Humanitarian Aid
on the move

Editorial

Once again, Haiti is in the news. Once again, a terrible tragedy has struck this captivating country. In early February we carried out a "real-time evaluation" to learn lessons about the complex initial weeks of the response. Amid the images of destruction and individual tragedy, we also saw the incredible resilience of the Haitian people. Past centuries and decades have not been kind, but the political and economic crises, oppression and hurricanes of the past have created an incredible ability to recover from trauma. Less than a month after the tragedy, the town of Port-au-Prince was buzzing with activity. Street trade had returned and the town's inhabitants were trying to restore a semblance of normality: despite the wounds that had been inflicted, life had begun to regain the upper-hand.

Despite this, the future of the IDP sites still looks bleak, while in rural areas, the magnificent way in which the population offered help and hospitality has no doubt led to the depletion of food stocks. In order to make sure that this resilience, mutual help and courage has not been in vain and is not broken under the weight of too many problems in the future, there is an urgent need to help the government pick itself back up and for the aid community to intensify its efforts after a difficult start, before the rainy and hurricane seasons arrive.

François Grunewald

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Humanitarian space

The R2P debate: the story so far

Béatrice POULIGNY

On 14 September 2009, the UN General Assembly adopted by consensus its first ever resolution on the Responsibility to Protect (R2P). This resolution followed three days of debate on the issue, which was also a first. Though, in recent years, there has been growing acceptance of this concept, it is still not clear how it should be applied concretely. This article looks at the most recent developments – particularly in connection with the question of protecting civilians in war contexts – and key questions which have yet to be resolved.

For the first time since its endorsement by Heads of State at the 2005 UN summit, the concept of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) was debated in a General Assembly plenary session on 23, 24 and 28 July 2009. On 14 September, the first ever resolution on this subject was adopted by consensus (A/63/L80 Rev. 1). Its three paragraphs are extremely brief and simple. It states that the General Assembly has "taken note" of the Secretary General's report on the subject and of the "productive debate" which was organised and has decided to "continue its consideration" of R2P, which means that R2P will regularly figure on the General Assembly's agenda. These modest results were in keeping with the objectives that had been fixed by the Secretary General and his advisor, who were satisfied after a debate which had been stormier than expected. The question remains, however, about how this doctrine will be applied in concrete terms.

A quick reminder of the content and history of the R2P concept

The R2P doctrine concerns the responsibility of states and the international community to protect populations against four specific types of crimes and violations of Human Rights: genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. The central idea is that a state is not uniquely responsible for the well-being of its population. If it fails or is clearly not assuming its responsibility, it is then down to the international community to do so, respecting the principles of international law and the United Nations Charter. R2P has three dimensions: the responsibility to prevent, the responsibility to react (by diplomatic, legal and other peaceful means; through coercive means such as sanctions; and by military force as a last resort) and the responsibility to reconstruct.

The concept of R2P was formally established by the Report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, published in December 2001[1]. The conceptual and political foundations of the concept were then established in three major United Nations documents. At the end of 2004 the High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges, and Change, which was created by the Secretary-General, referred directly to the concept in the title of its report "A More Secure World: Our Shared Responsibility", which included several pages on the subject. Kofi Annan then dealt with the concept in a chapter on the freedom to live in dignity in his subsequent report, "In Larger Freedom". And at the 2005 World Summit, heads of state and government gave the concept unprecedented political weight by dedicating two principle paragraphs to it in the Outcome document (138 and 139, paragraph 140 being more "trivial"). This document, dated 20 September 2005, was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly via a resolution dated 24 October 2005 (A/RES/60/1). This momentum was kept up when the United Nations Security Council re-affirmed the content of paragraphs 138 and 139 from the Outcome document on R2P in Resolution 1674 (28 April 2006) on the protection of civilians in armed conflicts. It recognised the importance of the concept again in resolution 1706 (31 August 2006) concerning the establishment of a peacekeeping force in Darfur. The discussions which took place in the General Assembly last July were the first opportunity that the Member States had had to discuss the issue since 2005. The debates were supposed to focus on the Secretary-General's report, "Implementing the Responsibility to Protect", that is to say, how to put the concept into practice rather on the concept itself, in order not to re-open the Pandora's box. In the end, the debates did not focus solely on implementation, but there was general agreement amongst observers that there had been a fundamental shift from the question of the acceptability of the concept to its application.

The gradual globalisation of the R2P concept

Since the summit of 2005, there have been efforts to establish broader support for the concept, including by civil society organisations. R2P is no longer the preserve of the Security Council but has become a

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subject that is discussed in the General Assembly; the recent resolution means that it will regularly be on its agenda. Also, R2P is not considered to be a tool of the rich and powerful as much as it was initially. The supporters of R2P, particularly within the UN, have made great efforts to consolidate the precarious and hard fought for balance established in paragraphs 138 and 139 of the 2005 Outcome and have tried to convince "non-aligned" Member States from the G-77 group. In the last two years, meetings have been held all over the world (particularly in Africa, Latin America and Asia), to broaden support. There is now the will among regional powers like India, South Africa, Brazil, Indonesia and Japan to contribute constructively to discussions, whereas before their position on R2P was much more ambivalent. The discussions at the General Assembly last July showed how much progress had been made, but also the existence of on-going opposition, particularly amongst the non-aligned countries. The task of those who support R2P was made particularly difficult by the President of the General Assembly, Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann (Nicaragua), a catholic priest and former Minister in the Sandinista government, who is fiercely opposed to R2P, which he describes as the new face of colonialism and interventionism. As a result, the debates were more ideological than expected. At the same time, they showed that genuine progress had been made and that the North-South split had gradually become less pronounced. This context explains the relief of the supporters of R2P given how little hope there was that there would even be a minimal resolution. Presently, their objective is to obtain real progress in the implementation of a doctrine that is now firmly part of the international agenda.

Towards implementation – the main unresolved questions

The main remaining unresolved questions concern how R2P can be implemented. Though there is wide recognition that R2P has probably had an influence on an increasing number of discussions and decision-making processes, there is still no clear answer to the main operational questions: Who should decide? Who should act? What action should be taken? There has been no progress on this issue since the ICISS report which recommended that guidelines should be developed on these different questions. During the last decade, there have been numerous missed opportunities to prove that R2P is effective in practice.

Criteria for deciding to apply R2P
Over and above changes in attitude, the R2P doctrine has not been able to emancipate itself from the in-

consistencies, hypocrisies and instrumentalisation which characterise crisis management (or non-management) at the inter-state level. Doubts about how R2P could be used are understandable, given the way that certain administrations have used it to justify military expeditions where it clearly was not applicable (Tony Blair's brief retrospective use of the concept in relation to the Iraq invasion, Russia's attempt to justify its invasion of South Ossetia during the summer of 2008). There have also been cases where there was an attempt to extend the concept beyond its field of application, as illustrated by the violent polemic between French and UN representatives during Cyclone Nargis in Myanmar in 2008. Events of this kind tend to reinforce the anti-interventionist position which argues that in cases like these, it is the state concerned which is primarily responsible. The supporters of R2P insist that it should only be applied in the four cases established in the 2005 Outcome document (genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity). Again, these points were central to the pre-occupations expressed by certain Member States during the General Assembly.

Decision-making bodies and methods
The issue of the respective roles of the General Assembly and of the Security Council, and the failure of any attempts to reform the latter, also affects the possibility of reaching a consensus to act in the case of a serious crisis, even regarding prevention. The case of Sudan, amongst others, has constantly illustrated this point in recent years. The question of the legitimacy of the Security Council's decisions is not a new one, but it has been more and more contested over the years, as has the position of its permanent members who act unilaterally whenever it is in their interests. The supporters of R2P insist on the role of regional organisations, but here again, there is no concrete proof of their ability to act in precise situations.

Intervention methods and the use of force
From the start, the R2P concept has suffered from being considered simply in terms of military intervention. Because of this, debates have often been dominated by the question of the use of force. Even though its supporters nowadays emphasise prevention as well as other methods of intervention (such as mediation) and coercion (sanctions, but also legal measures and specifically the ICC whose role is sometimes seen as being just as controversial by certain countries of the South), discussions continue to focus on the use of armed force. This is not a new question: it already figured in consultations of the ICISS, almost a decade ago. At the time, the discussion focused particularly on the adoption of criteria for the recourse to

force in the context of a General Assembly or Security Council resolution, or for a case by case strategy.

In other words, there has been little progress in terms of implementation methods for R2P. For the moment, the Secretary-General is planning to create a joint office on R2P and the prevention of genocide, a project which he had already tried to implement on arriving at the head of the Secretariat. This office will be responsible for monitoring and providing information about high-risk contexts.

R2P and the protection of civilians in armed conflicts

Even within the UN Secretariat, there is a great deal of reticence on this issue. This is particularly true for personnel in the Peacekeeping and Political Affairs departments and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the three departments who are the most active and the most directly concerned on this subject. The reticence is particularly evident each time that R2P is referred to in discussions on the protection of civilians in armed conflicts, as happened during the last Security Council meeting on the subject on 26 June 2009 (SC/9692). This subject has been on the Council's agenda since 1999 and it meets formally to discuss it twice a year. It has also been at the heart of discussions on peacekeeping operations for a number of years, as can be seen in the internal document recently drawn up by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Office of Mission Support to present an analysis of current and future peacekeeping challenges,[2] as well as ongoing debates within the General Assembly Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C-34).

