

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies



The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies was founded in Paris on 5 May 1919 in the aftermath of World War I, under the name of League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, changed its name in 1991, and celebrated its 75th anniversary in 1994.

The International Federation is a global humanitarian organisation consisting of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, a secretariat in Switzerland, and delegations throughout the world. It is non-political, non-denominational and non-racial.

The International Federation, the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the International Committee of the Red Cross together constitute the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

The general object of the International Federation is "to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by the National Societies with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering and thereby contributing to the maintenance and the promotion of peace in the world".

More specifically, its function is to:

- organise, coordinate and direct international relief actions;
- promote and support humanitarian activities on behalf of the most vulnerable populations;

- represent National Societies in the international field;
- bring help to victims of armed conflicts, refugees and displaced people outside conflict zones;
- encourage creation and development of National Societies;
- reduce the vulnerability of people through development programmes.

The International Federation has a unique network to respond efficiently and rapidly to ever-increasing humanitarian needs. In 1994 there were 163 National Societies, 274,000 employees, 128 million members and volunteers, and more than 400 delegates working worldwide in 13 regional and 50 national delegations.

In the event of disaster, the International Federation can launch an international appeal on behalf of those affected. It coordinates donations in cash, kind and services for relief operations — sometimes of indefinite duration. When the emergency phase is over, it very often initiates development and disaster preparedness programmes.

International Federation aid is given in an independent and impartial way. It is made available to people irrespective of race, religious beliefs or political opinions. The seven Fundamental Principles (see back cover) of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement — Humanity, Impartiality, Neutrality, Independence, Voluntary Service, Unity and Universality — guide all the International Federation's actions.

In addition to its relief operations and development and disaster preparedness programmes, the International Federation provides National Societies with support in areas as diverse as blood donation, the prevention of disease and epidemics, first aid, social welfare, the prevention of and fight against AIDS and information and communication systems.

As the third millennium dawns, humanitarian challenges are changing. Relief operations tend to be more complex as poverty increases among a large part of the world's population. At the same time, the humanitarian gap is widening: available resources are diminishing whereas those who need help are increasing.

The International Federation estimates that by the year 2000 the number of people affected annually by disasters of all sorts will be between 300 and 500 million.

The International Federation's guidelines for action, the *Strategic Work Plan for the Nineties*, focuses on the major challenge of improving, in cooperation with the populations themselves, the situation of the most vulnerable.

The four principal goals of the International Federation for the year 2000, as defined in the *Strategic Work Plan*, are: enhanced respect for human dignity and humanitarian values, improved ability to cope with crisis, strengthened capacities of vulnerable communities and a stronger International Federation.

The Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters



The Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters (CRED) was established in 1973 at the School of Public Health (University of Louvain) in Brussels. CRED became a World Health Organization Collaborating Centre in 1980.

Since then, it has increased its international network substantially and has collaborative status with United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs. It works closely with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the US Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, as well as the European Commission Humanitarian Office.

CRED actively promotes the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction within the context of its activities.

CRED's main goals are to:

- provide continued research and information support to the international community to help improve response and preparedness;
- train field managers, relief officers, physicians and health professionals in management of short- and long-term disaster situations;
- introduce emergency preparedness and response in development programmes of disaster-prone countries;
- enhance the capabilities of developing countries to manage their

own preparedness for, and response to, emergencies.

CRED's scope is defined by emergency situations with major human impact.

This includes all types of sudden, natural catastrophes and situations creating mass displacements of people, including civil conflicts.

While the main focus is on human health aspects of disasters, CRED also works on the socio-economic and long-term effects of mass catastrophes. Increasingly, preparedness, in particular human resource development and management issues, is gaining importance within the profile of CRED's activities.

World Disasters Report 1995

World Disasters Report 1995

**International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies**

Acknowledgements

Copyright © 1995 by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, PO Box 372, CH-1211 Geneva 19, Switzerland.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

The opinions expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official policy of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies or of individual National Red Cross or Red Crescent Societies. The designations used do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of the International Federation or National Societies concerning the legal status of a territory or of its authorities.

