

LEAGUE OF RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT SOCIETIES

International Federation of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

The Red Cross and Red Crescent: Development Challenges of the Nineties

By Ian McAllister
Dhaka, Bangladesh
07.06.90

It is a privilege to meet with you today. Prior to coming I had the pleasure of reading the progress review of the Bangladesh Institute for Development Studies (BIDS) and it brought back a flood of memories. In 1970 I was much helped by Professor Gordon Winston and the Staff of BIDS' predecessor, the Pakistan Institute for Development Economics - just before PIDE moved from Karachi to Dhaka. I am impressed to note how wide ranging your research interests now are, that they are drawing upon a number of disciplines, and that they are solidly focussed on the problems and opportunities of this region.

That is precisely why I hope to interest you in the work of (and challenges faced by) the International Red Cross Movement in general and of the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society in particular. There is scope for cooperation, I suggest, between our organizations - certainly at the individual level, on occasions perhaps at the institutional level. I am honoured to say that among us today are the Chairman of the BRDCS - Brigadier (Retd) Bari, the Secretary General - Major (Retd) Quoreshi, and a number of senior BRDCS staff, together with Mr. Michael Schultz, the League's head delegate in Bangladesh.

They will follow-up on my overview by providing more specifics on the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society and its programmes.

My remarks today will respond to four main questions:

1. What is the background and general profile of the International Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement?
2. What are some of the main issues being faced today by the International Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement?
3. As the Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies take on a more 'developmental role', what are some of the implications and challenges?

4. What, finally, might be some of the opportunities for cooperation between the Red Cross/Red Crescent and the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies, in particular, and the University of Dhaka more generally?

1. Profile of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement

The origins of this extraordinary Movement reach back to the ideas and work of a Swiss citizen, Henri Dunant, and the impact a day - long battle had on him, near the village of Solferino in Northern Italy.

That was in June 1859. It was a battle he chanced on while travelling from Geneva - hundreds of dying and slaughtered soldiers, uncared for - victims of the brutality of war. Helped by local people whom he organised to assist, he did what he could to aid the wounded. The experience subsequently led him to write "A Memory of Solferino", published in Geneva in 1862. That book is, in many ways, chapter one of the Koran of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement.

Among Dunant's key suggestions was the idea that army medical services should be supplemented, in times of war, by national relief societies. These would train volunteer staff in peacetime to care for the wounded; the volunteers should be regarded as neutral, even if called onto battlefields.

Four Geneva Citizens gave prompt and sustained support to Dunant. The "International Committee for Relief to the Wounded" was set up; later this became the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

In 1864 the Swiss Government called a diplomatic conference in Geneva. Fourteen governments were represented. An outcome was the "Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded in Armies in the Field". This convention represented a giant step forward in the building of humanitarian law. From then on ambulances, military hospitals, medical staff and volunteers were to be recognised as neutral and, in the words of the convention, "wounded or sick combatants, to whatever nation they belong, shall be collected and cared for". In the context of any times, the Geneva Convention was a daring and ambitious initiative in a world where, all too often, the enemy wounded were routinely slaughtered or left to a lingering death.

The Convention's 'Fundamental Principles' were to become the underpinnings of the Movement :

- . Humanity
- . Impartiality
- . Neutrality
- . Independence
- . Voluntary Service
- . Unity
- . Universality

The Swiss flag in reverse, a red cross on a white background, was incorporated in the Geneva Convention as the emblem of the new Movement.

A few years later, during the Russo-Turkish war, a second emblem gained currency, the red crescent. Both the red cross and the red crescent are today held in equal respect as symbols of the same Movement.

Within ten years of the 1864 Geneva Convention, twenty two European states had formed their own national Societies, acknowledging the basic humanitarian principles of the Convention and, in turn, being formally recognized by the International Committee in Geneva. The Movement continued to spread. Today there are one hundred and forty nine National Societies, with memberships loosely estimated as in excess of 250 million. Several more Societies are even now in the process of formation, for examples in some South Pacific Islands. Several others are consolidating, for examples those of North and South Yemen and those of North and South Viet Nam.

