not too close because of noise and fumes) to their field office or facility. Portable generator sets can produce up to 3000 watts, and anything above this is too large to be considered “mobile”. Having more than one generator is a good idea for many NGOs as one is bound to break. NGOs can normally keep generators running as long as there are stable fuel supplies. Diesel can be found in more places within the developing world, while gas-powered generators are lighter and cleaner.

Power supplies are extremely critical for relief workers and NGO operations. Without power, communications don’t work. So, while not deemed extremely sexy or technologically advanced, generators here are considered a main part of an NGO’s technology arsenal for establishing and maintaining communications during an emergency.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> For extremely detailed overviews of power supplies and almost all other things “disaster communications” related, see Mark Wood’s *Disaster Communications* (First Edition), published by the Disaster Relief Communications

**Handheld Devices.** Humanitarian workers are just now adopting the use of handheld, personal digital accessories (PDAs) for data collection, storage and communication needs. Very few NGOs have started to use PDAs, but the trend is emerging. PDAs are cheap, small and totally mobile, and now come with most features a laptop or desktop offer. With word processing, Excel, email software and database management abilities, these small devices offer a good amount of functionality for relief workers in the field. The Center for Disaster and Humanitarian Assistance Medicine (CDHAM) is leading the way with field tests and publications focused on the use of COTS in austere environments. The technology specialists have developed protocol and operational capacity to deploy voice, data and video communications with hand-held devices, a satphone and some special modifications. NGOs will soon be using some of these tools.<sup>100</sup>

Not all types of technology used by NGOs are listed here. The list could cover many pages. But computers, satphones, the internet, email, HF and VHF radios, local phones, faxes and cell phones make up a list of tools that NGOs normally use in every emergency. Depending on the type and severity of the emergency, various communications equipment will be deployed. For smaller NGOs, some communications equipment is prohibitively high, while for larger NGOs, the newest and most advanced equipment can be procured and used. Still, with advancements in global cellular service, satellite coverage and the internet, NGOs rely greatly on old, tested radio systems that seem to be the most efficient way of communicating within an emergency setting.

## F. NGOs and Communication Vendors

In most cases, NGOs obtain their communications equipment and capacities from private vendors or organizations dedicated to offering communication services. Here is a brief list of vendors that serve the NGO and humanitarian community specifically:

**Inmarsat.** A limited company based in London, Inmarsat was the first and is now one of the largest providers of mobile satellite communications. <http://www.inmarsat.com/>

**ICO Global Communications.** A company founded in 1995, ICO “is planning to offer a family of satellite wireless services, including wireless Internet and other packet-data services.” <http://www.ico.com>.

**Thuraya.** Thuraya “offers cost-effective satellite-based mobile telephone services to nearly one third of the globe.” <http://www.thuraya.com>.

**Volunteers in Technical Assistance (VITA).** VITA is a US-based non-profit organization dedicated to providing low-earth-orbit satellite packeting services for development and relief NGOs. <http://www.vita.org>.

**Schuemperlin Engineering AG.** A German firm that manages Inmarsat accounts and offers global communication services to a range of clients. Has created Wave Mail that allows NGOs to send mail in packeted form on radio waves and low or slow bandwidth systems. <http://www.schuemperlin.com/pages/products.htm>.

**Globalstar.** Globalstar is one of the more commercial companies that offer satphone and global cell phone services. <http://www.globalstar.com/>.

There are handfuls of vendors that provide global communication services and these are just a sample of those that are often used by NGOs for satphone accounts and global communication capacities.

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<sup>100</sup> CDHAM has published a training manual entitled “Austere Deployable Telemedicine Course”, available at <http://www.cdham.org>. It is specifically focused on providing information on how technology can be used for telemedicine. The manual, though, also outlines how the same equipment can be utilized for normal field communications (and not necessarily telemedicine). Randy Spears and Brandt Marshall suggest that all technology systems for remote field-based communications should be highly deployable, lightweight, low-cost and efficient for any humanitarian operators in the field.

## G. NGOs and Information Security

NGOs do not have the capacity to keep communications absolutely confidential or secure. While military communications systems are designed to keep information secret, NGO communication systems are meant to simply work well. Very little attention is given to “securing” data and information sent over digital or analog lines. While NGOs do value the protection of data, of ideas, of proposal leads or contacts, no major technology systems are employed to keep information scrambled or secure. Passwords on computers, internet email accounts, log-in prompts for websites and email accounts and the like are more common than any other form of information security.

## H. Conclusion: NGO Strengths and Weaknesses in Emergency Communications

NGOs have a series of strengths and weaknesses associated with their systems and capacities for communications. Here is a brief and partial review:

### Strengths

- NGOs have loose management structures that are reflected in many communication systems: this means that NGOs can quickly establish local/regional communication infrastructure efficiently, and can begin coordinating activities with other NGOs, relief agencies, donors and local governments.
- NGOs can use “Off-the-Shelf” technology for most communication needs. ]
- NGOs use ground-up management and communication structures that allow for fast and responsive decision-making during dynamic and changing emergency settings.
- NGOs are nimble, fast and efficient at responding to emergencies and depend on very little communications infrastructure. Large command trailers, stationary satellite structures or other more permanent structures are not required for most NGO communications. The less equipment an NGO needs to be operational, the fast it can be at responding to the needs of EPs.
- When using COTS technology, NGOs benefit from advancements made in the private sector, low prices and replaceable products.
- NGOs are moving into more technologically advanced systems, including dynamic web-based infrastructure made for managing logistics and wireless communications, handheld devices and new satellite and global cell phones (GSM).

### Weaknesses

- NGOs do not have large communication budgets, as most funding is provided for programmatic expenditures and allocation. Communication – while normally seen as essential for any emergency response program – is often seen as overhead or operational costs.
- NGOs are dependent on private sector developments, market rates and technology advancements. While also listed as a strength, NGOs often do not have custom equipment that would be better fitted for their needs in an emergency because the technology market has not produced such a thing. While examples are limited, NGOs are just now beginning to take advantage of lower-priced web portals and operations management software that is more reasonably priced.
- NGOs don’t always have the capacity to set up local or global connections. In many cases, smaller NGOs are often stuck “in the dark” when power goes out, when phone lines are down, satellite phones don’t work and local radio systems are inoperable or non-existent. Without major and redundant communication systems like government or military units, NGOs are often challenged with changing conditions and non-working equipment. This is not always the case, obviously, but it can render an operation “silent’ or without essential communication.

- NGOs are ultimately dependent on other organizations – NGOs or not – for assistance with communications. NGOs normally cannot host their own internet service provision (ISP services), cannot host web servers in-country, and sometimes cannot even manage their own area-wide radio networks. Assistance from the UN, militaries and other IOs are essential, and this makes NGOs somewhat reliant on assistance in this area.

NGOs are progressing on the communications and technology front, and as they do, service quality will increase. More communication and effective management of information, one would think, means that EPs receive faster and more thorough services.

## Chapter 16

### NGOs and the Military

#### Chapter Summary

- NGOs and military must work together in humanitarian emergencies if they want to maximize their utility and functionality. Each has a role that is complimentary – not detrimental or contrary – to the other.
- Past examples of military-NGO collaboration have shown that when NGOs and the military coordinate constantly and often, communication becomes easier and expectations are not skewed.
- When the military chooses to enter into an HAO, NGOs and the military are the most functional organizations during emergencies. This places a large responsibility on both organizations to manage their activities while collaborating.

NGOs and military units play essential roles in humanitarian emergencies. Some may go so far in saying that NGOs and militaries together are the most capable and important international bodies during complex emergencies and large-scale humanitarian responses. Both are able providers of humanitarian assistance in some of the worst places on earth, and millions of people worldwide have benefited from humanitarian services provided by NGOs and militaries. So how do NGOs see the military? This manual is about NGOs, and this concluding chapter will attempt to lay out the themes that exist in civil-military relations (NGO-military relations specifically), and how NGOs view, coordinate and exist with the military during complex emergencies.<sup>101</sup>

#### A. How NGOs and the Military Relate

NGOs and military units come in to contact constantly in emergency settings, and each has different missions, objectives, methods and protocol when participating in HAOs. NGOs are independent, civilian organizations that are often part of an NGO association or coordination mechanism, but that largely respond only to their own management structure, donor requests or requirements and the needs of EPs. NGOs are hard to typify or aggregate in any simple descriptions, and must normally be treated as individual agencies with different command structures, capacities and missions. Militaries, too, are hard to typify. The term “military” or “militaries” in this manual have been used generally, assuming that the reader understands that no entire “military” from a specific nation actually responds to any specific HAO. When responding to humanitarian emergencies, for example, the US deploys “military units” that are unique and often independent bodies that are responsible for specific tasks and operations. Militaries have numerous parts. Each one has a specific management style, capacity and job function, and should be analyzed or confronted as a specific entity until further familiarity warrants otherwise. As the diagram suggests in a simple manner, both NGOs and militaries respond to humanitarian emergencies.



<sup>101</sup> Davidson, et al.

NGOs and militaries both respond to humanitarian emergencies around the world. Many countries authorize their militaries to respond to international humanitarian emergencies, and NGOs can respond to any emergency they choose, given that they have the resources and capabilities. The US and EU militaries are most commonly found in larger-scale humanitarian emergencies when specific strategic or political interests are involved (Balkans, Afghanistan, Somalia, etc). For the US Department of Defense, specific directives and doctrine establish what types of humanitarian assistance can and should be deployed under specific circumstances.<sup>102</sup> For countries that are affected by an emergency, the national military forces are often mobilized to maintain order and to assist in relief efforts, reconstruction, transport, communications and coordination efforts. Militaries are extremely valuable in humanitarian emergencies, as mentioned, and while not always responding to every humanitarian emergency, military units that are deployed in emergency settings are extremely operationally capable.

NGOs respond to almost all international humanitarian emergencies regardless of the political or strategic value associated with a specific emergency. NGOs are often dependent on donor funding, which means that NGOs are often strapped by priorities and strategy of donor countries and agencies and their funding cycles or preferences. NGOs of concern in this manual (mostly western-based, internationally operating, professional relief organizations) often use their own capacity and resources during the initial onset of an emergency and can act independently of any donor for a period of time before having to seek support from outside donors or agencies. NGOs do develop their own doctrine, and many participate in things like the Sphere Project and InterAction or VOICE that require members to abide by specific standards and protocol. NGOs are largely market-driven and are extremely operational, requiring little force logistical support or bureaucracy when making decisions.

NGOs and militaries relate to each other in a few other specific ways outside of the fact that both respond to humanitarian emergencies. Some relation comes because both act as humanitarian actors. Each can relate to a specific mission or objectives, and can focus on a target when coordinating or communicating. While an ideal end-state may be different for NGOs and militaries, understanding that there IS an end state is often valuable enough to get dialogue moving between the two entities.

Second, NGOs and military units share geography and space. If there is little else that is shared between NGOs and militaries, it is the fact that each serve in emergency settings that are victim to major disequilibrium of the political, social and/or economic status quo. Somalia, Haiti, Afghanistan, Albania and other recent emergencies are examples of complex humanitarian emergencies that are largely man-made and that are not ideal for operating any type of mission. These conditions are hard to work in, and NGOs and militaries have adapted to these types of conditions with management structures, culture and protocol. While a military staff person may wear camouflage and an NGO person may wear normal clothing, both are experiencing other-than-normal conditions under stress, fatigue, danger and possibly depression or disgust. While operating for different reasons, each person or entity can share the “pain” of being in a complex emergency setting.

Third, NGOs and militaries share the same goal of changing a current condition. Military operations – whether with humanitarian intentions or not – are often devoted to changing a specific condition, power or problem. Through military might, threat or assuaging, militaries are becoming more involved in complex humanitarian emergencies and humanitarian action because population health and humanitarian conditions are important to the political side of operations or important to establishing conditions for the departure of military forces (peace). NGOs are devoted solely to changing humanitarian conditions, and this allows NGOs and militaries to understand

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<sup>102</sup> See the Joint Doctrine for Civil-Military Operations (3-57), the NATO CIMIC Doctrine AJP-09, JFT Commander’s Handbook for Peace Operations, Peace Support Operations JWP 3-50 and other pertinent doctrines that explain or outline military intervention policies, response triggers and types of responses authorized. These can be found on the CMO/CIMIC Reference Library for the Civilian and Military Practitioner” CDROM published by the Center for Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance (CDMHA) and is available at <http://www.cdmha.org>.

that the ideal end state may be different, but that movement is important. Without the possibility of change, NGOs often become frustrated, lose financial and material resources, and often have to pull out of operations. For militaries, a lack of change in condition (and a lack of reaching objectives) means that either defeat is looming, that operations may become too costly to sustain, and that there may be risk for changes in political climates in the military's home country that would trickle down to field-level military changes.

Other relating themes exist, but these are some basic elements that show how positive links can be established between NGOs and military units regardless of interaction type or operational collaboration.

NGOs and military units both provide extremely valuable services during humanitarian emergencies, and neither can replace the other completely. NGOs are nimble, quick, efficient and EP-focused and target their operations on assuring that EP needs are met. Military units are forceful, capable and supported by large organizational and physical infrastructure that can be utilized in a variety of ways.

## **B. How NGOs Perceive the Military**

While not always extremely apparent, NGO personnel have many feelings about the military: general disdain, nervousness (around weapons, camouflage, saluting, the “hoo-ah” attitudes), ignorance (which often leads to nervousness or disdain), previous bad experiences (Kent State University, Somalia, etc) or philosophical opposition. Regardless of what may be the cause of ill feelings between NGO and military personnel, there is a major cultural difference between NGOs and the military, and because NGOs exist solely to deliver humanitarian assistance, many feel that they have a mandate for leading the charge in HAOs. NGOs have learned, though, that in large-scale HAOs they cannot “go it alone”.

There has been no official poll concerning NGO personnel feelings about working with or the place of militaries in humanitarian emergency responses. In numerous field cases, articles and personal accounts, NGO staff members have displayed an array of emotions and feelings about military humanitarian interventions. Included here are some themes that often arise within the humanitarian community, but that are not necessarily true or representative of all opinions held by NGO personnel:

- Militaries are designed for fighting or defending, not for implementing humanitarian assistance operations.
- Primary military motives are starkly anti-humanitarian, as militaries are designed to be efficient combat-ready organizations.
- Military personnel do not have humanitarian training and have very little ability to understand the sensitive needs of EPs.
- Militaries pay too much attention to force protection and self-preservation to make them capable of being truly humanitarian agents.
- Militaries have rigid and inflexible management structures that make it hard for them to coordinate with other non-military and non-government organizations, as well as respond to highly-dynamic humanitarian conditions.

Almost all of these bulleted points are false. Militaries now are extremely able, sensitive and efficient in implementing HAOs, and have extensive training facilities and programs that are dedicated to readying their personnel for a variety of situations that may arise. These are samples of sentiments that can be found in various NGO personnel ranks, and in vocalized sentiment in NGO-military coordination meetings, but are mostly generalizations and uneducated statements.

