

**U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

***USAID Program and Operations Assessment Report No. 27***

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***Center for Development Information and Evaluation***

***December 2000***



# **COMPLEX HUMANITARIAN EMERGENCIES And USAID's HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE**

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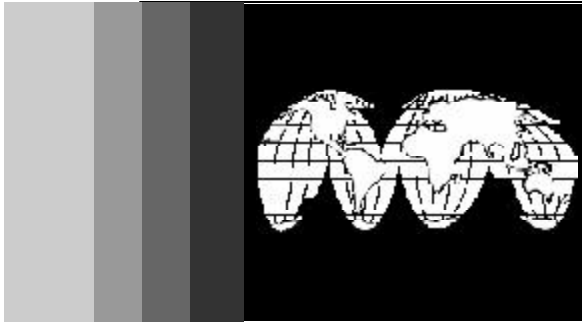
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Assessment Report No. 27**

# **Complex Humanitarian Emergencies And USAID's Humanitarian Response**

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**By**

**Donald G. McClelland  
Center for Development Information and Evaluation**

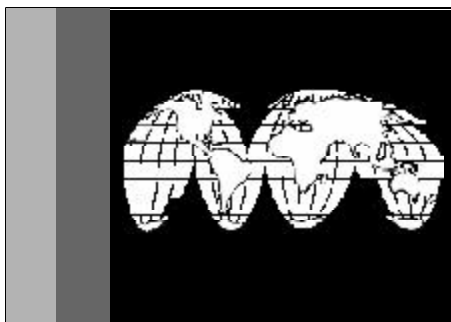
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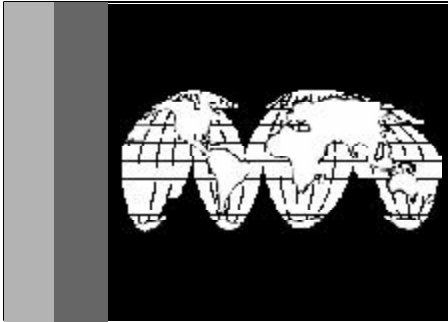




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## Preface

**C**OMPLEX HUMANITARIAN emergencies are by their nature multifaceted and involve many actors. The relief interventions are often undertaken in a context beyond the control of the implementing agencies. Moreover, the interventions are generally conditioned by overall foreign policy considerations, which means that political objectives help define the response.

Operational coordination is complicated because multiple players are involved (various U.S. government agencies, other bilateral and multilateral development agencies, nongovernmental and private voluntary organizations, and the host country) and these actors often have divergent approaches to strategic planning, decision-making, and delivery mechanisms. That relief experts have different views of the purpose of emergency assistance—whether it is for relief only, or for rehabilitation and economic development

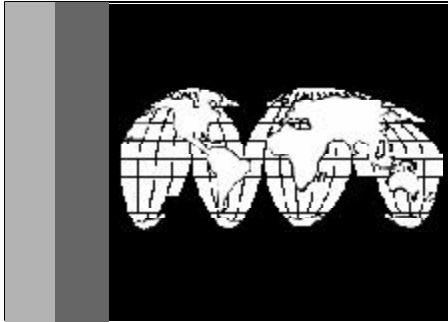
as well—exacerbates an already complex situation.

Given these circumstances, it is not surprising that humanitarian assistance has been subjected to less rigorous and extensive monitoring and evaluation than development assistance. In addition to the complexities just noted, this reflects the fact that until recently there was no standard methodology for evaluating humanitarian assistance. Some have likened this situation to “methodological anarchy.”

Nevertheless, it is possible to assess the impact of humanitarian assistance on vulnerable populations to some degree and to shed light on the relationship between emergency assistance and the political and development processes at work. This assessment and its lessons learned should contribute to formulating more effective policies and interventions in response to complex emergencies.







## Summary

**I**N 1998, some 32 million people needed humanitarian assistance because they were caught up in complex emergencies (armed conflicts or civil wars as distinct from natural disasters). That is triple the number of a typical year from the early 1980s. Most of these people are refugees or internally displaced persons. About 40 percent reside in Africa. The value of humanitarian assistance worldwide has typically been less than 2.0 percent of official development assistance (ODA). But in 1994 it jumped to 6.8 percent (\$4.3 billion) owing to the crisis in the Great Lakes region of Africa. It fell to an estimated 5.7 percent of ODA in 1998 but is likely to peak again in 1999 owing to the Kosovo and East Timor crises. The fact remains that humanitarian assistance has more than doubled since 1990 despite diminishing foreign assistance.

In 1990, U.S. ODA totaled nearly \$13.6 billion in real terms (1998 dollars); by 1997, it had fallen by half to \$7.0 billion, the lowest level since World War II. By contrast, U.S. humanitarian assistance has increased. In 1990, it was \$263 million (1.9 percent of ODA). In 1994 it peaked at \$1.2

billion (11.4 percent of ODA). By 1997 it had gradually decreased to \$344 million (4.9 percent of ODA), but in 1998 it more than doubled to \$898 million (10.2 percent of ODA). Although U.S. ODA as a percentage of total ODA has been falling steadily since the 1970s, the United States continues to be a generous provider of humanitarian assistance. USAID's Food for Peace Office, Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, and Office of Transition Initiatives are primarily responsible for administering U.S. emergency assistance.

This evaluation seeks to assess the effectiveness of U.S. humanitarian assistance in nations afflicted by complex emergencies. It addresses three principal questions: Did U.S. emergency assistance save lives and alleviate suffering? Did it affect social tensions and political hostilities? Did it contribute to long-term economic development? The findings are based on fieldwork carried out in three countries (Haiti, Mozambique, and Rwanda) as well as on evaluation results in other countries.

Evaluating relief programs in the context of armed conflict or civil war intro-

duces politically sensitive issues concerning sovereignty, international law, the appropriate balance of aid between opposing sides, and donors' foreign policy interests. This assessment treats the political effects of humanitarian assistance independently of U.S. foreign policy considerations. Nevertheless, these and other issues peculiar to complex emergencies made the evaluation methodologically more difficult.

