

*Network Paper 16*

**The Joint Evaluation of  
Emergency Assistance to Rwanda:**

**Study III Principal Findings  
and Recommendations**

*June 1996*

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# The Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda: Study III Principal Findings and Recommendations

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## Preface

Although a number of evaluations of international assistance in complex emergencies have been carried out, experience from the planning and execution of large scale aid for relief and rehabilitation has not been extensively documented and assessed. Those that have been undertaken have invariably been limited in their scope, focusing only on the actions of a particular donor organisation or relief agency and concentrating on the effectiveness with which the assistance was provided, rather than the political, diplomatic aid and management in the period leading up to the crisis.

Recognising the magnitude of the Rwanda emergency and the implications of complex emergencies for constricted aid budgets, the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, through its development cooperation wing, DANIDA, proposed a *Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda*. The initiative resulted in the launching of an unprecedented multinational, multi-donor evaluation effort, with the formation of a Steering Committee, at a consultative meeting of international agencies and NGOs held in Copenhagen in November 1994. This Committee was composed of representatives from 19 OECD-member bilateral donor agencies, plus the European Union and the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the OECD; nine multilateral agencies and UN units; the two components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (ICRC and IFRC); and five international NGOs.

The main objective of the Evaluation was to “draw lessons from the Rwanda experience, relevant for future complex emergencies as well as for current operations in Rwanda and the region, such as early warning and conflict management, the preparation for and provision of emergency assistance (which is the focus of Study III's work and the subject of this Network Paper), and the transition from relief to rehabilitation and development”.

In view of the issues to be evaluated, four separate studies were contracted to different institutions and individuals:

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|-----------|--|
| Study I   | Historical Perspective: Some Explanatory Factors (Nordic Africa Institute, Uppsala, Sweden)                          |
| Study II  | Early Warning and Conflict Management Chr. Michelsen Institute (Bergen, Norway and York University, Toronto, Canada) |
| Study III | Humanitarian Aid and Effects (ODI, London, UK)   |
| Study IV  | Rebuilding Post Genocide Rwanda (USAID, Development Alternatives Inc, Refugee Policy Group, Washington DC.           |

The ODI-based team which prepared Study III was led by John Borton, Research Fellow on the Relief and Disaster Policy Programme, and was made up of 16 technical specialists in the fields of health, anthropology, nutrition, epidemiology, military/protection, logistics, media, UN coordination, economics, water and sanitation and environment.

Network Paper 16 offers a summary of the work and findings of Study III Team to ensure that RRN members are aware of the issues covered and the principal findings and recommendations. Whilst it gives a useful overview of this unprecedented study and may serve as a reference for relief practitioners in a number of diverse fields of humanitarian assistance, as a synthesis, it does not do justice to the work and substantial detail contained in the full report. It is recommended that the full version be obtained.

A full report is available from the ODI's Publications Department at a price of £30.00 for the UK and £33.00 for Overseas (inclusive of post and packing). The report comprises the four studies mentioned above, together with a Synthesis Report.

# **The Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda: Study III Principal Findings and Recommendations**

## **1. Scope and Method**

Study III of the Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda examines the provision of humanitarian aid and physical protection by the international community in response to the Rwanda crisis. It combines a detailed technical assessment of the main sectors and phases of the response with an attempt to draw out the principal conclusions and policy lessons from the experience. The period covered was broadly that from April 1994 until late 1994 for operations inside Rwanda, but for refugee operations in Tanzania and eastern Zaire it extended to July 1995. Humanitarian operations prior to April 1994 were described but not evaluated and insecurity in Burundi and the limited time available resulted in refugee operations in Burundi not being evaluated. Time pressures also obliged the study to focus on the main refugee concentrations in Ngara, Goma and Bukavu. Consequently, refugee movements into Karagwe in Tanzania and Uvira in Zaire were not considered.

The study was undertaken by a team of 21 people, representing eight nationalities and a wide range of backgrounds and experiences. Initial consultations with key UN agencies, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs began in January 1995. A reconnaissance mission by five Team members to the Great Lakes region was undertaken in April and the principal block of fieldwork by more Team members was undertaken during June and July. Within the Great Lakes region a total of 235 donor, UN, NGO and government personnel were interviewed and approximately 140 beneficiaries of assistance. These were complemented by interviews with 245 personnel of donor organisations, UN agencies and departments, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Europe and North America and a document collection that eventually exceeded 2,000 items. A database to enable analysis of financial flows during 1994 was created, and two sub-studies on the 1994 dysentery epidemic and UK TV coverage

were commissioned.

## **2. An Overview of Humanitarian Relief Operations**

The protection and humanitarian crisis of 1994 did not begin with the shooting down of the Presidential plane on 6 April, but was preceded by at least three and a half years of developing operations inside Rwanda and in neighbouring countries within the Great Lakes region. By mid-1992, for instance, attacks by the RPF in the north of the country and ethnic violence and insecurity elsewhere had created 200–300,000 IDPs. Following the February 1993 advance by the RPF, this number increased sharply to perhaps 900,000, though, by the end of the year, 60% of these had returned to their homes. Large-scale relief operations were mounted, particularly by the ICRC, in conjunction with the Rwandese Red Cross and WFP, who undertook a massive airlift of food that transported twice the tonnage carried by the 1994 airlift operations. In October 1993, the attempted coup and subsequent wave of ethnic violence in Burundi resulted in the death of 50,000 to 100,000 people and an influx of almost 700,000 refugees to neighbouring countries, principally southern Rwanda and eastern Tanzania. Documentation reviewed by the study indicated that the international community's response to the refugees in eastern Tanzania was poor and exceptionally high rates of mortality were experienced as a result of the combined effects of inadequate water and sanitation, food supplies and healthcare. For those who moved into Rwanda the response was better as relief agencies involved in the IDP Programmes were able to rapidly divert personnel and resources to the Burundian refugees.

The events that followed 6 April 1994 were an extraordinary human tragedy consisting of genocide and civil war that caused the violent death of between 500,000 and 800,000 people, the movement of over two million Rwandese into neighbouring countries and the temporary displacement of well over one million people inside Rwanda. This study estimates that approximately 80,000 people died in the refugee camps in Zaire, Tanzania and the IDP camps inside Rwanda during 1994, principally from cholera and dysentery.

It is highly significant that the number who died as a result of causes that could be

considered avoidable (had the humanitarian response been more effective), was many times lower than those who died as a result of the genocide and conflict. The critical failings in the international community's overall response, therefore, lay within the political, diplomatic and military domains rather than the humanitarian domain. Had the international community responded more effectively in the months prior to, or in the days immediately following, the shooting down of the Presidential plane on 6 April, many, perhaps most, of those who died would probably have survived and much of the massive expenditures on the provision of humanitarian assistance been unnecessary.

