

## INTRODUCTION AND BRIEFING

This briefing document is to be read by the directing staff of the exercise and not by the participants, although it may be distributed after the exercise.

### **Objectives of the exercise**

This exercise has been created to guide participants to a clearer visualization of circumstances they might confront in a complex emergency and to inspire them to be prepared to seek creative solutions to the problems. Included in this are specific aspects of roles of governments, UN, relief agencies and donors and the nature of resource management, preliminary planning, compromise and negotiation that may be required to alleviate the disasters. Other complications are perceptual differences, media focus and distortions, political, personal and institutional agendas, and need for security.

The directing staff will decide how best to achieve these aims with the participants through choice of setting and designation of the roles. The participants should only be informed of very general objectives prior to the simulation so behavior will not be influenced. During the debriefing, comments from the participants will indicate whether or not the objectives have been achieved. If they are not satisfactorily achieved, the directors and participants may be able to determine the reasons and the simulation altered for future use.

The following are the objectives for this simulation:

1. The participant will be aware of the role of the UN in coordinating needs assessments, appeals to donors, and emergency response in terms of complex emergencies.

(Aspects include: Roles of the UN officials and offices in handling security, coordinating the relief committee and the NGOs, assisting the displaced, determining numbers at risk and needed supplies.)

2. The participants will be able to see interrelationships between humanitarian issues and political affairs and the way the UN is structuring itself to deal with this overlap.

(Aspects include: Security issues, political biases of donors and NGOs, monitoring the relief operation, pros and cons of media coverage, corridors of tranquility, cross border operations.)

3. The participants will recognize the usefulness/need for mitigation and preparedness measures in anticipation of a complex emergency.

(Aspects include: Early warning systems, establishing disaster preparedness teams, recruiting adequate personnel, training, developmental perspectives.)

## **Organizing the simulation exercise**

Depending upon the professional positions and number of participants in the workshop, the directing staff will determine how to allocate roles, the timing and sequence of the activities.

### *Timing of the exercise*

The exercise has been planned for use within a Disaster Management Training Programme (DMTP) Workshop and should be scheduled prior to the session on complex emergencies or emergency settlements. The duration of the exercise is recommended to be between 3 and 4 hours. Reports by the observers and directing staff may be given immediately afterwards, however, the debriefing may take place later, for instance after lunch, the next morning or even a few days later when participants have had time to reflect upon the implications.

### *Allocating the roles*

The roles may be allocated either by casting people close to the nature of their present jobs or by contrast, changing roles to a totally different position. Participants may feel more comfortable playing familiar roles and the exercise may proceed more smoothly. When participants practice different roles, unpredictable decisions may result but valuable insights may be gained.

The casting of chairman and other top management positions require careful consideration. These persons will in many cases determine the success of the exercise.

This simulation includes roles guides for 30 participants, not including observers. Some possible variations are:

1. Thirty participants each with a different role, plus observers
2. Deletion of minor roles to suit the number of participants
3. Expansion of the observer roles (from 2 to 3 or 4).

### *The timetable*

The day before the exercise - Distribute the documents and ask that the participants devote a significant period of time to reading them and getting into their roles. The more convincing the acting, the greater the inspiration to participate. The participants should not discuss their roles with other participants as that might reveal their hidden agendas, unless it is specifically stipulated in the role guide that those with like interests may meet.

### *The exercise*

If necessary, a period of time prior to the simulation may be devoted to reading and role development. Those playing key roles may need more time to prepare.

### *The setting*

Rooms: A main meeting room is required where all participants can sit comfortably and another room where half of the group will meet separately, in addition to two smaller rooms for the preliminary meetings.

**Setting:** Some aspects of realism should differentiate the setting from the normal workshop situation. It is recommended that a map of Brickama be on the wall, either projected by an overhead machine or blown up from the original in the simulation guide. The usual glasses or drinking water and note pads may be available. A blackboard or flipchart should be accessible. Name signs with roles written in very large letters should be displayed in front of each player.

It is advisable to record the sessions either by tape recorder or in writing for review later by directing staff so the exercise may be revised and strengthened.

### *Running the exercise*

**The opening** - It is strongly recommended that a brief press conference be held prior to the commencement of the meeting. The viewpoints of the world and the way they change are important considerations in working in a complex emergency setting. The press interview will add some sense of urgency and reality. (Use flash cameras to add to the effect.) If this is not possible, a recent press release should be passed out as the participants enter the room for the meeting, revealing the perceptions of the outside world.

The press conference will consist of two to four reporters (the directing staff and/or the observers) asking one or two questions each of the UN Resident Coordinator (UN RC) and the Chief Administrator of the Brickama Disaster and Emergency Relief Agency (DERA). At least two questions should be of a contentious nature requiring diplomatic answers. (See separate document for recommended questions.)