In 1919, the American Red Cross leader, Henry Davison, had convened an international medical conference at which he proposed that the "Red Cross Societies of the different countries" should form a humanitarian federation comparable to the governmental framework of the League of Nations, (forerunner of the UN). The League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies was therefore established with initial headquarters in Paris; twenty years later (1939) the main offices were moved to Geneva, where they are today, a brief walk from the offices of the ICRC, as well from a family of UN organizations including WHO, UNICEF, UNHCR and UNHCR. The League works closely with them all. A number of regional offices have more recently been established by the League, for examples in Harare, Zimbabwe, in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire and in San José, Costa Rica. More are likely to follow.

These are intended to give further support to National Societies and League delegations working on relief or development projects in countries facing particular difficulties. They interface additionally with other regional agencies such as the African, Asian and Inter-American Banks, participate in regional conferences, and so on.

The League's basic role is defined as "to inspire, guide and support the work of its members". it is probably best viewed as both a forum for, and a Secretariat of, the individual National Societies. It mobilizes resources and serves as a catalyst for policy and programme ideas - many of which originate in the National Societies. All officially recognized Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies form its membership, paying annual dues according to their means. The League has increasingly come to play a co-ordinating role - for example, when famines such as the Ethiopian or Sudanese ones struck, the League sought to harmonize the help to the Ethiopian and Sudanese Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies that had been offered by the various National Societies and through bodies like the EC, as well as

to launch international appeals for funds and other support. Among most recent appeals in 1990 are those for the people and the National Societies of Romania, Ethiopia, Viet Nam and Sri Lanka. Appeals are likely this year to run to about \$ 90 million - assuming no new major disaster.

The League is a relatively lean organization, given its huge mandate. The secretariat in Geneva, for example, comprises only about 180 people (drawn from some 50 nations), and there are some further 130 expatriate League delegates in the field plus, of course, large numbers of expatriate volunteers and staff working on bilateral Red Cross aid projects. When major crises emerge - these numbers quickly increase. At one point, in Ethiopia alone there were over 600 delegates. Most members of the League Secretariat are recruited from, or on loan from, their National Societies. A limited number of specialists are recruited from outside the Movement. Consultants are routinely drawn upon. The permanent staff within the one hundred and forty nine National Societies ranges from several thousand in the larger ones (such as Amcross) to a handful in some of the smaller ones (for example Fiji). National Society budgets range from over one billion dollars (in the case of Amcross) to very modest amounts (for smaller Societies). The League routinely works side by side with the ICRC, the latter concentrating especially on the protection and assistance of victims of armed conflicts, the dissemination of the Principles and on the important field of humanitarian law.

The Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement as a whole has been built around "disasters". Initially these were wars - than the role was extended to include other kinds of disasters. Two broad avenues of action followed.

First came the provision of a varied range of medical services in many countries - formally complementing government ministries and, especially in poorer countries, filling in quite large gaps in the health and /or social welfare systems. Here in Dhaka, for example, the Red Crescent Society runs a major hospital, as well as three others elsewhere in Bangladesh. Elsewhere, for other examples, a large hospital has been constructed in Pakistan for refugees from Afghanistan and a major spinal cord hospital has been built by the Red Cross for victims of the earthquake in Armenia. In time governments have often (especially in the wealthier regions) taken over many of the services started by Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies; but sometimes they have not - continuing to rely on the Red Cross for quite basic services. Some of the services begun by the Red Cross/Red Crescent have led to increasingly specialised programmes - the blood collection work is a good example. In countries including Finland, Canada, Australia and Zimbabwe, this has become large scale and sophisticated. In Bangladesh the Red Crescent Society runs an excellent but more modest facility.