There are several reasons why there is confusion between R2P and civilian protection. The Security Council has itself contributed to this confusion: following the 2005 World Summit and the momentum that it appeared to establish, the Council reaffirmed the content of paragraphs 138 and 139 from the Outcome document on R2P in Resolution 1674 (28 April 2006) on the protection of civilians in armed conflict. What is more, the bi-annual Council debates on the protection of civilians are the only chance to put the question of R2P on the formal agenda. Since its first resolution on the protection of civilians in armed conflicts in 1999, the Security Council referred to the need to protect civilians in the mandates of 31 UN peacekeeping missions: 12 directly and 21 indirectly.[3] The operational and tactical implications of this concept were much more limited and uncertain as the mandate to protect civilians is not always given priority when

choices need to be made about how troops are going to be used, and as troops do not always have the capacity and resources to carry this kind of work out.[4] Nevertheless, UN forces were effectively authorised to use force to protect civilian populations in several cases and sometimes did so, such as in Eastern DRC (Ituri and North Kivu) and in Haiti ("police" operations against gangs in several poor neighbourhoods of Port-au-Prince). Certain analysts feel that the concept of R2P has been made redundant by the "coercive protection operations" which are now part of the mandates of "complex" UN peacekeeping operations and which have contributed to changing the rules of engagement of UN forces.

The concept also appears very regularly in speeches and analysis concerning humanitarian access to crisis victims. Traditionally, in international humanitarian law, the issue of protection involves specific rights to assistance on the part of population groups who are considered particularly vulnerable and as such have a particular legal status and benefit from a specific form of protection. The agenda has become broader but has also become more precise since humanitarians and Human Rights campaigners have established a shared definition of what civilian protection means in war contexts. Certain ambiguities nevertheless remain. Numerous discussions focus on the question of the protection of refugees and, increasingly, IDPs. This can sometimes lead to an underestimation of the situation of resident populations whose protection needs can be more imminent and complicated but who receive less attention than in camps where international aid arrives in a more or less organised way and where the situation appears more contained. Besides, massacres almost always take place well out of sight of humanitarians and the civilian and military staff of peace-keeping missions. Discussions tend to focus on the question of humanitarian access, which moves and reduces the debate to the question of access to victims and not their basic protection. It is precisely these failings which current reflections on the protection of civilians during peace-keeping operations are supposed to respond. John Holmes, the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs has committed himself to making progress on the protection of civilians during his mandate. He works on this issue with his opposite number in Peace Operations, though the relations between these two departments have not always been very easy in the past. This tension was the result of differences in terms of practice and ethos between the peacekeeping community, which is far from being made up of just soldiers, and the humanitarian community. Last year, DPKO[5] and OCHA[6] commissioned an independent study on the

protection of civilians, particularly in the context of peacekeeping operations. The study, which was led by Victoria Holt (who has since taken up a position in the US State Department) and Glyn Taylor, was published in November 2009.[7] It is a rather conventional study and its conclusions and recommendations are not very surprising: they point the finger at the inconsistencies of the Security Council and the numerous inadequacies of the Secretariat to genuinely make what remains a pious wish operational. It is interesting to note that the report often refers to the concept of the "responsibility to protect", one of the reasons being that it was often used by interviewees, but it is not central to its analysis. In fact, the majority of actors involved in these discussions worry that R2P will cause confusion and lead to hard-won advances being challenged.

It is no doubt on this front that humanitarians could see concrete developments in practices, with more and more frequent collaboration with peacekeeping operations on questions of protection (notably in connection with the global Protection cluster). These developments are similar to those which have already taken place between the Human Rights and Police components of peacekeeping missions.

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[1] ICISS (2001), Report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, Ottawa: International Development Research Centre.

[2] "A New Partnership Agenda : Charting a New Horizon for UN Peacekeeping" : http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/documents/newhorizon.pdf

[3] Holt, Victoria K & Berkman, Tobias C. (2006), *The Impossible Mandate? Military Preparedness, the Responsibility to Protect and Modern Peace Operations*, The Henry L. Stimson Center, September ; Durch, William J. (2007), "*Framing 'Framing Training': A Commentary on Doctrines for Peace Operations and the Prospects for Mission Integration"*, Presentation for the 13th Annual Meeting of the International Association of Peacekeeping Training Centers, "Framing Training: Doctrine and Guidelines for Peace Operations," Stockholm, Sweden, The Henry L. Stimson Center: 25 September.

[4] Cohen, Roberta & Deng, Francis M. (2009), "Mass displacement caused by conflicts and one-sided violence: national and international responses", *SIPRI Yearbook 2009*, Stockholm: International Peace Research Institute, June.

[5] Department of Peace-Keeping Operations.

[6] Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

[7] Victoria Holt, Glyn Taylor (2009). *Protecting Civilians in the Context of UN Peacekeeping Operations: Successes, Setbacks and Remaining Challenges*, New York, United Nations, November. The study is available at:
http://www.peacekeepingbestpractices.unlb.org/PBPS/Library/FINAL%20Protecting%20Civilians%20in%20the%20Context%20of%20UN%20PKO.pdf

For more information

- Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect
http://globalr2p.org/

- International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect
http://www.responsibilitytoprotect.org/

- Stanley Foundation, Implementing the Responsibility to Protect (this project is part of their "Human Protection" initiative)
http://www.stanleyfoundation.org/articles.cfm?id=621

Strategies used by international NGOs to influence public policy

Alain ROBYNS et Véronique de GEOFFROY

The limits of purely operational aid have become increasingly apparent. No matter how relevant, an aid programme can not resolve all the problems which have created a crisis and the resulting needs. Most of the time, these problems are political. As a result, many international NGOs have developed strategies to influence public policy. Following the example of other sectors, they dedicate significant resources to lobbying national and international decision-makers (governments and international organisations).

The role of NGOs vis-à-vis public authorities: opposition force or advisers?

Advocacy can involve a number of activities such as awareness-raising, mobilisation of public opinion, providing expert advice, networking and lobbying. Generally, these are combined and are part of an overall strategy. The chosen strategy depends on three factors: the atmosphere and kind of dialogue which exists between the organisation and the authorities, analysis of the risks involved and the organisation's culture.

Traditionally, international NGOs were more likely to indulge in "external"[1] advocacy, mobilising public opinion and taking part in protest movements. Nowadays, however, a large number of international NGOs opt for "internal" advocacy and target political decision-makers. A study commissioned by CONCORD[2] in 2003 showed that collective external advocacy campaigns by NGOs had only had a relatively limited impact on the decisions and directives of the European Commission. The study concluded that the strategies used to influence civil servants in European institutions, who are less receptive to public opinion campaigns, needed to be revised. It recommended that lobbying should be based on better analysis of the internal decision-making networks within the EU, that positions on different issues should be determined and that NGOs should reach agreement about the messages they wanted to get across via "corridor advocacy" or classical lobbying activities.

On the strength of their field experience, NGOs attempt to influence public policy via active engagement in current debates. In recent years, international NGOs have undoubtedly gained recognition from the institutions that they campaign against. They have already won two major battles: by taking part in international social and political debates, they have convinced a lot of people to return to political action, and they have imposed themselves on the international scene to such an extent that they are now listened to by governments and the most powerful corporations[3].

The development of international NGO networks capable of gathering and organising information, taking positions and monitoring the practical implementation of international decisions and commitments is a form of safeguard during the construction of world governance[4]. At the same time, their ability to influence and modify the rules of globalisation remains much weaker than that of governments and corporations.

The critical points of advocacy activities

All advocacy activities run the risk of creating conflict. External advocacy which puts pressure on political decision-makers can lead to an issue being managed in a hurry and decisions being made which are not very well adapted or which have repercussions for those responsible for the advocacy. Humanitarian NGOs in the field are often confronted with the dilemma of denunciation: should they say nothing so that they can stay or should they talk and run the risk of being thrown out? This dilemma pushes a certain number of actors to choose confidentiality in their advocacy strategy, such as the ICRC (International Committee of the Red Cross) which has developed an approach based on confidentiality and where denunciation is the exception. Of course, the ICRC is not in need of notoriety or funding.

Being able to influence decisions through political advocacy can be perceived to be a form of interference or intrusion in the exercise of power. It creates conflict in the decision-making process. International NGOs must therefore establish their legitimacy and credibility, two essential factors which are often challenged. They gain legitimacy from their activities in the field and credibility from their knowledge of issues and their collection and analysis of information. NGOs can pass on information about the situations that they encounter, can take action in the name of the populations that they serve and can establish expertise in the field. Greenpeace and Amnesty International produce annual reports on the basis of surveys and studies carried out using their networks. Governments are often perturbed by this monitoring of their affairs on subjects such as Human Rights and the Environment,

but these documents give the NGOs credibility with which they can counter criticisms.

Over and above field knowledge, it has become crucial to have technical expertise. NGOs have therefore established more and more partnerships with the world of research. In order to intervene in the political decision-making process it is not enough to be fighting for a just cause. A convincing argument is also needed, with evidence to support and focus the debate. It needs to be backed up with facts, research, analysis and even scientific evidence to help decision-makers make their decisions. American and European think-tanks, foundations, research centres and universities are sources of "intellectual production" with whom NGOs and lobbying firms collaborate to develop their expertise and feed their advocacy work.

It is impossible for elected politicians to know everything about all the legislation that is produced by national parliaments and European and international institutions. As a result, they turn to experts to help them. As part of their strategy to influence international policy and gain expertise and credibility, NGOs should therefore develop their relations with think tanks.

Diluted and standardised messages – the issue of alliances.

In recent years the number of awareness-raising campaigns has grown, as has the number of organisations involved in advocacy activities. Every association runs their own campaigns, but the multiplication of messages creates the risk that they become diluted and lost in the mass of information and also that the public and intermediaries such as journalists lose interest. It would be impossible for authorities to deal with all the subtle differences which would inevitably appear between uncoordinated advocacy activities. Coordination is therefore necessary between NGOs so that they speak with one voice to public authorities and political decision-makers. It is when organisations create alliances and lead joint campaigns that advocacy is the most effective. Together, the different members of an alliance increase their weight and legitimacy as they represent collective interests which can be more easily assimilated to the common good. They also improve the possibility of success in situations where the majority vote is needed.

Three different types of alliance exist:

Networks - groups of individuals and/or organisations who work together and help each other on a very flexible basis to achieve their respective objectives and run joint projects;

Coalitions – circumstantial agreement to defend a shared interest or to oppose a shared adversary;

Pressure / Lobby group – an established group of individuals or organisations with shared strategic and self-serving interests.

But although alliances give organisations' demands more legitimacy, they also involve making compromises in the definition of objectives and means. By creating an alliance, individual organisations become less visible and their demands become more minimal and consensual.