The reporters are asked to sit down and refrain from further questions by the Chief Administrator so the meeting can commence.

**The meeting** - Brief opening statements with announcements of recent progress in negotiations are given by the Chief Administrator of DERA and the UN Resident Coordinator. (See role guides for directions for press conference, opening the meeting and conducting the meeting. The directing staff may have to meet with the chairpeople prior to the simulation to determine if directions are clear.)

The Chief Administrator then reviews the agenda and asks for approval of this agenda from the group. He/she then suggests that due to the time pressures required to solve the problems, the groups will immediately proceed to their working groups to brainstorm the options. After one hour, the groups will merge into two into bilateral working groups to further discuss issues and the international appeal to donors. The Chief Administrator DERA suggest that one group would discuss the needs for the western area and the settlement near the capital. The other group will discuss needs for the east and refugees in the south. There may be some dissention but problems should be resolved and the groups reassembled in separate meeting rooms as soon as possible. Government representatives will chair the bilateral meetings, the Director of DERA relief operations for the Western Brickama, and the Governor of Foss.

Following the second meeting, the entire group meets briefly in plenary to table issues that have been unresolved and determine what needs to be done before the appeal to donors can take place. The simulation ends at the time limit. Due to the fact that not all

participants have had contact with each other, it is suggested that the observers report immediately and lay the groundwork for the debriefing.

The suggested time frame:

10 minutes: Introductory remarks

45 minutes to 1 hour: Working group meetings for UN, Donors, Government representatives, and NGOs/ICRC.

1 hour to 1 1/2 hours: Working groups (2) for east and west.

15 minutes to 1/2 hour: Report of groups, wrap up of issues

### *The strategy*

The object of the preliminary group meeting is for the participants to get into their roles and reveal whatever they wish their groups to know. It will also serve to demonstrate the steps that have been taken and need to be taken by the UN Disaster Management Team and the government to get the operations underway.

The object of the bilateral group meeting is to allow the players to discuss and resolve as many issues as possible in the time given and be ready to produce a list of needs for the appeal to donors. The chair person for each group is responsible for steering the discussion in the direction of these aims. If all of the specific logistical and operational issues are not resolved, they will have to be mentioned at the wrap up for future resolution.

To emphasize the complexity of the situation, it is strongly recommended that new developments are reported to the participants particularly in the bilateral meetings. If the meeting is going well and useful discussion taking place with resolutions are at hand, the directing staff may choose to inject some rather innocuous or helpful announcements. If the meeting is losing momentum or decisions are being reached by only a few players with little interest from others, new information may be revealed which changes the entire picture and requires more creative solutions. In either case, at least two developments should be announced to enhance the sense of urgency, or the fact that the "world is watching". See separate document for examples of information that may be used.

### *The role of the observers*

The observers role is to introduce discussion on issues related to the objectives. The observer should try to draw out issues especially where they might not have been adequately reinforced in the meetings and bring them to the floor for further discussion. For example, did options exist to solve the problems that were not mentioned in the role guides, and if so, were they examined in the groups?

The observers may also comment on the way the roles were handled and ask participants to reveal some of their hidden agendas. They may draw attention to gaps that they perceived in the exercise. The observers may try to salvage some key issues even when the roles were not performed well, without drawing attention to individual

indifferent performance. If there were unresolved issues, the observers may set the stage for the debriefing in questioning how the issues might be eventually resolved. This may reflect back to the objectives and the roles played by the agencies.

*The report of the directing staff*

If the exercise is used by participants who will train others, the value of the exercise as a training experience should be discussed. The discussion should include the following aspects: the objectives, the roles, the background, timing and management of the exercise, the technical content and relationship of the exercise to the entire workshop.

## DOCUMENT DISTRIBUTION SCHEDULE

One day before the exercise: All participants receive:

The Background Document

The Brickama Country and Agency Briefs with map of Brickama

The Notice of Emergency Meeting to Discuss Relief Operations

The Meeting Agenda

The Situation Report produced by United Nations

Their personal role guide

If the press conference scheduled prior to the meeting has been cancelled, recent press releases are available to participants at the entrance to the meeting room.

The roles are to be kept private until the time of the meeting. The chairpersons for the plenary and the bilateral meetings may meet regarding meeting logistics.