Over the period April to December 1994, approximately US\$1.4 billion was allocated by the international community to the response. Of this amount, approximately 85% was from official sources with the remainder being provided from private sources. By a substantial margin, the Commission of the European Union (principally ECHO) and the US Government (USAID, Department of Defense and the State Department's Refugee Bureau) were the largest official sources of funds, accounting for 50% of total allocations. Approximately 50% of the total allocations were expended by, or channelled through, UN agencies, with just two agencies, UNHCR and WFP, accounting for over 85% of these. A substantial proportion of the resources channelled through these two agencies were allocated onwards to NGO implementing partners. The Red Cross Movement accounted for 17% of all flows.

At least 200 NGOs were involved in the response, but estimation of their relative role (i.e. their direct contributions and as partners to UN agencies) proved difficult as a result of inadequate data and an incomplete response to a questionnaire survey undertaken by Study III. It was clear though that many NGOs played critical roles and that overall, NGOs formed an important part of the response.

The response contained many highly commendable efforts, notably: the initial response in Ngara; the impressive performance of UNHCR Emergency Response Teams in Ngara and Goma; the work of ICRC inside Rwanda, mainly between April and July 1994, particularly in the field of protection of survivors and with its hospitals in Kigali and Kabgayi; and the courage and commitment shown by UN,



ICRC and NGO personnel in extremely difficult and often dangerous situations. Widespread starvation did not occur. For the refugees and many of the IDPs the food aid supply system, dominated by WFP and to a lesser extent the ICRC, was vital to their survival and performed well. Given the magnitude and scale of the population movements and the distance of the beneficiary populations from coastal ports, this was a substantial achievement. For the non-displaced population within Rwanda the combination of a good crop and the dramatic reduction in population meant that locally-available foods were comparatively plentiful.

### **3. Principal Features of the Response**

#### **3.1 Inside Rwanda**

Humanitarian operations in Kigali and in FAR-controlled areas after 6 April were severely constrained by the high levels of violence. Only ICRC (with MSF support) and the UN Advance Humanitarian Team were able to operate in Kigali and, though valuable, the volume of humanitarian assistance and protection they were able to provide was limited. The critical need was for security and physical protection, which the much-reduced and ill-equipped UNAMIR force was unable to provide, though it did succeed in protecting perhaps 25,000 threatened civilians. Between April and the end of June, only ICRC, CRS/Caritas and to a lesser extent WFP were able to provide humanitarian assistance in the south and west of the country, though, again, the volume was severely limited. In the RPF-controlled areas in the north and east, ICRC, UN agencies and NGOs had greater access and were able to deliver quite substantial volumes of assistance, though their freedom of operation was closely controlled by the RPF and many agencies were not allowed to remain inside Rwanda overnight.

The French-led *Opération Turquoise* that pushed into western Rwanda on 22 June, and then concentrated on the creation of a so-called Safe Zone in the south-west, remained in the country for two months. The operation protected approximately 14,000 threatened civilians within Rwanda and the improvement in security in the south-west enabled a dramatic increase in humanitarian assistance activities by the

three agencies that operated during the April–June period to at least 15 agencies by August. Such efforts served to spread out over a longer time period the number of displaced Rwandese crossing into Bukavu and to limit their eventual number. Had this not been done, it is highly likely that the mortality rates experienced in Bukavu would have been much higher.

Despite this, judgements of the benefits of Opération Turquoise have to be qualified. By concentrating forces in the Safe Zone after the end of June, the operation:

- ! greatly increased the likelihood of an RPF advance in the north-west and thus of a massive refugee influx into Goma;
- ! did not provide the security necessary for humanitarian agencies to operate freely in the northwest and respond to the needs of the large and growing number of IDPs there;
- ! diverted attention of donor organisations, UN agencies and NGOs to the south-west at a critical juncture for those in the north-west.

The positive contribution of Opération Turquoise in reducing and spreading out the movement of IDPs into Bukavu has to be balanced by the fact that the several hundred thousand Hutu who were encouraged to remain in IDP camps in the Gikongoro area presented the new government and the UN with an extremely difficult problem. Though the majority were eventually returned to their home communes, several thousand IDPs were killed at Kibeho camp in April 1995. The south-west has arguably remained the most insecure area of the country.

The response of humanitarian agencies to the needs of those concentrated in IDP camps in the Gikongoro area was initially slow as a result of: the reluctance by some NGOs to be closely identified with the French military; the time needed to establish operational capacity in the area; the change of focus to Goma by the international community following the influx in July; and a lack of technical coordination capacity at field level. The initial lack of food and water and inadequate sanitation resulted

in very high rates of dysentery in many of the camps and the death of perhaps 20,000 IDPs.

### **3.2 Outside Rwanda**

#### *Ngara*

Because of the insecurity inside Rwanda and the access problems facing not only humanitarian agencies but also the international media, the large-scale movement of Rwandese into neighbouring countries enabled readier access, at the same time as creating substantial humanitarian needs. The international response to the first major influx, that of almost 200,000 into Ngara District at the end of April, which was led and closely coordinated by UNHCR, was highly impressive. Substantial loss of life was avoided.

However, despite the initial successes and the continued impressive performance of most agencies working in Ngara, the programme has remained fragile as a result of a number of factors. Unlike Goma and Bukavu, where the initial influx was not followed by new arrivals, refugees have continued crossing into Ngara. The refugee population in Ngara District in May 1995 was 500,000 – double that of May 1994. Consequently, the situation has never quite stabilized and agencies have been continually needing to increase the scale of their programmes. Another factor contributing to the post-emergency situation in Ngara was that from mid-July onwards the focus of international attention moved to Goma, resulting in the transfer of resources and personnel away from Tanzania. The water sector was one where the initially impressive emergency response was not maintained; on a per capita basis, the amount of water available to refugees by June 1995 was less than half that of July 1994.

Factors contributing to deterioration have been the constantly expanding refugee population, deterioration of emergency boreholes that were not designed or

equipped for long-term service, and a lack of investment in more sustainable supply systems. Initial expectations that the refugees would repatriate, the high capital costs involved in developing sustainable supply systems and the government of Tanzania's reluctance to see investments that seemed to confirm that the refugees would be in the country for a long period, have all served to deter the necessary investments.

### ***Bukavu***

The number moving into Bukavu during July and August was approximately 300,000. The influx was not as intense as the initial influxes into Ngara and Goma and, because of the lack of camp sites for them to immediately move to, the town effectively served as a huge temporary transit camp until UNHCR, NGOs and the local authorities were able to identify and open new sites. A combination of the continued operation of the municipal water system, substantial levels of initial assistance from the people and local agencies in Bukavu, and the fact that many refugees arrived with disposable assets (much of it looted on leaving Rwanda), meant that disease outbreaks were limited and substantial loss of life did not occur. This result is somewhat paradoxical, because of poor overall coordination and because Bukavu received substantially less financial and human resources than were being deployed to Goma.