An advocacy code of practice?

As early as 1994, a certain number of humanitarian actors clarified in the *Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief* that, "*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.*" The links between information and marketing are an underlying theme in this text and this question continues to be relevant in external advocacy activities today. Advocacy campaigns are a means for NGOs to increase their visibility and raise funds. As such, it is not always easy to distinguish between advocacy and appeals for donations, which are also known as citizen mobilisation campaigns. The use of images for advocacy, visibility or fund-raising is regularly debated amongst NGOs. In awareness- and fund-raising campaigns, there appears to be a move away from very emotive images of people in need to more dignified images.

What is more, if the advocacy activities of international NGOs are to remain consistent with the values that they defend, it is not possible to use every form of pressure - "*Political advocacy for social issues must respect certain ethical standards and therefore avoid the fraudulent or illegal techniques and tactics which are used in the commercial and political domains - violence, intimidation, misinformation, blackmail and corruption*"[5].

Conclusion

International NGOs use a variety of different strategies to influence public policy. With the globalisation of aid issues, these have changed significantly in recent decades. Each strategy requires different means and levels of expertise. Communication requires a certain level of technical know-how and needs to be consistent with a precise methodological approach. The arguments put forward need to have solid foundations, as this forms the basis of a campaign's legitimacy and credibility.

The efforts that NGOs have made in this domain have already borne fruit (some of which has been recognised via the awarding of a Nobel Prize) and have given them a new status. However, before investing themselves in advocacy activities, NGOs need to consider a number of critical issues, such as the competition that is created when more and more organisations become involved, the risk of messages becoming diluted, the blurring of lines between marketing and advocacy and the risk of being integrated into the decision-making process and losing independence.

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See details : http://www.urd.org/spip.php?article339

[1] That is to say, by mobilising public opinion to influence policy via a confrontational approach with the objective of getting the attention of governments and forcing them to respond publicly. This type of advocacy is different from internal or technical advocacy which involves trying to convince political decision-makers, through analysis and expert knowledge, participation in technical work groups and sometimes even negotiation in consultative councils.

[2] *Etude sur l'efficacité des stratégies d'influence politique des ONG*, Mirjam van Reisen, EEPA.

[3] *La montée en puissance des acteurs non étatiques*, Christian Chavagneux, University of Sussex, Centre for Global Political Economy ; L'Economie Politique et Alternatives Economiques – shortened and slightly amended version of a contribution by Christian Chavagneux to the Global Governance Report, 2002, n°37 published by the *Conseil d'analyse économique*.

[4] Les coalitions internationales d'ONG, du lobbying à la contribution à la gouvernance mondiale, Pierre Calame, January 2004 (http://www.institut-gouvernance.org/fr/analyse/fiche-analyse-31.html).

[5] From *Techniques de plaidoyer pour l'éducation et le développement* by the World Bank (extract translated by Groupe URD).

Haiti: daring to choose the future! The necessary transition from providing emergency relief to supporting the dynamism of a people

Solidarity networks were up and running in Port-au-Prince and throughout Haiti only a few hours after the earthquake struck. People helped each other to get family members, neighbours and injured strangers out of unsafe houses. There was solidarity throughout the country despite problems in accessing information and the absence of instructions from the national authorities who had been badly hit. The day after the earthquake, the mayor of Cap-Haïtien requisitioned buses to transport injured people from Port-au-Prince to his town's hospital. Solidarity of this kind was shown all over the country.

Spontaneous acts of this kind will not be enough to rebuild Port-au-Prince and the rest of the country. It is essential that international aid continues to be provided in the long term if Haiti is to come back to life in the coming weeks, months and years. But it is up to the Haitians to decide what the priorities are. Experience has shown that the greater the amount of aid – and for Haiti, it needs to be a large amount – the greater the risk of abuse. Even if it is properly managed, international aid alone can not rebuild the country and give Haitians a future. This can only come if the Haitians themselves have the will – will of the kind that they demonstrated immediately after the earthquake. But this will needs to be encouraged, supported and allowed to express itself!

This disaster could lead to the advent of a new era in the political life and the development of Haiti. Many declarations have been made along these lines and there is much hope that this will happen. But if the people of Haiti are to realise this ambition, international aid must also help them to regain control of their country by supporting the work of public bodies and regional authorities.

Though this is rarely done after disasters, international aid should be used for other purposes than simply to rebuild what has been destroyed. It is essential that part of the aid is used to strengthen social networks, local institutions and associations who are in direct contact with the local people. The importance of actions of this kind can not be overstated. The earthquake did not modify the difficult, and too often brutal, political relations within Haitian society. Decisions about how the aid is used could exacerbate these. The large amounts of money which have been mobilised will undoubtedly feed the country's endemic corruption. Judging by the country's history, it is unlikely that the added poverty and problems that people are now burdened with will limit the number of attacks, the abuse of power, the hijacking of political power and the appropriation of the country's wealth by a small number of people. There is a need to strengthen internal solidarity over and above the acts of solidarity which followed the earthquake.

Therefore, providing organisations who work with the Haitian people with resources will be a decisive factor for the future of Haiti. A positive point is that these organisations already exist. There are many different kinds and they were the first to take action in the hours that followed the earthquake. Village organisations, cooperative and professional associations and the Haitian Diaspora continue to be very active, but they need to be consolidated. Only grassroots organisations of this kind will be able to mobilise the citizens of Haiti to reconstruct the capital and the country in the long term. The fragility of the political situation makes providing these organisations with support all the more important. They have a major role to play in helping people realise that they can shape the country's future despite the weight of history and the chaos that has been created by the earthquake. Allowing the people of Port-au-Prince to take part in the city's reconstruction will instil them with a sense of "ownership". Giving Haitians a role in renovating the capital will help to make them feel they have a right to be involved in making decisions from which they have been excluded for so many decades.

The present situation should also lead to the rethinking of regional planning so that state infrastructure and services are more equitably distributed throughout the country. Though the capital needs to be rebuilt, some resources should be directed towards the regions. Already in 2007, in an interview given to the

Le Matin newspaper, Talégrand Noël said, "We can not think of the country's future purely in terms of Port-au-Prince". This is even truer today. The quantity and quality of services available in the regions needs to be improved, new activities need to be created and funding systems to help the creation of small businesses need to be set up. Commercial and distribution networks need to be supported so that producers can sell their merchandise. Training needs to be provided at all levels in the different regions of the country to consolidate local dynamics and improve skills.

It is also important, from this point of view, to encourage exchange and debate between the country's social forces. If the Haitian people participate in the Promethean task of reconstruction, this will contribute to its success. At the national level, this could, for example, take the form of a "National conference" to define the priorities for the reconstruction and how it will be carried out and make sure that actions for the regions are included. At the local level, consultation should allow local development plans to be decided and monitored

Experience in other countries shows that if you do not use part of the aid to strengthen social organisations and support local development, the same blocked situations which existed before the disaster will return. Haiti could be a counter-example to show how a country can boldly shape its future despite what it has suffered, by using its internal dynamism and rising above the idea of implementing democracy from the top, which external interventions tend to impose. Without a doubt, the country's reconstruction must include consultation of the people, something they have been denied for so long. If this does not happen, Haiti will struggle to overcome its human and natural ills. The international aid sector must not forget this dimension in the assistance that it provides.

Crises and vulnerabilities

Crises and psychological damage: the role of psychosocial programmes

Claire PIROTTE

Most individuals manage to get over the shock of a major event. Others, who are more vulnerable, need help to recover psychologically. Without this help, they suffer and they weigh down their community through various forms of inaptitude or deviancy. Psychosocial programmes, which are adapted to individual cultural contexts, aim to help both individuals and the community. Though the need for programmes of this kind is now generally accepted, more detailed research is required into the methods involved, their specific objectives and how they can be evaluated.

In recent years, there has been greater acceptance of the need for a psychosocial component in humanitarian programmes and how these should be used. However, an area of uncertainty remains due to the many different forms which programmes of this kind can take.

A great deal of misunderstanding about the objectives and methods of psychosocial programmes comes from associations with Psychiatry and the treatment of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), the ancestor of psychosocial work.

People often fail to distinguish mental health and mental illness. Mental health is an all-embracing notion which does not simply refer to the absence of illness. The treatment of mental illness is carried out by a doctor and involves diagnosing and treating a recognised psychiatric condition.[1]

The notion of humanitarian psychiatry appeared in the 1980s and it was not till much later that the idea of psychosocial programmes was developed. Today, mental health programmes in conflict and post-conflict contexts either have a medical/psychological dimension and focus on the individual or have a social/anthropological dimension and focus on the more collective notion of "social well-being".

What is psychological trauma?

Though it is normal and universal to experience emotional disorder immediately after a major shock, it appears that most people deal with and overcome the effects relatively quickly. However, for a variety of reasons, a certain number of vulnerable individuals and groups find themselves in a situation where their ability to cope is seriously reduced. The consequences of the traumatism reduce their ability to adopt coping strategies and adapt to difficult post-crisis contexts.

If these individuals are not given some way of rebuilding themselves psychologically, in the face of all the challenges involved in contexts of this kind, their behaviour (violence, apathy, addiction, abandonment of parental duties, etc.) will have a negative effect on themselves and the rest of the community.

Therefore, even if they focus in part on the individual, psychosocial programmes are also aimed at all the relations between the members of a community so that they can face up to the difficulties, anti-social behaviour and delinquency which reduce their ability to recover both in the present and in the future. Over and above easing individual psychological pain, psychosocial programmes aim to support the capacity of a community. The difficulty is that, in contrast to vital needs, the consequences of psychological trauma are only apparent in the mid- to long-term.

The different levels at which psychosocial activities can take place

It is because the field is so vast that there are so many different types of psychosocial activity[2].