Complex emergencies are typically political in nature, characterized by violent conflict (often war) and a breakdown of institutions. But their underlying causes vary. Predatory governance was the principal cause of Haiti's complex emergency. By contrast, ethnic and ideological factors were pivotal in Mozambique and Rwanda. In all three countries, poverty was a contributory factor. In Haiti, per capita income was \$250 in 1994; in Mozambique, \$80 in 1986, the lowest in the world. Poverty was just as severe in Rwanda. Moreover, the distribution of income and wealth was highly skewed in all three countries. Haiti's 200-year history has been characterized by oppressive governments that favored the rich at the expense of the poor. Mozambique was characterized by a highly dualistic economy. In Rwanda, where the proportion of people living in poverty increased from 40 percent to 70 percent during 1990-93, a winner-take-all mentality has benefited a tiny elite at the expense of the poor majority.

Civilians in all three countries suffered widespread and systematic human

rights abuses. Tens of thousands of refugees fled Haiti (often as boat people). Millions fled Mozambique and Rwanda to escape indiscriminate terror. Hundreds of thousands were the victims of wholesale massacre or, in the case of Rwanda, genocide.

Donors, including USAID, responded with increased emergency assistance, both food and nonfood (water, seed, farming tools, medical supplies). Nongovernmental organizations were the main implementers of the humanitarian response. In Haiti, the international community was feeding 1.3 million people — one in seven Haitians — each day, with the United States providing 68 percent of the food. In Mozambique in 1989, an estimated one third of the population of 16 million depended on food aid for 60 to 70 percent of their food needs; again, the United States provided about 60 percent of total food aid during 1987-95. In Rwanda 1.3 million beneficiaries received emergency food aid in 1996-97.

What were the results? The assessment concluded that emergency assistance programs funded by USAID and implemented by U.S. nongovernmental agencies (NGOs) clearly helped save lives and alleviate suffering — which, after all, is their overarching objective. Except for Haiti, though, data collection and monitoring were not done (or were done poorly), so it is difficult to quantify results. In fact, most evaluations of humanitarian assistance tell a "mission accomplished" story but are

unable to substantiate that story with hard data.

Distributing relief supplies was a problem to some extent in all three countries. Food aid, in particular, was highly valued and became a source of violent competition—not only for its value as food but also as a source of political power for those controlling access. There were reports of corruption, theft, and political or personal favoritism in food aid distribution. And target populations did not always receive timely and sufficient food. NGOs addressed these problems with varying degrees of success. In Haiti they were highly successful in limiting diversion to 5 to 10 percent. In Mozambique, leakage was typically 30 percent when the government was in charge of distribution, and at one point reached 50 percent. But after the NGOs took over, losses fell to under 5 percent. In Rwanda the military and former political leaders controlled much of the relief distribution. They were able to divert substantial quantities of food (more than is usually the case in complex emergencies) from the intended beneficiaries for their own purposes.

While no aid is apolitical, humanitarian assistance, in particular, can result in substantial and unpredictable political effects, since it is provided in the context of conflict. Though designed to relieve suffering and promote peace, it sometimes, inadvertently, fuels, sustains, or worsens complex emergencies by making more resources available to warring parties. This is because aid does not just keep people

alive in a political vacuum but affects the local power structure and environment in which it is given.

In Haiti, massive quantities of emergency food aid reduced the probability of food riots during a period of political and economic stress and may have had a dampening effect on political tensions; but it also may have contributed to a political status quo that enabled the *de facto* military regime to stay in power longer. In Mozambique, external military assistance provided by the Soviet Union and South Africa fueled the civil war; food aid, by comparison, had relatively little effect on the country's political dynamics, although food diverted to soldiers may have contributed to the war effort. In Rwanda, genocidal killers were mixed with legitimate refugees in camps; targeting became problematic, and substantial quantities of food aid were diverted by Hutu extremists and militia resident in the camps. That had the unintended effect of prolonging the conflict.

The notion that relief assistance can be made more developmental in the context of ongoing armed conflicts is problematic. Unlike with natural disasters, during complex emergencies there is no institutional framework to provide physical security and political stability—both of which are necessary preconditions for economic development. On the contrary, complex emergencies are often characterized by a total breakdown of state institutions and social and economic structures.

Nevertheless, emergency assistance programs can help shape the pattern and direction of subsequent economic development. In Haiti, Mozambique, and Rwanda USAID and the NGOs not only provided immediate relief (food, medicine) but also agricultural inputs (seed, tools) and household goods to encourage refugees and internally displaced persons to return to their villages, resume food production, decrease their dependence on food aid, and maintain their livelihoods. They also implemented food-for-work programs in all three countries. These and other programs created short-term jobs and helped rehabilitate productive infrastructure (roads, irrigation) needed for economic development. The development-oriented objectives were clear: to restart subsistence agriculture and to restart the rural economy.

The assessment offers 4 management-oriented recommendations (summarized below) and 18 recommendations specific to the Kosovo crisis as of May 1999 (annex D).

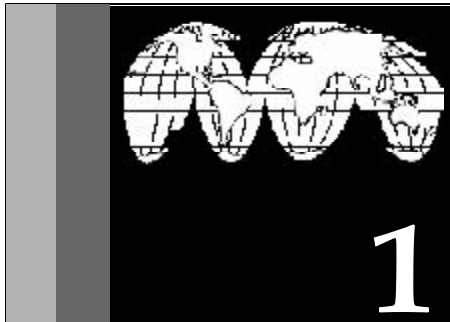
■ **Monitoring and evaluation.** *Establish a central monitoring and data collection unit to serve all donors during the early weeks of a complex emergency.* This is needed, among other things, to help managers identify appropriate kinds of emergency relief, target its distribution, evaluate its effectiveness, and enhance donor coordination.

■ **Adverse political consequences.** *Be alert to potential undesirable political or social effects that relief aid may cause.* Control of the distribution of food aid, in particular, can reinforce the power of local authorities or political factions; it can also facilitate their self-aggrandizing, often exploitive, behavior toward the intended noncombatant beneficiaries.

■ **Reducing dependency.** *Give refugees incentives to return home, and impose disincentives on those remaining outside their country of origin.* After populations have been repatriated and are settled, the agricultural base begins to be reestablished, dependency on free food drops, and long-term food security is enhanced.