There is also a slew of military verbiage aimed at NGO inefficiencies, whimsical patterns, media hunger and lack of absolute independent logistical capacities. In northern Iraq, NGOs and the military had large learning curves. It was one of the first times that large-scale humanitarian assistance operations would be carried out in collaboration between the two operational but completely different communities. Military personnel during Operation Provide Comfort, suggests Chris Seiple, were shocked at the manner and method of the NGO community's response to the hundreds of thousands of refugee/IDP Kurds in northern Iraq:



NGOs, according to their charter, interests, expertise and personalities essentially set up wherever they wanted. The military's first impression was not a positive one. SF officers trying to administer would inform NGOs that they were in their "sector." The NGO response would be: "What sector? Who are you? So what?" And thus, the military was introduced to the greatest strength and greatest weakness of the NGO community: the ability to go anywhere anytime with no one's approval, linked to an initial inability to come to grips with the crying need for coordination in the face of such an overwhelming situation.<sup>103</sup>

CMOCs, CIMICs and other coordination mechanisms dispel some of these concerns, and after somewhat regular contact since Operation Provide Comfort, many NGO personnel are now somewhat comfortable with military humanitarian interventions and coordination with military units and CMOCs that may be required for efficient humanitarian response.

Things are not always this easy, though. Experiences now suggest that NGOs and militaries can operate together to produce efficient and effective HAOs, but challenges still exist. During the Kosovo crisis in 1999, NATO forces and NGOs worked closely together in many instances. Still, communication and expectations became skewed at various times. A Watson Institute paper entitled "NATO and Humanitarian Action in the Kosovo Crisis"<sup>104</sup> suggests two themes. First, despite coordination efforts and extensive collaboration, NGOs often got frustrated with the "idle capacity" that military commanders left on reserve for emergency or contingency action. NGO managers thought it strange that thousands of troops and large logistical supply stores were left unused for long periods of time while NGOs were short-staffed and needs of the EPs were high. Second, NGO and military culture is bound to clash, even in coordination settings. NGOs often want to make sure there is a distinct line between military operations and relief activities they perform. This is for the sake of neutrality, often, but also because NGOs may feel intimidated or frustrated with the way military personnel operate. From the Watson paper:

For their part, some aid organizations sought to place a certain distance between themselves and the military. One reported a sharp exchange at a briefing for a senior KFOR officer. "Gentlemen," said an NGO official with provocation aforethought, "I'm not in your chain of command." "Then you're out of control," shot back one of the officers. "No, I'm a humanitarian professional." That difference in viewpoint was reconfirmed in day-to-day experience. "Nobody can tell an NGO what to do," lamented a KFOR official....<sup>105</sup>

For sure there is still much to learn in both the NGO and military communities, but experience thus far indicates that relationships are becoming easier to manage, and that ways to manage these relationships are well-known. NGOs and militaries play crucial roles in humanitarian emergencies. Different roles, but both are crucial.

### C. Interdependence in Emergencies

Regardless of personality, culture or even systems clashing, NGOs and militaries are interdependent in many humanitarian emergencies. While NGOs and militaries are not the only actors in HAOs, they are linked more closely together than any other entity because of their focus on operational assistance. Scale, type and intent may be different, but NGOs and militaries often help each other maximize utility. In a study completed in 1997, the Refugee Policy Group came up with a series of conclusions about NGO-military comparative advantages. For NGOs, their findings include that

- NGOs can obtain and manage humanitarian supplies faster and more efficiently than can the military. With more in-depth understanding of what EPs need during emergencies, NGOs are best suited to procure the right types of supplies.

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<sup>103</sup> Seiple, page 39.

<sup>104</sup> Minear, Larry, et al.

<sup>105</sup> Civilian and Military Means of Providing and Supporting Humanitarian Assistance During Conflict: A comparative Analysis. Refugee Policy Group, March 1997. Pages 58-59.

- NGOs are more efficient in providing medical care and supplies to EPs than are militaries. Militaries are often only focused on providing medical services to combatants and military personnel. While the military does have more in-patient capabilities, NGOs utilize local medical infrastructure more efficiently.
- NGOs are better at utilizing local resources, feedback and capacity than are militaries. With staff members immersed in local populations, NGOs can absorb information faster than militaries can, often because militaries are isolated by force protection requirements
- NGOs are better at managing refugee camps and providing water and sanitation services than are militaries because of their close relationships with UNHCR. As well, NGO staff members are often trained or specialized in various aspects of camp management.<sup>106</sup>

Militaries, too, have various comparative advantages. Without the military in many instances, NGOs would have been unable to provide humanitarian services, or less efficient in their programming. Military advantages, points out the RPG report, include:

- Militaries have a monopoly on security and the use of force. When a population is affected by conflict, external, non-combatant militaries can provide security for HAOs, EPs, NGO and UN staff and infrastructure. NGOs, with strict neutrality and non-combatant policies and lack of capacity, cannot do this.
- Militaries can provide extensive intelligence information about population movements, security conditions, road, river and bridge conditions and other information pertinent to conducting HAOs. NGOs do not have satellites, intelligence analysts or other capacities to collect and digest complex and intricate information.
- Militaries have, by far, the largest airlift capacity globally. Aside from the private sector with a combined load capacity much greater than even the US military, the US military is the largest single organization that can lift humanitarian supplies and materials in almost every condition and in very short notice. NGOs do use aircraft, but normally sporadically and in the worst scenarios for minimal amounts of time.
- Militaries have distinct advantages in large-scale communications infrastructure and communications capacities. NGOs often depend on communication capacities from militaries and/or UN agencies, as large satellite stations, bandwidth and other regional or global communications are not available at reasonable costs for NGOs (see chapter 15).
- Militaries can respond to maritime and chemical, biological and chemical emergencies unlike NGOs. NGOs have almost no capacity in this sector.<sup>107</sup>

Pulled together, the various resources, skills and capacities of both the NGO and military communities can create a viable and thorough humanitarian response to even extremely large emergencies. Successes in parts of the Middle-east, the Balkans, East Africa and the Caribbean prove this. When NGO and military personnel communicate closely and attempt to understand how the other works and what the other's needs are, operations can run extremely well.

#### **D. Conclusion: Who Leads the Way in Humanitarian Emergencies?**

Chris Seiple's study of four specific military operations that placed NGOs and military units into contact substantially is still one of the more valuable texts that exist today in understanding interaction and challenges that arise from NGO-military collaboration. NGOs and military units operating in humanitarian emergencies share many common goals, and must work together to make humanitarian operations efficient. In Seiple's case studies, detail is given that explains the intricacies of how NGO-US military interaction worked well and not-so-well. Through the

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<sup>106</sup> For a full discussion of military and NGO comparative advantages, see Refugee Policy Group report, pages 8-11.

<sup>107</sup> RPG Report, Pages 8-11.

details, major themes were found: the end results are perceived different for NGOs and militaries, and the difference in perception of the final state is what may stand out as the largest operational and thematic difference between the military and NGO sectors in humanitarian emergencies. For NGOs, relief activities are part of a continuum of humanitarian service. HAOs are part of bringing a society to independent development, health and empowerment, and the relief phase is only the introduction to longer-term development strategies. For the military, long interventions are dangerous, costly and inefficient, and are not appropriate for the very nature and mission of a military body. Militaries, whether self-perceived as such or not, are vital elements to humanitarian operations but must create a sufficient exit strategy and realize that NGOs are often in it for the long-haul. To conclude, Seiple leaves a strong statement for contemplation:

...[T]he military can never be in charge. If it is in charge, it inevitably diminishes the humanitarian effort and, ironically, prevents its own departure. However, if the military conceives of its role from the beginning as a means to a declared political end, and acts to support civilian efforts, then civilians will remain responsible for the overall strategy and for the end-state that results. If the exigencies of military action are allowed to dominate, however, one of two things will happen: 1) the military will leave too quickly because it is afraid of getting involved in nation-building; or 2) the military will stay too long (because no one else can do it, the military will take on the task of nation-building). Ultimately, decisive socio-political results are the realm of the NGOs, other IOs and indigenous authorities. Logically, theirs is the dominant role, and the larger responsibility.<sup>108</sup>

### **Selected NGO/Military Resources**

Civil Military Relations, General Information – from Stanford University:  
[http://democracy.stanford.edu/civ\\_milit.html](http://democracy.stanford.edu/civ_milit.html)

Civilian and Military Means of Providing and Supporting Humanitarian Assistance During Conflict: A comparative Analysis. Refugee Policy Group, March 1997.

CMO/CIMIC Reference Library for the Civilian and Military Practitioner. CDROM compilation of various documents, references and manuals for emergency management. Developed by the Center for Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance (CDMHA). <http://www.cdmha.org>.

Danieli, Yael, Editor, Sharing the Front Line & the Back Hills — Peacekeepers, Humanitarian Aid Workers & the Media in the Midst of Crisis. (Amityville, NY: Baywood Pub Co): 2002.

Humanitarian and Peace Operations: NGOs and the Military in the Interagency Process by Lisa Witzig Davidson, Margaret Daly Hayes, James J Landon. NDU Press Book. December, 1996.

Minear, Larry, Ted van Baarda and Marc Sommers. NATO and Humanitarian Action in the Kosovo Crisis. Occasional Paper #36. The Watson Institute. 2000.

NDU Humanitarian and Peace Operations: NGOs and the Military in the Interagency Process (1996)  
<http://www.dodccrp.org/ngoIndex.html>

Seiple, Chris. The US Military/NGO Relationship in Humanitarian Intervention. Peacekeeping Institute, Center for Strategic Leadership, US Army War College. 1996.

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<sup>108</sup> Seiple, Page 14.

## Annex 1

### NGO Listings

In this annex, 30 internationally-operating, US and European-based NGOs are profiled. Basic information is provided on each, and where possible, summaries have been given. Because many NGOs are extremely unique, there is an emphasis on aligning the information in a uniform fashion for quick and easy access to information.

The following NGOs are covered in this annex.

Action by Churches Together (ACT)

Action Against Hunger (USA)

Adventist Development and Relief Agency International (ADRA)

Air-Serv International

American Refugee Committee

Americares Foundation International

Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere (CARE)

CARITAS

Catholic Relief Services (CRS)

Church World Service

CONCERN WORLDWIDE

Danish Refugee Council (DRC) / Dansk Flygtningehjaelp

Direct Relief International

Doctors of the World

Food for the Hungry Inc (FHI)

Goal Ireland/ Goal USA Fund

International Medical Corps (IMC)

International Relief Teams (IRT)

International Rescue Committee

Lutheran World Relief

Medecins Sans Frontieres (Doctors Without Borders)

Mercy Corps International (MCI)

Operation USA

Oxfam

Refugees International (RI)

Relief International (RI)

Save the Children

United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR)

Volunteers In Technical Assistance, Inc (VITA)

World Vision International (WVI)

**Name** Action By Churches Together

**Contact Information:**

Address: Ecumenical Centre, Route de Ferney 150,

P.O. Box 2100, CH-1211, Geneva 2, Switzerland

Tel: (41) 22-791-60-33

Fax: (41) 22-791-65-06

Email: [act@act-intl.org](mailto:act@act-intl.org), [act@wcc-coe.org](mailto:act@wcc-coe.org)

**Web:** <http://www.act-intl.org>

**Regions:** Africa, Asia, Pacific, Europe, Latin America & the Caribbean, Middle East, North America

**Functions/Sectors:** International Relief, Relief Services

**Budget:**

Annual Revenue (FY 2000): \$81,000,000

Revenue Breakdown (approximate)

- Africa – \$33,800,000 (42%)
- Asia Pacific – \$5,00,000 (6%)
- Europe – \$30,500,000 (38%)
- Latin American & Caribbean – \$6,300,000 (8%)
- Middle East – \$4,500,00 (6%)
- Emergency Management Training & Rapid Response Funds – \$700,000 (1%)

**Note:** Appeals\* and running costs of the ACT Coordinating Office for FY 2000 were funded completely by member contributions.

**Summary:**

ACT is an international alliance of churches and humanitarian agencies that provides humanitarian assistance in response to emergencies created by environmental and natural disasters and/or war and civil conflict. A member of NGO Voice, ACT was founded in 1995 and has a membership of 180 protestant and orthodox churches and aid agencies from the memberships of the World Council of Churches (WCC) and Lutheran World Federation (LWF). Based on actions of these local members, ACT identifies “alerts” and “appeals” for assistance. ACT has a Rapid Response Fund in place to address urgent needs, and members often partner with UN agencies such as UNHCR. ACT also partners with the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance (EAA), and the World Council of Churches (WCC) to produce “Through Behind the News: Visions for Peace - Voices of Faith”, an online newsletter dedicated to “the alternative voices and perspectives on areas of critical conflict involving and demanding action by people of faith” (See: [www.wcc-coe.org/wcc/behindthenews/](http://www.wcc-coe.org/wcc/behindthenews/)). ACT is committed to capacity building among its members to strengthen leadership at the community level; its training programs include: assessment, monitoring, early warning and preparedness, identifying and working with the most vulnerable disaster survivors, communications, systems of cooperation and collaboration among response groups, leadership in implementation or preparedness and implementing response programs.



**Name:** Action Against Hunger

**Contact Information:**

Action Against Hunger - USA

Address: 875 Ave of the Americas, Ste 1905, New York, NY 10001, USA

Tel: (212) 967-7800

Fax: (212) 967-5480

Email: [aah@aah-usa.org](mailto:aah@aah-usa.org)



Action Contre la Faim - France

Address: 4 rue Niepce, 75014 Paris, France

Tel: (33) 1-43-35-88-88

Fax: (33)1-43-35-88-00

Email: [secretar@acf.imagnet.fr](mailto:secretar@acf.imagnet.fr)

Action Against Hunger - UK

Address: Unit 7B Larnaca Works, Grange Walk, London, SE1 3EW. UK

Tel: (020) 7394-6300

Fax: (020) 7237-9960

Email: [info@aahuk.org](mailto:info@aahuk.org)

Acción Contra el Hambre - Spain

Address: C/ Caracas 6, 28010 Madrid, Spain

Tel: (34) 91-391-53-00

Fax: (34) 91-391-53-01

Email [ach@achesp.org](mailto:ach@achesp.org)

**Web:** [www.aah-usa.org](http://www.aah-usa.org), [www.aahuk.org](http://www.aahuk.org), [www.acf-fr.org](http://www.acf-fr.org), [www.achesp.org](http://www.achesp.org)

**Regions:** Africa, Asia, Russia, Eastern Europe, South and Central America

**Functions/Sectors:** International Relief, International Development, Relief Services, International Migration, Refugee Issues

**Budget:** Action Against Hunger, US

Annual Revenue (FY Dec. 2000): \$11,394,982

Revenue Source Breakdown:

- Contributions - \$4,205,210 (37%)
- Government Grants - \$7,117,115 (62%)
- Investments - \$4,345 (<1%)
- Other - \$68,312 (1%)

**Notes:** Net Gain \$3,767,060, Action Against Hunger's total 1999 budget was \$70,000,000, ([www.aah-usa.org](http://www.aah-usa.org))

**Summary:**

- Action Against Hunger operates as an international network with headquarters in France (Paris), the US (New York), the UK (London), and Spain (Madrid). Founded in 1979, Action Against Hunger is dedicated to fighting hunger, malnutrition and physical suffering and to cultivating development that allows vulnerable populations to be self-sufficient. Action Against supplies emergency aid and longer-term assistance to people in the following situations:
- In natural or man-made crises that threaten food security or result in famine,
- In situations of social/economic breakdown, linked to internal or external circumstances, which place particular groups of people in an extremely vulnerable position
- In situations where survival depends on humanitarian aid" ([www.aah-usa.org](http://www.aah-usa.org))
- The organization brings teams of field specialists in nutrition, agriculture, water and sanitation and public health to administer the following types of programs: food security, health, nutrition, water and sanitation. Action Against Hunger is active in campaigning against the use of hunger as a weapon in conflict and for access to food as a basic human right; every two years it publishes the "The Geopolitics of Hunger". Action Against Hunger - USA is a member of Interaction.