The second major thrust of Red Cross activities was built around non-medical services associated with disaster relief - cyclones, earthquakes, volcanoes, floods, famines, uprisings

(as Romania), train and plane crashes - and so on. These services have included food aid, provision of blankets and clothes, the building of cyclone shelters, temporary shelters in tents, the rebuilding of houses, tracing missing persons and constructing flood protection structures. Some disasters are of a widespread and dramatic character - as for example the Chernobyl nuclear reactor tragedy; many others are more community and individual focussed - for example the problems faced by the handicapped. In some settings the numbers are large and the political circumstances complex - for examples the cases of the Vietnamese boat people and the communities struggling for survival in Southern Sudan.

In Malawi, to give a further example, the Red Cross is looking after some 800,000 refugees from Mozambique - as the implementing agency for the UNHCR.

Any serious concern about disaster relief raises issues that go far beyond the provision of blankets, or medicaments. To what extent can disasters be prevented - even in a 'routine' way? To what extent can early warning systems be developed to avert the worst effects of disasters? Here in Bangladesh, the Red Crescent Society has developed and nurtured an impressive cyclone early-warning communication network. Many disasters occur in countries with mushrooming populations and overstretched and often minimal economic and public infrastructure. A growing literature has begun to develop on many of these issues - contributed to by the Bangladesh Institute for Development Studies and many faculty members of Dhaka University .

Efforts to blend insights from a number of disciplines (including the social sciences) have been intensified - and the manner the satellite photos are integrated into the cyclone tracking procedures here, as well as the excellent work on hurricane early warning systems and detection by the National Hurricane Centre in Miami, Florida are good examples.

But many disasters have proven far less amenable to diagnostic 'science' despite serious efforts and some progress. Probability analysis, in some fields, is still not fine-tuned enough to warn of impending disasters in more than a very general manner. Earthquakes are an example of this category, albeit the work of the US Geological Survey Centre in Golden, Colorado, has been generating increasingly sophisticated data. Amcross has been working closely with them. Even more complex to forecast, and certainly to generate public assistance for, in time to prevent or substantially ameliorate, are "creeping disasters". These are situations which do not "suddenly erupt" like a volcano, but are in-the-making for some time; they may well already be "disasters" but have not been widely or effectively recognized as such. Too often, by the time they are given public recognition massive damage is already done. Many social and environmental situations fit this category - often a product of poverty and generations of deprivation.

2. A sample of issues faced by the International Red Cross

In its earlier days the Red Cross was seen by many as a 'first in - first out' organization. The image and often the practice was that the Red Cross was quickly on the spot when disaster struck, represented by a core of local volunteers who had pre-training in first aid and basic logistical procedures, such as how to distribute food, blankets and tents. Then these local volunteers would be soon supported by volunteers and food aid, clothing and transport from further afield and, quite often, from National Societies from other countries; the process would be co-ordinated by professional staff from national headquarters and, if large scale, by the League in Geneva, with publicity to raise funds to purchase needed supplies and specialized help. Many are the occasions still when this basic model has worked - and I am sure all in this room can recollect televised dramas, from Beijing to Bucharest, from California to the Philippines, where in the centre of destruction and tragedy are those reassuring Red Crosses or Red Crescents, worn by people risking their lives to bring compassion and help to the suffering. But, time and again, that simple model has also had a touch of 'make-believe' to it. It is certainly not irrelevant - but it has severe limitations for many situations, and the closer one gets to the scene, the more complications come to sight. Even when local Red Cross/Red Crescent volunteers are reassuringly on the spot, and they have often an extraordinary track record, their preparatory training may not always have been that good. Then the supporting assistance from further afield, the clothing, food and technicians from National Societies might indeed have been well meant, but it may have been quite inappropriate for the situation at hand. Coordination by the League in Geneva may have indeed been embarked on - but either too late or without adequate logistical follow-up, or indeed without influencing some rather impulsive National Societies, anxious to fly their countries' flags and to gain more prestige and public funds for themselves.