■ **Capacity building.** *Train technocrats to manage the postconflict economic transition, and train others in skills for which there is employment demand.* Economic recovery requires a cadre of high-level technocrats with management and conceptual skills; it also requires the unemployed (especially demobilized soldiers) to be trained in marketable skills.

Finally, however one assesses the effectiveness of humanitarian assistance in response to complex emergencies, one thing cannot be emphasized too strongly: it is far better to prevent complex emergencies from occurring in the first place than it is to respond to victims' needs afterwards.



# Introduction

**S**INCE THE END of the Cold War, the nature of international assistance needs has changed dramatically. Ethnic and national tensions have led to increased civil strife and an explosion in the number of complex humanitarian emergencies. As a result, the number of civilian casualties has increased, as has the level of emergency assistance allocated in response to their humanitarian needs. In 1998, USAID's Center for Development Information and Evaluation (CDIE) initiated an assessment of the effectiveness of the Agency's humanitarian assistance interventions. The assessment examined USAID programs in three countries afflicted with complex emergencies: Haiti, Mozambique, and Rwanda. This report synthesizes the findings of the three separate country studies.

## **Number of Emergencies And People Affected**

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According to the U.S. Mission to the United Nations (1997, 5), the number of humanitarian emergencies in which at least 300,000 civilians depended on international humanitarian assistance to avoid

serious malnutrition or death peaked during 1993–95. With improved situations in several countries (including Armenia, Cambodia, and Mozambique), the number of emergencies dropped to 20 in 1996 and remained at that level in 1997 (p. 5). In 1998, Russia (Chechnya) was dropped from the list (reducing the number to 19), but Colombia and Uganda were added (boosting it to 21) (U.S. Mission to the UN 1998, 7, 9). Annex A (table A1) lists ongoing humanitarian emergencies in 1996, 1997, and 1998 using data from the U.S. Committee for Refugees.

Worldwide, roughly 33 million people needed emergency assistance in January 1996. That increased to 34 million in January 1997, then decreased to an estimated 32 million in April 1998 (table A1). These levels are triple those typical of the early 1980s. They include both internally displaced persons who have remained within their own borders and refugees who have fled across international borders. During the 1990s most have been internally displaced persons rather than refugees. In 1996, 52 percent of those requiring emergency assistance owing

mainly to armed conflict or government repression resided in sub-Saharan Africa; in 1997 that percentage decreased to 48 percent, and in 1998 it decreased still further to 39 percent (table A1).

## Resource Implications

The Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development monitors levels of official development assistance and humanitarian assistance. Table 1 reports these data for all donors in 1998 dollars during 1988–98. In real dollar terms, official development assistance declined

gradually from a high of \$68.5 billion in 1991 to a low of \$53.4 billion in 1997, a decrease of 22 percent. In 1998 it increased for the first time since 1994; the increase was 8.1 percent. (The small increase in 1994 was probably due to the Rwanda crisis.)

Humanitarian assistance peaked at \$4.3 billion in 1994 owing to the crisis in the Great Lakes region of Africa. After that it fell to \$3.3 billion as of 1998. However, it was expected to peak again in 1999 because of the emergencies in Kosovo and East Timor and the Turkish and Taiwanese earthquakes. Humanitarian assistance had typically been less than 2.0 percent of official development assistance – until

**Table 1. Official Development Assistance and Humanitarian Assistance, in Millions of 1998 US\$, 1988–98**

Year	Official Development Assistance	Humanitarian Assistance	HA as a Percent Of ODA
1988	61,570	955	1.6
1989	60,172	969	1.6
1990	63,791	1,270	2.0
1991	68,503	3,503	5.1
1992	67,792	2,880	4.2
1993	62,659	3,863	6.2
1994	63,176	4,303	6.8
1995	56,968	3,401	6.0
1996	56,530	3,206	5.7
1997	53,424	2,921	5.5
1998	57,774	3,288	5.7

Source: OECD DAC/O database

Note: Annex A includes two figures that graphically depict dollar levels of foreign assistance and humanitarian assistance (figure A1), and humanitarian assistance as a percent of overall assistance (A2) during the 30-year period 1969–98.

1991, when it jumped to 5.1 percent (owing to violence in the Balkans). It peaked at 6.8 percent of official development assistance in 1994 with the Rwanda crisis, but afterward fell to 5.7 percent of ODA in 1998. The fact remains that within a diminishing overall foreign aid budget, humanitarian assistance has nearly tripled since 1990.

What about the United States? In 1990, U.S. official development assistance totaled nearly \$13.6 billion in real terms (1998 dollars); by 1997, it had fallen by half to \$7.0 billion in real terms (see table 2). This was the lowest level of U.S. assistance since World War II (Miller 1997, 1). U.S.

humanitarian assistance, by contrast, has increased. In 1990 it was \$263 million (1.9 percent of ODA); in 1994, it peaked at \$1.2 billion (11.4 percent of ODA). Since then it has gradually decreased to \$344 million in 1997 (4.9 percent of ODA). In 1998 both U.S. ODA and U.S. humanitarian assistance increased, and in 1999 humanitarian assistance was expected to increase again given current humanitarian needs.

Although U.S. official development assistance as a percentage of total ODA has been falling steadily since the 1970s, the United States continues to be a generous provider of humanitarian assistance. In 1998, for example, the United States allo-

**Table 2. U.S. Development Assistance and Humanitarian Assistance, in Millions of 1998 US\$, 1988–98**

Year	Official Development Assistance	Humanitarian Assistance	HA as a Percent of ODA
1988	13,141	220	1.7
1989	9,547	261	2.7
1990	13,580	263	1.9
1991	12,951	685	5.3
1992	13,146	585	4.4
1993	11,099	733	6.6
1994	10,662	1,216	11.4
1995	7,743	829	10.7
1996	9,669	603	6.2
1997	6,959	344	4.9
1998	8,786	898	10.2

Source: OECD DAC/O database

Note: Annex A graphically depicts trends in U.S. ODA and U.S. humanitarian assistance in 1998 dollars during 1971–98 (figures A3 and A4).

cated over 10 percent of its ODA to humanitarian assistance needs. However, to meet humanitarian needs, U.S. policymakers have had to divert resources away from sustainable development programs (Messer 1998, 15, citing USAID's FY97 Congressional Presentation). Any proliferation of complex emergencies is likely to tighten the squeeze on sustainable development programs even further. Ironically, development assistance programs designed to spur economic growth and reduce poverty may help mitigate the need for more expensive responses to complex emergencies, since they reduce the likelihood of their occurring in the first place.