ISBN 90-411-0038-5

Published by Martinus Nijhoff Publishers,
P.O. Box 163, 3300 AD Dordrecht, The Netherlands.

Fax +31 78 33 42 54

Sold and distributed in the USA and Canada by Kluwer Academic Publishers,
101 Philip Drive, Norwell, MA 02061, USA.

In all other countries, sold and distributed by
Kluwer Publishers Group,

P.O. Box 322, 3300 AH Dordrecht, The Netherlands

Fax: +31 78 18 32 73.

The World Disasters Report 1995 was edited by Nick Cater and Peter Walker. Principal contributors: Chapter 1, Larry Muear; Chapter 2, Johan Schaar; Chapter 3, Peter Walker; Chapter 4, John Borton; Chapter 5, Susanna Davies; Chapter 6, Luc Voeltzel, Mark Wilson; Chapter 7, John Sparrow, Mark Duffield, James Darcy, Colin Scott; Chapter 8, Nick Cater; Chapter 9, Charles Eldred-Evans; Chapter 10, Nick Cater, Patrick Webb, Nev Jeffries; Chapter 11, Deberati Sapir, Claudine Misson, Edward D'Aoust; Chapter 12, Giles Whitcomb; Chapter 16, Peter Walker. Among those contributing shorter items: Claes Amundsen, Josephine Fox, John Sparrow. Thanks to all those who assisted contributors during travel and research.

Contact details

International Federation of Red Cross and
Red Crescent Societies
17, chemin des Crêts, P.O. Box 372,
1211 Geneva 19, Switzerland
Tel.: +41 22 730 42 22
Fax: +41 22 733 03 95
e-mail: walker@ifrc.org

Centre for Research on the Epidemiology
of Disasters
Catholic University of Louvain,
School of Public Health,
Clos Chapelle-aux-Champs 30-34,
1200 Brussels, Belgium
Tel.: +32 2 764 33 27 / 764 38 23
Fax: +32 2 764 33 28

EDITING

Nick Cater
Words & Pictures
Tudor St Anthony, Muchelney,
Somerset TA10 0DL, England
Tel.: +44 1458 251 727
Fax: +44 1458 251 749

PHOTOGRAPHY

Magnum Photos Ltd
23-25 Old Street
London EC1V 9HL
England
Tel.: +44 171 490 17 71
Fax: +44 171 608 00 20

For further copies of the World Disasters Report 1995, please contact the International Federation's Disaster Policy and Refugees Department or any National Red Cross or Red Crescent Society. The publications order form is on page 150.

World Disasters Report 1995

Contents

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, CRED	<i>inside front cover</i>
Acknowledgements	4
List of illustrations	6
Introduction	7
Section One, Key Issues	
Chapter 1 Addressing humanitarian needs around conflicts	9
Box 1.1 Camp violence – five ways to reduce tension	15
Box 1.2 Somalia – working in the grey zone	16
Chapter 2 UN sanctions and the humanitarian crisis	19
Box 2.1 Haiti – sanctions, half sanctions or no sanctions?	22
Box 2.2 Iraq – sanctions and security	24
Box 2.3 Serbia-Montenegro – experiments in aid	25
Box 2.4 Iraq – sliding into destitution and vulnerability	26
Section Two, Methodologies	
Chapter 3 Doing the right thing: Why good practice?	29
Chapter 4 Turning early warning into livelihood monitoring	33
Box 4.1 Looking into Ethiopia's future	36
Box 4.2 Taking timely action against earthquakes	37
Box 4.3 Early warning of epidemics	38
Chapter 5 Evaluation: Measuring effects not process	41
Box 5.1 Listening to the beneficiaries	42
Box 5.2 Rwanda – assessing success and failure	45
Section Three, The Year in Disasters 1994	
Chapter 6 International Federation needs and appeals	49
Chapter 7 Rwanda: Dilemmas of a total disaster	59
Box 7.1 Humanitarians in uniform?	60
Box 7.2 Airwaves of hope and hate: Rwanda's radio wars	62
Box 7.3 Psychological support – who helps the helpers?	65
Chapter 8 Mozambique: Back to tough times	69
Box 8.1 Good news on mines and demobilisation	73
Chapter 9 Bangladesh: How to survive a cyclone	77
Box 9.1 Cyclones and refugees	81
Box 9.2 1991. Surviving the big one	82
Chapter 10 Ethiopia: Ten years on, could it starve again?	85
Box 10.1 Poverty deepens despite reforms in Ethiopia	89
Section Four, Disasters Database	
Chapter 11 Meeting the need for systematic data	93
Chapter 12 Early warning systems: A selective guide	115
Chapter 13 International Federation delegation network	121
Chapter 14 National Societies: The global reach	127
Chapter 15 Information sources and further reading	141
Chapter 16 Signatories to the Code of Conduct	145
The International Federation on the Internet	148
World Disasters Report publications information	149
World Disasters Report publications order form	150
Advertisers	<i>following 150</i>
Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement	<i>back cover</i>