Experience has demonstrated that once a relief operation has been mounted, it is frequently neither easy, nor appropriate, to leave the scene after a matter of days or weeks. Very often the governmental institutions are not coping; very often other NGO's may not be in the immediate area. To be first out may well be simply to leave the survivors or victims in just as vulnerable a condition as prior to the disaster, or even worse off - but with temporary supplies that will give a month or two of leeway but nothing better. A flood of relief supplies and the logistical complications of distributing them may merely have prolonged recognition of a deep-rooted problem that caused the disaster, the disaster merely being a symptom. Sometimes a dependency attitude may have crept into the behavior of those who are being helped and this may have been aggravated by the artificiality of the camp feeding system or other support structures provided. Traditional leaders may have become replaced by externally imposed "officials" or "artificial" systems and may subsequently lose authority and self-confidence.

Disaster relief experiences have emphasized to the Red Cross: first the importance of strengthening National Societies before disasters strike; second the importance of placing more importance on prevention and not only on cure (or picking up the remains); third the difficulty and frequently the inappropriateness of the 'first out' approach; fourth the difficulty of embarking on rehabilitation programmes without longer-term development frameworks or financial resources.

3. Development and the Red Cross

A longer-term developmental challenge has now been accepted by the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. As they struggle to alleviate suffering through relief projects for communities and individuals, they also see the need to strengthen the capacities of those vulnerable. They recognize this to be a long-term challenge, not a call for some quick-fix 'solution'.

But this 'developmental role', for the Red Cross Movement and for many other NGO's as well, is raising some quite fundamental questions. Let me highlight five of them:

First, there is the matter of neutrality. Red Cross has always stood for neutrality in war situations. But in development situations - in war on want - the poor and vulnerable are frequently victims of corrupt governments and systems designed to protect the welfare of élite groups. The Red Cross, just like the worker priests of the Catholic Church, often encounters social and economic structures that call for fundamental changes if the poor really are to become less vulnerable to disaster; and, like religious and political organizations also, Red Cross National Societies themselves are sometimes led by the élite of the Society in power". The Queen of A, or recently retired cabinet minister of B, may well be president or secretary general of the Red Cross National Society. This, of course, can sometimes be a major asset. Red Cross and Red Crescent traditionally play a role as government auxiliaries - on the assumption that both have a responsibility to help the people within the country-regardless of colour, beliefs or tribal backgrounds. But, in a country overwhelmed by poverty or problems that the government may be sweeping under the rug, it is not unknown to find a huge gulf between grass root volunteers, on the one hand, who are the front line of the Movement and very close to the poverty problems and, on the other hand, the National Society leadership who may be close to the government leaders but quite divorced from the problems of the masses or minorities. I would emphasize that while this is not the norm - it is far from unknown. It is not the case I should stress here in Bangladesh.

Second, there is the question of focus and specialization. While the Red Cross/Red Crescent began in the medical support field in times of war, National Societies rapidly espoused a varied range of other activities, basing the commitments on the very broad humanitarian principles of the Geneva Conventions. But where should the boundaries lie? With 149 National

Societies serving countries with very diverse problems and interests, this is no idle question. Like most such questions, it is not just a matter of "where do you stop?" - but also of "where to do you start?" AIDS education programmes for Haiti, cyclone shelters in Bangladesh, food production in Tanzania, clean wells in Côte d'Ivoire, a "blood bank programme" in Canada (not to mention water safety), community development in Viet Nam to raise money for first aid training in schools, a spinal cord hospital in Armenia, refugee camps in Malawi and Pakistan. The list goes on and on - the Movement has costly training institutes (for examples in Ethiopia, and Geneva) that are grossly underutilised; the Movement has art collections (for example the magnificent Japanese collection) that make many national galleries look gauche; the Movement has fleets of ambulances in some countries that give Volvo and Toyota encouraging profit margins. But there are also many Societies where bicycles or camels or donkeys are the transportation norm for volunteers and staff, where the national head office is not a palace or modern apartment block, but a single corner room with outside sanitation (I think of Hanoi), or where the key staff are walking on a razor's edge in representing basic principles and decency in regions characterized by corruption and justice by the gun, witness parts of South America.

Should there be more focus and specialization - and if so, in what directions? It is to countries such as Bangladesh that the Movement increasingly looks for answers - just as much as to major donor Societies as Amcross and Sweden. One has to note the enormous changes that have taken place in the International Red Cross Movement. Up to the end of the Second World War it was a very European centred organization. Now, however, the majority of members are in Third World Countries. That is greatly influencing the orientation.