## **Legislative Authority**

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The United States donates food aid to victims of floods, earthquakes, droughts, and civil strife under Title II of the Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act of 1954 (PL 480). Other types of humanitarian assistance are provided under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (as amended). Normally, the duration of both food and nonfood emergency assistance is limited, and only countries that lack resources to purchase commodities commercially are eligible recipients (GAO 1986, 10).

USAID's Office of Food for Peace administers the PL 480 Title II food aid program. Under this program the United States provides emergency food aid to cooperating sponsors who in turn distribute it to disaster victims. Food commodities are distributed in areas of greatest need

with priority given to people suffering from malnutrition. Cooperating sponsors can be (1) governments, (2) multilateral organizations such as the World Food Program, or (3) nonprofit U.S. private voluntary organizations (PVOs) such as Catholic Relief Services, Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere (CARE), Adventist Development and Relief Agency, and World Vision. Cooperating sponsors are responsible for establishing distribution networks to reach disaster victims and for properly storing and accounting for commodities. USAID is responsible for the overall administration and management of the program.

An emergency response normally requires not only food but also nonfood assistance, including medicine, sanitation, potable water, agricultural inputs, and shelter. USAID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance and Office of Transition Initiatives are primarily responsible for administering nonfood humanitarian assistance. OFDA coordinates the allocation of funds appropriated under the International Disaster Assistance account. The largest percentage of funds goes to relief and rehabilitation project grants managed by private voluntary, nongovernmental, and international organizations.

OFDA has an internal policy not to obligate funds for longer than 12 months at a time. That allows it to respond to unexpected crises worldwide. Food for Peace has a similar policy for emergency food aid. The Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance is widely respected for its respon-



siveness to disasters. Although it is permitted to provide responses aimed at relief, rehabilitation, and reconstruction, OFDA's lifesaving emphasis is paramount. OFDA is concerned about potential congressional criticism if it permits missions or embassies to use emergency assistance for longer term developmentally related interventions (Miller 1997, 27).

## **Complex Humanitarian Emergencies**

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The term "complex emergency" was first coined in UN circles, probably in Mozambique, as a diplomatic euphemism for a "chronic political" rather than "natural" emergency. The Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda (1996, study 2, 5) points out that complex emergencies

tend to have multiple causes, but are essentially political in nature and entail violent conflict. They typically include a breakdown of legitimate institutions and governance, widespread suffering, and massive population displacements, and they often involve and require a range of responses from the international community, including intense diplomacy and conflict resolution efforts, UN policing actions, and the provision of multilateral and bilateral humanitarian assistance by official and private agencies. A complex emergency tends to be very dynamic, characterized by rapid changes that are difficult to predict.

Brandt (1995, 1) suggests that complex humanitarian emergencies are often *wars*.

In the post-Cold War period, most have been conflicts that have taken place within, not between, countries. These internal struggles among warring factions are usually defined by ethnicity, religion, or language. According to Apthorpe (1997, 91), complex emergencies have deep roots and dense branches and cannot be understood from a Western-ethnocentric perspective. Similarly, Kleist (1994, 45) suggests that a disaster may be defined as complex when its origins are multiple and its effects compound one another. As USAID's 1998 *Performance Report* (131) notes, complex emergencies are manifested by "armed conflict, death, displaced populations, hunger, and injury."

Humanitarian aid (donations of food and other commodities and services) is intended to save lives in situations where virtually everyone is at exceptionally high risk. These situations require getting assistance to where it is needed – urgently. The humanitarian response is primarily an act of rescue. Under the umbrella of humanitarian assistance, there is a distinction between relief and rehabilitation (Kleist, 47). Relief helps people survive; rehabilitation helps people get back on their feet so they can reestablish their livelihoods.

Development aid, by contrast, is normally long term and sustainable in nature. In economic terms, it can be characterized as investment rather than consumption. There is no clear, operational definition of when short-term relief ends and long-term development begins. For all practical purposes, though, relief activities end with the

termination of emergency resources. And this occurs when donors decide to cease providing these resources. This suggests that the relief-to-development continuum may exist conceptually, but not operationally.

## General Evaluation Approach

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The overall objective of the CDIE assessment was to examine the effectiveness of U.S. humanitarian interventions, especially emergency food aid, in nations afflicted by a complex emergency. It addressed three principal questions:

1. Did U.S. emergency assistance save lives and alleviate suffering during the complex emergency (humanitarian effects)?

2. Did U.S. emergency assistance affect social and political hostilities or tensions associated with the complex emergency (political effects)?

3. Did U.S. emergency assistance contribute to long-term development (economic effects)?

The assessment examined the results of humanitarian assistance. It did not delve into the various agencies involved in implementation. In short, it did not evaluate the implementing agencies, but rather the results of their activities. The findings are based on fieldwork carried out in three countries: Haiti (McClelland 1999),

Mozambique (Liebersohn 1999), and Rwanda (Renison 2000). They also draw on syntheses of related evaluation results including in particular Apthorpe (1997) covering six evaluations of humanitarian assistance in Africa; Borton and Macrea (1997) covering 28 evaluations worldwide; and the UNHCR/WFP (1998) evaluation of the experience in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

CDIE evaluation teams carried out key informant interviews with beneficiaries and a broad range of experts who had managed or implemented emergency assistance programs. Information was collected in both urban and rural areas; site visits within each country also produced valuable insights. Illustrative questions asked during the interviews included the following:

■ What was the political, economic, and social context in which humanitarian assistance was provided?

■ What were the perceived results of the assistance in terms of saving lives, affecting hostilities, and contributing to development?

■ Were the results achieved those that were intended (i.e., what was the relationship between results and objectives)?

■ Were there unintended effects, positive or negative?

■ Were the interventions sustainable (in the case of rehabilitation assistance as distinct from relief aid)?

■ What were the key strong and weak points of the assistance; (i.e., the major successes and failures)?