## ROLES TO BE PLAYED

### **United Nations:**

UN Resident Coordinator  
UNHCR Representative  
UNHCR Field Officer  
UNDP Program Officer  
WFP Director  
WFP Logistics Coordinator  
FAO Representative  
UNICEF Representative

### **Government of Brickama:**

Chief Administrator of the Disaster and Emergency Relief Agency (DERA)  
Director of DERA Relief Operations for Western Brickama  
Regional Governor from Foss  
Regional Governor from Fajara

### **Voluntary Agencies of Brickama:**

Director of Brickaman Red Cross Society  
Head of Association of Indigenous NGOs  
Grassroots for the Homeless

### **International organization:**

ICRC Representative

### **NGO Representatives:**

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies  
Partners Coordinating Agency  
Norwegian Church Aid  
Missionaries of Charity  
Save the Children, UK  
Medecins Sans Frontieres/German Emergency Doctors (MSF/GED)  
Concern  
Community Aid Abroad

### **Donor Representatives:**

USAID  
Japanese (JAICA)  
Germany (GTZ)  
Sweden (SIDA)  
Canada (CIDA)  
Caritas

Observers: 2-4

## RECOMMENDED QUESTIONS FOR REPORTERS

1. For the Head of DERA: We understand that the famous Irish rock group, U2, has requested permission to come to the country and to visit the camps in the west. We understand that they would like to ride on the train. Will they be given permission and if not, why not?
2. For the UN RC: Is it true that some donors have threatened to withdraw aid if they are not allowed to go to see the camps? How will the UN react to this given the overwhelming humanitarian needs in the country?
3. For the Head of DERA: A relief worker who was in the camps told Africa Watch that the conditions are deplorable? Do you agree?
4. For the UN RC: What are your feelings as you enter this meeting, optimistic or pessimistic for resolution of the problem? And why?
5. For the Head of DERA: We understand that the government is abandoning the settlement in the east in favor of assisting the west and the displaced people near Bassey? Is this true?
6. For the UN RC: What is the total number at risk in Brickama? What have been the difficulties in obtaining the numbers? How will you proceed if you don't know the numbers in need?
7. For the UN RC: What negotiations have been made with the rebels to safeguard donor food if it is able to move to the camps?



## PRESS RELEASES

The following are excerpts from press releases of the past two days.

**LONDON TIMES: "BRICKAMA FACES THREAT OF FAMINE** The Republic of Brickama, engaged in a civil war with the Bakau Freedom Movement for the past year, faces threat of famine throughout the country but mainly where war or other humanmade conditions have worsened the situation. Moira O'Brien, a nurse working for Concern, was taken captive by the rebels and released into neighboring Terewan, after a perilous crossing over the river on the border. In interviews conducted by telephone, she describes the conditions in the camps as degrading to human life. UN officials are grappling with negotiations to open a corridor of tranquility to get food to those behind the front. The biggest obstacle remains the position of the government to bar international organizations from the camps. O'Brien, a missionary in the area for a long time, had been allowed to stay and assist the relief arm of the government in its efforts."

**DER SPEIGEL: "NUMBERS AT RISK OF STARVATION IN BRICKAMA STILL IN DOUBT** - Amid accusations from several international voluntary agencies that conditions in the areas of need are ignored by the government, the UN still cannot decide on numbers at risk. Each estimate reflects the political biases of the agency with UN/FAO estimates high and government estimates for the west, much lower. The eastern problem has not even been investigated and possibly nearly one million are at risk in a settlement named Foss and the surrounding area."

**WASHINGTON POST: "USAID RELATIONS WITH BRICKAMA GOVERNMENT TENSE OVER RELIEF EFFORT** - A spokesperson from the State Department said today that the impasse over mobilizing operations to assist the famine affected areas stems from the closed door policy of government, which are described as efforts to hide conditions from the press. The US and Germany are pressing for access to the areas before they commit funds and food."

**THE DAILY SUN: "POLITICS KILL SILENTLY WHILE THE WORLD WATCHES** - Africa Watch reports human rights abuses on both sides of front in the Brickama war with innocent people the victims of the military objectives. The Irish rock group, U2, has asked permission to visit the famine relief camps run by the government in the western regions in an effort to draw international attention to the problem. They have requested to travel on the national rail line which heretofore has been declared off limits to civilians and relief shipments. No response has been received from the Brickama government."

**REUTERS: "SWEDES DEFEND BRICKAMA GOVERNMENT STANCE ON CAMPS** - The Swedish government spokesperson defended the government's exclusion of international agencies from the famine relief camps near the front, where war continues against the Bakau Freedom Movement. Inga Swenson, a SIDA officer, said that repeated terrorist attacks throughout the country have already driven all international workers to the capital city where some terrorists are also in hiding. The Brickama government must ensure protection of the expatriates and would come under more protest if it did not. Claims from some nations that camps are being used as protection for government military operations are unsubstantiated. Capture of the Irish nurse by rebels last week is proof that there is danger for expatriate workers in the area."

## MESSAGES

(To be used by the Directing Staff only)

The following are examples of messages that may be passed to their addressees during the meetings, in ascending order of probable impact. These should be prepared and be ready for use by the directing staff.