### ***Goma***

The influx into Goma was of unprecedented scale and rapidity: in the space of just five days between the 14th and 18th of July, approximately 850,000 refugees crossed into Goma town and at points further north. The capacity of the agencies present in Goma was quickly overwhelmed despite an unprecedented and rapid response. Within the first month approximately 50,000 refugees died as a result of a combination of cholera, dysentery, dehydration and violence. Given the massive scale of the influx, many deaths were likely and the fact that there were not substantially more is a credit to the agencies involved in the response.

The study assessed the performance of the system both in terms of providing warning of the event and in preparing for a large influx. This assessment identified a fundamental weakness within the humanitarian system in that it did not possess a mechanism for monitoring and analysing information to provide warning of population movements that was either sufficiently integrated or capable of gathering information in areas that were poorly covered by relief agencies. UNREO and its daily Sitreps came closest to performing such a role, but UNREO's capacity directly to collect information was wholly inadequate and it had to rely heavily on relief agencies in different locations to provide it with any monitoring that they were carrying out. The reduced UNAMIR force was not able to monitor the situation in the north-west and the system was therefore reliant upon the ICRC operating out of Goma, whose monitoring of the build-up of IDPs was confined to the area around Ruhengeri, though within this area there were already 250,000 IDPs by early June. It was not until the first week of July, when an Oxfam Assessment Mission visited the area between Ruhengeri and Gitarama, that information became available on IDPs in this area. The Oxfam Team 'discovered' another 200,000 and also estimated that another 300,000 were moving westward, following the RPF capture of Kigali.

UNHCR had deployed a substantial Emergency Response Team to Goma in April but, with the influx into Ngara, part of the Team was redeployed in early May. At the end of June, just two weeks before the influx, the remainder of the team was withdrawn and the Sub-Office in Goma reduced to a staffing level that the Acting Head of the Sub-Office termed "skeletal". Following the Ngara influx the agency had begun contingency planning measures in early May that had included the build-up of stockpiles of non-food items in Amsterdam for 500,000 refugees. The team in Goma had begun preparing a Contingency Plan for North Kivu that used a planning figure of 50,000. Identification of a contingency site was hampered by the reluctance of the Zairian local authorities to consider the possibility of a large influx. The difficulties of making adequate preparations in Goma, coupled with the fact that the Goma airport was able to cope with heavy-lift aircraft, appears to have led UNHCR to rely more on its ability to respond rapidly by air rather than on the ground preparations, such as local stockpiling. This relative emphasis on rapid response rather than on-the-ground preparedness may also have reflected the

agency's conception of the term 'preparedness', which traditionally within UNHCR has, in effect, meant "contingency planning aimed at facilitating a rapid response once an influx occurs". This is more narrowly conceived than that used by other UN agencies.

The North Kivu Contingency Plan was finalized in the third week of June. Follow-up on the numerous action points by UNHCR Headquarters and the (much reduced) Sub-Office in Goma to convert the plan into reality was slow. Staff were severely over-stretched and a rapid sequence of events in the three weeks following the finalisation of the Plan, including the RPF capture of Kigali and the creation of the safe zone in the south-west, generated additional work. Consequently, the contingency plan was not 'ready-and-waiting' for an influx of even 50,000 by mid-July.

During June, sufficient evidence was available from two sources - the ICRC Sub-Delegation in Goma and figures being used by an inter-agency contingency planning process led by UNREO - to warrant a substantial increase in the planning figure. Poor relations between the ICRC Sub-Delegation and the UNHCR team in Goma appear to have prevented the ICRC estimate of 250,000 IDPs around Ruhengeri reaching the UNHCR Team. The UNREO-led process was initially taken seriously by UNHCR and the agency went to considerable lengths to ensure that a critical meeting in Nairobi was attended by key staff from Geneva and Goma. However, the meeting ended before it had considered the implications of the various scenarios and despite UNHCR requesting that the meeting resume the following day (a Saturday), this was not supported by representatives of other UN agencies present. After this fiasco, key UNHCR personnel do not appear to have taken the UNREO-led process seriously and the final document, which included a 'worst case' scenario of large numbers of displaced moving into eastern Zaire and Burundi, was not copied to the UNHCR Team in Goma. The coincidence between the completion of the UNREO-led process and UNHCR's North Kivu contingency plan with the start of Opération Turquoise was unfortunate as the French operation quickly altered the situation and dynamic of the conflict. As noted earlier, the concentration of Turquoise upon the safe zone in the south-west had a critical impact on the outcome in the north-west.

In the event, the fall of Ruhengeri and the sudden increase of civilians and FAR military moving towards Gisenyi coincided with a joint DHA, UNHCR, UNICEF, IOM and UK-ODA assessment mission into the north-west that resulted in the first steps in mobilizing a major relief effort. Thus UNHCR took the decision to deploy a new Emergency Response Team the day before the start of the influx and, with the exception of a Water and Sanitation Coordinator, the full team was deployed within the next few days.

The scale of the response to the crisis in Goma was extraordinary. Prompted by intense media coverage of the influx and the subsequent cholera outbreak, the international community poured assistance into the area. The response involved not just the usual UN agencies and NGOs, but also civil defence and disaster response agencies from within donor countries, several military contingents providing support to the humanitarian activities and a large number of comparatively inexperienced NGOs. Assessed overall, the results were impressive. The speed with which water was supplied to most camps, healthcare facilities established and general ration distributions initiated, was commendable.

However, there were several aspects of the response where performance of the system was less impressive and the performance of some agencies was poor. Almost all the non-food assistance arrived by air and so management of the airlift and the limited capacity of the airport became a critical constraint. UNHCR played a central role in the management of the airlift operation using the Air Operations Cell in Geneva, which had been established two years previously to coordinate the Sarajevo airlift. It appears that the Air Operations Cell had difficulty adjusting to a multi-destination operation (Bukavu and Kigali were served as well as Goma), and several agencies complained that the airlift had been treated as a UNHCR airlift and not as a common resource for all agencies. Cargoes arriving did not always conform to the priorities established in the field, though this may have owed more to donors sending whatever was available rather than what had been requested. There is ample evidence also that the airlift, or at least substantial components of it, such as the US Air Force operation out of the Entebbe AirHead, continued for several weeks longer than was required.

Coordination of the arrival of critical inputs was not impressive. For instance, while the ability to pump water from Lake Kivu was quickly increased by a US private company supported by the US military, the arrival of water tankers to transport it, particularly to the spontaneously settled camp at Kibumba, which had no water sources, took much longer. Similarly, given the hard volcanic rock in the area, a critical need was for heavy equipment to construct access roads into the camps to enable the siting of health facilities and water storage and distribution systems. However, as a result of commitments by the US Army not being implemented and faulty information flows between Goma and the US Army base in Germany, it was not until the end of September that the heavy equipment capability was substantially increased.

