

REHABILITATION OF SINGLE-MOTHER LED

FARMING FAMILIES IN JOHAR,

SOMALIA •

INTEGRATED

PROGRAM

The RECONSTRUCTION AND REHABILITATION FUND (1981-1995) provided financial and physical assistance to help overseas communities move beyond receiving relief assistance to rebuilding their communities after a disaster.

The fund was established and funded by the federal government's Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). The fund was administered by the Canadian Council for International Co-operation (CCIC), a coordinating body serving Canadian non-governmental organizations working in the field of international development.

Projects with a reconstruction and rehabilitation element are now funded directly through CIDA. For more information, please see the resources section of this brochure.

Although the fund no longer exists, the lessons learned over its lifetime are worth passing along. Therefore, this brochure describes the philosophy and activities of the RECONSTRUCTION AND REHABILITATION FUND and gives practical information and advice on developing successful projects of an R & R nature.

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SUPPORT OF

DISPLACED PEOPLE IN

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MAHARASTHRA

EARTHQUAKE AND REHABILITATION

PROJECT, INDIA •

REVIVING THE

ECONOMY AND REBUILDING SOCIETY, BURUNDI •

PROJECT FOR THE STREET CHILDREN OF PÉTIONVILLE, HAITI •

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Preface: REFLECTIONS ON DISASTERS AND DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE

DECISIONS FOLLOWING THE 1995 FEDERAL BUDGET have resulted in the end to the funding by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) of the Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Fund after 14 years of operation.

After 1986, the fund was administered by the Canadian Council for International Co-operation (CCIC) and, since that time, has developed into a program that promoted disaster responses in keeping with long-term developmental objectives.

In the 14 years, 275 projects received financial support for activities that took place in 48 countries. More than \$40 million was allocated for these initiatives. This includes the regular annual allocation plus special funds to address specific disasters such as the cyclone in Bangladesh, the people displaced by the Gulf War, the drought in Southern Africa and a special fund promoting prevention and preparedness activities.

The *R & R Fund* worked on a matching basis supporting projects presented by Canadian NGOs for which they had been able to raise funds from the Canadian public. The projects were selected by a committee composed of 13 representatives from the NGO community and one representative from CIDA.

The R & R Committee did more than allocate matching funds. It provided a unique forum for reflection on NGO experience in crises. The outcome of this reflection has been the refining of guidelines and criteria with the objectives of improving the quality and long-term impact of projects and of promoting responsiveness and cooperation among NGOs.

The other natural outcome of this reflection was the development of the fund's program to support the disaster work of NGOs. The program included: organizational development and training; monitoring and evaluation, especially in regions where special funds were received; research in key development issues, such as the environment, prevention and preparedness, refugees and the displaced; and building relationships with other sectors also active in the field of disaster management.

This "value-added" element resulted in improved criteria for projects, improved understanding among non-governmental organizations (NGOs)

of the need for a more developmental response to disasters, increased awareness of how that can be carried out and an NGO voice in international deliberations on disasters and development.

The *R & R Fund* was the only mechanism in place in Canada which enabled widespread NGO discussion of long-term developmental responses to disasters and which encouraged disaster reduction initiatives.

Reconstruction and rehabilitation activities have been documented extensively through monitoring, evaluation and research. A number of publications produced by the *R & R Fund* are available for NGOs to help them in their conceptualization of R & R projects based on natural disasters. *(Please see Resources section.)*

This brochure is intended to provide the NGO and international development community with the benefits of this expertise and experience. Even without the *R & R Fund*, reconstruction and rehabilitation projects will continue to be needed. It is important that reflections on the understandings of this specialized area of development assistance that have been built up over 14 years be preserved and acted on by the community.

Valerie Melnikoff
Coordinator

three basic principles

A RELIEF PRINCIPLE

Relief work should be held to development standards. Thus, every disaster response should be based on an appreciation of local capacities and should be designed to support and increase these.

A DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLE

Development work should be concerned with long-term sustainability. Thus, every development program and project should anticipate and be designed to prevent or mitigate disasters. Thus, they should identify and address the vulnerabilities of the people with whom they work and ensure that these are reduced over time.

RELIEF/DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

1. Both relief and development programs should be more concerned with increasing local capacities and reducing vulnerabilities than with providing goods, services, or technical assistance. In fact, goods, services or technical assistance should be provided only insofar as they support sustainable development by increasing local capacities and reducing local vulnerabilities.
2. The way that such resources are transferred must be held to the same test.
3. Programming must not be solely preoccupied with meeting urgent physical/material needs, but must integrate such needs into efforts that address the social/organizational and motivational/attitudinal elements of the situation as well.

Development cannot be imposed. Imposing aid often undermines people's development. Aid can only be effectively given by people and agencies that give it with full respect and appreciation of the capacities of the recipients to shape their own lives and futures. As one NGO leader said, "We can only act as allies in development, allies of the people whose lives are engaged in their own development."