**Name:** Adventist Development and Relief Agency International (ADRA)



**Contact Information:**

Address: 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904, USA

Tel: 1-888-237-2367

Fax: (301) 680-6370

Email: 104100.140@compuserve.com

**Web:** <http://www.adra.org>

**Regions:** Europe, Asia, Latin America, Middle East, Africa, South Pacific, Eastern Europe

**Functions/Sectors:** International Development, Relief Services, International Agricultural Development, International Economic Development

**Budget:**

Annual Revenue (FY Dec. 2000): \$ 69,002,341

Revenue Source Breakdown:

- Contributions - \$ 32,883,014 (48%)
- Government Grants - \$ 35,689,860 (52%)
- Investments - \$ 338,412 (<1%)
- Other - \$ 91,055 (<1%)

**Notes:** Net Gain \$ 4,402,979

**Summary:**

ADRA was founded in 1956 as the humanitarian affiliate of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. ADRA's mission to improve the quality of life in developing countries by concentrating on community-based development and disaster preparedness and response activities. It fulfills this function through a combination of five "core portfolios": food security, economic development, primary health care and child survival, basic education and disaster preparedness and response (providing temporary shelter, emergency supplies and pre-arranging emergency supplies and contingency plans. ADRA emphasizes community ownership at all stages, providing equitable access for women and children and tailoring programs to local cultures. ADRA is a member of Interaction and NGO Voice.

**Name:** Air-Serv International



**Contact Information:**

Address: 6583 Merchant Pl Ste 100, Warrenton, VA 20187, USA

Tel: (540) 428-2323

Fax: (540) 428-2326

Email: [airserv@airserv.org](mailto:airserv@airserv.org)

Contact Name: Mr. Alan Graham, Vice President/Chief Operating Officer, [agraham@airserv.org](mailto:agraham@airserv.org)

**Web:** <http://www.airserv.org>

**Regions:** Africa, Western Asia

**Functions/Sectors:** International relief, focus on providing air lift services in small to medium sized aircraft.

**Budget:**

Annual Revenue (FY Dec. 2000): \$ 8,320,290

Revenue Source Breakdown:

- Contributions - \$ 1,082,602 (13%)
- Government Grants - \$ 5,096,595 (61%)
- Program Services - \$ 2,049,655 (25%)
- Investments - \$ 91,438 (1%)

**Notes:** Net Gain \$761,063

**Summary:**

Air-Serv was founded in 1984 to provide air transportation and other logistics services for emergency relief and development activities throughout the world. Air-Serv's supplies air transportation to relief and development agencies like private voluntary agencies (PVOs/NGOs), embassy aid missions, UN agencies, multilateral and national government agencies. Where transport is scarce, Air-Serv also manages relief operations with cargo aircraft. Air-Serv owns and operates a various Beech King Air, Cessna, and DeHavilland Twin Otter aircraft to fulfill these activities and is able to acquire other types of aircraft as needed. In 2001 Air-Serve began providing new logistical support services for its clients, including storage, maintenance and distribution of pre-positioned relief supplies, full-service air terminal operations for major relief efforts, and surface transportation solutions. Air-Serv is a member of Interaction.

**Name:** American Refugee Committee

**Contact Information:**

Address: 430 Oak Grove St., Ste 204,

Minneapolis, MN 55403, USA

Tel: (612) 230-7060

Fax: (612) 607-6499

Email: archg@archg.org

**Web:** www.archg.org

**Regions:** Africa, Asia and Europe

**Functions/Sectors:** Ethnic/immigration services, water and sanitation and refugee camp management.

**Budget:**

Annual Revenue (FY Sept. 2000): \$ 21,900,178

Revenue Source Breakdown:

- Contributions - \$ 4,564,401 (21%)
- Government Grants - \$ 10,937,161 (50%)
- Program Services - \$ 6,352,974 (29%)
- Investments - \$ 45642 (<1%)

**Notes:** Net Gain \$ 0

**Summary:**

ARC is a non-sectarian organization working to ensure the well-being of refugees and displaced persons. Repatriating and reintegration services include bus visits, legal aids and liaison assistance. ARC also provides multi-sector and training in order to help recipient build productive lives. These programs include primary health care delivery (including reproductive health services), water and sanitation improvement, shelter reconstruction, micro-credit schemes, environmental rehabilitation and counseling legal aid and conflict resolution services. ARC emphasizes working with local communities, building local capacities and providing assistance that can be sustained once ARC is no longer in the area. Primary ARC beneficiaries have been women and children in Bosnia, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia; Pakistan; Thailand; Guinea, Rwanda, Sierra Leone and Sudan. ARC is a member of Interaction.



**Name:** AmeriCares Foundation International

**Contact Information:**

Address: 161 Cherry St., New Canaan, CT 06840, USA

Tel: (800) 486-HELP





Fax: (203) 966-6028

Email: [info@americares.org](mailto:info@americares.org)

**Web:** [www.americares.org](http://www.americares.org)

**Regions:** National, Europe, Middle East, South America, North America, Central America, Caribbean, Africa, Asia, Pacific Rim

**Functions/Sectors:** International Development, Relief Services, Hospitals and Primary Medical Care Facilities , Home Improvement/Repairs

**Budget:**

Annual Revenue (FY Jun. 2001): \$ 464,899,135

Revenue Source Breakdown:

- Contributions - \$ 462,764,787 (100%)
- Government Grants - \$ 60,000 (<1%)
- Investments - \$ 2,072,584 (<1%)
- Other - \$1,764 (<1%)

**Notes:** Net Gain: \$ 24,890,087

**Summary:**

AmeriCares was founded in 1982 as a disaster relief and humanitarian aid organization. Americares supplies emergency medical assistance and long-term health care programs to victims of natural and man made disasters. Americare was built on the idea that medicines abundantly available in the United States could be sent abroad to enhance primary health care services. In its international relief efforts, Americares work with other NGOs and local governments to supply medicines and help disaster victims. Americares is also active in domestic relief activities, such as free clinics, Camp Amerikids for AIDs children and Homefront, a community repair program. Americares is a member of Interaction.

**Name:** CARE (Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere)

**Contact Information:**

CARE International Secretariat

Address: Boulevard du Regent, 58/10

B-1000 Brussels

Belgium

Ph: 32-2-502-43-33

Fax: 32-2-502-82-02

E-mail: [info@care-international.org](mailto:info@care-international.org)

Web: site: <http://www.care-international.org>

Sir Harold Walker, President

Guy Tousignant, Secretary General

CARE USA

Address: 151 Ellis Street, NE

Atlanta, GA 30303-2440 USA

Tel: 1-404-681-2552, 1-800-521-CARE

Fax: 1-404-577-5977

E-mail: [info@care.org](mailto:info@care.org)

Web: site: <http://www.careusa.org>

**Web:** <http://www.care.org>

**Regions:** More than 60 countries across Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Middle East.



**Functions/Sectors:** International Relief, International Economic Development, International Agricultural Development

**Budget:**

Annual Revenue (FY Jun 2001): \$ 423,268,000

Revenue Source Breakdown:

- Contributions - \$ 127,938,000 (30%)
- Government Grants - \$ 287,146,000 (68%)
- Investments - \$ 7,020,000 (2%)
- Special Events – (\$128,000) (<1%)
- Other – 1,292,000 (<1%)

**Notes:** Net Gain \$ \$97,200. Over 90% expended resources support program activities. ([www.care.org](http://www.care.org))

**Summary:**

CARE is a large umbrella organization coordinated by an International Secretariat in Brussels. National members are located in Austria, Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, UK, USA. CARE's mission is to serve individuals and families in the poorest communities by helping them overcome their most threatening problems. Programs cover projects fighting poverty, advocacy, communications, fund raising and building relationships with governments and other organizations. CARE was founded in 1945 to provide relief to survivors of World War II and is a member of Interaction (CARE USA) and NGO Voice (CARE in Italy, Germany, France, UK, Netherlands, Austria).

**Name:** Caritas Internationalis

**Contact Information:**

Address: Palazzo San Calisto, 00120 Vatican City

Ph: (+39) 06 698 797 99

Fax: (+39) 06 698 87 237

E-mail: [caritas.internationalis@caritas.va](mailto:caritas.internationalis@caritas.va)

**Web:** [www.caritas.org](http://www.caritas.org)

**Regions:** Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, Latin America & Caribbean, Middle East and North Africa, North America, Oceania

**Functions/Sectors:** Agriculture and Food Production, AIDS/HIV, Community Development, Disaster and Emergency Relief, Education/Training, Material Aid, Public Policy and Advocacy, Shelter/Housing

**Budget:**

Data unavailable

**Summary:**

CI is an umbrella organization of 154 Catholic relief, development and social service organizations that reside in 198 countries and territories. Caritas dedicated to spreading solidarity and social justice by serving as a forum for dialogue and exchange among members, assisting local members to strengthen their capacities for service at the grassroots level, acting as advocates for the poor and encouraging cooperation with other organizations. Currently, CI's key advocacy issues are: Palestine, Iraqi sanctions, UN Conference on Financing for Development, Sierra Leone, international debt of poor countries, and trade The Based in the Vatican, CI's General Secretariat mobilizes and coordinates member organization's response to major emergencies, defined as "a situation where there is a substantial loss of life, great human suffering and distress, and large-scale material damage including damage to the environment. It is a situation with which the affected member cannot cope and needs assistance of others" ([www.caritas.va](http://www.caritas.va)). The following national chapters of CI are members of Ngo Voice: UK, Spain, Sweden, Denmark, Germany, France, Luxembourg, Switzerland, Austria Nine of CI's national members are members of NGO Voice Austria, Denmark, Germany, France, Luxembourg, Spain, Sweden and the UK.



**Name:** Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Inc.



**Contact Information:**

Address: 209 West Fayette St, Baltimore, MD 21201 USA

Tel: (410) 625-2220

Fax: (410) 685-1635

Email: [webmaster@catholicrelief.org](mailto:webmaster@catholicrelief.org)

**Web:** <http://www.catholicrelief.org>

**Regions:** Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, Latin America & Caribbean, Middle East and North Africa, North America

**Functions/Sectors:** International Relief, International Development, Roman Catholic

**Budget:**

Annual Revenue (FY Sept. 2001): \$ 334,423,000

Revenue Source Breakdown:

- Contributions - \$ 109,758,000 (33%)
- Government Grants - \$ 88,231,000 (27%)
- Investments - \$ 11,045,000 (3%)
- Other - \$ 125,389,000 (37%)

**Notes:** Net Loss: \$(10,457,000)

**Summary:**

CRS was founded in 1943 by the Catholic Bishops of the United States to help the poor and disadvantaged that live outside the USA. CRS programs are built on the teaching of Jesus Christ as they pertain to helping human suffering, the development of people and promoting charity and justice. Emergency assistance programs address natural and complex emergencies, stabilizing the local community, reconstruction and rehabilitations. Other programs include microfinance, agriculture, health, safety net activities, Education, peace-building human rights and HIV/AIDS. CRS is a member of Interaction.

CRS is one of the most active organizations in food aid and commodity management programs. CRS programs are seen all over the world, often in the form of fleets of trucks that deliver food aid to EPs. CRS is one of the leading NGOs in the world.

**Name:** Church World Service



**Contact Information:**

Address: 28606 Phillips Stupor Box 968, Elkhart, IN 46515, USA

Tel: (800) 297-1516

Fax: (219) 262-0966

Email: [cws@nccusa.org](mailto:cws@nccusa.org)

**Web:** <http://www.churchworldservice.org>

**Regions:** Africa, East Asia and the Pacific, Europe, Latin America & Caribbean, Middle East, Southern Asia

**Functions/Sectors**

International Development, Relief Services, International Human Rights, International Migration, Refugee Issues

**Budget:**

Data unavailable. Offers to send interested individuals an annual report upon request.

**Summary:**

Founded in 1946, Church World Service comprises of 36 Protestant, Orthodox, and Anglican denominations to provide relief and humanitarian assistance. Church World Service seeks to fulfill its mission of sharing Christian love by meeting primary humanitarian need, cooperation, advocating human rights and dignity, environmental

protection and peace and reconciliation education. Church World Service has the following programs: Education & Advocacy, Emergency Response, Immigration & Refugee, Mission Relationships & Witness, and Social & Economic Development. Church World Service is a member of Interaction.

**Name:** CONCERN Worldwide, Inc

**Contact Information:**

Address: 104 E 40th St Rm 903, New York, NY 10016, USA

Tel: (212) 557-8000

Fax: (212) 557-8004

Email: [info@concern-ny.org](mailto:info@concern-ny.org)

Contact Information: outside the US

Republic of Ireland

52-55 Lower Camden Street, Dublin 2

Tel: 01 417 7700

Fax: 01 475 7362

Email: [info@concern.ie](mailto:info@concern.ie)

**Web:** <http://www.concernusa.org>, <http://www.concernworldwide.org>

**Regions:** Africa, Asia, Latin America, Kosovo, East Timor

**Functions/Sectors:** International Development, Relief Services, International Relief, International Migration, Refugee Issues

**Budget:**

Data available on Concern US.

Annual Revenue (FY Dec. 2000): \$ 3,771,119

Revenue Source Breakdown:

- Contributions - \$ 1,312,448 (35%)
- Government Grants - \$ 2,227,404 (59%)
- Investments - \$ 5,186 (<1%)
- Special Events - \$ 226,081 (6%)

**Notes:** Net Gain: \$140,434

**Summary:**

CONCERN Worldwide is a nondenominational voluntary organization focused on relief, assistance and advancement of peoples in developing areas. CONCERN sends volunteers to implement programs in emergency relief and long-term self-help programs: education, health, engineering, agriculture, community development, environmental protection, and capacity building. CONCERN also emphasizes engaging people of both donor and recipient countries more fully in the practical struggle against poverty and injustices in the world. Concern USA is a member of Interaction.



**Name:** Danish Refugee Council (DRC) (Dansk Flygtningehjaelp)

**Contact Information:**

Address: Borgergade 10, Postbox 53,1002 Copenhagen K, Denmark

Tel: 3373 5000

Fax: 3332 8448

Email: [drc@drc.dk](mailto:drc@drc.dk)



**Web:** [www.drc.dk](http://www.drc.dk), [www.english.drc.dk](http://www.english.drc.dk)

**Regions:** Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America

**Functions/Sectors:** Disaster Preparedness and Relief Services, International Relief, International Migration, Refugee Issues

**Budget:**

Unavailable

**Note:** DRC's most significant donors in international activities are the EU, the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Danida) and UNHCR. ([www.english.drc.dk](http://www.english.drc.dk))

**Summary:**

DRC is an umbrella organization with 30 member organizations working to gain public support and awareness of refugee issues and finding solutions for them. Programs include transport of aid, rebuilding of homes, schools, water supplies etc, removal of landmines, support of local humanitarian organizations and development of democracy and human rights. The DRC works closely with UNHCR and other international organizations. The DRC's international projects are financed by Danida, the EU and UNHCR. Private donations enable the Refugee Council to act fast when necessary. The DRC is a member of NGO Voice.

**Name:** Direct Relief International

**Contact Information:**

Address: 27 S La Patera Ln, Santa Barbara, CA 93117, USA

Tel: (805) 964-4767

Fax: (805) 681-4838

Email: [info@directrelief.org](mailto:info@directrelief.org)

**Web:** [www.directrelief.org](http://www.directrelief.org)

**Regions:** Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, Former Soviet Republics, Middle East, Pacific Islands, USA

**Functions/Sectors:** Disaster Preparedness and Relief Services, International Relief, Health - General and Rehabilitative N.E.C., Pharmaceutical procurement, shipping/supplying., Not operational in relief operations but provides support to partner agencies and NGOs.