The very nature of complex emergencies imposed certain methodological limitations on the study. For example, there was little evidence of long-term development-oriented effects, since achieving short-term effects was the principal objective of the humanitarian assistance. Many

of the people involved (beneficiaries, managers, implementers) had moved on and could not be reached, and some of the institutional mechanisms had been dismantled. Because action came first, paperwork was frequently not given priority, so relevant data were lacking or conflicting. Finally, the contribution of the United States to operations that were cofinanced could not be separated from the contributions of other donors.





## Country Context

**T**HE TERM “complex humanitarian emergency” is relatively new in the American lexicon. Complex emergencies are generally characterized by a breakdown of institutions and governance. They always involve conflict, often war. What causes them, and what humanitarian tools has USAID used to alleviate widespread suffering? This section examines these questions in the context of the three country case studies: Haiti, Mozambique, and Rwanda.

### Causes of Complex Emergencies

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*Haiti.* Most studies have singled out predatory governance as the principal cause of Haiti’s complex emergency; ethnic and ideological factors appear less important. Haiti has almost no history of democratic governance or strong public institutions. Instead, during its nearly 200-year history, oppressive governments have favored the rich at the expense of the poor. The country’s military has controlled a

subservient police, and both institutions have engaged in widespread and systematic human rights abuses with nearly complete impunity.

The situation boiled over during 1991–94, shortly after a military coup removed democratically elected President Jean-Bertrand Aristide from office. Although never an all-out civil war, this period bore all the hallmarks of a complex emergency with political, social, and economic collapse. Human rights violations swelled to unprecedented levels, prompting a series of UN-backed sanctions including the U.S.-led international embargo. By September 1994, an estimated 300,000 of Haiti’s 7 million people were displaced internally; another 60,000 to 70,000 were refugees, some as the highly publicized boat people (World Bank 1998b); thousands had fled across the border to the Dominican Republic; and 4,000 had been killed (Dupuy 1997). Gross domestic product fell by 35 percent during this period and inflation increased to 50 percent by 1994 (Buttari 1997). An esti-

mated 143,000 jobs were lost in the private sector (Maguire 1996). The inflation-adjusted value of the minimum wage was less than it had been 10 years earlier, and per capita GNP was \$250.

*Mozambique.* In 1975, after a 10-year war for independence, Mozambique inherited a highly dualistic colonial economy that lacked schools, health facilities, and other public services. With the end of colonial rule, most of the Portuguese and many skilled Mozambicans fled, leaving the country without the technical skills needed to operate factories or the transport system, to manage commerce or government, or to provide professional services. The Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (Frelimo), the insurgent group that had fought for independence, took control after the Portuguese left. The Frelimo government established a one-party state and a centrally planned economy modeled after those in Eastern Europe.

Mozambique's neighbors – white-ruled Rhodesia and South Africa, which supported apartheid – were alarmed by a black-ruled, antiapartheid socialist country on their borders ready to export revolution. In 1976, white Rhodesian military officers opposed to the Marxist-leaning Mozambique government formed the Mozambican National Resistance (Renamo). Renamo guerrillas sought to disrupt Mozambique's economy in an effort to keep the new government from supporting guerrillas who were trying to overthrow the white Rhodesian government.

They cut railway and power lines, destroyed roads and bridges, and sabotaged oil-storage depots. They raided towns and villages and sometimes engaged in the wholesale massacre of civilians. Mozambique's socialist allies countered by providing the Frelimo government with weapons and financial support.

The result was civil war – nominally based on ideology but actually supported by foreign countries in the context of Cold War politics and fueled by a drive for power by local military and political leaders. It was mainly a low-intensity, hit-and-run guerrilla war fought largely with small arms and land mines to destroy economic and social infrastructure. Both armies terrorized the rural population by seizing food and killing people.

Over 2 million people fled to neighboring countries and 4 to 6 million moved to areas of relative safety within Mozambique. As many as 8 million people in a country of 16 million were affected – a reflection of the large-scale human suffering and economic dislocations that took place. In 1986 the economy hit bottom: per capita GNP was \$80, the lowest in the world; real GNP growth was a negative 2.3 percent; inflation was 41 percent. In 1992, after 16 years of fighting, General Peace Accords were signed. The country's first democratic, multiparty elections were held two years later. Why did the war end? Among the more important reasons was that foreign military support ended. Assistance to Frelimo dropped sharply with the collapse of the Soviet Union, and

Renamo lost its external support when apartheid ended in South Africa. In addition, foreign (mainly Italian) intermediaries helped to bring Frelimo and Renamo to the negotiating table and to facilitate their reaching a settlement.

*Rwanda.* Rwanda's wholesale genocide of 1994 was a desperate attempt by the government and Hutu extremists to prevent the Tutsi-dominated Rwandan Patriotic Front from seizing power. Based in Uganda, the RPF had already tried to topple President Juvénal Habyarimana and his Hutu-dominated government in 1990. That unsuccessful effort set the stage for a second attempt in 1993, which ended with a cease-fire and later a peace agreement, the Arusha Accords. However, it soon became clear that key elements of the accords, including access to land and political power sharing for the Tutsi living in both Rwanda and Uganda, would not be honored. This reignited the military campaign, and by July 1994 the Rwandan Patriotic Front had defeated the army of the government of Rwanda.

In a 100-day period during April–July 1994, more than 800,000 people were massacred in a genocide historically unmatched in its intensity. The killing, or ethnic cleansing, eliminated close to three fourths of the Tutsi population of Rwanda. The international community (including the United States) ignored, then acknowledged, the genocide, but did little to prevent it. The U.S. secretary of state apologized for this failure to act in December 1997, as did the president in March 1998.

Rwanda remained in a state of tension and instability throughout 1995 and 1996, as *génocidaires* came from neighboring countries, particularly from Idjwi Island in Lake Kivu in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (formerly Zaire). By 1999 the Rwandan Patriotic Front had secured its borders and established security throughout most of the territory within them. (Some killing continues, primarily in the northwest.) The bulk of the population in exile or refugee camps has returned to Rwanda. However, there remains a small group of Hutu-power extremists, determined to overthrow the current government and finish their work of genocide. Many of these *génocidaires* have found sanctuary in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Central African Republic, and Angola.