(Rising from the Ashes, Development Strategies in Times of Disaster by Mary B. Anderson and Peter J. Woodrow, pp. 96 - 100).

Introduction:

FROM "HELPLESS VICTIMS" TO COMMUNITY BUILDERS

*T*HE RECONSTRUCTION AND REHABILITATION (R & R) FUND was born out of a growing understanding on the part of both government and non-government bodies of the need for assistance of a more permanent nature than that provided by short-term relief aid immediately following a disaster. Too often after a disaster, people were treated as "helpless victims" and the development principle of involving people in decision-making was forgotten in an attempt to provide quick response.

While short-term relief aid may fill immediate needs, its medium and long-term effects are often harmful, distorting local economies, weakening existing social structures and undermining local capacities, thereby increasing the dependency and vulnerability of those affected.

Relief or welfare involves keeping people alive by providing for their immediate needs after a disaster, such as food aid or emergency shelters. Projects are considered relief when there is no community development and when there has simply been distribution of goods with little or no activity by the community.

Development, on the other hand, involves a community defining its priorities and achieving its goals. This occurs when communities are able to identify and build on their capacities and to find ways to decrease their vulnerabilities.

What is a disaster?

It is a natural or human-made event (or events) that causes an acute state of crisis to the extent that the affected country, region or community can no longer rely on its own resources to cope and the essential functions of society are disrupted. There is no limit on types of disasters, either natural or man-made. The determining factor is not the nature of the event, but the effect upon the community.

The goal of projects funded under the *R & R Fund* was to increase capacities and reduce vulnerabilities of individuals and communities which are the poorest and most at risk—economically marginalized, women, children and the aged. *R & R Fund* projects did more than merely replace structures and institutions. Ideally, they brought new hope by identifying and building on the resources and skills which remained in the community after the disaster, which helped promote self-reliance. They included prevention and preparedness elements; they gave impetus to renewed community efforts to achieve sustainable development. The *R & R Fund* gave Canadian NGOs with international development programs the means to involve themselves in post-disaster activities founded on viable development principles, in effect, integrating relief and development.

Reconstruction and rehabilitation projects are development projects addressing the effects of disasters. They are **not** a stage between relief and development, but development in a situation of more immediate and pressing incapacitation. Therefore, the first priority should be in rebuilding the capacity of groups and communities to take care of themselves. Disasters can provide the opportunity to introduce new ideas, to question conventional ways of doing things, to reorganize in different ways, to raise new issues and to strengthen local control.

Themes of R & R assistance: RESTORING LIFE TO COMMUNITIES

OVER THE YEARS, the *R & R Fund* identified some standard themes of project assistance.

► **Natural disasters** Naturally occurring phenomena such as hurricanes, monsoons, cyclones, floods, earthquakes, volcanic eruption and drought often cause disruption beyond the coping capacity of local communities and many *R & R Fund* projects addressed this type of disaster.

► **Prevention and preparedness** In some areas of the world, such natural disasters can be expected to recur (such as floods in Bangladesh and hurricanes in the Caribbean). Therefore, community organizing to prepare and plan for the next event as well as rebuilding to prevent as much damage and loss as possible are important factors. Coordination and cooperation between NGOs in planning, implementing and evaluating is crucial to a more effective response. Prevention and preparedness can apply to human-made disasters as well—in areas of conflict, for example, there may be activities to prepare for invasion. Environmental disasters can result from human actions, such as excessive floods resulting from deforestation, and preventive measures such as tree planting and erosion control are needed.

► **Areas of conflict** Human-made disasters occur where there is conflict and devastating effects are felt by the people where communities find it difficult to provide even basic services. There may be open warfare or a condition of occupation and on-going civil unrest. In areas away from the fighting or in situations of ongoing tension but where communities have formed, *R & R Fund* projects were developed that helped restore community livelihood and self-reliance, as well as deal with the trauma of war, both physical and mental. It has been said that areas such as Lebanon are in a perpetual state of reconstruction and rehabilitation.

► **Displaced people** Chronic natural disasters such as drought and human-made disasters, such as continuing conflict, often force people to move. About one-third of the projects supported by the *R & R Fund* in later years dealt with displaced people, with only a few people having been displaced due to natural disasters.

Resettlement

Refugees, both internal (having moved within their own country) and external (having moved across a country border) are being resettled permanently or temporarily but for a longer term and require community rebuild-

ing and rehabilitation. A large number of refugees are women and children, who are among the most vulnerable.

Repatriation

The situation in a country can improve, as in El Salvador, or it can become worse in the new country, such as for Guatemalan refugees in Mexico. Refugees might therefore wish to return to their home country or community. Physical safety, land tenure and re-establishing a community and a livelihood are some important issues.

Conflict resolution and reconciliation

In areas with long-term conflict such as Lebanon, or in areas where refugees have moved into other communities, there is a need for skills to deal with conflict between individuals and groups in order to rebuild a functioning and healthy community.