**Budget:**

Annual Revenue (FY Dec. 2000): \$ 80,635,963

Revenue Source Breakdown:

- Contributions - \$ 80,044,190 (99%)
- Government Grants - \$ 137,663 (<1%)
- Investments - \$ 129,635 (<1%)
- Special Events - \$ 270,287 (<1%)
- Other - \$ 54,188 (<1%)

**Notes:** Net Gain: \$10,388,066

**Summary:**

DRI offers assistance to health institutions and projects worldwide, which serve the poor and victims of natural and civil disasters. Direct Relief provides emergency medical and shelter supplies to evacuation centers, refugee camps and health facilities treating refugees and victims of natural disasters and civil strife. Direct Relief International is a member of Interaction.



**Name:** Doctors of the World

**Contact Information:**

Address: 375 W Broadway  
4th Fl

New York, NY 10012

Tel: (212) 226-9890

Fax: (212) 226-7026

Email: [cooperm@dowusa.org](mailto:cooperm@dowusa.org)

**Web:** <http://www.doctorsoftheworld.org/>

**Regions:** National, Europe, Central America, Asia, Africa, United States

**Functions/Sectors:** Public Health Program, International Relief, International Human Rights

**Budget:**

Annual Revenue (FY Dec. 2000):

Total Revenue \$3,136,837

Contributions \$1,892,375

Government Grants \$1,224,578

**Notes:** NET GAIN/LOSS \$(260,338)

**Summary:**

Doctors of the World is a nonprofit organization, dedicated to creating sustainable medical programs that promote and protect health and human rights in the United States and abroad.



**Name:** Food for the Hungry, Inc.

**Contact Information:**

Address: Borgergade 10, Postbox 53,1002 Copenhagen K, Denmark

Tel: 3373 5000

Fax: 3332 8448

Email: [drc@drc.dk](mailto:drc@drc.dk)

**Web:** [www.fh.org](http://www.fh.org)

**Regions:** Africa, Asia, Europe, Inner City Phoenix, USA, Latin America, Los Angeles, USA, New York City, USA

**Functions/Sectors:** International Development, Relief Services, International Agricultural Development, Protestant, Food aid, food supply and storage, distribution

**Budget:**

Annual Revenue (FY Sept. 2001): \$ 55,522,074

Revenue Source Breakdown:

- Contributions - \$42,566,575 (77%)
- Government Grants - \$12,977,775 (23%)
- Investments - \$(22,276) (<1%)

**Notes:** Net Loss \$(843,892)

**Summary:**

FHI is a Christian organization focused on sharing emergency relief and development with an emphasis on physically and spiritually feeding the poor. FHI has on-going programs in over 25 countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Eastern Europe. These include: child sponsorship. Community development, food production and agriculture, income generation, primary healthcare, relief and rehabilitation and water resources. FHI is a member of Interaction.



**Name:** GOAL International

**Contact Information:**

Address: P.O. Box 19, Dun Laoghaire, CoDublin, Ireland

Tel: (353) 1-280-9779

Fax: (353) 1-280-9215

Email: info@goal.ie

GOAL USA Address: 1330 Avenue of the Americas 33rd Fl., New York, NY 10019, USA

Tel: (212) 698-9860

Fax: (212) 262-0598

Email: goalrain@aol.com

**Web:** www.goal.ie

**Regions:** Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, Central America

**Functions/Sectors:** Emergency Relief, Development Services

**Budget:**

Annual Revenue (FY Oct. 2001): \$ 416727

Revenue Source Breakdown:

- Contributions - \$450929 (108%)
- Investments - \$5,553 (1%)
- Special Events - \$(39,755) (-10%)

**Notes:** Net Gain \$199,835

GOAL receives funding from, the Governments of Ireland, the UK, the USA, Holland, Italy, Spain, Canada and Sweden as well as from the European Union, the United Nations, a variety of UK and USA charitable trusts and foundations and the general public. (www.goal.ie)

**Summary:**

GOAL was founded in 1997 to alleviate the suffering of the poorest populations in the developing world. GOAL focuses on working with those affected by emergency situations, providing life saving food, water, medicines and shelter. GOAL concentrates its activities on street children and those affected by HIV/AIDS. GOAL's programs include rehabilitation in health, infrastructure and water and sanitation sectors and long term health, nutrition and education development programs. GOAL also provides financial support to various indigenous groups and missionaries in developing countries that share its philosophy. deprived countries. GOAL is a member of NGO Voice.



**Name:** International Medical Corps (IMC)

**Contact Information:**

Address: 11500 W. Olympic Blvd, Suite 506,

Los Angeles, CA 90064, USA

Tel: (310) 826-7800

Fax: (310) 442-8662

Email: imc@imcworldwide.org.

**Web:** www.imc-la.org

**Regions:** Albania, Africa, Asia, Kosovo, Former Soviet Republics

**Functions/Sectors:** Emergency Relief, Emergency medical response programs and training



**Budget:**

Annual Revenue (FY Jun. 2000): \$ 23,891,152

Revenue Source Breakdown:

- Contributions - \$ 14,304,453 (60%)
- Government Grants - \$ 9,474,225 (40%)
- Investments - \$ 105,508 (<1%)
- Special Events - \$ 6,916 (<1%)

**Notes:** Net Loss \$(132,628)

**Summary:**

From the IMC website: "IMC was founded in 1984 to provide emergency medical relief and training, giving people the skills and knowledge to rebuild their own health care systems, thus promoting self-sufficiency." IMC is a member of Interaction.

**Name:** International Relief Teams

**Contact Information:**

Address: 3547 Camino del Rio South  
Suite C

San Diego, CA 92108

Tel: 619.284.7979 Office

Fax: 619.284.7938 Fax

Email: [info@irteams.org](mailto:info@irteams.org)

**Web:** <http://www.irteams.org/index.htm>

**Regions:** Africa, Asia, Balkans, Caucasus, Eastern Europe, Europe, South/Central America, USA

**Functions/Sectors:** Emergency health services and training

**Budget:**

Total Revenue \$7,514,079

**Summary:**

From IRT's website: Since 1988, International Relief Teams (IRT) has mobilized 379 teams with 2292 medical professionals and other volunteers to assist disaster victims and those in desperate need worldwide. More than 25,000 patients have received direct medical assistance. More than 47 million dollars in medicine and supplies have been delivered to refugees in Bosnia, Albania, Macedonia, Kosovo, Croatia and Rwanda and disaster victims both here and abroad. IRT has also provided training in infant care, obstetrics, orthopedic surgery, cardiac resuscitation, critical care nursing and eye, ear, nose and throat surgery to 500 doctors and nurses in Lithuania, Latvia, Armenia, and Romania — to upgrade medical procedures and establish uniform standards where few or none existed.



**Name:** International Rescue Committee, Inc.

**Contact Information:**

Address: 122 E 42nd St 12

New York, NY 10168, USA

Tel: (212) 551-3000

Email: [info@intrescom.org](mailto:info@intrescom.org)

**Web:** [www.intrescom.org](http://www.intrescom.org)





**Regions:** Africa, Asia, Balkans, Caucasus, Europe, South America, USA

**Functions/Sectors:** International Migration, Refugee Issues, Shelter and water and sanitation, General relief services, including transportation, storage and logistical tasks, reproductive health/public health, education, etc.

**Budget:**

Annual Revenue (FY Sept. 2000): \$ 157,561,000

Revenue Source Breakdown:

- Contributions - \$ 84,863,000 (54%)
- Government Grants - \$ 68,626,000 (44%)
- Investments - \$ 1,828,000 (1%)
- Other - \$ 2,244,000 (1%)

**Notes:** Net Gain \$12,279,000

**Summary:**

From the IRC website: The IRC, Inc. is a non-sectarian, private not-for-profit organization providing relief, protection and resettlement services for refugees and victims of oppression and violent conflict. The IRC is committed to freedom, human dignity and self-reliance. IRC is a member of Interaction.

IRC responds to many emergencies around the world and has some of the best-known relief teams that respond in short periods of time.

**Name:** Lutheran World Relief

**Contact Information**

Address: 700 Light Street, Baltimore, MD 21230, USA

Tel: 410-230-2800

Fax: 410-230-2882

Email: [lwr@lwr.org](mailto:lwr@lwr.org)

**Web:** [www.lwr.org](http://www.lwr.org)



**Regions:** Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, Latin America, Middle East

**Functions/Sectors:** Agriculture and Food Production, AIDS/HIV, Community Development, Disaster and Emergency Relief, Education/Training, Material Aid, Public Policy and Advocacy, Shelter/Housing

**Budget:**

Annual Revenue (FY Sept. 2000): \$24,788,631

Revenue Source Breakdown:

- Contributions - \$24,788,631 (83%)
- Government Grants - \$3,314,477 (11%)
- Investments - \$1,642,548 (5%)
- Other - \$162,185 (1%)

**Note:** Net Gain \$2,327,859

**Summary:**

LWR is a faith-based organization active in overseas development and relief. LWR works on behalf of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and receives support from the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. In addition to providing disaster, health and medical assistance, LWR is active in community development through cooperative, credit loan and agricultural production initiatives. LWR is also committed to increasing the participation of women and provides literacy, education and skills training. LWR is a member of Action by Churches Taken Together and Interaction and believes strongly in partnerships with all types of organizations as demonstrated by its Stand With Africa initiative, a joint campaign between LWR, ECLA World Hunger Program and LCMS World Relief targeted at HIV/AIDS, hunger and peace building.

**Name:** Mediciens Sans Frontieres

**Contact Information:**

Address for US office: 6 East 39th St 8th Fl  
New York, NY 10016  
Tel: (212) 679-6800  
Fax: (212) 679-7016

**Web:** [www.doctorswithoutborders.org](http://www.doctorswithoutborders.org)

**Regions:** More than 80 countries worldwide

**Functions/Sectors:** International Relief, specifically emergency medical relief, water and sanitation, immunizations and trauma services.

**Budget:**

Annual Revenue (FY Sept. 2000):  
\$37,910,000

**Summary:**

From the MSF website: Doctors Without Borders/Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF) is an independent, private, international medical relief organization aiding victims of armed conflict, epidemics, natural and man-made disasters, and others who lack healthcare due to social marginalization.

MSF is one of the leading emergency medical NGOs that exist today, normally responding to emergencies within 48 hours and providing professional and reliable services to EPs. MSF is also known for its advocacy and hard stances on specific policy issues and donor decisions. MSF was founded in France and now has many chapters.

MSF is a member of VOICE and InterAction.



**Name:** Mercy Corps

**Contact Information:**

Address: 3015 SW First Ave  
Portland, OR 97201  
Tel: (503) 796-6800  
Fax: (503) 796-6844

**Web:** <http://www.mercycorps.org>

**Regions:** Portland, OR; New York, NY , The Balkans, Central and South Asia, East Asia, America, Africa, Middle East/Caucasus

**Functions/Sectors:** International Development, Relief Services, International Relief, International Human Rights

**Budget:**

Annual Revenue (FY Sept. 2000):  
Annual Revenue: \$112,915,339  
Contributions: \$34,250,282  
Government Grants: \$78,335,208  
Investments: \$222,930

**Summary:** From MCI's website: Mercy Corps is a not-for-profit organization that exists to alleviate suffering, poverty, and oppression by helping people build secure, productive, and just communities.

Since 1979, Mercy Corps has provided more than \$640 million in assistance to 74 countries. Mercy Corps is known nationally and internationally for its quick-response, high-impact programs. Over 91 percent of the agency's resources are allocated directly to programs that help those in need.



With headquarters in the United States and Scotland, Mercy Corps is an international family of humanitarian agencies that reaches more five million people each year. Your support can make a world of difference.

Mercy Corps is a member of InterAction and VOICE.

**Name:** Operation USA

**Contact Information:**

Address: 8320 Melrose Ave 200, Ste 200

Los Angeles, CA 90069

Tel: (323) 658-8876

Fax: (323) 653-7846



**Web:** <http://www.opusa.org>

**Regions:** International locations

**Functions/Sectors:** International Development, Relief Services, International Economic Development, Disaster Preparedness and Relief Services

**Budget:**

Annual Revenue (FY Sept. 2000):

Annual Revenue: \$8,774,716

Contributions: \$8,742,208

Government Grants: \$11,803

**Summary:**

From OPUSA's website: Operation USA assists developing communities in the United States and abroad in addressing problems relating to natural and man-made disasters and chronic poverty through the creation of sustainable health, nutrition and disaster response programs. We provide essential materials, training and advocacy, and financial support for these programs. Our small staff and versatility ensure that only 1-3 percent of donations cover its overhead costs - 98% of all donations are strictly for program use.

OPUSA is a member of InterAction.

**Name:** Oxfam International (OI)

**Contact Information:**

Address (US chapter)

Oxfam International Secretariat, Oxford

Chair: Ian Anderson

ED of Oxfam International: Jeremy Hobbs

Office Address: Suite 20, 266 Banbury Road,

Oxford, OX2 7DL, UK

Tel: ++ 44 1865 31 39 39 / 36 39

Fax: ++ 44 1865 31 37 70

Email: [information@oxfaminternational.org](mailto:information@oxfaminternational.org)

Oxfam International Advocacy, Washington

Advocacy Director: Phil Twyford



Office Address: 1112 16th St., NW,  
Suite 600, Washington DC 20036, USA  
Tel: ++ 1 202 496 1170  
Fax: ++ 1 202 496 0128  
E-mail: [advocacy@oxfaminternational.org](mailto:advocacy@oxfaminternational.org)  
Website: <http://www.oxfaminternational.org>

**Web:** <http://www.oxfam.org/>

**Regions:** International locations, over 80 countries

**Functions/Sectors:** International Development, Relief Services, International Economic Development, Disaster Preparedness and Relief Services

**Budget:**

Annual Revenue (FY Sept. 2000):  
Annual Revenue: \$27,190,418  
Contributions: \$25,868,713  
Government Grants: \$1,271,655

**Summary:**

From Oxfam's website: Oxfam International is a confederation of twelve non-governmental organizations working together in more than 80 countries to find lasting solutions to poverty, suffering and injustice. The Oxfams are strategic funders of development projects; provide emergency relief in times of crisis; and campaign for social and economic justice.

Oxfam is a member of both InterAction and VOICE.

**Name:** Refugees International (RI)

**Contact Information:**

Address: 1705 N St NW  
Washington, DC 20036  
Tel: (202) 828-0110  
Fax: (202) 828-0819  
Email: [antonia@refintl.org](mailto:antonia@refintl.org)

**Web:** <http://www.refintl.org>

**Regions:** Africa, Asia, Balkans, Latin America , Middle East

**Functions/Sectors:** International Development, Relief Services, Migration, IDP and refugee issues

**Budget:**

Annual Revenue (FY Sept. 2000):  
Annual Revenue: \$2,068,894  
Contributions: \$2,010,298 (97%)

**Summary:**

From Refugee International's website: Refugees International is an independent, non-profit advocacy organization that generates lifesaving assistance and protection for refugees and internally displaced people around the world, and works to end the conditions that create displacement.

RI participates mainly in advocacy and refugee/IDP assistance operations, stemming from refugee camp management to immigration services.

Refugees International is a member of InterAction.



**Name:** Relief International (RI)

**Contact Information:**

Address: 11965 VENICE BLVD STE 405

LOS ANGELES, CA 90066

Tel: (310) 572-7770

Fax: (310) 572-7790

Email: [hq@ri.org](mailto:hq@ri.org)

**Web:** <http://www.ri.org>

**Regions:** Africa, Balkans, Caucasus (Azerbaijan, Chechnya), Middle East

**Functions/Sectors:** International Development, Relief Services, Medical services, construction, refugee camp management and educational programs.