These take place on four broad levels:

During the emergency phase, the affected population is shown respect and given the opportunity to participate in all the relief programmes. In this way, they are not restricted to their role of victims and enclosed in the trauma that has taken place, but are allowed to look ahead and feel that they have an active role to play. In many ways, this is a psychosocial act of prevention which will help a large part of the population with sufficient resilience to deal with the violence of the events which have taken place. Another factor which will play a major psychosocial role is providing the affected people with clear information about what is happening.

Another level of psychosocial activity is the creation of support programmes for specific issues. For example, psychological assistance given to depressive mothers who are breastfeeding and whose children have

nutritional problems despite having access to sufficient food or assistance given to physically handicapped people who need to reintegrate into society.

A third level consists of prevention programmes for psychosocial disorders within "high-risk groups" (children who have lost their families, mothers with families to support, etc.).

A fourth level focuses on high-risk subjects who are detected via different channels: mental health auxiliaries, social workers, health centres, education bodies, beneficiary groups etc.

This variety of activities explains why psychosocial programmes have a variety of different names: mental health programmes, psychological trauma programmes, etc.

The critical points of psychosocial programmes

- Diagnosis[3]

Diagnosis is fundamental. It involves observing a community to detect individuals and/or groups in difficulty. It is not so much their symptoms but the way in which they are dysfunctional for a given population which needs to be identified. The cultural context will determine whether or not a type of behaviour can be tolerated by the community. Consequently, programmes can not be reproduced, but rather need to be fully adapted to specific contexts.

The initial diagnosis may be premature so needs to be re-evaluated regularly as symptoms evolve with time and because communities implement regulation strategies. Family and social support networks remain the most effective protection mechanisms against mental and psychosocial problems.

Though it is true that measures need to be taken as soon as possible after the shock, the implementation of programmes nevertheless needs to be properly organised and documented.

Natural disaster contexts should be treated in a very different way from armed conflicts. In the former, the solidarity which is present in the early stages pushes back the period when psychosocial programmes might be necessary. In the latter, the multiple risk factors involved means that more subjects and groups need to be provided with support.

- The concept of vulnerability

The concept of vulnerability is intimately linked to the idea of danger. Vulnerability is determined either by potential risk (the probability of being harmed, threatened or suffering loss) or by its impact (the risk of suffering the consequences). In violent situations, certain groups are more at risk of developing mental health problems. These high-risk groups are children, elderly people, women (whether on their own or not), the sick, the handicapped, minorities, those who have lost family members, rape victims, torture victims, ex-combatants, etc. But vulnerability also depends on the context. For example, a woman combatant may not be vulnerable while in action but will then become vulnerable when she is demobilised if her previous status is taboo.

- Pitfalls to be avoided

As in all types of humanitarian action, it is important to be particularly careful about the security of beneficiaries and both local and expatriate staff, particularly as feelings of insecurity can be psychologically destabilising and can counteract any benefits that an operation might otherwise bring.

It is always essential to respect confidentiality so that individuals and groups do not become stigmatised. In conflict contexts, it is a factor of protection.

- Sustainability

The problems and suffering involved in such contexts often last for a long time. In order to increase the sustainability of the programmes that are implemented, targeted operations are needed: information, training, advocacy, encouraging local authorities to address psychosocial issues so that they can take over when the programme ends, etc.

- The question of human resources

There is a consensus in all the relevant literature, that teams should be made up of members of the same communities as the beneficiaries. And yet, there are very few staff who are already trained "to listen". Some doctors and social workers already have this skill and certain countries sometimes have a psychological assistance network.

Local staff need to be found, brought together and trained to carry out psychosocial activities and identify vulnerable groups and individuals. In addition to initial theoretical and practical training, regular supervision is needed as the local staff will often have been victims of the same events as the people receiving assistance. This is necessary both for general staff and more specialised staff who are involved in counselling, for example. It is not enough to offer occupational activities. It is necessary to add a therapeutic dimension. Psychological restructuring can be achieved via games or social support to income-generating activities.

It is also important to try to work with as many partners as possible: health networks, traditional doctors, local leaders, teachers, etc.

- The evaluation of psychosocial programmes

Questions remain about the evaluation of psychosocial programmes. Certain programmes are evaluated using recognised psychometric criteria[4]. Others have to use a mixture of psychometric criteria and beneficiary satisfaction criteria[5]. But in numerous cases, it is difficult to formulate criteria, whether quantitative or qualitative. For the time being, the evaluation of impact is impossible due to the lack of baseline references. Both operators and donors are working on this important question which prevents psychosocial programmes from being fully recognised as an integral part of certain humanitarian operations.

Contentious issues in the literature and in the field

A number of contentious issues exist, such as:

- Measuring the frequency of mental health problems.

There is a risk of cultural misunderstanding if an inappropriate symptom scale is used (certain cultures consider certain psychological problems to be physical conditions). Work is being carried out in different areas to address this problem.

- Defining target groups.

If target groups are over-estimated, the programmes become unmanageable. If they are under-estimated, there is a danger in the mid to long term.

- The type of programme to implement.

Certain conditions require individual treatment: this is the case, for example, for women who have been sexually abused. The location for the treatment and the choice of practitioner will vary depending on whether there is a risk of socio-cultural stigmatisation.
In certain cultures, discussion groups provide effective support in helping to deal with unusual behaviour or reducing feelings of solitude in the face of problems encountered.

Other issues require a more collective approach, such as children who are withdrawn, agitated or aggressive after a natural disaster. After-school activities such as sport and artistic activities (run by trained local teams who know the cultural environment well) will help to reduce symptoms, identify the most complex cases and improve understanding of child behaviour amongst parents or adult carers.

No one activity (sport, drama, drawing, relaxation, etc.) is necessarily more effective than the others. The objective is to help people to regain self-confidence, to re-learn rules and limits, to have a positive attitude towards the future and to stop anxiety attacks, etc. The proposed activity will depend on the local culture (for example, in certain cultures, theatre or story-telling can play a particularly strong pedagogical and symbolic role) and on the skills available locally.

Generally, psychosocial programmes have a certain number of advantages over programmes which involve individual clinical diagnosis. They affect more people, are not expensive and are more easily transferred after the departure of the international aid organisation. However, they are not yet evaluated enough, they lack methodological clarity and they continue to be the subject of debate and uncertainty, as described above.

Conclusion

Though very little research has been carried out in this area, it is now widely accepted that there is a strong link between post-traumatic symptoms and changes in social behaviour in violent conflict and natural disaster contexts.
More investment needs to be made in terms of operations and research into psychosocial activities by humanitarians, donors and researchers in order to reduce psychological suffering and its impact on society.
Workgroups exist within the Inter Agency Standing Committee and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and ad hoc groups exist in connection with specific regional conflicts, etc. More need to be created as there is a real need for skills from a variety of sectors: psychiatrists, different medical professions, social workers and sociologists, psychologists, anthropologists etc. There is also a need for more training in order to put an end to the pseudo psychosocial programmes which are sometimes run in the field.

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[1] Numerous references are made to Evelyne Josse's book: « *Interventions humanitaires en santé mentale dans les violences de masse* » (humanitarian mental health operations in mass violence contexts), published by DE BOECK, 2009.

[2] In this article, psychosocial programmes do not include cases which require specialist medical-based psychiatric treatment which are referred to adhoc structures (when they exist!), whether these appeared before or after the traumatising event or cases of neurological illnesses such as epilepsy, malformation, etc.

[3] IASC, *Inter Agency Standing Committee*, 2008 : http://www.humanitarianinfo.org/iasc.

[4] For example, the Evaluation of psychological support for victims of sexual violence in a conflict setting: results from Brazzaville, Congo (2009) by Thierry Baubet et al.

[5] For example, the evaluation of the child relief psychosocial programme run by Terre des Hommes in Sri Lanka 2005-2007, carried out by Claire Colliard.

Aid and Quality

Accountability goes digital

Olivier SARRAT

> **Groupe URD and its Spanish partners IECAH carried out a study at the end of 2009 on the computerisation of communication between donors and NGOs. What is the current state of affairs and what benefits could this bring in the future?**

Over the decades, the international aid sector has grown and become more professional. This has led to a greater quantity and diversity of information which needs to be managed. The professionalization of the sector is something to be welcomed as it has no doubt improved the quality of humanitarian response. Unfortunately, it has also burdened humanitarian organisations with more and more administrative work as donors have instigated more and more accountability procedures. These have the potential to improve practices as they force humanitarian actors to analyse their actions in more depth, but the fact that the reports requested have so many different formats means that more and more energy is used up dealing with these different administrative obligations which could otherwise be used on actual humanitarian action.

In order to cope with this ever-increasing amount of administrative work a new trend has begun to emerge: the use of New Information and Communication Technology (NICT) to exchange information between donors and NGOs. Examples of these are ECHO's[1] APPEL system[2] and AECID's[3] CAP Online project[4]. How common is this kind of project? What is the nature of these developments and what progress has already been made? At the end of 2009, Groupe URD and IECAH[5] conducted a study financed by AECID to find answers to these questions, during which they consulted a large number of donors and UN agencies[6]. This rapid review of the current situation is a necessary first step before being able to answer the underlying question of whether computerisation will allow a more efficient use of time and energy in the production of reports.

The computerisation of reporting procedures between donors and implementing partners is in its infancy. Very few projects are up and running. Out of the 19 organisations we surveyed for the study, 6 are working on a project (30%), 4 of these already have something in place (20%), and only 2 of these have completed the pilot phase (10%). These projects can be split into two categories in relation to what they are used to manage:

- *Funding*: projects for the management of funding requests (2/7);
- *Whole projects*: monitoring systems which aim to improve the monitoring of NGO results to improve accountability (5/7).

The two projects involving the management of funding requests are both called "CAP Online". These were developed independently of each other, one by AECID and the other by OCHA. Of the projects studied, they are the two that have gone beyond the pilot phase. These platforms allow NGOs to directly record their funding requests on the donor's or partner's information system, and monitor revisions.