Scholars have documented the existence of a culture of political impunity in Rwanda – including ethnically based mass killing that is sanctioned or planned by government (Uvin 1998, Prunier 1995, Africa Rights 1998). Violence has been part of a winner-take-all mentality that has dominated Rwanda's governments during the colonial and postcolonial periods. Both Hutu and Tutsi have used violence to obtain, and then maintain, absolute control over political and economic decisions.

This mentality has benefited a tiny elite, exclusively and handsomely, at the expense of the poor majority. During 1990–93, the proportion of Rwanda's population living in poverty increased from 40 percent to 70 percent. During 1994–98, eco-

conomic activity declined sharply. As a result, 75 percent of rural households (or 90 percent of *all* households) currently live below the poverty line, compared with 53 percent five years earlier. Structural adjustment programs had not pulled Rwanda out of its economic crisis.

But this is not surprising, since most elements of these programs were not implemented. That prompted the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund to halt disbursements. According to the World Bank, “rising poverty undoubtedly played some role in exacerbating social tensions leading up to the genocide” (World Bank 1998, i). But as Uvin states, “structural adjustment did not cause these [economic] problems; rather, it was irrelevant to their resolution” (Uvin 1998, 59).

## USAID’s Humanitarian Response

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*Haiti.* The need for humanitarian assistance was sharpened by the economic embargo imposed by the international community in response to the 1991 coup and the military’s subsequent political repression. USAID responded with an expanded program that included food aid, potable water, and health and sanitation assistance.

USAID increased Haiti’s PL 480, Title II program by 60 percent, from \$15.4 million in 1993 to \$24.6 million in 1994. In 1995 it was increased by another 37 percent to \$33.6 million (USAID/Haiti 1992–96). At its peak, the international

community was feeding 1.3 million people—one of seven Haitians—each day at 3,100 distribution points throughout the country. It was also providing most of the country’s health services (USAID 1995).

Private voluntary organizations implemented the humanitarian response in Haiti. The Adventist Development and Relief Agency operated 1,100 feeding centers in poor urban neighborhoods in Port-au-Prince and in northern and central Haiti. CARE worked in the northwest and Artibonite regions through 1,200 school feeding centers as well as hospitals, clinics, and other distribution centers. Catholic Relief Services operated 800 feeding centers in the Port-au-Prince area and in the south and southwest. International Lifeline implemented food aid programs for two years, and the UN World Food Program, working through local and European nongovernmental organizations, provided food to vulnerable children, pregnant and lactating mothers, and the destitute.

USAID’s Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance awarded seven grants to private voluntary organizations totaling \$5.4 million. Catholic Relief Services, the principal grantee, distributed essential drugs, medical supplies, and agricultural inputs (tools, seed, and fertilizer) and contributed to UNICEF’s oral rehydration therapy and measles immunization programs. The Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance also supported efforts to purify drinking water throughout Haiti, to purchase equip-



ment for the Port-au-Prince municipal water system, and to buy fuel needed to transport emergency assistance to beneficiaries. The Pan American Development Foundation played a pivotal role in the humanitarian response by implementing a \$38 million jobs creation project.

Finally, the Office of Transition Initiatives provided \$17.3 million in 1994–95 to support Haiti’s transition to democratic governance. It funded the demobilization of the armed forces (not covered in the case study) and over 1,900 microprojects designed to bridge the gap between relief and development.

*Mozambique.* In the mid-1980s, USAID assistance to Mozambique was under \$50 million a year, with emergency aid a small proportion of total aid. During 1988–91, as the civil war and humanitarian suffering escalated, USAID assistance doubled to an average of \$100 million a year. In 1989, an estimated one third of the population depended on food aid for 60 to 70 percent of their food needs. In 1992, in the final throes of the war, total U.S. aid doubled again to \$200 million annually. During 1993–95, after the 1992 peace accords, U.S. assistance averaged \$125 million a year, of which emergency assistance was a large part.

USAID’s relief-to-development program in Mozambique included several key components: resettlement packages (food, seed, farming tools, household goods); rebuilding rural transport infrastructure; support for elections and civic education;

demobilization of the two armies; and mine clearance. The number of internally displaced emergency food aid beneficiaries was reduced from 1.5 million in 1993 to only 600,000 in 1995. During 1996–97, USAID assistance dropped to about \$50 million a year, and the mission resumed its emphasis on development.

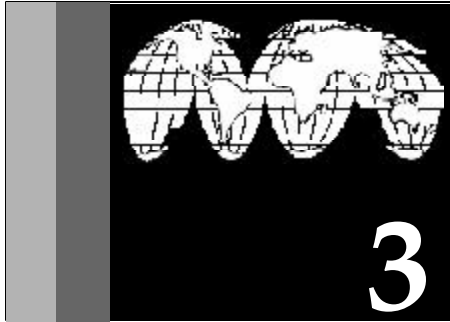
*Rwanda.* USAID provided food and other types of emergency assistance to Rwanda. According to USAID/Kigali, the value of the assistance was almost \$118 million in 1997 and over \$56 million in 1998. Most of it was food commodities. Beans, cornmeal, and vegetable oil were provided to genocide survivors, including widows, orphans, unaccompanied minors, and refugee-returnees. Most of the assistance was channeled through the World Food Program, Catholic Relief Services, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and World Vision Relief and Development. The most vulnerable (children under 5 and pregnant and lactating mothers) were reached through wet feeding programs in nutrition centers, inpatient feeding, and feeding programs in centers for unaccompanied children and orphans.

The Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance simultaneously provided potable water, sanitation, and health services (as well as emergency food aid) along the route of returning refugees. Part of this assistance targeted orphans and unaccompanied minors. For example, a grant to the International Rescue Committee helped establish transit camps for such children.

OFDA also assisted over 50,000 vulnerable farm families by providing seed, tools, and food rations for three months through the World Food Program. The intent was to jump-start agricultural production. The Rwanda Emergency Seeds and Tools project, also OFDA funded, helped 90,000 families for one month following repatriation. Another agricultural project, implemented by Food for the Hungry, International, distributed seed packages to 25,000 vulnerable farmers. The project encouraged farmers to move onto rehabilitated marshlands, trained farmers in new practices, and rehabilitated rural infrastructure. The Seeds of Hope project sup-

ported agricultural experts who identified appropriate seed stock, which then was multiplied.