The level of violence within the camps was extremely high, with one estimate based on a retrospective survey in one camp suggesting that 4,000 refugees died as a result of violence at the hands of the militia, undisciplined Zairian soldiers and other refugees. The high levels of insecurity in the camps directly affected the effectiveness of the relief efforts as most foreign personnel were unable to remain in the camps overnight and the ability of medical personnel to maintain continuous care of patients was hampered. The performance of the Zairian authorities and the international community in addressing the violence was also unimpressive. The fact that Western military contingents were in Goma to assist with the relief efforts but were not mandated to address the problem of insecurity in the camps appeared illogical. It was not until March 1995 that a satisfactory solution was implemented involving a contingent of the Zairian Presidential Guard, paid and equipped by UNHCR, and supervised by an international monitoring team.

Many of the military contingents, civil defence and disaster response organisations that worked in Goma, did so in response to a UNHCR request to donor governments to provide eight 'Service Packages'. This was a relatively new concept devised as a means of rapidly increasing management and implementation capacity within the system, and the intention was that individual governments should assume responsibility for entire packages. The results were very mixed, with several governments providing capacities that were broadly similar, leading to coordination problems. Within the critical water sector, for instance, there was confusion between



the respective roles of the US military, the German agency Technisches Hilfswerk (THW) and Oxfam. At one point Oxfam was informed by UNHCR Headquarters that the US military was responsible for the whole sector and that the very substantial outlays by Oxfam would not be met by UNHCR.

## **4. Findings and Recommendations**

### **4.1 Lack of policy coherence**

A core finding of the Joint Evaluation is the lack of coherence in policy and strategy formulation, principally within the political/diplomatic/military domains. Study III has chosen to call it a “policy vacuum”. This lack of coherence was the result of numerous and often interacting factors, the principal ones being:

- ! conflicting interests between members of the Security Council and lack of resolve to overcome these differences, probably stemming from little interest in a small African country of marginal strategic importance to the main powers; and
- ! a lack of understanding of Rwanda’s complex situation and misread signals prior to and immediately after the shooting down of the President’s aircraft on 6 April.

Other factors included the ‘shadow’ cast by the US experience in Somalia in October 1993, inadequate strategy formulation and communication within the UN Secretariat and disjointed relationships between the Secretariat and the field level. The 21 April decision to withdraw the bulk of the UNAMIR force and the tardy subsequent efforts to provide reinforcements allowed the genocide to proceed virtually unhindered and forced the withdrawal of almost all humanitarian agencies from the areas controlled by the interim government. Members of the humanitarian relief agencies sought to provide relief assistance and some form of protection in these areas which, as a result of the lack of concerted political and military action, involved considerable personal risks.

The massive refugee movement, particularly into Goma, was accompanied by very high levels of violence within the camps. Once again there was a lack of coherence and concerted action by members of the Security Council to address the insecurity and, once again, humanitarian agencies had to do their best in a situation that was untenable. In the face of the overwhelming humanitarian needs created by the Goma influx, military contingents were deployed to the area but did not attempt to address the high levels of insecurity that severely hampered the relief efforts – for instance, by forcing medical personnel to leave the cholera centres at nightfall and severely delaying the registration process, which could have significantly assisted efforts to improve the inequitable food distribution systems within the camps.

Both inside Rwanda and in the camps of Goma, the humanitarian community was left to steer its own course, attempting to substitute for the lack of political and military action. At times, particularly in relation to the repatriation of refugees from Goma, this course was influenced by Western political figures. The attempt to encourage early repatriation was naive given the enormity of the genocide and represented a classic attempt to substitute humanitarian action for the political action that was required first and foremost.

A continued lack of coherence and concerted action in the political/diplomatic domain has produced a situation that, even in 1996, was costing the international community approximately \$1 million a day to sustain Rwandese refugees in neighbouring countries, and contributes to hardening attitudes among the government in Kigali. Despite the massive loss of life and the expenditure of enormous sums of money, 1.8 million Rwandese remain in camps outside their country and many observers expect a resumption of the civil war at some point in the future. A solution remains distant.

A key lesson, then, is that humanitarian action cannot serve as a substitute for political, diplomatic and, where necessary, military action. The onus of responsibility must, first and foremost, be upon the political and diplomatic domain to address complex emergencies. This will require the development of more effective mechanisms for formulating policy and a greater commitment from the international community, and particularly members of the Security Council, to the

formulation of coherent strategies. In setting such strategies, fuller account must be taken of the humanitarian implications of political and military actions – and inaction. The international community must be more prepared to highlight the humanitarian consequences of political, diplomatic and military inaction, both for the affected populations and for the effectiveness of relief activities. This will require development of more effective channels of communication between the humanitarian and political/diplomatic/military domains.

To address these issues, Study III, in conjunction with Studies I, II and IV and the Synthesis Team<sup>1</sup>, makes the following recommendations:

***Recommendation 1***

The Security Council should establish a Humanitarian Sub-Committee. Its purpose would be to inform fully the Security Council of developments and concerns regarding the humanitarian dimensions of complex emergencies and to make appropriate recommendations, taking into account both interrelated and distinctive aspects of political, military and humanitarian objectives.

***Recommendation 2***

A team of senior advisers should be constituted for all complex emergencies, charged with synthesizing crisis information and bringing coherent policy options to the Secretary-General. The purpose of this team would be to ensure that humanitarian, political and peacekeeping concerns are all taken into account in formulating options for the Secretary-General, the Security Council and in the General Assembly; it would not be charged with making operational decisions regarding humanitarian action.

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<sup>1</sup> The articulation and formulation of these findings and recommendations has benefited considerably from the work of the Synthesis Team and interactions between that team and Study III. The Synthesis Team's contribution, particularly those of John Eriksson, are gratefully acknowledged.

## **4.2 Donor funding and preparedness measures**

Despite the generally impressive achievements of the humanitarian agencies and the massive resources contributed by donor organisations and the general public during 1994, the study found that there was frequently an imbalance in resource provision between preparedness and capacity increasing measures, on the one hand, and response measures in the face of a pressing humanitarian need on the other, particularly where such needs were well covered by the media. There were instances where investments (such as the purchase of additional locomotives and rolling stock for the Tanzanian Railways) would have recouped their cost within weeks as a result of savings. More importantly, there were instances where investments in preparedness that would subsequently have saved many lives, were not made because of an actual or perceived reluctance on the part of donor organisations to fund such measures. This was referred to as the lack of up-front funding within the system, and its effects were pervasive.