NGOs are generally very enthusiastic about these new platforms and the possibility of structuring their exchanges. Many of those consulted were very positive about the idea, an obvious strength of this kind of project. Indeed, they often respond to the needs of both donors and NGOs. The most obvious case is World Vision's proposal to integrate the data on their LastMile tool into WFP's information system. LastMile is a system which monitors food distribution in much the same way that UPS might monitor the progress of a parcel. It makes it possible to monitor each article that is distributed and its beneficiaries. The fact that attendance has been so high at ECHO's open training

sessions on its APPEL system is a sign that there is real interest among NGOs. During APPEL's pilot phase, which is due to end at some point in 2010, NGOs have contributed to its development via their feedback. The APPEL project, which is limited to ECHO partners who have signed a partnership contract, allows funding requests, mid-term and final reports and amendment requests to be exchanged using the Single Form framework.

APPEL can take two forms: a classic web site or an autonomous software programme which allows information to be recorded without having to be connected to internet. Indeed, all the projects that were studied take the form of interactive web sites. But some of them, like APPEL, go further and make it possible to work without being connected to internet. Projects like the integration of LastMile data into the WFP's information system, or the project being looked into involving the Dynamic COMPAS and APPEL go further as they attempt to directly integrate new reporting options into actors' information systems to maximise the re-use of information and reduce double entries.

The German Ministry of Foreign Affairs is planning to use the PROFI system, which also has an external software programme which can function without internet. The decision has been made to use it in the other German ministries, but it has not yet been implemented. An online version of PROFI is planned which will publish all the information about a project, how funds are used, etc. in a transparent manner. Several of the projects studied have this objective of improving transparency and accountability. The project which takes this the furthest and for which transparency is the central objective, is currently being looked into by the Dutch Foreign Ministry. It aims to improve the transparency of development projects funded by the government using collaborative techniques which have become possible due to the latest developments on the web (Web2.0). The Dutch Foreign Ministry believes that the reactivity and transparency that these offer have the potential to improve collaboration and coordination with their implementing partners.

It will be very interesting to see how the trend towards computerisation develops. For the moment, it is still too soon to know whether it will allow more efficient use of time and energy in the production of reports. As long as these technical interfaces use compatible computer standards, they ought to improve efficiency. A tool which was capable of presenting the same project information in the different formats required by different donors, would allow field workers to reduce the energy they spent writing reports, which could then be spent on running projects. This would be an innovative way of implementing principle 23 of the Good Humanitarian Donorship Initiative[7] which encourages the standardisation of reporting formats and which, so far, has gone unheeded.

The standardisation of reporting formats added to more fluid information exchange could create a new context for improving practices in the sector. But, just as professionalization has increased the burden of administrative tasks, this new context of integrated and simplified information exchange could lead to a form of "push-button" humanitarian aid and a virtual image of field realities. The sector must try to avoid this risk by developing tools which have the right format and level of flexibility. In the end, these new tools could even achieve what the Dutch project, among others, is trying to achieve: to improve coordination by making the information about each project more transparent.

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[1] ECHO: European Community Humanitarian aid Office.
[2] More information about the APPEL project can be found at: https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/appel
[3] AECID: Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo (*Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation*) (www.aecid.es)
[4] More information about the AECID's CAP Online project can be found at: http://www.aecid.es/cap
[5] IECAH : Instituto de Estudios sobre Conflictos y Acción Humanitaria (*Institute of Studies on Conflicts and Humanitarian Action*) (www.iecah.org)
[6] List of organisations who took part in the study: ACDI, AECID, DFID, ECHO, JICA, NORAD, NZAID, SDC, SIDA, USAID, FAO, OCHA, UNDP, UNHCR, WFP and the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of Germany, France, Ireland and the Netherlands.
[7] The GHDI is an agreement between 36 donor governments based on 23 principles to be promoted to improve humanitarian assistance: http://www.goodhumanitariandonorship.org/

Project	Organisation	Country/Region	Progress	Object
CAP Online	OCHA		Implemented	Funding
CAP Online	AECID	Spain	Implemented	Funding
APPEL	ECHO	Europe	Pilot	Complete project
LastMile	WFP		Pilot	Complete project
"M&E module"	WFP		Pilot	Complete project
PROFI	German MFA	Germany	Research	Complete project
"Web2.0 study"	Dutch MFA	Netherlands	Research	Complete project

The consultation and participation of local people - a key parameter of quality?

Groupe URD - The "Global study" team

The participation and consultation of affected populations during the implementation of humanitarian programmes is of primary importance, but it is also a very sensitive issue. Who should be involved and why? How should it be done? What are the risks and opportunities involved? These are the kinds of questions which need to be analysed in advance to guarantee the quality, sustainability and appropriation of the aid provided.

Introduction

In recent decades, humanitarian aid has grown considerably but has also come up against an increasing number of challenges. One of the most important criticisms of the humanitarian system is that it is imposed by the West, that it uses a "top down" approach and that it does not listen. For different reasons, some good, some bad, power remains in the hands of NGOs from the North.

The question of the consultation and participation of beneficiaries in humanitarian operations has regularly been brought up in different forums and publications, but nothing compared to the level of interest that exists in the world of development. In fact, very little is known about the use of participatory practices in the humanitarian sector or their impact. Before the Global Study, there had been no attempts to identify "good practices" in this area.

For a long time, the role played by crisis-affected populations in ensuring their own survival was underestimated and not properly taken into account. Numerous evaluations appear to show that increased consultation and participation of the affected population are beneficial for humanitarian operations. In addition, the importance of participatory approaches is underlined in texts such as the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief or in the work done by the Humanitarian Accountability Partnership (HAP). In reality, however, participation is a complicated issue and there are very few concrete examples of participatory approaches being used in the humanitarian sector. On the one hand, the concept of participation has strong "development" connotations. On the other, its application in conflict, unstable or dangerous contexts is not always simple, realistic or even compatible with

humanitarian principles.

From 2002 to 2004, ALNAP (the Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action) commissioned Groupe URD to carry out an ambitious research project entitled, the Global Study on Consultation and Participation of Disaster-Affected Populations. This project aimed to identify existing experience and good and bad practice and sought to understand their determining factors, areas of application and limits. It also aimed to promote participatory approaches in humanitarian action, without losing sight of the numerous constraints and risks that exist.

Six case studies were conducted covering a wide variety of contexts in order to understand the relations between contexts, types of crisis and aid practices.

With the recent publication of the Participation Handbook for humanitarian field workers , it seemed appropriate to return to certain fundamental points which continue to be overlooked today in practice.

Key questions

Before engaging with the population, organisations should have clear answers to the following questions:

• *Who should participate?*

First of all, it is important to clarify which stakeholders could be involved.
- *Individuals:* Should they be disassociated in terms of age, sex, social status, etc.? What knowledge of the society is being used to make the choice? Should we use targeting? How should a sample group be established in order to study it and involve it in the approach? How can manipulation be avoided?
- Local institutions: Which should be chosen: traditional bodies, those created during the colonial or socialist periods, those recreated as a consequence of structural adjustment programmes, those newly created to take advantage of the aid bounty, etc.? What are the links between these bodies and the parties to the conflict and institutions related to violent groups?

• *Why is a participatory approach being used?*

Secondly, it is necessary to look at the reasons why a participatory approach is being adopted:
- Is it *to make the NGO's work* (identification of needs, targeting and project implementation) *easier*?

- *Is it to reduce the cost of programmes* through the material, financial or work-based participation of beneficiaries, the implementation of a cost-recovery system or the delegation of sub-contracted work to cheaper local actors?
- *Is it to reduce the risk of insecurity* for expatriate staff, by delegating projects to local implementing partners?
- *Is it in response to an obligatory paragraph* in a funding request?
- *Or is it for ethical reasons, to improve the quality of aid provided* and to improve the links between emergency relief and development?

• *How should a participatory approach be implemented?*

The third question focuses on how participation is implemented and the potential consequences this can have:

- A key issue is the level of compatibility or incompatibility that exists between participatory practices and respect for humanitarian principles. For example, should maximum short term efficiency and effectiveness be pursued at the expense of independence and impartiality?

- What can be done when participation leads to discrimination against certain groups? How can we ensure that the pursuit of active participation does not allow certain groups to manipulate the assistance to their advantage? How can classic targeting practices based on "suspected vulnerability" be made compatible with collective coping strategies within communities?

- Another question concerns the dangers faced by local people involved in participation. What can be done to make sure that their involvement in participatory activities does not place them in a more dangerous situation? This is clearly a protection issue.

Results of the field research

• *The context / populations / aid actors triangle*

The research on three continents in a variety of different crisis contexts highlighted a certain number of points which were common to all the contexts, and a list of points which were specific to individual contexts. It was clear that participatory practices were relatively rare in humanitarian action. The issue of timeliness was the reason most frequently given to explain this situation. In addition, it was not easy to define what
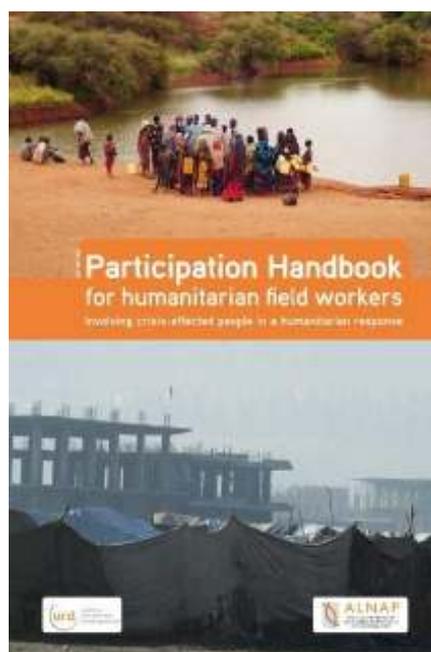
constitutes "consultation and participation" due to the cultural, political and operational diversity of the situations which were analysed. It seemed important to compare the points of view of affected populations and of aid organisations on the issues of consultation and participation.

During the studies that were carried out, the perceptions and practices of different stakeholders were analysed using a multi-entry grid (stakeholders / project cycle phase), which can be filled in either when initial strategic decisions are made (what participatory approach do we want to adopt, at what point in the project and who will it involve?), or during an ex-post evaluation of a project, to evaluate the level of participation of the different stakeholders.