Finally, OFDA provided \$26 million to fund rapid-impact activities. These included a shelter program to help meet the needs of some of the 1.3 million returning refugees and to preempt a potentially unstable security situation in the northwest. At the same time, the Office of Transition Initiatives funded the Women in Transition program (reaching over 162,000 women) and various activities to educate local leadership and support local democratic processes.



## Results: Humanitarian Effects

**S**AVING LIVES and alleviating suffering are key objectives of humanitarian assistance. When judged in terms of these criteria, most evaluations of humanitarian assistance tell a “mission accomplished” story. For example, Apthorpe’s review of six evaluations of humanitarian assistance in Somalia, the Horn of Africa, Rwanda, Liberia–Sierra Leone, and Sudan concludes as follows:

... despite the horrendous and horrendously difficult circumstances, what we read in these consultancies on the whole is that the humanitarian aid *does* actually get through. Against all the odds, the job of getting it there is actually done, if not always at the times scheduled or as suitably composed as planned. (Apthorpe 1997, 101–2.)

However, this message of overall success is highly qualified. Apthorpe writes:

All accounts appear to find that, shall we say, making our own brave leap into the quantitative blue yonder, normally more than probably 90 percent of assistance has not failed to get through and be duly delivered with, say, usually

very much more than probably 60 percent of this being duly distributed, if not to the intended beneficiaries, then at least to their representatives. (Apthorpe 1997, 97.)

What about the complex humanitarian emergencies in Haiti, Mozambique, and Rwanda?

### Haiti

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*Emergency indicators.* One indicator of the magnitude of Haiti’s complex emergency is the national food supply. Haiti historically has had a structural food deficit that makes the country dependent on imports. The deficit increased during the crisis years, 1992–94. Domestic production was reported at 90 to 94 percent of normal, while commercial imports decreased by one third. Food aid increased by an average of 29 percent during 1993–95, but this was insufficient to compensate for decreased domestic production and commercial imports. As a result, Haiti’s food deficit increased to an estimated 20 percent of national food requirements, nearly

three times the deficit in a normal year (World Bank 1998a, WFP 1998).

Another indicator is food prices. Food prices in Haiti rose sharply as commodities became scarce. In Port-au-Prince, rice prices increased by 126 percent during 1991-94; bean prices, by 167 percent; and corn prices, by 184 percent (USAID/Haiti 1992-94). Although average food prices decreased during 1994-96, they were still more than twice their 1991 levels.

Malnutrition rates of children under 5 is a third key indicator of the severity of a complex emergency. Most studies agree that Haiti's historically high malnutrition rates increased in 1991-94 owing to the combination of economic stress and a total breakdown of the public health sector (IDB 1994, Ianotti 1997, World Bank 1998a). Data from OFDA's monitoring reports also show the trend of increased malnutrition but indicate the changes may not have been significant. Nationally, nutritional status (based on weight-for-age) of 50 percent of Haitian children was normal in 1992. This figure increased to 52 percent in 1993 but then declined to 49 percent in 1994 and dropped still further to 47 percent in 1995. It then rose to 51 percent in 1996 (USAID/Haiti 1992-96).

Of course, these national rates mask regional differences. For example, severe malnutrition at the national level increased from 3.3 percent (1992) to 3.9 percent (1994) to 4.1 percent (1996). In the northwest, though, it increased from 11.7 percent (1992) to 14.4 percent (1994), then de-

creased to 10.8 percent (1996) (USAID/Haiti 1992-96).

*Humanitarian response.* International donors increased food aid deliveries to Haiti by a third, primarily to address malnutrition. The United States contributed an average of 68 percent of total food aid (World Bank 1998a). The United States also initiated programs to provide short-term employment, agricultural inputs, fuel, and medicine. Three major U.S. nongovernmental organizations (CARE, Catholic Relief Services, and Adventist Development and Relief Agency, as previously noted) implemented most of the emergency assistance efforts funded by the United States. According to the NGOs' figures, beneficiary levels nearly doubled during the emergency. In 1995, food aid was reaching 1.3 million direct beneficiaries, or 16 percent of Haiti's population (World Bank 1998a).

Efforts to target Haiti's vulnerable populations generally worked well, but the problems of looting and armed theft were always present. The Adventist Development and Relief Agency, for example, distributed dry rations for only six months in the low-income neighborhood of Cité Jasmine in Port-au-Prince in 1992 because of violence. Catholic Relief Services also had difficulties in urban areas. Overall, though, the estimated amount of leakage was 5 to 10 percent, regarded as normal.

The Jobs Creation project was implemented during 1993-96 primarily to offset the embargo's economic pressures. It

created almost half a million person-months of short-term employment during its 34 months of operation, of which 20 percent was for women (Brown 1996). Another USAID-funded activity supported agricultural production and reduced decapitalization of farm households. This project loaned funds to farmers for seed and fertilizer and sold them tools at half price. Approximately 13,000 farming households and 47 farmers' associations participated (Naval 1995). USAID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance funded the purchase of fuel needed to deliver emergency medical supplies, potable water, and food to more than 400 health centers throughout the country.

Most studies agree that the embargo seriously exacerbated Haiti's historically high malnutrition rates. But they also conclude that emergency food relief alleviated that effect. And unlike the six evaluations reported by Apthorpe, there is quantitative evidence to support this conclusion. The data from Haiti are approximate because the sample populations and methods of data collection were not standardized during the emergency. Nevertheless, they provide a basis for making an informed judgment about the humanitarian effects of the emergency assistance. This was not the case in Mozambique.

## **Mozambique**

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The United States was Mozambique's major donor during its complex humanitarian emergency, contributing a total of

\$636 million during 1987–95. Of this, \$529 million was food aid, which accounted for 60 percent of total food aid provided during this period.

*Indicators.* The Mozambique evaluation team found no valid quantitative data to assess objectively the impact of U.S. emergency assistance. Although estimated rates of malnutrition, mortality, and morbidity at the national level showed some improvement, first in the late 1980s and then again in 1994 after the emergency, it was impossible to attribute these improvements to emergency assistance. NGOs reported having little empirical basis for targeting food aid because of the lack of systematic information about food insecurity and nutritional status in rural areas. Bulletins issued by Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders) contained health and nutrition information, but they were produced only after 1992. Moreover, their data were based on small samples and different methodologies and therefore, according to Médecins Sans Frontières, "must be interpreted with caution."