A problem identified regarding contingency planning and preparedness measures is the lack of consistent working definitions among agencies and of a shared understanding between agencies and donors as to what constitutes an appropriate level of investment in preparedness. Donor organisations appear to be instinctively over-cautious in funding preparedness measures for events that, though likely, may not actually happen. In contrast, they may spend freely in the face of a self-evident need. The problem, of course, is that by the time a need is self-evident it may well be too late, lives may have been lost and higher-cost types of response, notably airlifts, will have to be used. Donor organisations and agencies need to be encouraged to accept that a proportion of preparedness measures will not be utilised, but this need not be reason to regard them as wasted resources.

It is also important that preparedness be broadly conceived, not just regarded in terms of stockpiling at different locations within the region and development of substantial rapid response capacity (both of which may well be highly appropriate). Ideally, preparedness should also include the advance placement of key technical and logistics staff and measures such as the preparation of adequate maps and

communications equipment, which may play a vital role in the event of a sudden population movement. Donors should be prepared to provide increased up-front funding to agencies for contingency planning and preparedness measures for major complex emergencies and honour pledges to do so. For activities that draw on funds channelled through the UN, the existing contingency fund overseen by DHA should be expanded and procedures for its utilisation streamlined.

*Recommendation 3*

Donor funding sources and implementing agencies need to be brought together, perhaps through an appropriate forum of the OECD/DAC, to seek a common understanding regarding mutually-acceptable levels of investment in contingency planning and preparedness measures, as well as the accompanying levels of risk.

*Recommendation 4*

Donors should be more prepared to provide advance funding that would enable implementing agencies freedom to respond effectively to fast-moving events and to make their own decisions in relation to expenditures central to the effectiveness of their operations. The level of the Emergency Response Contingency Funds maintained by the principal agencies and CERF and administered by DHA, should be increased but be subject to ex-post scrutiny by the respective governing bodies.

*Recommendation 5*

Donor organisations and implementing agencies should take greater care to ensure that during periods when resources are comparatively freely available, as was the case for the two months following the Goma influx, they continue to be used wisely and cost-effectively. Greater efforts should be made to utilise locally-available goods and services or those available within the region. Similarly, airlift capacity should be used judiciously, and if viable overland routes are available, they should be preferred.

### **4.3 Humanitarian early warning and contingency planning**

Detailed study of the information flows and decisions leading up to the Goma influx reveal that an integrated mechanism for gathering and analysing information that could provide advance warning of large population displacements did not exist. The UNREO Information Cell came closest to fulfilling such a role but its objective was to collect and share information for coordination rather than warning purposes. It was heavily dependent upon a) relief agencies or UNAMIR contingents being present in an area and b) on relief agencies providing regular monitoring reports on developments/events in their area. These conditions were not met in much of north-west Rwanda during the critical period of May and June 1994. The need for early warning capacity to be located in the region was strongly supported by the detailed study of the Goma case, which revealed that inter-agency 'early warning' meetings covering 10–20 actual and imminent emergencies were simply too distant to be of value operationally. The study also highlighted the need for information to be circulated as widely as possible among all agencies involved in the response, including NGOs (as it will most likely be NGOs that are first to implement any response actions) and to all agency sub-offices, many of which did not receive the UNREO situation reports (Sitreps) sent to headquarters.

The study revealed that, especially in the context of fast-moving, complex emergencies, contingency planning can play a vital role. Anticipation of a range of scenarios, and the continuous assessment of the chances of them occurring, may be seen as a critical link between early warning and preparedness planning. An important resource for contingency planners should be information and analysis drawn from an integrated humanitarian early warning capacity. Just as important, the contingency plan must then be updated to reflect relevant changes in the environment, again drawing on the early warning system.

*Recommendation 6*

Once emergency operations have commenced, an adequately-resourced integrated early warning cell should be established within the DHA field coordination office. All agencies - governmental, UN and NGO - operating in the region should be encouraged to feed into the Cell reports on developments within their area of operation. Where coverage of areas is incomplete, it should have capacity to place field observers/monitors to complement relief agencies or, in those areas where security is very poor, to call upon aerial reconnaissance capacity through standby arrangements with suitable military forces. Contingency plans should be prepared and regularly updated, drawing on the information and analysis provided by the Integrated Early Warning Cell. Reports containing information on key developments in each area and assessments of the likelihood of substantial population displacements should be disseminated widely to all sub-offices of agencies involved in the response with a proven record of treating sensitive information confidentially. In extremely fluid and tense situations, reporting should be daily.

#### **4.4 Coordination: filling the ‘hollow core’**

The overall response involved an unprecedented number of agencies and organisations operating in Rwanda and the four neighbouring countries. At least seven UN agencies and the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, the IOM, approximately 250 NGOs, at least eight military contingents, the ICRC, IFRC and various National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies were involved in the response in either an implementation or support role. In addition, the system was resourced by over 20 donor organisations, several of which placed their own teams in the field to undertake specific activities or assess needs and provide recommendations on funding. With so many agencies and organisations involved in the response, there was a critical need for a strong capacity at the centre to provide leadership and overall coordination.

With regard to refugee operations, UNHCR came close to fulfilling such a role by virtue of its clear mandate, support from host governments (particularly that of Tanzania), highly competent technical coordination personnel, and control over a significant proportion of the funds available for agencies and NGOs – in large part due to a bold decision by ECHO to channel all its funds for refugees through UNHCR. However, coordination arrangements in relation to other areas and levels

of the system were less satisfactory. The fact that the roles of the SRSG, the UNAMIR Force Commander and the Humanitarian Coordinator/Head of UNREO were limited to operations within Rwanda, hampered coordination of policies and operations inside Rwanda with those relating to refugees in neighbouring countries. Within Rwanda, UNREO performed several useful functions, though it suffered as a result of its ad hoc status and lack of clarity over its relationship to DHA and UNDP, its relationship with operational UN agencies and the SRSG. In addition, it did not have adequate resources and some of its personnel (many of whom were UNDP and seconded NGO personnel), lacked emergency coordination experience. Consequently, its role was limited, principally to that of information sharing. At the préfecture level within Rwanda, UNREO's field offices provided a useful forum for information sharing among NGOs, but technical coordination was the responsibility of other UN agencies such as UNICEF, WHO and FAO. As a result of their initial concentration on developing the capacity of the new government in Kigali, the provision of technical coordination in the south-west, with its 300,000 IDPs, was slow.

As well as supervising UNREO, DHA undertook a wide range of coordinating actions ranging from the initiation and leadership of the UN Advanced Humanitarian Team to coordination of Consolidated Appeals and the chairing of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee. Whilst assessment of the effectiveness of such non-operational coordination is difficult, it was clear that DHA was substantially more effective in providing coordination than it had been during the Somalia operations in 1992, when it was created. Nevertheless, it was apparent that the Department experienced substantial institutional and financial obstacles and faces continuing uncertainty over its future. By virtue of its lack of control over the funding of UN agencies and ambiguity over its representation in the field, it was unable, despite the best efforts of its personnel, to provide strong leadership and directive coordination. The above difficulties in the area of coordination, and the dominance in resource terms of WFP and UNHCR led Study III to conclude that the term 'hollow core' was an apt characterisation of the humanitarian relief system during the response.