**Budget:**

Annual Revenue (FY Sept. 2000):

Annual Revenue: \$2,292,843

Contributions: \$150,930

Government Grants: \$2,142,705

**Summary:**

From Relief International's website: Relief International is a humanitarian, non-profit and non-sectarian agency providing emergency relief, rehabilitation, and development assistance to victims of natural disasters and civil conflicts worldwide. RI's programs bridge the gap between immediate emergency relief and long-term community development, through innovative programming that is multi-sectoral and grassroots-based. This orientation promotes self-reliance and the peaceful reintegration of populations. RI's programs are designed with the input and participation of target beneficiary groups such as women, children and the elderly, whose special needs are often neglected in disasters.

Relief International is a member of InterAction.



**Name:** United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR)

**Contact Information:**

General Board of Global Ministries, The United Methodist Church

Address: Room 330, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10115

Tel: 212-870-3816; FAX: 212-870-3624

E-mail: [umcor@gbgm-umc.org](mailto:umcor@gbgm-umc.org)

**Web:** <http://gbgm-umc.org/umcor/>

**Regions:** Operational in more than 100 countries.

**Functions/Sectors:** International Development, Relief Services, Medical services, construction, refugee camp management and educational programs.

**Budget:**

Data unavailable.

**Summary:**

From UMCOR's website: To aid in extending Christ's love, United Methodists have established the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) as a channel for sharing the compassion of their Lord wherever God's people are in need. Today, UMCOR's ministries—aiding refugees, providing relief in disaster areas, and confronting the challenge of world hunger and poverty—are helping to heal the hurts of humanity in more than 100 countries.

**Name:** Save the Children Fund, Save the Children UK, Save the Children US

**Contact Information:**

Address: 54 Wilton Rd  
Westport, CT 06880  
Tel: (203) 221-4187  
Fax: (203) 226-6709  
Email: cbarton@savechildren.org

Address: 17 Grove Lane  
London, SE5 8RD UK  
Tel: (+44) 020 7703 5400  
Fax: (+44) 020 7703 2278

**Web:** <http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/>

**Regions:** Over 70 countries

**Functions/Sectors:** International Development, Relief Services, Medical services, construction, refugee camp management and educational programs. Focus on child services and child victims of humanitarian emergencies.

**Budget:**

Annual Revenue (FY Sept. 2000):  
Annual Revenue (US): \$173,255,775  
Contributions: \$78,347,786  
Government Grants: \$90,977,052  
Investments: \$958,225

**Summary:**

From Save the Children's website: Save the Children is a leading International nonprofit child-assistance organization working in nearly 50 countries worldwide, including the United States. Our mission is to make lasting, positive changes in the lives of children in need. We help children and their families improve their health, education, and economic opportunities. In times of crisis, we help children and their families recover from the effects of natural and man-made disasters.

Save the Children is a member of both InterAction and VOICE. Save the Children is also well-known for its work in nutrition and assessment standards work.



**Name:** Volunteers in Technical Assistance (VITA)

**Contact Information:**

Address: 1600 Wilson Blvd Ste 710  
Arlington, VA 22209  
Tel: (703) 276-1800  
Fax: (703) 243-1865  
Email: vickit@vita.org



**Web:** <http://www.vita.org>

**Regions:** National, Africa, Central America, Central Europe, Eastern Europe

**Functions/Sectors:** Technical support to humanitarian and development organizations in rural and remote locations. Training, capacity building and support to humanitarian assistance field.

**Budget:**

Annual Revenue (FY Sept. 2000):

Annual Revenue: \$3,177,667

Contributions: \$106,194

Government Grants: \$3,050,549

**Summary:**

VITA is a unique organization that supports other humanitarian and development organizations with data and communication services. As one of the pioneers of the low-earth-orbiting satellite use for packeting emails and data, VITA helps development and aid workers in remote locations connect to HQ and others via the internet or email. VITA trains and promotes the use of appropriate technologies. VITA is a member of InterAction.

**Name:** World Vision International

**Contact Information:**

US Chapter Address:

34834 Weyerhauser Way South

PO Box 9716

Federal Way, WA 98063

Tel: (253) 815-1000

Fax: (253) 815-3446

Email: [downen@worldvision.org](mailto:downen@worldvision.org)

**Web:** <http://www.wvi.org>

**Regions:** Over 88 countries worldwide.

**Functions/Sectors:** International Development, Relief Services. One of the largest combined relief agencies in the world, operating in almost every sector of humanitarian assistance operations in every part of the world.

**Budget:**

Annual Revenue for US chapter (FY Sept. 2000):

Annual Revenue: \$468,045,000

Contributions: \$372,045,000

Government Grants: \$90,174,000

Investments: \$4,133,000

**Summary:**

From World Vision's website: World Vision is an international Christian relief and development agency intent on helping the world's poor by meeting their immediate needs and equipping them to meet their own future needs.

World Vision International is an umbrella organization for over 20 national chapters. All chapters combined, it is potentially the largest NGO in the world with over 1\$ billion in combined annual revenue.



## Annex 2

### Selected Humanitarian Websites

NGO, UN, government and private sector personnel involved in humanitarian assistance activities use the internet for many information needs. Below are a series of annotations for websites that are most used by NGO personnel and others before, during and after emergencies. This is not an inclusive list, but attempts to highlight many of the very popular websites.

#### A. General Websites for Humanitarian News and Information

Alertnet by Reuters	<a href="http://www.alertnet.org">http://www.alertnet.org</a>	Medium-sized news site that provides listings of emergency and humanitarian-oriented news from Reuters wires and other organizations. NGOs can subscribe to specific channels by requesting a username and password.
Cable News Network	<a href="http://www.cnn.com">http://www.cnn.com</a>	The widely-commercial and popular CNN website provides humanitarian personnel with up-to-date news and information on many events worldwide. Often used for monitoring political conditions
Global Disaster Information Network (GDIN)	<a href="http://www.gdin.org">http://www.gdin.org</a>	Portal-like service that brings NGO, academics, private sector and government personnel together on various humanitarian and disaster-related issues.
Information Security Network (ISN)	<a href="http://www.isn.ethz.ch">http://www.isn.ethz.ch</a>	Large portal of information related to many types of emergencies, conflicts, disasters and politics. Most a links and resources database from other sites.
International Crisis Group (ICG)	<a href="http://www.crisisweb.org">http://www.crisisweb.org</a>	Leading think-tank on conflict and emergency analysis. Based in Brussels with analysts in many conflict regions worldwide, ICG reports are widely-read by many in the humanitarian field seeking in-depth understanding on specific conflicts and political conditions in selected areas.
Integrated Regional Information Network (IRIN)	<a href="http://www.irinnews.org">http://www.irinnews.org</a>	IRIN provides ground-level reporting and analysis of humanitarian, conflict and disaster conditions daily on various regions of Africa and Central Asia. It is part of UN OCHA, and all stories are published online. Some are published in French.
New York Times	<a href="http://www.nytimes.org">http://www.nytimes.org</a>	Widely-commercial publication provides extensive news and analysis online on many international emergencies and political conditions that are important to humanitarian workers.
ReliefWeb	<a href="http://www.reliefweb.int">http://www.reliefweb.int</a>	Largest humanitarian portal that exists, featuring updated news and information on emergencies directly from hundreds of contributing NGOs, UN agencies and government aid agencies.



**B. Technical Websites for Humanitarian Conditions, Updates and Sectoral Interest**

African Conflict Journal	<a href="http://www.africanconflict.org">http://www.africanconflict.org</a>	An online resource for news and information on current and developing conflict in Africa, including information on NGO updates and challenges, problems.
Early Warning System (FEWS)	<a href="http://www.fews.net/">http://www.fews.net/</a>	A resource for individuals seeking information on food levels, weather, news and resources for famine and CHE effects on food levels and food security. FEWS is supported by USAID.
INCORE	<a href="http://www.incore.ulst.ac.uk/cds/countries/index.html">http://www.incore.ulst.ac.uk/cds/countries/index.html</a>	Website that provides analysis on conflict. Not always updated.
Minorities at Risk Project	<a href="http://www.bsos.umd.edu:80/cidcm/mar/">http://www.bsos.umd.edu:80/cidcm/mar/</a>	A more academic-oriented set of data is the Minorities at Risk, hosted at the University of Maryland, that tracks substantial amounts of information throughout the world to create an index of the level of suffering and development benefit minorities receive worldwide.
Prehospital and Disaster Medicine, Journal of	<a href="http://pdm.medicine.wisc.edu/">http://pdm.medicine.wisc.edu/</a>	Provides copies of its journal that covers technical trends, practices and themes in the field of disaster medicine.
The Carter Center	<a href="http://www.cc.emory.edu/CARTER_CENTER">http://www.cc.emory.edu/CARTER_CENTER</a>	Information and news on conflict and mediation efforts. Good analysis and advocacy on specific conflicts. NGOs often use this for gauging future peace accords or humanitarian access capabilities.
The Forum on Early Warning and Response (FEWER)	<a href="http://www.fewer.org/">http://www.fewer.org/</a>	It is a lesser-used website, but deals with humanitarian conditions and conflict early warning and conflict prevention. It is an association of NGOs.
The Global Information and Early Warning System on Food and Agriculture (GIEWS)	<a href="http://www.fao.org/WAICENT/faoinfo/economic/giews/english/giewse.htm">http://www.fao.org/WAICENT/faoinfo/economic/giews/english/giewse.htm</a>	A major source of information for NGO personnel managing early warning activities and potential trouble-spot monitoring. It is supported by the UN Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO).
The OFDA/CRED Database	<a href="http://www.cred.be">http://www.cred.be</a>	A site dedicated to providing data on over 12,000 disasters. Normal users include national governments, NGOs, UN agencies and academic institutions.
The WHO Emergency and Humanitarian Action Website	<a href="http://www.who.int/disasters">http://www.who.int/disasters</a>	This site is also a popular destination for not only early warning information, but for disaster and emergency information. Sponsored and hosted by the World Health Organization (WHO).
UNHCR	<a href="http://www.unhcr.ch">http://www.unhcr.ch</a>	Often cited as the best humanitarian website that exists, UNHCR's web resources are unmatched. It provides news and updates on refugee and IDP conditions globally, and also information about its funding priorities, advancements, resources and manuals.
World Association for Disaster and Emergency Medicine (WADEM)	<a href="http://wadem.medicine.wisc.edu/">http://wadem.medicine.wisc.edu/</a>	Specialized discussion list and website.

### C. NGO Association Websites

Business Humanitarian Forum	<a href="http://www.bhforum.org">http://www.bhforum.org</a>	Forum for businesses and humanitarian organizations to communicate, liaise and coordinate activities.
Center for International Disaster Information (CIDI)	<a href="http://www.cidi.org">http://www.cidi.org</a>	Website devoted to explaining appropriate giving, and to coordinating gift campaigns. Not specifically useful for NGO personnel seeking emergency-related information.
InterAction	<a href="http://www.interaction.org">http://www.interaction.org</a>	Consortium of US-based humanitarian organizations. Site used for membership information (over 150 members) and appeals information.
International Aid and Trade	<a href="http://www.aidandtrade.org">http://www.aidandtrade.org</a>	Associated with the US, this organization and website put on trade shows. This site has information on the shows, exhibits and people that attend and support these shows.
International Council of Volunteer Associations (ICVA)	<a href="http://www.icva.org">http://www.icva.org</a>	A world-wide network of NGOs and nonprofits.
Institute of Global Communications	<a href="http://www.igc.org/igc/issues/hr">http://www.igc.org/igc/issues/hr</a>	Telecommunications association.
VOICE	<a href="http://www.ngovoice.org">http://www.ngovoice.org</a>	Consortium of European-based NGOs, similar to the US-based InterAction. Website is still being constructed.

### D. Online Reports and Manuals

Bulletin of the World Health Organization	<a href="http://www.who.int/bulletin/">http://www.who.int/bulletin/</a>
The Journal of Disaster Studies, Policy and Management	<a href="http://www.blackwellpublishers.co.uk/journals/DISA/descript.htm">http://www.blackwellpublishers.co.uk/journals/DISA/descript.htm</a>
Forced Migration Review	<a href="http://www.fmreview.org/">www.fmreview.org/</a>
Humanitarian Review	<a href="http://www.ngovoice.org">http://www.ngovoice.org</a>
Internet Journal of Rescue and Disaster Medicine	<a href="http://www.ispub.com/iournals/iirdm.htm">www.ispub.com/iournals/iirdm.htm</a>
Journal of Humanitarian Assistance	<a href="http://www.jha.ac/">http://www.jha.ac/</a>
Morbidity and Mortality Weekly	<a href="http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/">http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/</a>
Prehospital and Disaster Medicine	<a href="http://pdm.medicine.wisc.edu/home.html">http://pdm.medicine.wisc.edu/home.html</a>
The British Medical Journal	<a href="http://bmj.com/">http://bmj.com/</a>
The Humanitarian Practice Network	<a href="http://www.odihpn.org/home.asp">http://www.odihpn.org/home.asp</a>
The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies annual World Disaster Report	<a href="http://www.ifrc.org/publicat/wdr2001/">http://www.ifrc.org/publicat/wdr2001/</a>
The Lancet	<a href="http://www.thelancet.com/">http://www.thelancet.com/</a>
The U.S. Committee for Refugees Annual World Refugee Survey	<a href="http://www.refugees.org/">http://www.refugees.org/</a>

**E. UN Agency Websites**

Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis (DESIPA)	<a href="http://www.undp.org/popin/wdtrends/bss/bss.htm">http://www.undp.org/popin/wdtrends/bss/bss.htm</a>
Food And Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)	<a href="http://www.fao.org">http://www.fao.org</a>
International Strategy for Disaster Reduction	<a href="http://www.unisdr.org/">http://www.unisdr.org/</a>
Official WEB Site Locator for the United Nations	<a href="http://www.unsystem.org/index.html">http://www.unsystem.org/index.html</a>
Reliefweb	<a href="http://www.reliefweb.int">http://www.reliefweb.int</a>
The World Health Organization	<a href="http://www.who.int/home-page/">http://www.who.int/home-page/</a>
UN ACC Sub-Committee on Nutrition	<a href="http://www.unsystem.org/acccsni">http://www.unsystem.org/acccsni</a>
UN Development Programme (UNDP)	<a href="http://www.undp.org">http://www.undp.org</a>
UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	<a href="http://www.unhcr.ch">http://www.unhcr.ch</a>
UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS)	<a href="http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/mine/">http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/mine/</a>
UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OHCA)	<a href="http://www.reliefweb.int/ocha_ol/">http://www.reliefweb.int/ocha_ol/</a>
UNFPA	<a href="http://www.unfpa.org">http://www.unfpa.org</a>
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)	<a href="http://www.unicef.org">http://www.unicef.org</a>
United Nations Home Page	<a href="http://www.un.org/">http://www.un.org/</a>
WHO Regional Office for Europe	<a href="http://www.who.dk/">http://www.who.dk/</a>
WHO/Division of Emergency and Humanitarian Action (EHA)	<a href="http://www.who.int/eha/">http://www.who.int/eha/</a>
World Food Programme (WFP)	<a href="http://www.wfp.org/">http://www.wfp.org/</a>
World Health Organization (WHO)	<a href="http://www.who.int/">http://www.who.int/</a>

## F. Other Important Websites

Center for Disaster and Humanitarian Assistance Medicine (CDHAM)	<a href="http://www.cdham.org">http://www.cdham.org</a>
Center for Disaster and Humanitarian Assistance (CDMHA)	<a href="http://www.cdmha.org">http://www.cdmha.org</a>
US Army	<a href="http://www.army.mil">http://www.army.mil</a>
US Navy	<a href="http://www.navy.mil">http://www.navy.mil</a>
US Airforce	<a href="http://www.af.mil">http://www.af.mil</a>
US Marines	<a href="http://www.usmc.mil">http://www.usmc.mil</a>
US DOD	<a href="http://www.dod.mil">http://www.dod.mil</a>
US Department of State	<a href="http://www.state.gov">http://www.state.gov</a>
US Department of Agriculture	<a href="http://www.usda.gov">http://www.usda.gov</a>
US Agency for International Development	<a href="http://www.usaid.gov">http://www.usaid.gov</a>

## Annex 3

### Selected Humanitarian Publications

The following publications are taken from various types of literature concerning different topics and themes to provide a wide array of references for understanding the NGO sector and humanitarian assistance community. This is an abbreviated list and is by far not comprehensive. It focuses on providing those publications that are still available today, and does not include conference report publications. The citing style is not official but is formatted to be easy to read or thumb through.