In humanitarian crisis contexts, and particularly conflict contexts, numerous factors affect the ability to implement participatory practices and the degree to which they can be implemented. For example, being able to stay in a village for several days and to stay overnight will influence the level of dialogue which is possible and consequently the level of participation.

We disaggregated these factors into three categories:

- Factors linked to the characteristics of the context (type of crisis, duration, danger, etc.);
- Factors determined by the characteristics of the affected population;
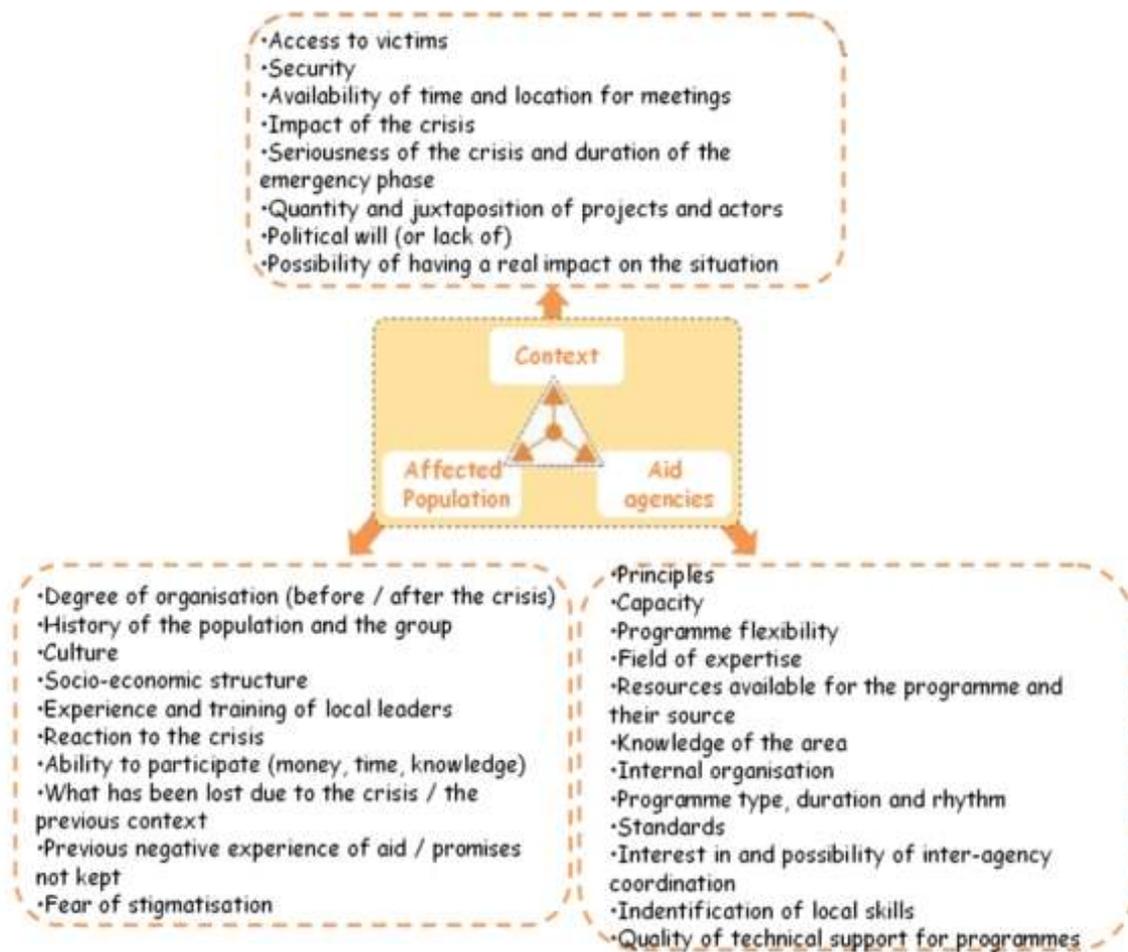- Factors induced by aid organisations (mandate, funding, etc.).

Participation Handbook
for humanitarian field workers

Context

Affected Population — Aid agencies

- Access to victims
- Security
- Availability of time and location for meetings
- Impact of the crisis
- Seriousness of the crisis and duration of the emergency phase
- Quantity and juxtaposition of projects and actors
- Political will (or lack of)
- Possibility of having a real impact on the situation

- Degree of organisation (before / after the crisis)
- History of the population and the group
- Culture
- Socio-economic structure
- Experience and training of local leaders
- Reaction to the crisis
- Ability to participate (money, time, knowledge)
- What has been lost due to the crisis / the previous context
- Previous negative experience of aid / promises not kept
- Fear of stigmatisation

- Principles
- Capacity
- Programme flexibility
- Field of expertise
- Resources available for the programme and their source
- Knowledge of the area
- Internal organisation
- Programme type, duration and rhythm
- Standards
- Interest in and possibility of inter-agency coordination
- Indentification of local skills
- Quality of technical support for programmes

Figure: Factors affecting the ability to implement participatory practices

• *Dialogue, information and transparency: the foundations of trust*

Participatory approaches are not "gadgets" even though this is sometimes the impression that is given by participatory methods and tools. First and foremost, participation is a question of attitude. When humanitarians want to adopt a participatory approach, they often have to go through a "cultural revolution" which involves listening, showing humility and empathy, questioning their own ideas and giving up some of their power.

Information sharing, transparency and responsibility towards aid beneficiaries is an essential part of both theoretical debate and operational practices with regard to participation in humanitarian action. Even when it is difficult to implement participatory practices, it is still possible to ensure that local people are well-informed about what is happening, but this is rarely done. And yet, sharing information is both an important sign of respect and an essential factor of security for staff. During the study, it was interesting to compare participatory practices vis-à vis the affected community with those used within organisations Indeed;

the use of participatory methods within an organisation is itself a crucial question. Can an organisation adopt a participatory approach with beneficiaries if it does not function in this way itself?

• *Predefined programmes or working together in a partnership?*

There are two pre-requisites to implementing participatory practices:
- It is important not to arrive with everything already decided and predefined standards when consulting and involving local people in the choices which affect their survival and the assistance and protection activities which will be implemented;
- When consulting and involving local people with regard to operational choices and project implementation, it is important to accept that participatory processes can be a Pandora's Box. One can never be sure what will emerge and one must be open to discussion and ready to question one's own ideas.

The demands of donors – which often lead to pre-formatted programmes – often prevent the genuine involvement of victims. Demands in terms of standards,

effectiveness and efficiency as well as the short funding timetables and the high turnover of staff who implement humanitarian programmes are factors which do not make participation easy, either in theory or in practice.

Two important points emerged from the case studies:

- The first of these concerns traditional participation mechanisms. Present in many societies (e.g. the shura in Afghanistan, the palaver tree in West Africa), they need to be carefully analysed: who speaks, who decides who speaks, who does not speak, who is not present, etc. Our participation tools (participatory planning methods, discussion groups, etc.) can quickly create conflict with the local systems. This is a subject that is regularly debated in the development sector and is all the more important in unstable and conflict contexts.

- The second point is particularly relevant for conflict, humanitarian disaster and post-conflict contexts and concerns relations with the state or the powers in place. This is relevant in Afghanistan (how should NGOs position themselves in relation to the new government and the provincial powers?), in Angola (how should the fact that the state is progressively taking over in the former rebel zones be managed?), in Sri Lanka and in DRC (what room for manoeuvre is there when there is obviously no mutual recognition on the part of the central government and the rebel forces?). This issue is both peripheral and central to participatory practices due to its connection with the "elected representation/political democracy versus associative representation/civil society empowerment" dialectic.

• *The quality of Human Resources*

Many difficulties can be encountered when implementing a participatory approach:

- Limited access to certain groups (e.g. women in Afghanistan);
- Insecurity (armed groups target those who participate);
- Conflict with local "prescriptive" social systems.

Overcoming difficulties of this kind requires a mindset and specific skills which are rarely observed among humanitarian actors. It involves rethinking the roles of "giver" and "receiver". But humanitarians often lack the necessary skills in social sciences and in communication and facilitation. The right kind of experience and the ability to take a step back, gain acceptance, establish dialogue and conduct negotia-

tions are rarely the most important criteria for recruitment even if they are often mentioned in job adverts.

Conclusion

The consultation and participation of local people and civil society organisations has always been one of the major challenges facing humanitarians. It is an issue which figures in debates about quality, responsibility, power and linking relief and development. And yet, analysis of practices in the field shows how large the gap is between the reality of humanitarian action and ideas about participation.

The studies carried out during the Global Study showed that in unstable situations and violent contexts, the promotion of participation requires great care. In addition to the question of "why" participation should be incorporated, it is important to also consider "how", "where" and "when", as well as possible counter-arguments.

The majority of actors agree about the importance of more participation on the part of the affected population, at least, once the emergency relief phase is over. However, opinions vary amongst beneficiaries themselves, because they are often suspicious that there are hidden agendas behind the rhetoric of participation. Each organisation's institutional culture, its perception of its place in the relief-development continuum, power stakes and the role of donors are among the determining factors of a participation "system" which has yet to be clarified. The "tyranny of participation" was how one author put it…

The participatory tools contained in the Participation Handbook come from the field of development and have been adapted to take into account the specific constraints and dangers of humanitarian contexts: difficult access, limited time, insecurity, increased vulnerability, etc.

Participation should obviously not be seen as a miracle recipe which can ensure that programmes are relevant, effective and efficient. If implemented in an appropriate and sensitive way, this approach can have a very strong impact both in terms of quality and downward accountability. As such, engaging with the population is absolutely critical!

Lessons learned from other natural disasters which are relevant for the response to the Haiti earthquake

François GRUNEWALD

This article reviews the principle lessons learned in evaluations of responses to natural disasters previously carried out by Groupe URD like Hurricane Mitch in 1998, the tsunami in 2004 and the earthquakes in Jog Jakarta in 2006 and Haiti this year, disasters which often affect populations who are already very vulnerable.