Three options for addressing these problems are formulated below with each option varying in the degree of reform required. Each is recognised to have relative



advantages and disadvantages.

*Recommendation 7- Option (i)*

Strengthen and extend existing inter-agency coordinating arrangements and mechanisms through:

- a) the use of inter-agency Memoranda of Understanding (such as that between UNHCR and WFP);
- b) strengthening DHA by assuring its funding base and giving it responsibility for providing common services to UN and other agencies (air cell management responsibility, integrated humanitarian early warning system, etc.);
- c) structuring UN coordination meetings as inclusive task forces, chaired by DHA, at which representatives of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, major bilateral donors and key NGOs would be routinely invited to participate;
- d) reducing the number of senior officials with coordination and leadership roles and clarifying lines of authority of those with such roles.

*Recommendation 7- Option (ii)*

Considerably strengthen the central coordinating role of DHA. Under this option, humanitarian assistance funding for UN agencies and their NGO implementing partners would be channelled through DHA, which would decide on priorities and determine the amount of funds each agency would receive. To perform effectively this expanded role, DHA would need additional expert staff, including those with technical backgrounds, to be posted to the field as well as headquarters.

*Recommendation 7- Option (iii)*

Consolidate, in a new, expertly-led and -staffed and fully operational mechanism of the United Nations, the emergency response functions of DHA and the principal UN humanitarian agencies (UNHCR, WFP and UNICEF). This is the option recommended by Study III.

Option (i) would be the least costly and disruptive, but the findings of Study III suggest that these efforts would not be enough to eliminate the confusion, competition and considerable difficulties faced by DHA and UNREO during the

Rwanda emergency. For instance, technical coordination inside the country experiencing the complex emergency as well as for IDPs would continue to be provided by several UN agencies rather than the DHA field coordination office.

Option (ii) would enable DHA to achieve directive coordination of the sort enjoyed by UNHCR in the Ngara operation. This would not require the creation of additional organisations but would strengthen one that is already there. Given DHA's relatively recent establishment, its inadequate resourcing and limited capacity, other UN agencies can be expected to regard this option unfavourably. To achieve this option would require a phased programme of implementation, including early strengthening of DHA's capacity and competence. It would be feasible for additional technical staff to be seconded from other agencies.

Option (iii) is that preferred by the majority of the Study III Team and is therefore the recommended option. Such a radical proposal is not new and over the last two to three years has been proposed by several authoritative observers and departments of key governments<sup>2</sup>. The proposal would ensure coordination by centralising all policy and operational responsibility in one agency/department. It should be noted that this agency/department need not be created outside the existing UN structure, but could be created within one of the existing bodies, such as DHA. It would considerably rationalize the current system, reduce duplication costs and create a strong body fully capable of providing leadership. Against these positive aspects are the fact that the transition to the new consolidated agency/department would be disruptive and that it might increase rather than reduce the disjuncture between relief and development programme management.

Whichever option is chosen, a plan of action should be formulated, including a full review of staff needs by a special panel of international experts, governments and NGOs. A report containing the reasoning for selecting the option as well as the plan of action should be submitted by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly.

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<sup>2</sup> For example: Erskine Childers with Brian Urquhart, "Renewing the United Nations System", *Development Dialogue* 1994:1, Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, Uppsala, Sweden; US so-called non-paper "Readying the UN for the 21st Century: Some UN-21 Proposals for Consideration", US State Department 1995.

#### **4.5 Stand-by capacity and the role of military forces in humanitarian operations**

Military contingents from OECD countries had a significant involvement in humanitarian operations inside Rwanda and in eastern Zaire in the provision of relief assistance and by supporting relief agencies. Unfortunately, the study was unable to obtain sufficiently precise and comparable data on costs and performance to allow definitive conclusions about the value and appropriateness of military contingents in humanitarian operations. The Rwanda experience with military contingents does raise questions about their predictability, effectiveness, high cost and ability to participate collaboratively in operations involving several official agencies and numerous NGOs.

In large part, involvement of the military was in response to capacity within the humanitarian system having become overstretched by the time of Goma and UNHCR's novel request for governments to provide self-contained service packages. Not only were military contingents deployed in response to this request but so too were civil defence and rapid response teams. The response by governments did not closely follow the service package concept as envisaged by UNHCR. Several governments provided broadly similar capacities and there were significant coordination problems between the government teams/military contingents and NGOs working in the same sectors. Costly but crucial items such as water tankers and earth-moving equipment did not arrive as quickly as required and as had been hoped by UNHCR. Whilst the experience points to the need to make better arrangements for the maintenance and provision of stand-by capacity (particularly in the case of larger strategic equipment items such as bulldozers and water tankers), it raises important questions about how best to do so.

***Recommendation 8***

A systematic study should be undertaken of the performance and costs of military contingents in humanitarian relief operations compared with those of official agencies, NGOs and the private sector performing the same functions. The study should assess the most effective and cost-effective ways of maintaining stand-by capacity between emergencies. Once this has been identified, the principal UN agencies should develop coordinated stand-by arrangements, a process that should be properly resourced by donor organisations.

***Recommendation 9***

Until such time as this study is undertaken and policy formulated, and in recognition of the likelihood that some governments may continue to deploy military contingents in support of humanitarian operations, clearer frameworks should be developed for civil-military cooperation in relief operations. This may require joint training courses and exercises for agency and military personnel.

***Recommendation 10***

To improve the response capacity of NGOs at a national level, donor organisations should develop schemes enabling their principal national relief NGOs to train and retain competent personnel between periods of deployment.

#### **4.6 Improving NGO performance**

NGOs played a vital role in the response, undertaking most of the delivery of assistance to beneficiaries. Whilst many NGOs performed impressively, providing a high quality of care and services, a number performed in an unprofessional and irresponsible manner that resulted not only in duplication and wasted resources but may also have contributed to an unnecessary loss of life. The need for NGOs to improve their performance is now widely recognized.

A set of standards is being developed by several NGO networks intended to supplement the Code of Conduct developed by the ICRC, IFRC and associations of NGOs. Both the Code of Conduct and set of standards (now being developed by

Oxfam and other NGOs) should be widely disseminated and promoted among NGOs, official agencies and governments. While voluntary adoption and implementation of the Code of Conduct and standards is clearly preferable to edicts imposed on NGOs from outside, the Rwanda experience indicates that it will not be enough to rely on voluntary adoption alone.