Aall, Pamela, Lt. Col. Daniel Miltenberger, Thomas G. Weiss  
Guide to IGOs NGOs and the Military in Peace and Relief Operations  
United States Institute of Peace Press, Washington, D.C. 2000

Anderson, Mary B and Peter Woodrow  
Rising from the Ashes: Development Strategies in Times of Disaster  
Boulder, CO: Lynne Reinner, 1998.

Bennet, Jon  
Meeting Needs: NGO Coordination in Practice  
Earthscan and ICVA, 1995.

Black , Maggie  
A Cause for Our Times: Oxfam the First 50 Years  
Oxford University Press, 1992.

Boli, John and Thomas, G.  
Constructing World Culture: International Nongovernmental Organizations since 1875 Stanford, CA:  
Stanford Univ. Press, 1995.

Byman, Daniel, Ian Lesser, Bruce Pirnie, Cheryl Benard, Matthew Waxman  
Strengthening the Partnership: Improving Military Coordination with Relief Agencies and Allies in Humanitarian Operations  
Santa Monica, CA, Rand, 2000.

Cuny, Frederick C.  
Disasters and Development  
Washington, DC: Intertect Press, 1994.

Dollar, David, and Lant Pritchett  
Assessing Aid: What Works, What Doesn't and Why  
World Bank Policy Research Report, 1998.

Edwards, Michael and David Hulme  
Non-Governmental Organizations- Performance and Accountability: Beyond the Magic Bullet  
London: Save the Children and Earthscan, 1998.

Hampton, Janie, ed.  
Internally Displaced People: A Global Survey  
London: Earthscan, 1998.

Hancock, Graham  
Lords of Poverty: The Power, Prestige and Corruption of the International Aid Business  
New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1989.

Hoy, Paula  
Players and Issues in International Aid  
Kumarian Press, 1998.

InterAction  
InterAction Membership Directory, 2000-2001  
Washington, DC: InterAction, 2000.  
<http://www.interaction.org>

InterAction  
Global Work: Guide to Volunteer, Internship and Fellowship Opportunities  
Washington, DC: InterAction Press, 2000.

Levenstein, Aaron  
Escape to Freedom: The Story of the International Rescue Committee  
Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1983.

Meyer, Carrie  
The Economics and Politics of NGOs in Latin America  
Westport: Praeger Press, 1999.

Macrae Joanna and Anthony Zwi, eds  
War and Hunger: Rethinking International Responses to Complex Emergencies  
London: Zed Books, 1994.

Malena, Carmen  
Working with NGOs: A Practical Guide to Operational Collaboration Between the World Bank and Non-Governmental Organizations  
World Bank Operations Policy Department, 1995.

Minear, Larry and Thomas Weiss  
Mercy Under Fire: War and the Global Humanitarian Community  
Westview Press, 1995.

Natsios, Andrew  
US Foreign Policy and the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse  
Westport, Conn: Praeger, 1997.

Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance  
OFDA Annual Reports  
Washington, DC: USAID Bureau for Humanitarian Response

Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance  
Foreign Operations Guide, Version 3.0 ("FOG")  
Washington, DC: USAID/BHR, 1999.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Development Assistance Committee  
Civilian and Military Means of Providing and Supporting Humanitarian Assistance During Conflict: Comparative Advantages and Costs  
Paris: OECD, 1998.

Pirnie, Bruce  
Civilians and Soldiers: Achieving Better Coordination  
Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1998.

Salomon, Lester

*"The Rise of the Non-Profit Sector"*

Foreign Affairs 73, no. 4 (July-August, 1994).

Scott, Colin, Larry Minear and Thomas Weiss

*The News Media, Civil War, and Humanitarian Action*

Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1996.

Seiple, Chris

*The US Military/NGO Relationship in Humanitarian Interventions*

Carlisle, PA: US Army War College, 1996.

Shawcross, William

*Deliver Us from Evil: Peacekeepers, Warlord and a World of Endless Conflict*

New York: Simon and Schuster, 2000.

Sogge, David, editor

*Compassion and Calculation: The Business of Private Foreign Aid*

London: Pluto Press, 1996.

Sphere Project

*The Sphere Project: Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response*

Geneva, Switzerland and Oxford: Oxfam Publishing, 2000.

Suzuki, Naoki

*Inside NGOs*

London: Intermediate Technology Publications, 1998.

Tarp, Finn, Editor

*Foreign Aid and Development: Lessons Learned and Directions for the Future*

London: Routledge, 2000.

Tvedt Terje

*Angels of Mercy or Development Diplomats*

Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 1998.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

*Handbook for Emergencies (2nd Edition)*

Geneva: UNHCR, 1999.

Vaux, Tony

*The Selfish Altruist: Relief Work in Famine and War*

Sterling VA: EarthScan, 2001.

Weiss, Thomas and Cindy Collins

*Humanitarian Challenges and Intervention: World Politics and the Dilemmas of Help (2nd edition)*

Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2000.

Willetts, Peter

*The Conscience of the World: The Influence of Non-Governmental Organizations in the UN system*

Washington DC: Brookings Institute, 1996.

Wood, Adrian, R Apthorpe, J Borton

*Evaluating International Humanitarian Action: Reflections from Practitioners*

London: Zed Books, 2001.

## **Annex 4**

# **The Principles of Conduct for The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Response Programmes**

### **The Code of Conduct**

#### **1: The Humanitarian imperative comes first**

The right to receive humanitarian assistance, and to offer it, is a fundamental humanitarian principle which should be enjoyed by all citizens of all countries. As members of the international community, we recognise our obligation to provide humanitarian assistance wherever it is needed. Hence the need for unimpeded access to affected populations, is of fundamental importance in exercising that responsibility. The prime motivation of our response to disaster is to alleviate human suffering amongst those least able to withstand the stress caused by disaster. When we give humanitarian aid it is not a partisan or political act and should not be viewed as such.

#### **2: Aid is given regardless of the race, creed or nationality of the recipients and without adverse distinction of any kind. Aid priorities are calculated on the basis of need alone**

Wherever possible, we will base the provision of relief aid upon a thorough assessment of the needs of the disaster victims and the local capacities already in place to meet those needs. Within the entirety of our programmes, we will reflect considerations of proportionality. Human suffering must be alleviated whenever it is found; life is as precious in one part of a country as another. Thus, our provision of aid will reflect the degree of suffering it seeks to alleviate. In implementing this approach, we recognize the crucial role played by women in disaster prone communities and will ensure that this role is supported, not diminished, by our aid programmes. The implementation of such a universal, impartial and independent policy, can only be effective if we and our partners have access to the necessary resources to provide for such equitable relief, and have equal access to all disaster victims.

#### **3: Aid will not be used to further a particular political or religious standpoint**

Humanitarian aid will be given according to the need of individuals, families and communities. Notwithstanding the right of NGHAs to espouse particular political or religious opinions, we affirm that assistance will not be dependent on the adherence of the recipients to those opinions. We will not tie the promise, delivery or distribution of assistance to the embracing or acceptance of a particular political or religious creed.

#### **4: We shall endeavour not to act as instruments of government foreign policy**

NGHAs are agencies which act independently from governments. We therefore formulate our own policies and implementation strategies and do not seek to implement the policy of any government, except in so far as it coincides with our own independent policy. We will never knowingly - or through negligence - allow ourselves, or our employees, to be used to gather information of a political, military or economically sensitive nature for governments or other bodies that may serve purposes other than those which are strictly humanitarian, nor will we act as instruments of foreign policy of donor governments. We will use the assistance we receive to respond to needs and this assistance should not be driven by the need to dispose of donor commodity surpluses, nor by the political interest of any particular donor. We value and promote the voluntary giving of labour and finances by concerned individuals to support our work and recognise the independence of action promoted by such voluntary motivation. In order to protect our independence we will seek to avoid dependence upon a single funding source.

#### **5: We shall respect culture and custom**

We will endeavour to respect the culture, structures and customs of the communities and countries we are working in.

#### **6: We shall attempt to build disaster response on local capacities**

All people and communities - even in disaster - possess capacities as well as vulnerabilities. Where possible, we will strengthen these capacities by employing local staff, purchasing local materials and trading with local companies. Where possible, we will work through local NGHAs as partners in planning and implementation, and co-operate with local government structures where appropriate. We will place a high priority on the proper co-ordination of



our emergency responses. This is best done within the countries concerned by those most directly involved in the relief operations, and should include representatives of the relevant UN bodies.

**7: Ways shall be found to involve programme beneficiaries in the management of relief aid**

Disaster response assistance should never be imposed upon the beneficiaries. Effective relief and lasting rehabilitation can best be achieved where the intended beneficiaries are involved in the design, management and implementation of the assistance programme. We will strive to achieve full community participation in our relief and rehabilitation programmes.

**8: Relief aid must strive to reduce future vulnerabilities to disaster as well as meeting basic needs**

All relief actions affect the prospects for long term development, either in a positive or a negative fashion. Recognizing this, we will strive to implement relief programmes which actively reduce the beneficiaries' vulnerability to future disasters and help create sustainable lifestyles. We will pay particular attention to environmental concerns in the design and management of relief programmes. We will also endeavour to minimize the negative impact of humanitarian assistance, seeking to avoid long term beneficiary dependence upon external aid.

**9: We hold ourselves accountable to both those we seek to assist and those from whom we accept resources**

We often act as an institutional link in the partnership between those who wish to assist and those who need assistance during disasters. We therefore hold ourselves accountable to both constituencies. All our dealings with donors and beneficiaries shall reflect an attitude of openness and transparency. We recognise the need to report on our activities, both from a financial perspective and the perspective of effectiveness. We recognise the obligation to ensure appropriate monitoring of aid distributions and to carry out regular assessments of the impact of disaster assistance. We will also seek to report, in an open fashion, upon the impact of our work, and the factors limiting or enhancing that impact. Our programmes will be based upon high standards of professionalism and expertise in order to minimise the wasting of valuable resources.

**10: In our information, publicity and advertising activities, we shall recognise disaster victims as dignified humans, not hopeless objects**

Respect for the disaster victim as an equal partner in action should never be lost. In our public information we shall portray an objective image of the disaster situation where the capacities and aspirations of disaster victims are highlighted, and not just their vulnerabilities and fears. While we will co-operate with the media in order to enhance public response, we will not allow external or internal demands for publicity to take precedence over the principle of maximising overall relief assistance. We will avoid competing with other disaster response agencies for media coverage in situations where such coverage may be to the detriment of the service provided to the beneficiaries or to the security of our staff or the beneficiaries.

## Annex 5

### Example of NGO Security Problems

NGOs face many dangers when they work in CHEs and in disaster settings. In places like southern Sudan and northern Uganda, security conditions change constantly. NGOs are traditionally neutral, and while often in the middle of fighting or in dangerous areas NGOs are normally not targeted specifically. As this article reports, military forces suspected that military operations were based in refugee camps, and that NGO and UN humanitarian activity must stop because of suspected association with a specific side.

This article, taken from UN IRIN on August 12, 2002, outlines events that caused the deaths and kidnapping of NGO personnel and drastic obstacles to providing humanitarian assistance to hundreds of thousands of people.

#### **UGANDA: Rebels demand aid agency pull-out**<sup>109</sup>

NAIROBI, 9 Aug 2002 (IRIN)

The Ugandan rebel Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), has issued an ultimatum for the United Nations and aid agencies to pull out of northern Uganda and southern Sudan by 14 August, according to an LRA statement issued to the International Rescue Committee (IRC), the humanitarian agency said.

IRC also reported that the LRA continued to hold hostage five of its employees who were abducted on Monday, when the rebels attacked and destroyed Acholi-Pii refugee camp in northern Uganda's district of Pader, forcing about 24,000 Sudanese residents to flee. IRC, which has been overseeing humanitarian programmes in the camp for two years, said it was negotiating for the release of the aid workers - all men and Ugandan citizens.

In a statement it released on Thursday, IRC said the LRA telephoned the IRC offices in Kampala, the Ugandan capital, on Wednesday and issued a statement, which, they said, must be broadcast in exchange for the release of the hostages.

"The rebel statement, relayed to IRC by Colonel Charles Tabu Ley, said Monday's attack was in retaliation for Uganda's military campaign against it in southern Sudan, with permission from the Sudanese government and with the help of the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA)," the IRC reported. "The LRA also accuses the Sudanese government and the United Nations refugee agency (UNHCR) for supporting the operation."

According to IRC, the LRA demanded that the United Nations and nongovernmental aid organisations cease their operations and leave northern Uganda and southern Sudan by 14 August, warning that in the event of non-compliance, "history will repeat itself". "The rebel statement has not been broadcast verbatim, but on Wednesday, the BBC's Focus on Africa programme aired an interview with Timothy Bishop, the head of IRC programmes in Uganda, about the contents of the statement and his discussions with LRA to win the release of the staff," the IRC statement said.

"Bishop said the LRA had assured him that a Ugandan military base in the camp, not the IRC, had been the target of the attack. Bishop told the BBC that he is pleading with LRA to release the hostages," it added.

IRC said the four hostages had been made to walk long distances and were unsure where they were, but believed they were still in Uganda.

On Tuesday Bishop told IRIN that IRC had earlier withdrawn most of its staff from the camp, following an attempted attack on the camp on 31 July, but redeployed them there after receiving assurances from the Ugandan authorities guaranteeing their security.

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<sup>109</sup> [http://www.irinnews.org/report.asp?ReportID=29272&SelectRegion=East\\_Africa&SelectCountry=UGANDA](http://www.irinnews.org/report.asp?ReportID=29272&SelectRegion=East_Africa&SelectCountry=UGANDA).

Monday's attack on Acholi-Pii was considered one of the most severe raids carried out by the LRA since it began to intensify its attacks in northern Uganda in June. The number of casualties incurred in Monday's attack is still unconfirmed, but media reports suggest that at least 50 people were killed. The IRC was also tracking down up to 30 aid workers who remained unaccounted for, according to its statement.

Following the attack, IRC urged the Ugandan government to "act decisively" to restore security in northern Uganda, where nearly half a million people have been uprooted from their homes and are living in camps as a result of LRA activities. "It is clear that the government is trying, but is unable to guarantee security. We believe any long-term solutions in northern Uganda must include peace," the IRC said.