LESSON 1: INADEQUATE ASSESSMENT

Assessments which are incomplete, inadequate or biased because the organisation thinks it knows what needs to be done before it has gone are very common. Two reasons are given for this shortcoming: there is not enough time (in natural disaster contexts, speed is important and organisations sometimes have to leave their base in a question of hours), and not enough money (donors rarely finance exploratory missions). And yet, extreme emergency situations, when there is a very limited amount of time to carry out an assessment, are very rare and last only a few days. But even in these extreme situations, the analysis of constraints is fundamental, and is rarely carried out properly. This creates the risk that organisations very quickly launch responses which are technically or culturally inappropriate, which lead to considerable future costs.

LESSON 2: PROGRAMMES NOT ADAPTED TO COMPLEX REALITIES

The passage from the initial assessment to the project design is not always very coherent. Very often, even when an initial assessment has been carried out properly, there is a tendency to repeat standardised programmes. There are a number of reasons for this: the area of expertise of the NGO, time pressure and staff experience.

This issue is specifically important in the housing sector. These programmes are often managed like emergency programmes (distribution of sheeting) and then they are just considered in terms of construction. Socio-cultural factors (housing is a socio-economic domain rather than just a question of "bricks and mortar") and political factors (property law, services, particularly access to water and sanitation and urban development) are often under-estimated. Indeed, humanitarians have little expertise in urban issues.

LESSON 3: HIGH STAFF TURNOVER

In acute emergency situations, staff turnover is high. The first wave arrives (mainly first-aid workers) and only stays for a few days or weeks before leaving once the relief phase is over. The turnover then slows down but unfortunately still remains too high. It is difficult in these conditions to have continuity and to be able to build and conserve the trust of the population and local actors. It is also common for programmes to lack internal logic as each new team wants to "leave its mark" on the programme.

LESSON 4: RELATIONS BETWEEN ACTORS, INSTITUTIONAL DONORS AND PRIVATE DONORS

Most actors in the field complain about pressure from institutional donors to always produce more reports with different reporting formats, imposed methods of action, very tight deadlines, etc. Though sometimes actors use this as an excuse to explain their own failures, it is true that the mobilisation of private funds on a large scale means that funds can be allocated more quickly and more flexibly during the emergency phases. On the other hand, this can lead to the loss of accountability as there is less systematic monitoring and evaluation of how money from the general public is used.

LESSON 5: LRRD NOT SUFFICIENTLY TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT

The evaluations often point out the lack of thought that goes into "exit strategies". This question is often raised when the abundant funds of the emergency phase run out and the organisation has to decide whether it is going to stay or leave. This is when institutional difficulties (related to mandates) and lack of know-how and method begin to appear. It is also during this phase that the consequences of poor analysis of local actors and the lack of partnership strategies become apparent. Ex-post evaluations of how disaster and reconstruction activities were managed show that this is often a window of opportunity for preparedness and prevention activities.

LESSON 6: CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES NOT SUFFICIENTLY TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT

The evaluations show the importance of certain cross-cutting issues in the response to major disasters: gen-

der, environment, protection and population displacement, etc. These issues are either badly integrated or dealt with superficially during an emergency response, whereas they could be integrated proactively based on experience and consequently better managed.

LESSON 7 : WEAK COORDINATION

Coordination between actors in major disaster contexts is obviously important. Coordination uses up a lot of time and money, but it is also fundamental in order to avoid duplication, gaps and incoherence between practices. Considerable progress has been made in recent years and the large NGOs are drivers of these good practices in coordination. In contrast, there is often no coordination between small NGOs and aid sent by certain religious groups, regional authorities and bilateral systems. The implementation of the Cluster Approach, which is part of the United Nations Humanitarian Reform, has provided the opportunity to improve exchange and cooperation.

LESSON 8: CLARIFICATION OF MANDATES

The deployment of armed forces as part of an emergency response (post-Tsunami, Pakistan and now Haiti), once again raises the issue of the lines being blurred between humanitarian and military actors. Though the tension in natural disaster contexts is less evident than in conflict situations, it is nevertheless still there as armed forces obviously represent « state humanitarianism » and the possibility of other agendas. Appropriate coordination mechanisms need to be put in place, based on clearly identified roles, mandates and responsibilities.

LESSON 9: LACK OF PARTICIPATION ON THE PART OF THE LOCAL POPULATION

The majority of large humanitarian agencies are very poor at conceiving and implementing participatory processes. They use a number of excuses to justify this shortcoming: lack of time, lack of local actors, lack of trust, etc. Analysis of the facts shows that the real reason is mostly the result of cultural bias on the part of the humanitarian actors, and lack of skills in relation to participatory methods. Furthermore, the evaluation of numerous operations in natural disaster contexts has shown that local people are often very present in providing assistance, structure, solidarity and helping to manage distress. When international organisations arrive and plan to take over from these local actors, including local NGOs, there can be serious tension and a great deal of energy, efficiency and quality is lost.

LESSON 10: THE NECESSARY BUT COMPLEX INVOLVEMENT OF NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

In natural disaster contexts, the state is usually at the centre of the response. Unfortunately humanitarians too often decide to skirt round state institutions. The reasons for this vary, some of them good and others not so good. They may want to avoid the political instrumentalisation of aid, it may just be easier or they may be overly concerned with short-term effectiveness. This can lead either to confrontation between state institutions and humanitarian organisations or to long-term and harmful loss of legitimacy on the part of the state institutions.

In conclusion

The evaluations that we have carried out show that NGOs, United Nations agencies and most donors have very weak institutional memories, even if everyone spends a lot of time writing reports. As a result the same errors are repeated again and again. It is essential to ensure that teams who head out into the field are aware of the lessons which have been learned in these situations.

François Grunewald,
Groupe URD

Bibliography

Haiti and lessons learned from different disasters

Un pactole qui suscite les convoitises
COURRIER INTERNATIONAL, 1st March 2010
DUVAL, Frantz ; GEFFRARD, Roberson

The Haitian authorities would like to manage the money which, for the time being, is being given to NGOs. But a number of the government's decisions have raised concern that the aid is not benefiting the victims of the tragic earthquake of January 12.

The article can be read at:
http://www.courrierinternational.com/article/2010/03/01/un-pactole-qui-suscite-les-convoitises

Le serpent à plumes pour Haïti
DU ROCHER, February 2010. 175 P.
LAFERRIERE, Dany; TROUILLOT, Evelyne ; SPEAR, Thomas C. ; VICTOR, Gary

The *Hôpital de la Communauté Haïtienne* is one of the rare medical centres in Port-au-Prince which provides health-care to the poorest people, without funding from the state. With its 50 beds, it has been completely overwhelmed since the earthquake: thousands of victims have shown up day after day and the needs are enormous. There is not enough basic medicine, orthopaedic equipment or staff: most patients have lost their homes, they often have lost their families and do not know where to go. The injuries resemble those of a war situation, with many crushed limbs and head injuries. Aid is not only necessary, it is urgent, it is vital. It will be given to those who have always been abandoned, those who are the most in need, the homeless of Haiti who, more than ever, are alone. The *Hôpital de la Communauté Haïtienne* is their hospital. (publisher's note)

Haiti: Food security update: February 2010, 6 P.
USAID; FEWSNET

Since the earthquake of January 12 2010, the Haitian population's food security situation has deteriorated, but the situation is getting better thanks to the aid which is getting through little by little. In addition to the emergency food and non-food aid which has reached the population, the funds raised have increased and small local businesses have been able to start up again.

Download: http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWFiles2010.nsf/FilesByRWDocUnidFilename/MYAI-8337RH-full_report.pdf/$File/full_report.pdf

Après le tsunami, reconstruire l'habitat en Aceh
KARTHALA, 2010. (available at the end of March 2010)
DEPREZ, Simon; LABATTUT, Eléonore

After the devastation caused by the 2004 tsunami, several hundred NGOs and international organisations arrived in Aceh, on the Indonesian island of Sumatra, to begin the long reconstruction process. 500 000 Acehnese had lost their homes, and during the next four years, 140 300 houses were built thanks to the 7.8 billion dollars collected by the international community and private donors. Never before had humanitarian programmes involved so much construction.
Based on field research, this study analyses the impact that this vast reconstruction programme has had on the Acehnese population and territory. The authors consider the appropriation and sustainability of the new houses in relation to their architectural type, the construction methods used and their adaptability. They also look at the related issues of planning, property law, economic aid and how well the emergency phase was linked to development programmes. Also highlighted is the post-conflict context in which the reconstruction took place, following the 2005 peace agreement which ended thirty years of guerrilla war between the separatists of the GAM and the Indonesian government.
Aceh has been impoverished and isolated by years of conflict. Has this massive reconstruction programme laid the foundations of sustainable social and economic development? (Publisher's note).

Links between relief, rehabilitation and development in the tsunami response
UNITED KINGDOM: TSUNAMI EVALUATION COALITION, 2006/07, 99 P.
TSUNAMI EVALUATION COALITION

Before the tsunami of 26 December 2004, the Indonesian region of Aceh and Sri Lanka suffered from economic problems, internal conflict and Human Rights abuses. Emergency relief, rehabilitation and development aid were all already present. The tsunami prompted a change in vision and allowed links to be created between these different forms of aid, with emergency relief and rehabilitation taking place at the same time. In order to create these links, it was important for aid actors to properly understand the situation and evaluate needs. It was also important to try to avoid a disaster of this kind happening again, by allowing the population to gain security via vital economic, social and environmental development. This evaluation aimed to establish whether the link between relief, rehabilitation and development established in Sri Lanka and Aceh before and after the tsunami had been effective or not.

Download: http://www.alnap.org/pool/files/lrrd-final-report.pdf

Les Antilles, terres à risques
KARTHALA, 1999. 311 P. TERRES D'AMERIQUE
GEODE, Caraïbe

Between 1900 and 1996, the Antilles and Central America experienced 475 disaster events which caused the deaths of 155 714 people, affected 2 0295 808 individuals and damaged or destroyed infrastructure, housing and means of production.
More recently, between 23 October and 5 November 1998, Hurricane Mitch hit Central America with devastating force, leaving more than 18 000 people dead and missing.
Small and large islands are regularly victims of natural disasters, flooding, landslides, earthquakes and volcano eruptions, compromising development programmes (publisher's note).