### 1. Letter to Sister Karthi from Mother Theresa in Calcutta

Dear Sister,

I know how determined you are to protect our sisters in Fajara from interference with their holy work, but after praying over the matter, I have decided that we must give up our own personal objectives for the sake of helping the millions who may starve. I have spoken with the Head of Partners Coordinating Agency yesterday and he/she has humbly requested that our compound be used for the operations of the Partners as that is the only place at present where the trucks will be safe. We hope that they will soon find another place for the trucks but that is in God's hands. I pray for you every day.

Yours in Christ,

Mother

### 2. FAX

To: The UN Resident Coordinator  
From: NY UNDP

We have been informed that the Belgian Air Force is willing to loan two C130s and revolving crews for a period of four months to Brickama. Funding will have to be obtained for fuel. This is very good news; other offers are sure to follow.

### 3. Message:

To: The Chief Administrator of DERA  
From: The Prime Minister

Some rebel soldiers have managed to set off some bombs near the port. They have been apprehended and the port has not been damaged. You may report this to your meeting if you think it would hasten the negotiations for immediate airlifts to Fajara. We need some time to transport military supplies by rail to Fajara.

### 4. Telex

To: UN Resident Coordinator  
From: Head of the Provisional Government of New Medina  
Subject: Use of New Medina Port for operations in Brickama

Please be advised that violence has taken place on the border between citizens of New Medina and aggressive military troops from Uzima. The people of New Medina will not tolerate such action. Please be advised that as per our discussion with your envoys, we had agreed to discuss repairs to our port for use in relief operations in Brickama, we

now amend that discussion. If the port in Uzima is used for your operations, we cannot/not cooperate with your plans.

Regards

5. Message from Foss:

To: Director of Norwegian Church Aid  
From: Field Worker for NCA in Foss

The situation is getting more desperate here. We have attempted to return to Bassey but the river is too deep. This note was carried across by someone who swam the width. The river should subside in a few days but the sky is very cloudy and another thunderstorm is very possible.

We need urgent help. The number of diarrheal cases is escalating and a possible epidemic is occurring. We have no lab to perform analysis but the symptoms appear to be typhoid fever. Nomadic families are gathering around the settlement and already some thefts have been reported. Their spokesperson is requesting food packages and then they will depart. We are reticent to give them any of our stocks as we may not get more and many in the settlement are very weak.

The water is very contaminated and the supply of iodine is depleted. We have saved a small ration for ourselves or we will not be able to care for the sick. The Red Cross water truck was full but we fear that the water is contaminated, yet it is all there is to drink. We are trying to get some water from the river but still may be risky.

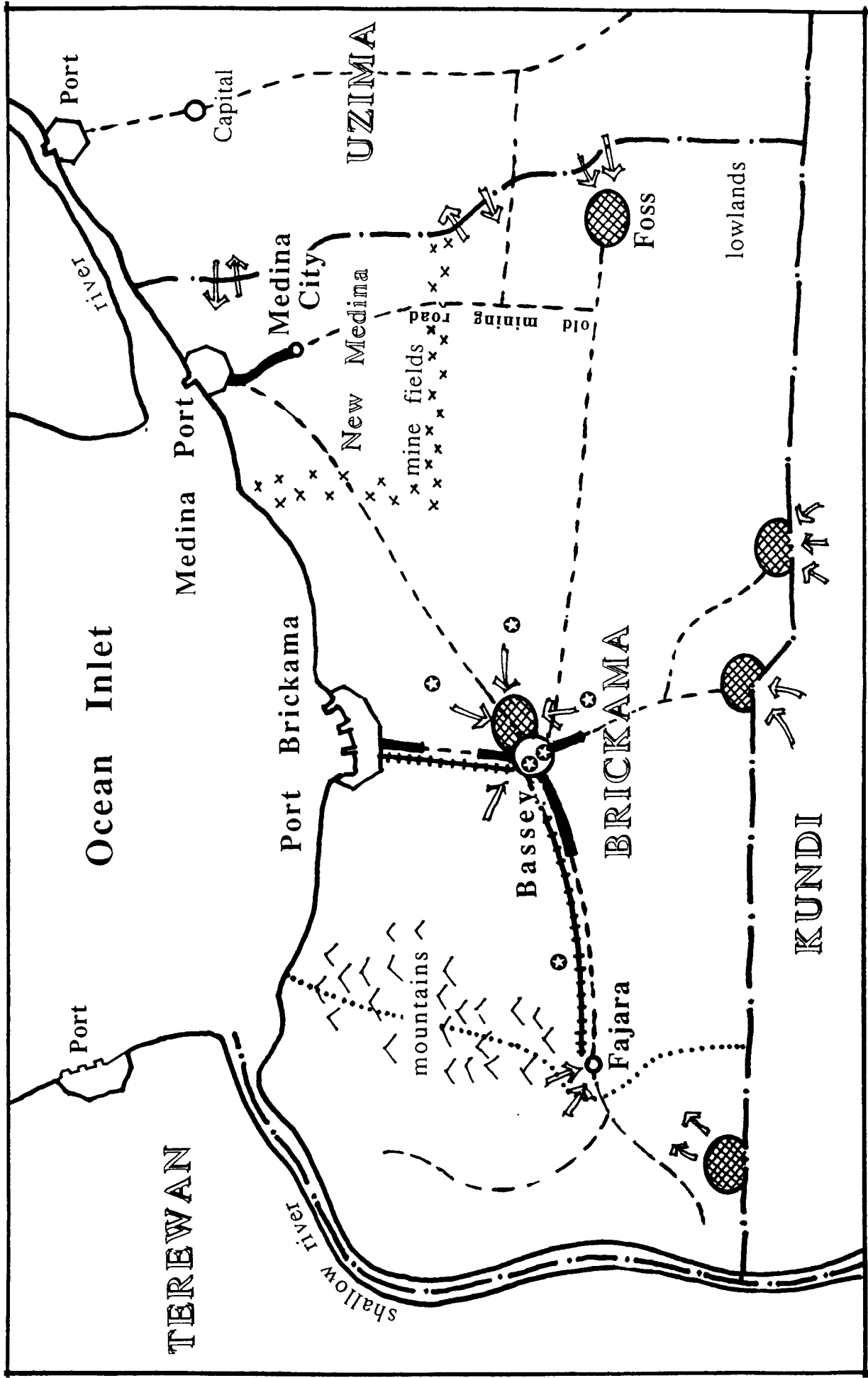
Please inform us as soon as possible of plans to assist. Please be advised that any attempts to reach here by road must be in the company of armed guards. Some terrorist activity has been reported on the Bassey/Foss road.