Meanwhile, the UN World Food Programme (WFP) has said it was concerned over the escalating violence in Uganda, which, it said, was preventing it from delivering food to the half a million people who depended solely on the agency for food. "We have been unable to deliver food to refugee camps without convoys. Even that is only possible on days when authorities believe the area is secure," Khaled Mansour, a WFP spokesman, said in a statement released

[ENDS]

## Annex 6

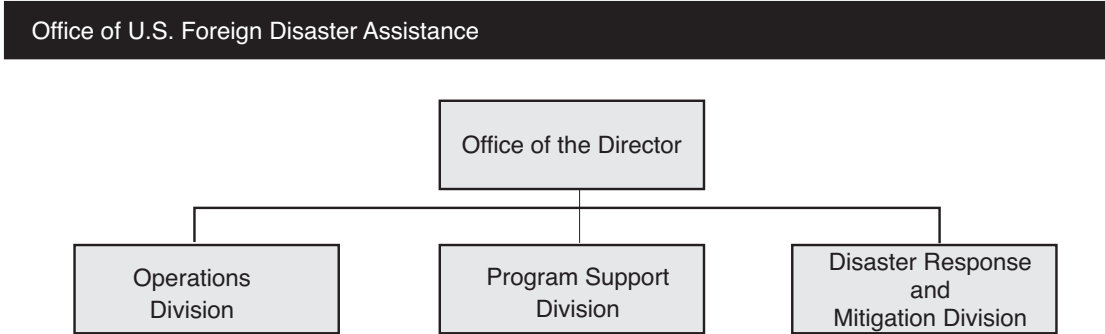
### How the US Government Provides Humanitarian Aid

Taken directly from the USAID website, these few pages describe in detail how USAID and OFDA specifically formulate and implement humanitarian assistance activities.<sup>110</sup>

#### The Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance

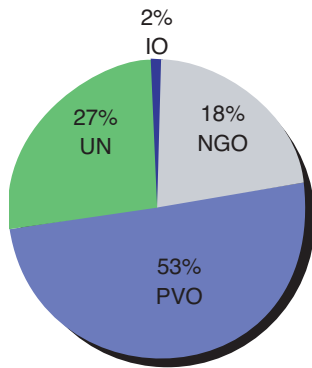
The Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA) is the office within USAID responsible for providing non-food humanitarian assistance in response to international crises and disasters. The USAID Administrator is designated as the President’s Special Coordinator for International Disaster Assistance and USAID/OFDA assists in the coordination of this assistance. USAID/OFDA is part of the Bureau for Humanitarian Response (USAID/BHR), along with the Office of Food For Peace (USAID/FFP), the Office of Transition Initiatives (USAID/OTI), the Office of Private and Voluntary Cooperation (USAID/PVC), and the Office of American Schools and Hospitals Abroad (USAID/ASHA). USAID/OFDA recently reorganized into three divisions, under the management of the Office of the Director. The Disaster Response and Mitigation (DRM) division is responsible for coordinating with other organizations for the provision of relief supplies and humanitarian assistance. DRM also devises, coordinates, and implements program strategies for the application of science and technology to prevention, mitigation, and national and international preparedness initiatives for a variety of natural and man-made disaster situations. The Operations Division (OPS) develops and manages logistical, operational, and technical support for disaster responses. OPS maintains readiness to respond to emergencies through several mechanisms, including managing several Search and Rescue (SAR) Teams, the Ground Operations Team (GO Team), field Disaster Assistance Response Teams (DART), and Washington Response Management Teams (RMT). The Program Support (PS) division provides programmatic and administrative support, including budget/financial services, procurement planning, contract/grant administration, general administrative support, and communication support for both USAID/OFDA Washington, D.C. and its field offices....

...USAID/OFDA/DRM provides humanitarian assistance in response to a declaration of a foreign disaster made by the U.S. Ambassador or the U.S. Department of State. Once an event or situation is determined to require U.S. Government (USG) assistance, USAID/OFDA can immediately provide up to \$25,000 to the U.S. Embassy or USAID Mission to purchase relief supplies locally or give a contribution to a relief organization in the affected country. USAID/OFDA also can send its own relief commodities, such as plastic sheeting, blankets, tents, and water purification units, from one of its five stockpiles located in Italy, Guam, Honduras, and the United States. Increasingly, USAID/OFDA deploys short or long-term field personnel to countries where disasters are occurring or threaten to occur, and in some cases, dispatches a DART.



<sup>110</sup> [http://www.usaid.gov/hum\\_response/ofda/00annual/how.html](http://www.usaid.gov/hum_response/ofda/00annual/how.html).

The largest percentage of USAID/OFDA’s assistance goes to relief and rehabilitation project grants managed by Private Voluntary Organizations (PVOs), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), and International Organizations (IOs). Relief projects include airlifting relief supplies to affected populations in remote locations, managing primary health care and supplementary feeding centers, and providing shelter materials to disaster evacuees and displaced persons. A rehabilitation project might immunize dislocated populations against disease, provide seeds and tools to farmers who have been affected by disasters, or drill wells or rehabilitate water systems in drought-stricken countries. USAID/OFDA carefully monitors the organizations implementing these projects to ensure that resources are used wisely and to determine if the project needs to be adapted to changing conditions.



The goal of each project is to meet the humanitarian needs of the affected population, with the aim of returning the population to self-sufficiency. The “notwithstanding” clause of Section 491 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 states that no statutory or regulatory requirements shall restrict USAID/OFDA’s ability to respond to the needs of disaster victims in a timely fashion. USAID/OFDA follows the standard USAID procedures for routine procurements, but utilizes expedited or modified procedures when necessary to achieve its disaster response objectives. The first principle in disaster response accountability is to ensure that appropriate assistance gets to the neediest victims in time to minimize death and suffering. Procurement and accounting procedures may be expedited, but must include effective systems of internal control.

Not all of USAID/OFDA’s assistance goes to providing aid in response to disasters. USAID/OFDA’s mitigation staff oversees a portfolio of projects designed to reduce the impact of disasters on victims and economic assets in disaster-prone countries. Over the last several years, USAID/OFDA has invested in a number of programs in partnership with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center, the World Environment Center, and other offices within USAID. These programs not only enhance a country’s capacity to manage its own disasters and hazards, but also promote the transfer of technology, goods, and services between the U.S. and the host country. USAID/OFDA mitigation-related programs range from investing in drought early-warning systems that can possibly head off a famine to training local relief workers to manage the response to a disaster more effectively. USAID/OFDA is increasingly investing in programs designed to prevent, mitigate, prepare, and plan for complex emergencies, which are more the result of human actions than acts of nature.

**Other U.S. Government Offices That Provide Foreign Humanitarian Assistance**

USAID/OFDA is not the only office within the USG that provides humanitarian aid to foreign countries. USAID/FFP is responsible for administering the USG’s foreign food aid programs, under U.S. Public Law (P.L.) 480 Titles II and III. Title II emergency food aid programs are targeted to vulnerable populations suffering from food insecurity as a result of natural disasters, civil conflict, or other crises. Title II emergency food aid is provided without repayment requirements, whereas Title III food aid is provided as a bilateral loan program to countries in need of assistance. USAID/OTI is the office within USAID responsible for providing assistance to countries that are in a stage of transition from crisis to recovery. Its assistance is designed to facilitate the transition to peace and democracy by aiding in the demobilization of combatants or developing democratic governance structures within the country. Other parts of USAID, such as the regional bureaus, provide foreign development aid, which often complements humanitarian relief programs or can be regarded as disaster recovery assistance. Countries that have achieved sustainable development are less likely to require massive USG humanitarian assistance.

Three of the biggest providers of USG humanitarian assistance are the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau for Population, Refugees and Migration (State/PRM) and the U.S. Department of Defense’s Office for Peacekeeping and Humanitarian Affairs (DOD/PK/HA). USDA works closely with USAID/FFP in allocating surplus food commodities to developing countries, under the Section 416(b) program of the Agricultural Act of 1949. This food aid is often used for emergency feeding programs in countries experiencing food shortages due to drought or civil strife. In other countries, local currency proceeds from the sale of Section

416(b) food aid is used in support of disaster assistance projects. State/PRM provides multilateral grants to international relief organizations in response to refugee emergency appeals and contributes to the regular program budgets of organizations such as the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). DOD/PK/HA coordinates the utilization of DOD assets for humanitarian assistance overseas. In addition, DOD works closely with USAID/OFDA and the U.S. Department of State to coordinate the Denton Program, a program that transports humanitarian goods on a space available basis, using U.S. military transportation. The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) also provide technical assistance in response to disasters and potential hazards overseas.

**USAID/OFDA Top Five Programs FY 1990 - FY 2000**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Disaster</b>	<b>Program Length</b>	<b>Total Funding</b>
Former Yugoslavia*	Complex Emergency	9 years	\$328.0
Sudan	Complex Emergency	14 years	\$280.7
Angola	Complex Emergency	12 years	\$137.6
Somalia	Complex Emergency	12 years	\$133.8
Rwanda	Complex Emergency	9 years	\$108.4

\* Accumulated funding for programs in Gosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Kosovo, and Serbia-Montenegro

## Annex 7

# The Red Cross and Red Crescent Systems Explained



**By Steven Hansch**

The Red Cross movement accounts for a large part of the system of civilian aid agencies, but has a special status because the Red Cross movement was created by governments. The Red Cross derives its mandate from government meetings and conventions, including the Geneva Conventions.

### A. The American Red Cross

The American Red Cross is the national Red Cross society in the U.S. that was created by the US Congress. The US Congress also legislated that within the US, only the Red Cross and the military are permitted to use the Red Cross emblem. The American Red Cross is also unique among US NGOs in that it was established by Congress to be explicitly bi-partisan.

In the United States, the Red Cross is perceived to be, and often is, the lead agency that people turn to in times of natural disaster. It is also the nation's lead agency for managing the nation's blood supply and for training and mobilizing volunteer labor for basic health care. The American Red Cross's annual income and expenses exceeds \$1.7 billion and this does not include the tens of thousands of work hours contributed by community volunteers

The international services division of the American Red Cross works in both relief and development. It channels almost \$200 million a year for overseas humanitarian aid. Alone among US NGOs because of its size, the American Red Cross has the peculiar luxury of having automatic counterparts — other Red Cross societies — in each country overseas with which it can work. In addition it can work through the international bodies based in Geneva — the Federation and ICRC. At any time, the American Red Cross has fifty or more delegates working in crisis-affected areas such as Macedonia, El Salvador and Cambodia.

A new effort by the American Red Cross, working with partners like UNICEF, is the Measles Initiative to try to control measles deaths in Africa by vaccinating 200 million children over five years, that is estimated could save over a million child deaths. In this effort, announced in 2002, the American Red Cross is merging its resources with WHO, CDC, the UN Foundation, and other donors.

### B. Other National Societies

The Red Cross movement requires that each nation have no more than one Red Cross (or Red Crescent) society, and that the determination be made by the government of that country. That “national society” represents the whole country, just as the American Red Cross is the one and only national society in the US. Any country can establish their society either to be a Red Cross society or a Red Crescent society. Red Crescent societies are exactly the same except in the emblem they display, and are full members of the international Red Cross movement. Many countries with large Muslim populations have chosen to name their society Red Cross since the original creation of the Cross emblem was based on the flag of Switzerland, not any religious reference. China, Nigeria and Indonesia each have huge Islamic populations but adopted the Red Cross, not the Red Crescent.

In most countries, the national Red Cross society has a closer relationship with its government, and its military, than other NGOs. In many developing countries, the local Red Cross society is not always extremely capable. As in the US, many Red Cross societies also become involved in managing blood supplies. Frequently, therefore, local Red Cross societies play a critical role as the channels for international assistance from donor Red Cross societies.

### C. The Federation of Societies: IFRC

The association coalition of the various Red Cross agencies is called the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. Based in Geneva, Switzerland, it was previously called the “League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies” and depends on its members for most of its work. In effect, its value is in facilitating the contri-

butions from various members to each country affected by crisis. The Geneva hub conducts assessments and surveillance for all its members, and is increasingly playing a lead role in creating standardized health and food aid responses.

For most of its history, the Federation has had a different name: the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, or “the League” for short-hand. The Federation responds to natural disasters and promotes disaster mitigation, manages refugee camp aid, and helps reconstruct health systems after conflicts have ended.

#### **D. ICRC: the International Committee of the Red Cross**

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), based in Geneva, is established by international convention and promotes adherence to the Geneva conventions in war zones.

Of the NGO-like operational agencies, ICRC has the largest budget (over \$600M a year) devoted entirely to humanitarian crises.

As an inter-governmental organization, the ICRC receives funding directly from governments. The US Department of State gives the ICRC a sum, earmarked by Congress, for use each year for its worldwide operations. With this funding, the ICRC is more “on the ground” than any other international organization funded through state channels. The ICRC’s relief assistance is perhaps the most comprehensive of any implementing agency, including food aid, nutrition, water supply, medical and surgical care, shelter, and care for livestock. Unlike WFP, ICRC not only procures food but distributes it directly to EPs.

It visits prisons worldwide to observe the treatment of prisoners, particularly political prisoners and prisoners of war. When the ICRC visited the Taliban POWs held on the US military base of Guantanamo in Cuba, it was routine. As part of its mandate, ICRC also trains militaries worldwide about the Geneva Conventions. In the 1980s, the ICRC gradually catalyzed an international movement to view landmines as a violation of the laws of war because they kill civilians at least as often as they kill armed combatants.

Most ICRC expatriate staff members are Swiss, but some are Americans and other nationalities. The American Red Cross often seconds US delegates to ICRC operations overseas.

The ICRC does not participate in coordinating forums in the same ways that other NGOs do. Because it is not an NGO, it is not a member of NGO associations, though it often attends meetings. Because of its strict adherence to its principles of neutrality, impartiality and confidentiality, it feels that it must avoid the appearance of signing on to coalition efforts. Thus, while it will meet one-on-one with militaries, including the US military or peace-keeping forces, it avoids those forums that give the appearance of “joint” efforts where NGOs, militaries and governments may have struck joint strategies. The ICRC always has maintained both the fact and the appearance of independence of action, in order to gain access to EPs on each side in a war.

#### **E. Red Cross Myths**

##### **Red Cross Myth #1: The Red Cross Emblem is Meant to be a Religious Symbol**

The “Red Cross” (a plus + sign against a white background) was chosen by the founders of the movement precisely to be neutral, to imply no race, creed, nationality or religion. It is based on the national flag and symbol of Switzerland which had demonstrated neutrality over many centuries. It was not meant to be a reference to the Christian cross, even though some leading politicians have said as much.

##### **Red Cross Myth #2: International Humanitarian Law Applies Only to Uniformed Combatants**

International Humanitarian Law (IHL) specifically addresses wars and combatants, but is intended to be binding on all parties to any major conflicts, including rebel groups and irregular militia. The Geneva Conventions also specify that civilian populations can not be targeted in war-time, and it goes on to also confer protections on aid agencies working in conflict zones.



**Red Cross Myth #3: There is one “International Red Cross” Agency**

Often news reporters speak about the “International Red Cross” as if there were an agency with this name, which there is not. There is indeed a “Red Cross Movement” - the alliance of different Red Cross agencies. But there are two international Red Cross bodies, both of which are based in Geneva, but in different offices, under different administrations, and with separate budgets and programs. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is the lead agency spoken about in the press in war-zones, whereas the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is the organization that more often takes the lead in refugee camps, natural disasters and epidemics.

**Red Cross Myth #4: The Federation Just Helps in Natural Disasters**

While the ICRC works inside war zones, the Federation (IFRC) frequently works around war-zones, including displaced persons camps and work in post-conflict reconstruction.

**Red Cross Myth #5: The Red Cross Gets Involved Only After Crises**

The Federation, perhaps more than any other organization in the world, emphasizes disaster reduction through prevention, preparedness and mitigation. Again, the ICRC tries to address the root causes of conflict by bringing scholarly and diplomatic attention to the spread of arms; the ICRC publishes journals that act as forums for scholarly analysis of the application of humanitarian principles to emerging problems, such as chemical weapons, biological weapons,<sup>111</sup> the spread of small arms, and landmines.