My third "development issue" comes under the umbrella of "North-South relationships". Poverty and development are both relative concepts. What one nation or individual may deem as either poor or developed may be quite different from a neighbor's perception.

In the Red Cross we have National Societies often competing to help Third World countries, regardless of whether the National Society of that country is, or is not, involved. I must confess that we still have some cases of "paternalism" that could have made government development agencies of 20 years ago cringe. We display an "amateurism" and "quick fix" approach, on some occasions (but certainly not all), that makes CIDA, DANIDA or USAID look the ultimate in consistent sophistication. Now, I do not say this to belittle the Red Cross Movement, far from it, but to highlight the importance of recognizing that development is a very relative and far from absolute concept. Lewis Perinbam stressed that in a lecture series in India that you may have read. (2) Many Third World countries, and Bangladesh is a good example, boast civilizations and traditions that reach back many centuries, even though the majority of their people enjoy few North American

amenities. Can these societies reasonably be considered 'underdeveloped' by our Northern MacDonal'd Hamburger /BMW driven societies? Do the Nordic or Swiss Red Cross Societies really know how best to help Bangladesh or Viet Nam? Do delegates/or advisers from Northern Nations, such as Canada or France, really give reasonably relevant advice to the Sri Lanka's, Jamaica's or Indonesia's of this world? These questions, of course, apply equally to other foreign aid agencies; just as much as to Red Cross/Crescent. I do not presume to seek to respond to that question, but it does have to be raised and honest reappraisals do have to be constantly made. Any student of development studies well knows that mere indicators of economic growth are glaringly inadequate as a sole basis for any thoughtful analysis of the development mosaic. Similarly mere indicators of Red Cross aid volumes, or numbers of delegates sent from North to South, are completely inadequate measures of the value of Red Cross development aid. We are challenged to be far more profound. The Bangladesh Institute for Development Studies has been pointing out these kinds of things for years.

That takes me to my fourth "issue", to the ideas raised recently by Peter Woodrow and Mary Anderson, in the Harvard study (Rising from the Ashes). (3) They define development in terms of capacity to avoid or surmount disasters - at both individual and large scale levels. The definition of development now being espoused by the Red Cross is very much along those lines - capacity building to prevent and to overcome disasters - both at the institutional level (in this case, within the Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies) and at the community levels... the reduction of vulnerability. In the context of Bangladesh that is very much the Red Crescent slogan. Yet from a fund raising vantage point this is an unglamorous matter. Rarely can results be quickly pointed to in short order, rarely can flags be raised on buildings. The essence of the effort has to go in helping people help themselves. This can rarely be done effectively by imposing outside theories or prescriptions.

Fifthly, the Red Cross has historically always been very much a "grass roots" organisation. Most of its "programmes" have been more an amalgam of local activities graced by the term programme, rather than a reflection of some top down, "planning from the centre" process. Regular Red Cross/Red Crescent General Assemblies have indeed played a major role in formalizing directions, in promoting guidelines and in blessing principles and rules. But, when all is said and done, each National Society is very much a law unto itself, and each branch within each National Society often has also great autonomy. This is one of the greatest strengths, I believe, of the whole Movement. This is what enables it to be responsive. But it also raises the risk that the Movement can be viewed as a "Jack-of-all-trades and a master-of-none", in a world of increasing specialization and professionalism. Minimal guidelines are one thing: reliable, professional

performance is another. The Movement needs to work more and more closely with organizations like BIDS. The path from research to development is not a straight forward one - especially for grass root oriented bodies like the Red Cross/Red Crescent.

Industrial country NGOs in general, and the donor National Societies of the Red Cross quite specifically, are facing a number of challenges as they broaden their roles and still try to retain essential focus.