***Recommendation 11***

Some form of regulation or enforcement is needed to ensure improvements in performance by NGOs. Two options are formulated below:

- (i) **Self-managed regulation.** Under this option, NGO networks could be assisted in acquiring greater capacity to monitor member compliance with the Code and standards.
- (ii) **An international accreditation system.** Under this option, core criteria for accreditation would be developed jointly by official agencies and NGOs. These criteria would need to be adapted and supplemented for a specific complex emergency. This is the option recommended by Study III.

As stated, the second option is stronger than the first in terms of enforcement, but it raises a number of issues that would have to be resolved, such as the selection of an entity to administer accreditation, funding, reporting relationships, etc. Self-regulation under the first option would be encouraged if donors and donor governments agreed to restrict their funding and tax-free privileges to agencies that have adopted the Code and standards. Similarly, host-country governments could provide registration, work permits and duty-free importation privileges only to those agencies that have adopted the Code and standards. If implemented, these incentives and disincentives would compensate for the weakness of the first option. Donors and governments must, of course, be prepared to hold NGOs accountable to the Code and standards and employ disincentives in the event of non-compliance. The media have played and should continue to play a positive role by exposing instances of unprofessional and irresponsible conduct by NGOs. However, care is needed to ensure that journalists are well informed of what constitutes good and bad practice in relief management and the specific context in which the NGOs have been operating.

As part of efforts to improve NGO performance, training courses and activities are being expanded and greater efforts made to learn lessons from particular operations. However, given the complexity and often technically-demanding nature of relief operations, the high turnover of staff and the difficulty of utilizing private resources on non-operational or ‘visible’ activities, these efforts need greater encouragement.

*Recommendation 12*

Donor organisations should give greater support to NGO emergency training and lesson-learning activities.

#### **4.7 Improving accountability**

The availability and quality of performance data and reporting by official agencies and NGOs involved in emergency relief operations were highly variable. In some locations, such as in Goma, the situation was more satisfactory but in others, such as within much of Rwanda, availability of data was patchy and frequently not comparable between agencies due to a lack of standardized survey methods and inadequate technical coordination. In such areas the information available did not provide a sufficient basis for assessing impact or performance, or – just as important – for adjusting programme activities to improve performance. A tendency by some official agencies and NGOs to emphasize or inflate positive accomplishments and play down or ignore problems resulted in distorted reporting. Even basic data on staff, finances and activities were difficult or impossible to obtain from a number of NGOs.

Several options are formulated below to address problems identified above. An additional recommendation is addressed to donor governments and bilateral agencies.

*Recommendation 13*

Systems for improving accountability need to be strengthened. The following options are proposed for achieving this:

- (i) By strengthening the effectiveness of official agency coordination and standards of NGO conduct along the lines recommended above, accountability would be strengthened, especially if implementation of these recommendations includes standards for data collection and reporting. The current Red Cross/NGO Code of Conduct commits signatories to “hold ourselves responsible to both those we seek to assist and those from whom we accept resources.” Full implementation of this commitment would entail establishment of NGO mechanisms for consultation with people affected by humanitarian emergencies.
- (ii) Establish a unit in DHA or the body proposed in Recommendation 7 - Option (iii) that would have no other responsibilities but the following:
  - ! undertake regular field-level monitoring and evaluation of emergency humanitarian assistance, and review adequacy of standards followed;
  - ! serve as ombudsman to which any party can express a concern related to provision of assistance or security;
  - ! set up and manage on behalf of the international community a database on emergency humanitarian assistance operations; and
  - ! prepare periodic status reports for the public domain.
- (iii) Identify a respected, independent organisation or network of organisations to act on behalf of beneficiaries of humanitarian assistance to perform the functions described in (ii) above. This is the option recommended by Study III.

Option (i) would entail least cost and disruption to the humanitarian assistance system, but it would not provide one focal point for a database or for dissemination of information throughout the system. Option (ii) provides the focal point but as part of a UN unit it could, and probably would, be viewed as lacking independence. Option (iii) provides both independence and a focal point but poses issues in terms of selection of the entity, accessibility, and reporting responsibility (its own accountability). While both options (ii) and (iii) would have cost implications, their contribution to effectiveness and accountability should also be kept in mind. It is essential that either option be adequately resourced. It should also be noted that option (iii) need not require creation of a new entity, but could well entail selection of an existing institution to assume the functions outlined above.

The availability and quality of data collected and made available by donor governments varied considerably. Some donors rarely if ever provided data to the DHA Financial Tracking System. Donors have a responsibility to improve accountability both to their taxpayers and to the beneficiaries of their assistance and to improve their own performance information and reporting (including on any humanitarian role played by military contingents). But they also have a leadership role in promulgating consistent standards, including adequate breakdown of data by activity and area. Finally, they have a responsibility to standardize the formats they use for reporting requirements of agencies they fund.

*Recommendation 14*

DHA's Financial Tracking System should be given additional support to enable it to increase the sophistication and coverage of its database. The reports should be published annually and donor organisations not reporting should be listed. The costs of military support to humanitarian operations and the basis for their estimation should be listed separately from non-military humanitarian contributions.

*Recommendation 15*

The Development Assistance Committee of OECD should develop, in consultation with relief agencies, guidelines for adequacy, consistency and standardisation of performance data and reporting on humanitarian assistance activities.

*Recommendation 16*

All UN relief agencies and NGOs should ensure that, during relief operations, timely epidemiological, nutritional and food security surveys are undertaken and that survey methodologies and presentation of results should be standardised to allow comparability between agencies.

#### **4.8 Improving camp security**

Physical protection of refugees and displaced persons in camps can be problematic even in 'normal' circumstances. In the Rwanda crisis, this issue quickly became of paramount importance. The continued dominance of the former leadership, some of



whom were key perpetrators of the genocide, and the presence of armed elements in refugee camps, particularly those in eastern Zaire, inflicted more trauma, insecurity and diversion of resources destined for bona fide refugees. In addition, the insecurity posed a very real threat to relief agency staff and obliged them to restrict their relief efforts. As revealed by Study II, the international community's efforts to find a workable means of addressing the security problems were considerably delayed in the case of the camps in eastern Zaire.

The recommendations developed by Study II and the Synthesis Team in addressing this issue are included here because of their relevance to the effectiveness of relief efforts.

*Recommendation 17*

In situations where the international community has assumed humanitarian responsibility at refugee and/or IDP camps, the following actions with respect to camp security measures should be taken:

- a) Give UN peace missions authority and the appropriate means to ensure protection, in coordination with host governments or otherwise, of camp populations and staffs of relief organisations.
- b) Work with host governments to take other measures, such as disarming camp residents, separating genuine refugees from those not entitled to refugee status, barring arms trading, preventing military training of residents, expelling hostile leadership from camps, halting the operations of hate media, and splitting up large camps into smaller ones at a greater distance from the border.
- c) Advise official and non-governmental agency staff on prudent patterns of behaviour that will not invite security problems as well as on how effectively to maintain an open and continuous dialogue with the beneficiary community.