Yours,

6. URGENT MESSAGE

To: The Chief Administrator of DERA  
From: The President of Brickama

I sincerely regret to inform you that an attempt has been made on the life of the Prime Minister. He/she has been wounded and his/her condition is serious. A suspect is in custody and is probably a member of BFM but will not talk. We require your urgent participation in a meeting as soon as possible to discuss the repercussions of this development.



**Railroad**

**Paved Road**

**Unpaved Road**

**Movement of People**

**War Front**

**Terrorists**

**National Border**

**Emergency Settlement**

0 100 200 300 400 500  
kilometers

North

## BACKGROUND DOCUMENT

### Narrative:

The country of Brickama now faces an emergency situation of unprecedented complexity. The current government assumed power five years ago, following a long liberation struggle against a government installed by former colonial rulers. Since the initiation of the new government, terrorist groups have inflicted severe disruption and insecurity throughout the country but particularly in the west. A year ago, government forces engaged in armed conflict against the western regions, dominated by the Bakau tribe. Government troops have made few gains against the rebels, clever and experienced guerilla fighters, who receive military support from external sources.

The area to the west of the war front is controlled by the Bakau Freedom Movement (BFM). The only sea port still in daily operation is controlled by the government but is in constant danger of seizure by the rebels, who hide in the hilly areas waiting for an opportunity to attack. At present, the capitol city, Bassey, is a significant distance from the front but acts of sabotage perpetrated by subversive rebel sympathizers are occurring with alarming frequency at night, the streets sometimes resounding with gunshots. The urban population is becoming nervous and losing faith in the government's ability to manage the situation. Shanty settlements, formed in recent years on the fringes of the capital, and consisting of displaced rural people who fled from unsafe areas, are suspected hiding places of the insurgents. The government provides relief assistance to the settlements so the economy of the capital is not severely disrupted.

Over the past five years, the government undertook an ambitious program to establish education and health services for the population, with the assistance of indigenous and international NGOs, and United Nations agencies. It provided economic incentives to farmers and fisherman and small businesses. In the past two years, however, terrorists have sabotaged infrastructure, and destroyed schools, health posts and development projects, causing NGOs to abandon their sites and people to flee their villages. For the past year, the government has devoted increasing amounts of foreign currency and a larger percentage of its national budget to the war effort, thus the economy which never fully recovered from the liberation struggle, is eroding further.

Years of rainfall shortage have resulted in drought conditions throughout the country. The population of the west, once the "breadbasket" of Brickama, now suffer from famine, exacerbated by the interference of the war in cropping and marketing activities. The lack of rainfall has severely affected the entire geographic region, including the neighboring countries of Terewan, Kundi and Uzima. The country of Terewan, an even poorer country than Brickama, is in the midst of a large international relief operation. Refugees fleeing drought and persecution as a result of a tribal conflict in Kundi, are streaming into the southern area of Brickama.

The region to the far northeast was conceded to the Medina tribe for their participation in the liberation war. The Medina, who believe themselves to be ethnically unique and discriminated against by the former governments, have established their own provincial government. They have virtually closed their border to Brickama by leaving the mines planted during the liberation struggle intact. The majority of their population is nomadic and roams the border area of Uzima, the neighboring country to the east. The riverine port that was operating in what is now New Medina, has for the most part been closed down due to damages in the final battles of the war and lack of funds to devote to the task of repair. The Medina have developed a hostile relationship with Uzima over lands in western Uzima, now irrigated plantations, that Medina

nomads roamed for thousands of years before colonial powers divided it between the two countries.