Let me suggest six of the kinds of questions they have to face up to :

First, there is the matter of the changing roles of NGOs within industrialized countries. (4) In some cases their traditional functions at home have been largely taken over by relatively affluent governments and other bodies (sometimes even by the private sector). In other cases, and universities are in this category too, funding is often more readily accessed for overseas ventures than for domestic projects - so they have spread off-shore. (5) Are they off-shore as missionary or as colonialist or as entrepreneurial bodies? Or are they genuinely responsive and understanding of local priorities and issues? Experience is very mixed.

Second, are the industrial - country - spawned NGOs professional in the best sense of the word? Do they draw on research findings in determining their programmes? Do they have strong "learning and teaching from experience" capacities? When sending out delegates ~~as~~ technical advisers and so on, do they ensure they are given adequate briefings. Are they indeed sending out "the right people" - or just those who are dispensable? Do they foster institutional memories - or are they constantly rediscovering the wheel?

Third, what about competition? Do they genuinely seek to cooperate - or are they at each other's throats - chasing after the same and limited public funds - simply complicating unnecessarily the delivery of support to those in greatest need. Is their competition serving to weaken, rather than to strengthen, the capacities of the domestic institutions in the country in crisis? Are they, because of their anxiety to work in a country, reinforcing corrupt governments or NGOs - accepting project practices that should be not tolerated - simply to keep their feet in the door?

Fourth, what about the whole question of equal partnerships? Are they practising this or are they encouraging dependency attitudes among the people in need? Do they display a paternalistic style - are they genuinely 'developmental' in the best sense of that word? Are they encouraging local NGOs to take over their own roles - so they can phase out - are they utilising delegates from the region rather than "from afar"?

Fifth, are they and, if so, should they be, extensions of their home governments? Many are now far more dependent on government-aid than used to be the case. Are NGOs now becoming purveyors of the public policies of their own governments and, if so, how do these policies relate to their basic humanitarian principles? Are they promoting "made in Japan" or "made in USA" rather than "self-help" and "self-sufficiency"? Are they preaching humanitarian justice or "political expediency"?

Finally, in this rather ad hoc list of challenges and questions faced by 'Northern' NGOs and Red Cross donor Societies, are they genuinely accountable in a responsible way. In a world where the medium is often dangerously close to being the message - are they promoting their interests through crassly simplistic advertising? And if so - how serious a misdemeanor is that and what are the options? We all know that, while a few francs a day may be enough to feed one starving child, that child's family and village also need help if that one child is to be given sustained support. We all know that powdered milk can provide needed nutrition - but that also needs clean water.

There are no absolute answers to these kinds of questions; it would be presumptuous to try to give any. These are examples of some of the kinds of points that are increasingly debated in the Red Cross. - How far to specialize; the balance between planning from above or the centre and grass-root ideas; the appropriate relationship between NGOs like the Red Cross and respective Governments; the best ways to fund development and relief activities; the scale of projects that should be embarked on ; the degree of planned focus versus "shot-gun" responsiveness; the degree of emphasis that should be placed on advocacy and public education programming versus "directly getting on with the job". Such questions rarely have cut and dried "right" or "wrong" answers; they reflect tensions and the Red Cross is struggling with them in a fascinating and sometimes convoluted way. The Red Cross contains, just as do universities and governments, traditional dogmatists - who say the role of the organization is "obvious" - let's not waste time questioning it. Then there can also be found those who question anything and everything, including the very value of the Movement as a "structure". And there also is, as in universities and governments, a large "middle-block" who moves from half-position to half-position, trying to marry idealism with pragmatism, perceived needs with available (or hoped for) resources...

4. Opportunities for Cooperation

The Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, as you will recognize, is long-standing, large-scale and complex. Quite probably you may have identified some areas where you feel some form of cooperation might occur between your work, whether as an individual faculty member of BIDS and/or Dhaka University, and the Red Cross/Red Crescent. In many countries (I would not presume to say it of Bangladesh), strengths of the Red Cross/Red Crescent are in those very areas where the university community tends to be relatively weak and vice versa. For example, the strengths of the Red Cross/Red Crescent are substantially at the grass-roots level, access to volunteers in large numbers from all walks of life, experience in 'field operations'. The weaknesses are frequently to be found in systematic reflection, research and analysis. Universities are often, as I have suggested, the other way round - their comparative advantage tends to lie in longer-term research, the capacity to reflect and to draw upon the institutional memories of a great variety of organizations, the ability to plan longer-term programmes as opposed to being confronted with the kinds of crises that face the Red Cross/Red Crescent on an almost daily basis - uprisings, floods, earthquakes and famines.