Evaluer pour évoluer : L'action humanitaire dans le processus de reconstruction en Amérique Centrale
Conference report
GROUPE URD; COMMISSION COOPERATION DEVELOPPEMENT, 2002.

Central America is one of the regions in the world that is the most exposed to « natural » disasters. In recent years there have been hurricanes, droughts, floods, cyclones and earthquakes and they seem to be getting more and more frequent. Population growth, the increase in the gap between rich and poor and the saturation of agricultural and constructible land has led to increased vulnerability amongst a large section of the Central American population. Even though poverty and vulnerability are not necessarily synonymous, nowadays, the two are closely related. The region of Central America as a whole has the highest levels of absolute and relative poverty on the American continent, a situation which was made all the more acute during the 1980s by the economic crisis which affected the region and the internal conflicts which took place in Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala. This poverty (dependence and lack of autonomy) is reflected in various forms of vulnerability in relation to disasters. (author's note)

Download: http://www.urd.org/_special_haiti/Evaluerpourevoluer.pdf

Responding to earthquakes 2008: Learning from earthquake relief and recovery operations
ALNAP; PROVENTION CONSORTIUM, 2008. 40 P.

This document is based on 30 years of observation, learning and practice and deals with the post-disaster phase. According to the authors, after a natural disaster like an earthquake, aid should not focus purely on disaster victims but also needs to be more effective in terms of recovery and reconstruction.

Download:http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWFiles2008.nsf/FilesByRWDocUnidFilename/ASAZ-7ZQHL8-full_report.pdf/$File/full_report.pdf

Responding to urban disasters: Learning from previous relief and recovery operations
ALNAP; PROVENTION CONSORTIUM, 2009. 31 P.

There are many challenges for humanitarians in urban disaster contexts. Humanitarians are not used to working in urban contexts and local authorities are not used to managing disasters. They have very little experience in planning and implementing large scale operations in cities and how to manage the relief and early recovery phases.

Download: http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWFiles2009.nsf/FilesByRWDocUnidFilename/ASAZ-7UDJ9M-full_report.pdf/$File/full_report.pdf

Les catastrophes naturelles aux Antilles : D'une soufrière à l'autre
KARTHALA ; CERC, 1999. 334 P.
YACOU, Alain

A period of around twenty years separates the infamous disaster of the Grande Soufrière in Guadeloupe and the recent disaster caused by Soufrière Hill on the neighbouring island of Montserrat, a little to the north. Volcano eruptions, earthquakes and hurricanes have always affected the Carribbean islands. These devastating natural phenomena have left their mark on the collective memory: the 1843 earthquake, the eruption of Mount Pelée in 1902 and the cyclone of 1928. More recently, it has been the fatal hurricanes which ravage the islands which have captured the attention of the world. Most people agree that Hurricane Hugo in 1989 was as destructive as the cyclone of 1928. But though the people of the islands have become used to the idea of atmospheric perturbations appearing on the horizon, the eruption of volcanoes remains an omnipresent danger on several of the Lesser Antilles. The threat of major risks in the tropics highlights the extreme vulnerability of the islands. And the desolation that is caused by each cataclysm is made worse by the very narrow stretches of land combined with uncontrolled demographic pressure. (publisher's note)

* Consult the full bibliography on the Groupe URD website: www.urd.org/newsletter

Events

The all new Groupe URD website!

The Groupe URD website has been given a complete makeover. The new user-friendly version makes finding documents much easier. It has a new search engine which allows you to look for information either by theme, by geographical area, by activity or by key word. Visitors will find a rich selection of articles, reports, project documents and all our latest news. Translated into three languages, we hope it will also contribute to the sharing of experiences and intercultural exchange. And of course, the site may have changed, but the Groupe URD team is still here, ready to work with you to help improve humanitarian practices!

"Urban fragility, humanitarian aid in cities and the challenges of reconstruction": the 2010 edition of the Autumn School on Humanitarian Aid will focus on the challenges involved in urban contexts for the humanitarian, disaster prevention and reconstruction sectors, from 29 September to 1 October

In the context of the terrible earthquake which took place in Haiti on January 12, Groupe URD will present its latest findings on the impact of crises in urban contexts and on reconstruction assistance in the post-emergency phase at the next edition of the Autumn School on Humanitarian Aid.
Uncontrolled urbanisation, whether directly or indirectly prompted, is accelerating around the world, creating dangerous urban fragility and vulnerability. Analysis of post-crisis aid in urban contexts (e.g. post-tsunami or Afghanistan) raises a certain number of questions. For example, in the field of building reconstruction, these include construction quality criteria, the provision of services, the presence of infrastructure, spatial and social coherence, validation of land allocation and property and consultation and implementation methods. Operations in urban contexts can not be viewed in the same way as operations in rural contexts. They take place on a completely different scale and are multidimensional, raising issues of a financial, temporal, spatial, societal, economic and environmental nature.

Each year, the Autumn School on Humanitarian Aid focuses on a topic which we consider to be relevant and important, providing an opportunity to exchange knowledge, experience, skills and expertise. The 2010 edition will take place from 29 September to 1 October at Groupe URD headquarters when we will look at aid methods and strategies in urban contexts following sudden or recurring crises.

The programme and topic overview documents will be available in the coming months.

For any further information, please contact Jeanne Taisson (jtaisson@urd.org)

Courses at Groupe URD headquarters (Fontaine des Marins training centre in Plaisians, Drôme provençale, south of France)

Mainstreaming the Environment in Humanitarian Action, 2-7 May 2010

Groupe URD (Urgence Réhabilitation Développement) and UNEP (the United Nations Environment Programme) are running a training course in English on Mainstreaming the Environment in Humanitarian Action.
Though there is increasing awareness among humanitarian actors that the environment needs to be taken into account during the design and implementation of programmes, it is clear that specific know-how is required to do so.
The course will therefore cover the following areas:
- Analysing environmental stress,
- Assessing the environmental impact of a programme,
- Difficulties and obstacles involved in taking the environment into account at the operational and institutional levels.

Evaluating the Quality of Humanitarian Action, 17-21 May 2010

This training course looks at evaluation (definition, phases, types, etc.) in connection with the quality of humanitarian projects.
It is organised around a case study based on field experience.

The course is aimed at Programme coordinators, Heads of Project, Heads of M&E, Evaluators and any other project management functions in the humanitarian sector.

This course on quality management in humanitarian projects explores the Quality COMPAS method and includes:
- The foundations of quality managementt
- Managing a project with the Quality COMPAS (based on a case study)
- Evaluating a project (based on a case study)
- Introduction to the Dynamic COMPAS (based on a case study)

This course is aimed at professionals from the aid sector currently in charge of projects and/or carrying out evaluations (e.g. Heads of Programmes, Heads of Projects, Heads of Evaluation, Quality Managers, etc.).

Participants should be fluent in French (spoken and written).

For more information, please contact Pierre Brunet (formations@urd.org) or visit our website (www.urd.org)

Real-time evaluation in Haiti for the IASC

Groupe URD and GPPI – who already worked together on the evaluation of the Cluster Approach – have been selected to carry out the inter-agency real-time evaluation (RTE) of the humanitarian response following the Haiti earthquake of 12 January 2010. The evaluation team will be led by François Grünewald, Group URD's General Director and will include an expert from GPPI and two experienced Haitian specialists.
This RTE is part of a broader initiative which consists of carrying out evaluations very rapidly in order to understand the initial phases of the humanitarian response and establish an advisory service for ongoing activities. The evaluation is planned to begin in early April 2010.

Cluster II evaluation almost completed

The Summary Report of the Cluster II Evaluation is currently being finalised and will soon be made public. It includes a summary of the general conclusions and lessons learned from the 6 Country Reports and general recommendations for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the Cluster Approach and its contribution to providing relevant and coordinated humanitarian assistance.

The 3rd edition of the Salon des Solidarités will take place from 4 to 6 June at the Parc des Expositions - Porte de Versailles, Paris

The Salon des Solidarités is an annual Fair where aid actors can meet, exchange and establish partnerships. It raises awareness amongst the public about different themes such as humanitarian aid, fair trade, sustainable development, international cooperation, and provides information about getting involved.

A wide variety of issues will be discussed over the three days in conferences and workshops, including the Millennium Development Goals, the environment, NGO accountability, corporate social responsibility, different ways of taking action and job profiles.

As a member of the steering committee of this event, Groupe URD is co-organising a conference on climate change which will be looked at from two angles:
-        The impact of climate change on vulnerable populations (How can methods of production be adapted to preserve sources of income and food? What can be done to prevent and prepare for disasters? What can be done for environmental refugees?).
-        The repercussions of climate change on humanitarian and development programmes (What needs to be done to adapt existing programmes to these new forms of vulnerability and types of crisis? How can the resilience of populations be strengthened? What do Disaster Risk Reduction programmes consist of?).

For more information about the conference, contact Jeanne Taisson: jtaisson@urd.org

For more information about the Fair, go to www.SalonDesSolidarites.org

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For extended articles and a bibliography go to:

www.urd.org/newsletter

Groupe URD

*Groupe URD (Urgence – Réhabilitation – Développement)*is a non-profit research, evaluation and training institute. Its main objective is to help improve humanitarian practices in favour of crisis-affected populations. Followingmore than ten years of research into quality in humanitarian action, it developed the Quality COMPAS and the Dynamic COMPAS, a Quality Assurance method specifically designed for humanitarian actors.

Further information
www.urd.org
www.compasqualite.org

Humanitarian Aid on the move

Humanitarian Aid on the Move – a quarterly, trilingual e-newsletter – aims to share the results of work on important issues currently facing the sector.
We regularly invite external contributors and provide links to other publications. Please contact us if you would like to propose an article.

Further reading on certain topics and full articles by the authors can be found on the Groupe URD website:
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Newsletter n°5

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