**Red Cross Myth #6: ICRC’s policy of Confidentiality Supports Human Rights Violators**

The ICRC policy to not reveal information it finds in its site visits (for example to prisons) is often criticized by NGOs. It is argued that ICRC is cowardly or uncaring or lacks a sense of outrage and stands too fastidiously on its bureaucratic rules.

But other organizations like NGOs are free to criticize governments for human rights and IHL violations; the system works effectively because they can complement the ICRC. Meanwhile, if the ICRC did not strictly adhere to its confidentiality policy, it would not be invited into countries, into prisons, which means there would be no observation to protect prisoners. Lastly, ICRC issues a report of its findings to the government in question. If that government does not release the findings to the public, or share with other governments, then the international community can indeed interpret this reluctance as a sign that the ICRC found problems during its visit. The lack of publication itself becomes a red flag calling attention to human rights violations.

**Red Cross Myth #7: The ICRC and Federation Dictate Which Societies Can Belong**

The ICRC has the responsibility to review the status of organizations claiming to have fulfilled the requirements of being a national Red Cross society. But the requirements were established by governments, and specified in the Geneva Conventions, which was adopted by governments.

There was much debate, for example, over why the Israeli movement, the Magen David Adom was not recognized as a member of the Red Cross movement. The responsibility to meet the requirements of membership falls to each national society, such as MDA, which could adopt one of the two emblems stipulated in the Geneva Conventions. Because governments created the Geneva Conventions and wrote the rules of membership, they were specifically asked in 1949 whether they wanted to add the MDA symbol to the Geneva Conventions, thereby entering the MDA society without any modification to its practices, and governments voted no.

**Red Cross Myth #8: The ICRC Picks and Chooses Which Wars to Work in**

When other NGOs pull out, that’s often the point in time when the ICRC comes in. Every NGO, including the American Red Cross, has latitude to decide just on its own which crises it wants to get involved with. In the charter

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<sup>111</sup> As in Robert Mathews and Timothy McCormack's 1999 "The Influence of Humanitarian Principles in the Negotiation of Arms Control Treaties" in the *International Review of the Red Cross*.

of the ICRC, it does not have a choice. According to the view of the officers of the ICRC, it is required to work in any and all war-zones where it is needed for as long as it is needed. The ICRC stays in the worst crises even when other agencies have pulled out (including Somalia in 1991, Rwanda in early 1994). The only exceptions, when the ICRC staff pull out, is when their staff are systematically killed – as when 3 international staff (unarmed) were executed in Burundi in 1995 and in 6 in Chechnya in 1996. Similarly, after an ICRC relief plane was shot down while en route to Biafra, Nigeria in 1968, the ICRC also temporarily withdrew its staff.

## **F. Red Cross Summary**

The International Federation was founded in 1919 because of the need that had been shown for cooperation between Red Cross Societies based on the expertise and volunteerism that had been built up during World War I. The League of Red Cross Societies, as it was then called, became the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in 1982 and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in 1991. The five founding members were Britain, Italy, France, Japan and the United States; now the Federation has 178 member National Societies.

The International Federation is the world's largest humanitarian organization with a Secretariat based in Geneva. The Federation's mission is to help vulnerable people who are at risk from situation threatening their survival or who live in below a standard level of socio-economic dignity, victims of natural disasters, poverty created by socio-economic crises, refugees, etc. The Federations' work focuses on four core areas: promoting humanitarian values, disaster response, disaster preparedness and health and community care. The Secretariat coordinates National Societies by developing country/regional strategies identifying vulnerabilities and managing funding.

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## Annex 8

### Key Humanitarian UN Agencies

#### By Steven Hansch and Grey Frandsen

Dozens of UN agencies participate in some form of humanitarian assistance each year. And in those emergencies that the UN responds to, there are a handful of dominating agencies that play essential roles in managing international emergency response efforts. Two of them, UNHCR and WFP, are important to NGOs because they pass large sums of resources on to NGOs. Others, such as WHO and OCHA are important for coordinating activities and giving NGOs key technical guidance.

Below are brief profiles of each of the larger UN agencies that are most often encountered in emergency settings.

#### United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) grew, in 1951, out of the International Refugee Organization (IRO) which the General Assembly had established in 1946. Over the decades its scope of activities grew, from an original focus on legal support to European asylum-seekers, to a full-service aid agency working in every part of the world, wherever there are refugees.

Whereas UNHCR grew into a manager of large relief programs in the 1980s, in the 1990s, it faced the responsibility of negotiating and planning mass return. It helped to arrange the repatriation of some ten million refugees during the 1990s. UNHCR works largely through its NGO partners, roughly 300 of them.

#### UNICEF

Of all the UN agencies, UNICEF behaves the most like an NGO. If it were not in fact a UN body, it would be listed in this publication as if it were a large, ubiquitous humanitarian NGO. It has an advantage over other UN agencies in being present in virtually every emergency affected area; unlike UNHCR its work precedes emergencies and comes after emergencies and unlike WFP it does not only work in areas of food shortages. More than any other UN body, it is operational, working close to the ground mobilizing health, hygiene, nutrition and education for women and, through women, children.

For UNICEF, emergencies take up a small portion of its portfolio, roughly 10%, and because UNICEF has such a wide range of technical capabilities, it responds to EP needs with programs that are quite different from one crisis to the next. Sometimes it focuses on food security – a major element of its work in southern Sudan for example. In Kosovo it led the humanitarian community in providing education and warnings about landmine hazards. In northern Kenya, it drilled and maintained wells to provide water to Somali refugees. In Zaire, it managed centers for abandoned or “unaccompanied” children who were refugees from Rwanda. Increasingly UNICEF has tried to systematize the rapid re-establishment of education as an essential emergency service, and bring more resources to the recovery of children, including remedial services for psychosocial trauma.

In refugee crises, UNICEF often works under UNHCR’s coordination, helping out in a particular sector, shoulder to shoulder with NGOs. In other crises, it can sometimes play more of a lead role, as in southern Sudan, where UNICEF manages the UN umbrella aid effort for internally displaced and famine victims known formally as “Operation Lifeline Sudan” (OLS).

UNICEF was created by the UN General Assembly (government representatives) in 1946 to focus both on the needs of children and their mothers. Like other specialized agencies, it does not receive a budget from the UN Secretariat, but derives its income from voluntary contributions from governments. Just as the ICRC is guided by the Geneva Conventions, UNICEF is guided by the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC), which entered into force in September 1990.

One of the oldest and best known of all annual reports is UNICEF's State of the World's Children, which NGOs look to as a source of data about immunization coverage, malnutrition and other health trends in developing countries. UNICEF's 8000 staff also promote the Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative BFHI,

The Education for All (EFA) principles,<sup>112</sup> research on drug use and new vaccines, such as the Children's Vaccine Initiative, and is increasingly involved in human rights promotion.

### **The World Food Program (WFP)**

The World Food Program began as an experiment, promoted by the Kennedy Administration, and working under the Food and Agriculture Organization (another UN agency) at first. But after the 1974 World Food Summit, donors committed to the WFP idea more fully, and it grew throughout the 1960s. WFP has always received a lot of food from the US Government (as appropriated under Title II of the Food for Peace account of Public Law 480).

For most of its history, WFP staff saw it as primarily a "development" agency, using food to support economic challenges of developing countries. But in the 1990s, WFP was pulled into more and more responses to disasters, conflicts and protracted refugee operations, where refugees needed food in large volumes year after year. Today, the larger share of WFP's food budget goes to humanitarian crises.

Headquartered in Rome, WFP tracks the shipments of international donations of food aid, and in some cases buys local foods with cash given to it. In almost all cases it hands food over to counterpart organizations, such as international NGOs or local groups such as the Red Cross, for distribution.

### **World Health Organization (WHO)**

The World Health Organization works by supporting other agencies with the best technical information available. It staffs world medical experts who publish and disseminate guidelines and epidemiologic analyses about crises. There are several parts of WHO that are relevant in emergencies, including the Emergency and Humanitarian Assistance (EHA) division, the nutrition division, which looks as part of its work at malnutrition in refugee camps, and the Emerging Infections division, which works with EHA to find ways to ensure surveillance of explosive and growing epidemic diseases that often occur in failed states and conflict zones.

### **U.N. Office for the Coordinator for Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)**

OCHA is an office of the UN Secretariat, not a stand-alone operational agency. It is the mechanism by which the UN Secretary General, and his teams, can ensure that someone is monitoring all emergencies, from wars to refugee flight to natural disasters.

The buck stops here.

OCHA was created in the aftermath of the poor UN response after the Iraq/Gulf war of 1991 – when millions of refugees sought assistance north to Turkey and east to Iran. Originally it was called DHA, for the Department for Humanitarian Affairs. The feeling of governments in 1992 was that no one point in the UN had the responsibility to watch over all EPs, there was no place where the "buck stopped." OCHA is that place now, but lacks much capability on its own; it accomplishes its work primarily by getting resources for other UN agencies to act.

### **Inter-Agency Coordinating Committee (IASC)**

OCHA convenes and chairs a forum in which each of the independent UN agencies meet to determine who is doing what and what gaps need to be addressed, collectively or by different agencies with a lead opportunity. The IASC meets regularly, not only during large crises, in New York and Geneva, and allows NGOs to interface with representatives from WHO, WFP, UNHCR and other key agencies, including the ICRC. NGOs tend to be represented at IASC meetings through their NGO-association representatives, from InterAction, Voice and the NGO Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response.

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<sup>112</sup> Crafted in the World Conference on Education for All, held in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990.

Less well-known is the ECHA, the Executive Committee for Humanitarian Affairs within the UN Secretariat, which OCHA also chairs, of senior experts within the UN Secretariat departments in New York. Similarly, there's another group that meets regularly in Geneva and New York among the representatives of the various embassies to the UN, that is, by government officials interested in sharing information about humanitarian aid: the Humanitarian Liaison Group.

## UNDP

In most countries, UNDP has the responsibility to manage the joint UN office for all aid, and to make sense of the work of other UN agencies. Often, OCHA will co-locate within UNDP's office. The official "resident representative" for the UN in most countries is the head of the UNDP office there.

Originally, UNDP's orientation in emergencies was to try to be the lead agency for natural disaster prevention and reconstruction. Increasingly, UNDP is trying to also become a leader in preventing and reconstructing civil society and governance, putting human rights and democracy at the top of its priorities for assistance. UNDP attempts to track all manner of human development, human security, income disparities, access to water, vaccines,<sup>113</sup> enterprise training, education, and intellectual property rights. UNDP is based in New York, and works closely with the UN Secretariat.

## B. Myths About Humanitarian UN Agencies

### Myth 1: The U.N. Secretary General manages all the U.N. agencies

The Secretary General of the U.N. has direct management control over the UN Secretariat offices (in New York and Geneva) but has limited practical authority over the various U.N. agencies, such as UNHCR and WFP, which have their own directors and supervisory boards made up of representatives of governments, including the U.S. Of the UN groups mentioned here, only OCHA falls under the direct authority and management of the Secretary General.

In each new large emergency, the Secretary General does make an important decision to designate one of the UN agencies as the "lead" humanitarian agency for that crisis. The default lead agency, if he does not assign special responsibility, would be the United Nations Development Program, headquartered in New York, which is supposed to maintain the general UN representation in each country and also have responsibility for working with each government to provide disaster preparedness.

### Myth 2: UN Engagement in emergencies is primarily via Peacekeeping Troops

Much attention is given to those situations where armed UN peacekeeping troops deploy to a zone of conflict. Most UN peacekeeping forces work, however, in areas where there is no active conflict; their purpose after all being to prevent the possibility of conflict. In contrast, UNHCR, WFP, UNICEF and OCHA are involved in many hundreds of live, active humanitarian emergencies every year, the majority of which do not involve peacekeeping.

### Myth 3: UN deployment in crises defies or circumvents US interests

The United States Government gets its way in a large proportion of UN deliberations about how and where UN capabilities will be put to use. In those circumstances where the US wants there to be a large UN deployment, there usually will be. In most refugee crises and natural disasters, the US wants UN involvement, and criticizes the UN when it is slow off the mark.

In fact, most of the work of UNHCR and WFP in providing aid to refugee communities, aid which grew fast in the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s, was aid for people fleeing countries that were either communist or at war with communists, and the US wanted the aid as a symbol of opposition to the Soviet Union's influence, to call attention to the failures and human rights abuses that came with Soviet involvement. Since the early 1990s, after Russia

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<sup>113</sup> UNDP *Human Development Report 2001* New York: United Nations Development Programme, 2001.

abandoned communism, the US and European donors to the UN re-directed the same UN agencies to now contain refugee flows, for example to assist EPs inside Bosnia and Kosovo and prevent large numbers of people from trying to flee to other developed countries.

#### **Myth 4: UN involvement in emergencies bails out autocratic states**

Many Americans complain that humanitarian aid creates the preconditions for future emergencies, by helping dictators or by bailing out incompetent and corrupt governments, who then create ever-worsening conditions for their own people. In some instances this is true, and aid has the unintended effect of stabilizing countries that might benefit from civil resistance. But it's also true in as many instances that humanitarian aid brings embarrassment to governments who looked weak in the light that assistance from other countries was needed.

Very little humanitarian aid (disaster relief, food aid, health care) from the U.S. is delivered via the governments of the affected country; most of it passes through NGOs and the Red Cross. That's true of aid that the UN manages also, UNHCR works largely through NGOs, not governments.

#### **Myth 5: UN aid to crisis areas fosters long-term dependency**

Humanitarian aid can sometimes support EPs in the same refugee camp for years or even decades. Some refugees stayed for ten years in large camps in Malawi, Honduras and Thailand. Refugees from Burma, Tibet and Afghanistan have stayed for over twenty years in some cases. But humanitarian aid does not tend to include such great incentives that it discourages anyone from their own entrepreneurial efforts. In most cases, refugees become self-reliant.

#### **Myth 6: UNHCR gives assistance directly to refugees**

Like a lot of agencies, UNHCR is involved in some manner with all the activities that it funds or that occur under its aegis. But, except for legal services, UNHCR delegates most assistance delivery to partner groups; it devolves actual direct contact with refugees to NGOs.

## Sources

This publication has been produced with a variety of sources and material that has been collected over the past five years. Listed in this “Sources” section are publications used for this book, and interviews that have been conducted in person, via email or phone.

In the “Publications” section, the reader will find a collection of material that is also found in the footnotes throughout the text. These are listed here because they were either mentioned specifically in the text, or were drawn upon in theme or theory. Some citing is sparse as there was little information available for various publications found online or in old libraries. Many more publications were referred to and/or read during the production of this publication, but these are some of the most pertinent.

In the “Interviews and Personal Resources” section, the reader will find a listing of approximately fifty individuals both named and not named that have contributed in some fashion to the production of this publication. This is not an inclusive list of all the people that have been interviewed or referred to throughout the production of this publication, but it does include those that played a major role in defining portions of this book.

For those people that were interviewed or communicated with for the purposes of this publication but are not listed by name, their titles are included. Also, many dates are specific, indicating a specific date upon which an interview or discussion took place. For those personal resources that list “Spring” or “Summer” or “May, 2002” for the time of the interview, this indicates that there were numerous interviews or communications over that period of time. To provide specific dates would be burdensome, especially with those that have been supportive and guiding continuously during the publication process. The citing uses the name of the individual, the organization for which the person worked at that time, and the place and date of the interview or communication.

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