What kinds of interfaces might be considered - whether at an individual level or, on occasion perhaps, institutionally? Let me isolate eight points which you might consider exploring further:

- 1) Research. The Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement impresses me as an extraordinarily rich source of research potential in the social science fields in particular (but not exclusively). The project experiences gathered, but frequently not analysed systematically and lodged in often forgotten files, are of enormous potential value for future policy and programme planning - not just for the Red Cross/Red Crescent, but for other organizations.
- 2) Evaluation. The National Societies, League and ICRC have frequent requirements for consultants to evaluate particular projects - often in mid-stream. In such cases the evaluator can gain the satisfaction that can come from seeing his or her analysis and suggestions put to good use quite quickly on occasion.
- 3) Advisory Work. The Movement, both here in Bangladesh and overseas, relies considerably on specialist advisers - for programmes ranging from technical fields (such as blood) to less narrowly technical but more comparative (such as fund raising and organizational behaviour).
- 4) Training Courses. The Movement holds training courses around the world routinely. Experienced instructors with appropriate backgrounds are always in demand. These courses

are especially for Red Cross/Red Crescent volunteers and staff.

- 5) Volunteer support; the Movement is built on volunteers. Without volunteers' help, most projects would fail.
- 6) Student Links. There is enormous scope for closer cooperation between the Red Cross/Red Crescent and students e.g. thesis topics, summer 'field projects', students as volunteers in rural areas as teachers on such courses as first-aid, basic literacy and primary health care, project planning and management, and so on. Students, when overseas studying, can also benefit from Red Cross/Red Crescent linkages to learn more of the country they are studying in, to exchange experiences from their own country, to learn more of the Red Cross/Red Crescent internationally, (especially through the Movement's youth programmes).
- 7) Staff Secondments. There is scope for two-way arrangements between the university community and the Red Cross/Red Crescent, as well as for sabbatical leave linkages.
- 8) Conferences. On themes of mutual interest - for examples, on disaster preparedness, on major reports of mutual concern e.g. the UNICEF work on 'Adjustment with a Human Face' or the World Bank report (soon to be released) on 'Poverty'. Recently the League sponsored a major conference in Prague on the theme "Europe in Transition".

Conclusion

The humanitarian principles that underpin the Red Cross are easy to support wholeheartedly - without reservation. Its potential, given the vast numbers of National Societies and the huge force of volunteers across the globe, is clearly massive for good in an unpretentious and pragmatic fashion. Its accumulated body of conventions and legal landmarks is a solid foundation. It is, I think it quite reasonable to say, one of the most extraordinary organisations for good that the world has ever known. But the world is in the process of rapid change and many traditional structures are collapsing around us. The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is not a solid rock in this international turmoil. It is groups of people, many working in tiny villages in far away lands, who are committed to those same ideals that caused Henri Dunant to found the Movement over one and a quarter centuries ago. They constantly need reinforcing and backing up.

References

- 1) For further background on the history of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, see: Françoise Bory, Red Cross and Red Crescent: Portrait of an International Movement. Geneva : ICRC, 1987; and, D. Personnaz and T. Utheim, 1919, 1989: The League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Geneva: League 1989.
- 2) Lewis Perinbam, North and South - Towards a New Interdependence of Nations. Halifax: Dalhousie Studies in International Development, 1983.
- 3) Peter Woodrow and Mary Anderson, Rising from the Ashes. Paris: UNESCO, 1989.
- 4) Tim Brodhead and B. Herbert Cropley, Bridges of Hope. Ottawa: North South Institute, 1988.
- 5) For further discussion, Ian McAllister, "The Role of a University in International Development", Journal of Canadian Public Administration, Vol. 31,no4, 1988, pp. 605 - 621