In the southeast, the Brickama government provided incentives for nomadic families to settle and farm some of the marginal lands near a seasonal river. This policy resulted from frustration over the constant demand for relief assistance by the nomadic tribes believed to be also benefitting from assistance in Uzima. Unfortunately, the settlement intensified hostilities on the part of those who remained nomadic, numbering over one million, who roam the border areas and have seen their dry season grazing lands slowly taken over by agriculture. Shortly after the settlement began farming, nomads raided agricultural supplies and sabotaged irrigation systems. The settled population, over 100,000, now requires total assistance, their lands parched by drought and their agricultural supplies wiped out. The government is hard pressed to continue assisting them given its more important agendas.

In the west, several famine relief camps have recently developed near the main road, still in government control. Two indigenous NGOs, and members of several international missionary groups living in the area have been allowed to work in the camps, controlled and supplied by the government Disaster and Emergency Relief Agency (DERA).

Reports of huge numbers at risk have reached the international media and reporters are clamoring to tour the camps. The government has been reticent to allow the press in, claiming that it is unsafe although government officials and military travel there often. Attempts to truck food and medical supplies to the sites by international donors have been waylaid by government officials for one major reason: possible ambush by rebels. An antiquated railway is functional and donors have offered to upgrade it in hopes of carrying large amounts of food to the area. The government has offered various excuses as to why this cannot be done yet managed to transport military supplies a week ago which safely reached the regional capitol of Fajara, the last remaining stronghold of the government in the west. The airstrip in Fajara is maintained by the military.

Publicity of the horrible effects of war and famine is rapidly escalating amid international accusations that the UN and major donors are unresponsive. Young boys of the rebel Bakau tribe who have walked for days are emerging into the neighboring country, Terewan, where they are being interviewed by the press. Their families have been killed or captured. They report thousands dying of starvation and many too weak to walk to the camps.

A critical point was reached this week when an Irish relief worker was taken hostage by the rebels, and released into the neighboring country to the west. Her report to the press depicted the horrible conditions in the camps, the worst she, as a missionary of 25 years, had seen. Several epidemics have run their course through the camps due to the unsanitary conditions, killing more than malnutrition. Hundreds, perhaps thousands wait on the outskirts of the camps seeking assistance, but have not been allowed in. She cannot understand why the world does not respond to assist these innocent people. The Brickama government spokesperson accused the woman of sympathy to the rebel cause and could not confirm any reports of epidemics.

The rainy season in the lowland areas to the east just commenced with a major storm causing flash flooding of the seasonal flood plains from initial runoff of the compacted soils. While the rain is certainly welcome, the ground is now saturated and several government trucks have sunk in mud up to their axles. The water, even in the deep wells, is highly contaminated by debris, promoting several types of diarrheal disease. A

missionary worker, recently returned from the area, declared the situation an emergency. Not only are the settlement groups at risk but the nomadic families are affected, their animals weak and dying from bloat. Nomadic herders have come to the settlement asking for assistance and are too desperate to walk the hundred km into Uzima. The clinics are overrun with patients and will soon run out of rehydration solutions and other medications.

Although the government recognizes its inability to deal with relief assistance to all of the needy, it still strives to maintain control over any international interventions. Weekly meetings between UN and government officials have failed to break the impasse over negotiating access to the west, and agreement regarding the numbers at risk or the amount of food available in government warehouses. The situations concerning the influx of refugees in the south and the sickness and supply shortages in Foss are relatively recent developments but with serious disaster potential. Hovering above all else is the specter of chaos that may develop if the fighting on the streets at night in the capital reaches a dangerous level, or a coup should occur, and international personnel are forced to evacuate.

## BRICKAMA COUNTRY BRIEF

*Population:* 15 million

*Per capita income:* US\$175 yearly

*Government:* Republic

*Structure:* The President of the dominant party is the President of the Republic. The cabinet consists of eight ministers chaired by a Prime Minister. The ten regional military governors have recently come to control the power structure.

*Ethnic and Sociocultural Groups:* Approximately 40 ethnic tribes live in Brickama. The government has tried to play down ethnic differences, while it is composed largely of members of the historically dominant tribe, the Bonsang. The Bakau tribe is the largest, being mainly agriculturalists living in the more hilly regions to the west. The nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes in the south and east are members or related to the major ethnic grouping of the Kar tribe. The Medina are part of the Kar group and have now splintered off, however, some Medina live in Brickama and Uzima.