List of illustrations

Photographs

<i>Carrying water</i> , Sarajevo, 1993. Paul Lowe/Magnum	8
<i>Street vendor</i> , Iraq, 1991. Leonard Freed/Magnum	18
<i>Health worker</i> , Sudan, 1991. Chris Steele-Perkins/Magnum	28
<i>Parched land</i> , Ethiopia, 1985. Sebastiao Salgado/Magnum	32
<i>Food delivery</i> , Mozambique, 1985. Jean Gaumy/Magnum	40
<i>Aid convoy</i> , Zaire, 1994. Chris Steele-Perkins/Magnum	48
<i>Pregnant refugee</i> , Tanzania, 1994. Sebastiao Salgado/Magnum	58
<i>Refugee possessions</i> , Malawi, 1989. Eli Reed/Magnum	68
<i>Relief boat</i> , Bangladesh, 1985. Bhawan Singh/Magnum	76
<i>Water carriers</i> , Ethiopia, 1983. Chris Steele-Perkins/Magnum	84
<i>Registration queue</i> , Afghanistan, 1994. Chris Steele-Perkins/Magnum	92
<i>Damaged homes</i> , Japan, 1995. Philip Jones Griffiths/Magnum	114
<i>Sniper barricade</i> , Bosnia, 1994. Paul Lowe/Magnum	120
<i>Evacuation day</i> , Bosnia, 1993. Gilles Peress/Magnum	126
<i>Camp lessons</i> , Afghanistan, 1994. Chris Steele-Perkins/Magnum	140
<i>Rwandan corpses</i> , Zaire, 1994. Chris Steele-Perkins/Magnum	144

Figures

<i>Figure 1.1 Conflict goes local: Increase in internal wars</i>	13
<i>Figure 3.1 Ten million more: Growth in vulnerability</i>	31
<i>Figure 4.1 Epidemic early warning: Rise in communicable disease in the NIS</i>	39
<i>Figure 6.1 Back to Africa: Regional picture for International Federation assistance</i>	50
<i>Figure 6.2 Global help: Growth in International Federation assistance</i>	52
<i>Figure 6.3 Frightened and hungry: Who does the International Federation assist?</i>	54
<i>Figure 7.1 No fast return: Where did Rwanda's refugees go?</i>	59
<i>Figure 8.1 Returning to vulnerability: Mozambique's indicators of poverty</i>	69
<i>Figure 8.2 Back from exile: Where did Mozambique's refugees go?</i>	71
<i>Figure 8.3 War on civilians: Who is injured by landmines?</i>	75
<i>Figure 9.1 Surviving the cyclone: Bangladesh gets prepared</i>	79
<i>Figure 10.1 Ethiopia's structural crisis: Decreasing food production</i>	85
<i>Figure 10.2 Global structural response: Constant food aid</i>	87
<i>Figure 10.3 Poor and hungry: Who is food insecure in Ethiopia?</i>	90