#### **4.9 Food issues and registration**

That widespread starvation did not occur during 1994 reflects in part the satisfactory and often impressive performance of the systems for the supply of food aid. However, the study revealed a number of areas where problems were experienced. Substantial difficulties stemmed from initial reliance on the former leadership in

many camps as an expedient mechanism for food distribution. This served to reinforce the power of this group and resulted in rations being manipulated and diverted from refugee consumption. Agencies were soon aware that such ‘indirect’ distribution systems were resulting in high rates of malnutrition among certain groups, particularly the elderly and female-headed households, but had difficulty in introducing more ‘direct’ distribution mechanisms (such as to the cellule or household level) to by-pass the leadership. Factors contributing to the delay included the high levels of insecurity in the camps, their large size – particularly in Goma and Ngara – and the difficult physical terrain in Goma, which severely hampered better site planning. For similar reasons, the process of registration of the refugees was greatly delayed in eastern Zaire and this contributed to the delays in moving to more equitable systems and also of involving a wider group of refugees in planning and implementing camp services. Despite these problems, some organisations were able to move to direct distribution systems considerably earlier than others, suggesting that agency attitudes and practice contributed to the delay.

Other problems experienced concerned the appropriateness of the rations provided and the tendency for agencies to introduce supplementary feeding programmes rather than focus attention and resources on addressing problems encountered in the supply of general ration commodities.

*Recommendation 18*

Develop and obtain advance agreement from the relevant agencies and, where feasible, governmental authorities, on operational guidelines for food distribution. These guidelines should provide for direct distribution of food at household level if there is a risk of exploitation of the distribution system by camp leadership. The guidelines should also recommend exploring the desirability and feasibility of direct provision of food to women.

*Recommendation 19*

Registration/enumeration specialists should be deployed with UNHCR's Emergency Response Teams to ensure that the registration/enumeration of refugees is undertaken as soon as possible after any influx.

*Recommendation 20*

Formal Food Aid Needs Assessments involving nutritionists should always be carried out early in an emergency operation to ensure adequate attention is given to issues of ration composition and acceptability to beneficiaries.

*Recommendation 21*

Before approving the establishment of supplementary feeding programmes (SFPs) in refugee camps, UNHCR, donor organisations and implementing NGOs should consider the potential improvements that could be made to the general ration supply pipeline if SFP resources were deployed in support of the general ration supply instead.

*Recommendation 22*

The costs of milling cereals supplied by WFP as part of the general ration should be included within the Internal Transport Storage and Handling (ITSH) costs and therefore paid automatically by donor organisations.

#### **4.10 The role of the media**

It was apparent that the media played an important and, at times, influential role within the international humanitarian aid system. The advent of on-the-spot satellite broadcasting, and the powerful nature of the images of the influx into Goma, contributed to the massive response there. It may also have contributed to the lack of policy coherence resulting from the media's focus upon the humanitarian story, rather than the more complicated and difficult-to-comprehend story of the genocide and the conflict. The precise ways in which the media may influence a particular humanitarian aid operation could not be studied with any rigour during the evaluation. This requires comprehensive academic analysis, of which there has been none to date.

*Recommendation 23*

A rigorous study of media coverage of humanitarian aid operations and the way it influences and is, in turn, influenced by relief agencies, should be undertaken. To increase its ability to inform policy, the study should cover more than one relief operation.

#### 4.11 Mitigating the impact on host communities

While certain groups and enterprises gained from hosting large refugee or displaced populations, others experienced substantial losses. Both gains and losses were distributed unevenly. There were clear environmental and other costs imposed by the large refugee camps on local populations in the neighbouring countries of Zaire, Tanzania and Burundi as well as on local populations surrounding IDP camps. Some of these costs resulted from flawed agency policies. In general the study found that the international community was slow to provide compensation to those groups who were negatively affected and that, as a consequence, the host communities have come increasingly to resent the presence of the refugees and that this in turn limits the options for the wider management of the crisis in the Great Lakes region.

##### *Recommendation 24*

Standard operating policies and procedures should be prepared for donor organisations, UN agencies and NGOs that will help to minimize and mitigate adverse impacts of relief operations (whether refugee or IDP) on surrounding populations and their environment.

##### *Recommendation 25*

A quick-disbursing fund should be established (or alternatively allowed to draw from the existing UNHCR Emergency Response Fund) to provide early compensation to the host communities in the immediate vicinity of refugee/IDP concentrations.

##### *Recommendation 26*

Ensure that strategies are pursued that minimize negative impact of refugee/IDP concentrations on host communities, such as: providing food that requires little or no cooking; providing fuel for cooking; extending camp infrastructure and services (healthcare, water supply, etc.) to surrounding local populations; and rehabilitating physical infrastructure (e.g. roads and airstrips) damaged in meeting relief needs.

## **Acronyms**

CERF	Central Emergency Revolving Fund
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (OECD)
DHA	Department of Humanitarian Affairs
ECHO	European Community Humanitarian Office
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FAR	Force Armée Rwandaise
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IFRC	International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
ITSH	Internal Transport, Storage and Handling
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
ODA	Overseas Development Administration
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
RPF	Rwandese Patriotic Front
SFP	Supplementary Feeding Programme
SitRep	Situation Report
SRSR	Special Representative of the Secretary-General
THW	Technische Hilfswerk (Technical help organisation, German government)
UNAMIR	United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNREO	United Nations Rwanda Emergency Office
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organisation



## Relief and Rehabilitation Network

The objective of the Relief and Rehabilitation Network (RRN) is to facilitate the exchange of professional information and experience between the personnel of NGOs and other agencies involved in the provision of relief and rehabilitation assistance. Members of the Network are either nominated by their agency or may apply on an individual basis. Each year, RRN members receive four mailings in either English or French comprising Newsletters, Network Papers and Good Practice Reviews. In addition, RRN members are able to obtain advice on technical and operational problems they are facing from the RRN staff in London. A modest charge is made for membership with rates varying in the case of agency-nominated members depending on the type of agency.

The RRN is operated by the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) in conjunction with the European Association of Non-Governmental Organisations for Food Aid and Emergency Relief (EuronAid). ODI is an independent non-governmental organisation, limited by guarantee and registered as a charity, which undertakes the study of development and humanitarian issues. It also encourages the exchange of information and experience of these issues to inform public debate and policy. EuronAid provides logistics and financing services to NGOs using European Commission food aid in their relief and development programmes. It has 27 member agencies and two with observer status. Its offices are located in the Hague.

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