*Religion:* There is no official or state religion. The rural people are to a large extent animists or follow traditional beliefs. Some of the nomadic populations are Moslems as are many in the neighboring country of Uzima. Large numbers of the urban populations and areas where missionaries have worked, are Christian, including Catholics, Lutherans and some Jehovah's Witnesses.

*Geography:* Hilly and temperate in the west and northern coastal areas, becoming flat and progressively more arid toward the east. The ocean coast on the northern area is flanked by river outlets. Seasonal stream beds and floodplains are widespread in the east and south.

*Disaster vulnerability:* Particularly high vulnerability exists to meteorological and human made disasters. Drought occurs in 11 year cycles and flooding occurs on nearly a yearly basis. Both are aggravated by intense deforestation in the west and desertification in the east. Several great famines occurred in the past, rating Brickama one of the most drought affected countries in the world. Damaging locust infestations occur every few years and other pests, such as rats, have inflicted serious losses in the storage facilities at the ports and railyards. Storm surges have occurred on the ocean coast seriously damaging port facilities. Occasional earth tremors are felt.

*Economy:* Agriculture is the main economic activity, employing about 60% of the population. Animal husbandry, and sales of meat and hides rank second. Maritime industries and tourism on the coast are a significant resource and salt making. The main subsistence crops are barley, corn and millet.

*Transportation:* The road network is extremely minimal and damaged by years of mining and lack of maintenance. The major road extends from the port south to Bassey and west to Fajara. The railway parallels this road and operates when tracks are in good condition. Port Brickama is in operation but suffers from lack of storage space. Bassey has an international airport and Fajara, a gravel airstrip. Brickama Airways travels to neighboring countries.

*Communications:* There is a government controlled radio station. The telephone connections are usually poor. Infrastructure for communications and electricity have been rendered inoperable in many areas.



## AGENCY BRIEFS

### The United Nations

The UN agencies operating in the country are UNDP, WFP, FAO, UNHCR and UNICEF. WHO, UNSO and UNEP have a presence but are unable to carry out development activities due to unsafe conditions in the field.

The UNDP Resident Representative has recently been named UN Resident Coordinator to strengthen his/her negotiating position with the government. He/she has been working in the country for one year, is extremely diplomatic and yet assertive. He/she has established good relations with government counterparts and has tried to strengthen the UN emergency coordination role in anticipation of the events occurring at present. His/her efforts to include the government in these planning stages have been thwarted by the preoccupation of the government with the war and its "complicit" avoidance of any activities that may assist members of the rebel tribes. Members of the UN Disaster Management Team have brainstormed solutions to the problems but lack government cooperation to enact any plans. Other obstacles to relief efforts include the political agendas of donors which often limit what participation they envisage and the goals of the NGOs in the country. One of the major problems complicating UN efforts are the roles of its own agencies within the country and the preoccupation of headquarters in NY with a much larger scale complex emergency in the former USSR which dominates the political agenda. UN and other professionals who were formerly available for consultation in disaster management are now totally involved elsewhere.

### Government of Brickama

Government officials, including the Prime Minister, have focused daily affairs solely into winning the war. The pressures to do so are incredibly intense from the countries funding the arms and also from the standpoint that all government officials and their families will likely lose their lives if the war is lost. The government officials are becoming more resigned to letting the UN worry about the refugees on the border and desperate people in the Foss areas and even the displaced around Bassey, but must dominate operations in the west due to the need for control of the military situation. The delivery of the relief supplies also protects the military supplies being delivered at the same time. The government believes that the rebels have spared these shipments for the most part so their people won't starve completely although they have attacked a few government convoys and a train.

The position of the Prime Minister is believed to be increasingly precarious yet the system of paranoia he/she has engendered promotes an artificial loyalty. The President is now a figure head only and matters are controlled mainly by the military council. These days, the government officials think more often of fleeing with their families, however, periodic punishment of any suspected defectors seems to keep them in line. Their main goal, apart from winning the war, is to maintain a business as usual situation in Bassey so that the city population is kept peaceful. Need to secure financing for the war has led to greater taxation and some restlessness is occurring. The expectation of an announcement of devaluation of the currency has set many on edge.

The government has successfully kept the donors and their accompanying media, from interfering with the war by playing on their political interests. The recent events have demonstrated that will not be the case for long as funds to keep the supplies going to the camps are running out. The Prime Minister is expected to announce an open policy to

assisting the famine camps but watchdogs from the government and the military will likely oversee every move.

The Chief Administrator of the DERA, cousin to the Prime Minister, has stretched his/her resources to the limit and now is more conciliatory toward accepting international aid. The Director of DERA operations for Western Brickama is also on the military council, is a retired commander, and safeguards military interests in the relief operation. The Director of the Brickama Red Cross also panders to government interests and is a political appointee. The Head of NGOs is not in a strong position as he/she controls no vital resources. The regional governors are military officers and see matters from that perspective.