Tables

<i>Tables 1 and 2 Regional picture of people affected by disasters</i>	99
<i>Graphs 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 Mortality for all disasters, 1969-1993</i>	100
<i>Tables 3 and 4 Effect of differing categories of disasters</i>	102
<i>Tables 5 and 6 Disaster events worldwide</i>	103
<i>Table 7 Effect of Disasters on individual countries</i>	104
<i>Tables 8 and 9 Disaster events in 1994</i>	105
<i>Tables 10 and 11 Financial cost of disasters</i>	106
<i>Table 12 Refugees by country of origin</i>	107
<i>Table 13 Refugees by host countries</i>	108
<i>Table 14 Internally displaced people</i>	109
<i>Table 15 Intensity of conflict by year and region</i>	110
<i>Table 16 Number of victims by country</i>	111
<i>Table 17 Types of conflict by region</i>	112
<i>Table 18 Value of humanitarian assistance</i>	113



Cover photo:
Goma, 1994.
Chris Steele-Perkins/Magnum

Burdens that never get lighter

The closing years of the twentieth century have brought massive changes to the work of the International Federation, changes in the way the international community views disaster response, and above all changes in the scale of the disasters we have to respond to. We now face tremendous dilemmas in our work. Dilemmas created by the growing insecurity of the environments within which we work, the increased public profile of our work and the sheer scale of the assistance which we have to provide.

Both the absolute amount and the proportion of overseas development assistance going into short-term humanitarian work have increased dramatically in the last few years. Figures from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development suggest that over three thousand million US dollars a year go into international humanitarian assistance, and this does not include food aid. Ten years ago humanitarian assistance accounted for just over 1 per cent of total overseas development assistance, now it is up to 6 per cent. With some 160 million people affected by disasters other than wars in 1994, and over 50 wars ongoing, killing at least a quarter of a million people in 1993 (the last year for which reliable figures are available), there is little prospect of the need for humanitarian assistance diminishing. Disasters and disaster response are here to stay.

Many of these protracted disasters, in Liberia, Rwanda or the Caucasus for instance, show little prospect of allowing for a return to normality. These relief operations cannot close down in a few weeks. Well-resourced welfare states with clear, respected and defensible boundaries are increasingly a thing of the past. Power, from the barrel of the cheap but effective automatic rifle, is the most potent factor shaping many people's lives. Today there are over 16 million refugees in the world and an estimated 26 million people displaced within their own countries. These 42 million people represent the fall-out of failed development and diplomacy and increasingly it is the international humanitarian system which is looked to for support and durable solutions.

But the international humanitarian system has its own problems. Funding is not spread equitably, it goes where the publicity and political interest direct it, not always where the need is greatest, and the vogue of the "integrated approach" to assistance which links humanitarian assistance to political and military intervention may make theoretical sense in the safety of an agency's headquarters, but it flies in the face of over a century of practical humanitarian experience in the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. It is difficult to see how the providers of humanitarian assistance can also judge guilt on the ground and yet remain neutral and impartial.

We believe, and our experience shows, that humanitarian assistance must be delivered by a neutral agency. Today this is more than a matter of not taking sides in a dispute, it has more to do with not judging who is right or who is wrong. By linking humanitarian assistance with military force, albeit in the form of peace-keeping operations, or with political objectives, as is the case with UN-imposed sanctions, humanitarian assistance is being drawn into the conflict. Agencies, rightly or wrongly, are perceived of as taking sides and their ability to alleviate suffering is severely hampered.

Humanitarian assistance must be based on consistent and high standards. Both ethical and professional. Humanitarian agencies must never forget that they exist, not to serve their staff or their funders, but to serve the 42 million displaced people, the 160 million people affected by disasters and, behind them, the two billion people whom the United Nations Development Programme estimate live in a state of vulnerability and poverty.

Neither the world's humanitarian load nor the complexity of the dilemmas we have to deal with show any prospect of decreasing in 1995. Faced with this reality, humanitarian agencies have a duty both to adhere to high professional standards and to advocate on behalf of the disaster victims. The World Disasters Report is part of this process. I commend it to you and welcome any comments you may have on its contents.



George Weber
Secretary General