### **The NGOs**

Most of the international agencies had full fledged development operations here until the war paralyzed the economy and eventually access to the west was cut off. Most agencies also operate programs in and around the capital and have had skeleton staff present. All stand ready to scale up their operations if the government gives them permission and a designated site. Those who were working in the west would like to have their old sites back or to work in the camps as some of them speak the Bakau language. Most agencies working together under the Partner's Coordinating Agency umbrella, mainly missionary groups headed by the Catholics, are not in disfavor with the government. The Missionaries of Charity remain totally apolitical. The Catholics know how to manage the political scene. The Norwegians, operating in the Foss settlement, have been accused of inciting the local populations against the government but have never been expelled. Save/UK publicized some atrocities occurring in the west, was expelled from its site near Fajara, and one staff member was deported. Due to its long association with Brickama, Save/UK has been permitted to remain in the capital. Concern has been allowed to work in the western camps but that may change after publicity regarding the captured relief worker. IFRCS is mainly provides technical assistance and donations to the Brickaman Red Cross Society. An indigenous NGO, Grassroots for the Homeless, works in both the western famine camps and with the Bassey displaced. The major agencies, ICRC, and Partners, have constantly petitioned to work in the famine relief camps but their efforts have been thwarted.

International NGO operations, except for those working near the capital are at a standstill, and many staff have been placed in other countries. The port is clogged with military equipment taking precedent over NGO arrivals of food and supplies, which in some cases they have had to hand over to the government for distribution by DERA. Government officials whom they once worked with are increasingly unavailable or unable to help them. The government's focus is currently on the situation in the west and no plans have been expressed to further assist the population in Foss or give permission for any large scale operation.

#### *Target areas for Voluntary Agencies*

Foss: Norwegian Church Aid, UNICEF

Bassey: Grassroots for the Homeless,

West: Partners, Missionaries of Charity, ICRC, Brickama Red Cross/LICROSS, Concern

South/Refugees: UNHCR

(Save/UK ?)  
(MSF/GED ?)  
(CAA?)

## **Donors**

The donors with similar attitudes about Brickama meet together as a group every month to discuss the situation. Several donors are not invited to this group because they are mainly donors of military equipment with little to do with assistance for the famine and displaced emergency operations.

The donors group is fragmented as well with some donors reluctant to act because of their government's desire not to offend the Brickama government which they are trying to woo for strategic and political purposes. Others feel that a diplomatic ultimatum must be issued insisting that the government take part in negotiations with the rebels for access to the affected areas. Nearly all donors in the group are suspicious of the government's motives and have not really given much credibility to the excuses made for not allowing them to enter the famine camps, and most have expressed this to government and UN officials. Their feelings toward the rebel groups are not much more positive.

The situation in the west of Brickama offers more political grist than the plight of the refugees in the east, which is regarded as a major headache. Yet the issues of refugees and settlements are getting more international publicity, thus, the donors are beginning to study the details. In general, most wish they were working in the former Soviet republics where their governments are focusing their attention and where they would be more likely to receive recognition in their agencies than they will for their efforts here. Due to the cumbersome bureaucracy, their hard won donations cannot even be distributed to their satisfaction. If the NGOs were allowed to operate, they may be able to justify their presences here.

Major donors include:

USAID, Japan, Germany, Canada, Sweden, and Caritas

## **Bakau Freedom Movement**

The rebels are optimistic that the war is going their way. The major focus is gaining control of the town of Fajara and the main road. They are very concerned that the people in the camps are purposely being mistreated. The rebels are willing to negotiate safe passage for vehicles carrying food to more remote areas where people are in very poor condition and unable to walk. They will insist no government vehicles or personnel enter their territory. The food shortage has severely affected rebel soldiers as well and they have nothing left for relief. Cross border operations from the southern country, Kundi, have ceased due to growing unrest among tribal groups there which is in danger of escalating into a war. There was never enough food supplied anyway, giving people no choice but to walk to the camps.

## NOTICE OF EMERGENCY MEETING TO DISCUSS RELIEF OPERATIONS

To: Representatives from Brickama Government, Voluntary Agencies and Donors

From: Chief Administrator of Disaster and Emergency Relief Agency (DERA) and the UN Resident Coordinator

Time:

Place:

We ask you to devote the afternoon to the goal of resolving the problems we face in meeting the needs for emergency assistance in Brickama. It is possible that more than one million people are at risk at this time and the number will escalate rapidly.

An emergency has been declared by the UN Resident Coordinator and a needs assessment conducted. We now, in view of time constraints, ask that all agencies gather in one venue and meet first as working groups and then as bilateral groups focused on specific areas of need. It is of the utmost urgency that we discuss the issues in a candid manner and attempt to work through the bottlenecks.

It is graciously requested that you ascertain donations and services that your countries and agencies are willing to pledge for humanitarian purposes in Brickama.

We thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Att: Agenda