Notwithstanding the lack of accurate quantitative data, there was consensus among donors, relief workers, Mozambican government officials, and Mozambicans who received food aid that the assistance aided people's survival during the emergency. All agreed that many more people would have suffered and died without food aid, although it was impossible to estimate the number of lives saved. Consistent with Apthorpe's six-

evaluation review, "Mission accomplished."

*Effectiveness.* However, the impact of emergency assistance varied greatly depending on (1) where the beneficiaries sought refuge (within Mozambique or in nearby countries such as Malawi), (2) who delivered the assistance (the relief unit of the Mozambican government or NGOs), and (3) when people were uprooted and received assistance (before 1987, during 1987-92, or during 1992-95).

Mozambicans who fled to nearby countries had a hazardous journey but generally received adequate food and medical care once they reached the refugee camps. They were also relatively secure from Renamo or Frelimo harassment. By contrast, those who were internally displaced within Mozambique received less adequate relief food that was supplied irregularly. And they were often threatened and harmed by Renamo or Frelimo soldiers.

The internally displaced who received aid directly from NGOs or the World Food Program reportedly received more adequate and regular supplies than those aided by the Mozambican government. According to former internally displaced beneficiaries, the government did not provide enough emergency food aid, and usually there was a two- to four-month time lapse between distributions. They also reported that the government's distributions were unfair, often influenced by the recipi-

ents' political affiliation and social status. Former internally displaced persons reported that everybody was hungry during the war years, so those who received less food preyed on those who received more, and when quantities were insufficient, people in some areas knifed open sacks and fought for a share.

Access to assistance by the internally displaced also varied depending on whether they were in Frelimo- or Renamo-controlled areas. U.S. policy was to provide emergency assistance only to government- (Frelimo-) controlled areas — except for limited quantities provided to Renamo territory through the International Committee of the Red Cross. Regardless of its source, food aid attracted both Frelimo and Renamo soldiers. People from several villages said they lost their food aid to Frelimo by day and to Renamo by night.

Finally, the effectiveness of emergency assistance varied over time. Before 1987, the war was disruptive, but few people had to flee their homes. Relief efforts were relatively small and localized. The war intensified during 1987-92. People fled to the relative safety of neighboring countries or the Beira corridor. (The corridor is an east-west swath across the country's waist; it was guarded by Zimbabwean troops and thus served as a safe haven for Mozambican civilians.) This was an especially difficult period for internally displaced persons. After the 1992 peace accords were signed, people began returning home. Resettlement packages (food,

tools, and services) were provided by NGOs through 1995. This final stage of the emergency was the smoothest.

## Rwanda

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In late 1996 and early 1997, some 1.3 million refugees were repatriated to Rwanda from the border camps, either voluntarily or by force. Massive starvation and human suffering would have occurred without substantial infusions of predominately U.S. emergency food aid. As in Mozambique, though, this is difficult to quantify because data were not systematically collected.

*Monitoring.* Following repatriation of refugees, the World Food Program carried out a six-month general-distribution food program. This was intended to last only until the harvest in June 1997 but was reinstated in November 1997 in five prefectures. In those areas local food prices had increased by a factor of three, signaling a significant food shortage. Starvation and death were on a sharp incline, and emergency food aid continued to be provided until the next harvest in June 1998.

Food insecurity was especially acute in Ruhengeri Prefecture owing to political instability as well as poor harvests and high prices. As many as 573,000 people of an estimated population of 869,000 were displaced, living in camps and awaiting resettlement. The Ministry of Health did a nutritional survey in January 1999 based on a sample of 900 children under 5 living

in camps in Ruhengeri. It found what Save the Children Foundation/UK described as “alarmingly high rates of malnutrition, in particular severe malnutrition among children 6–59 months.” Specifically, it found 8.0 percent of children with acute malnutrition, 4.7 percent with edema, 40.6 percent underweight, and 59.9 percent with chronic malnutrition. These 1999 figures were substantially higher than those reflected in a 1996 National Nutrition Survey. Thus, the situation in Ruhengeri, at least, was not getting any better – despite emergency food assistance.

*Targeting.* Targeting assistance to the intended beneficiaries in pre-1996 Rwanda was mixed. In the Bukavu area in southern Zaire, government soldiers formed separate camps from the very beginning. By contrast, in the Goma area the army, militia, and civilian refugees were all mixed together (forming “refugee-warrior camps”), and the military and former government leaders controlled relief distribution. In Tanzania, the military was not as visible among the refugees, but the militia and former officials were. There was little security in these camps, and food and other relief supplies were diverted from the intended beneficiaries.

It was painfully obvious that the perpetrators of human rights abuses and genocide were fed and assisted in the camps. Médecins Sans Frontières believed the only alternative was to leave the camps and suspend most services. By contrast, most other NGOs and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees decided to stay.

They recognized the humanitarian imperative to protect and assist the vast population of refugees, even if that meant assisting people guilty of crimes against humanity (Joint Evaluation 1996, study 2, 58–9).

Poor monitoring (which did not begin in earnest until 1998) also contributed to ineffective targeting. U.S. government officials reported considerable double-counting of refugees by former military and government leadership, particularly in the cross-border camps. As a result, many experts believe that more food aid was supplied both inside and outside Rwanda during this period than was necessary – and that more food aid was misappropriated in Rwanda than is usual in emergency situations.

Interahamwe (Hutu militia responsible for the genocide) and former soldiers of the Rwandan army diverted food from women and children for their own purposes. There was also evidence that camp rosters were sometimes not updated to remove the names of those deceased, which resulted in the accusation that the UN High Commissioner for Refugees “feeds dead people.” Although this is anecdotal, there is little doubt that there were abuses in the feeding program.

## **Bosnia–Herzegovina**

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The humanitarian assistance operation in the former Yugoslavia was one of

the largest initiatives ever undertaken by the international community. Although Bosnia–Herzegovina was not included as one of the country case studies for this assessment, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and the World Food Program had completed a joint evaluation of the assistance program in 1998 covering the entire period from 1992 to June 1997 (UNHCR/WFP 1998, 1). The evaluation examined the effectiveness of targeting in response to beneficiary needs, the impact of the emergency operation on the war itself, and the relevance of food aid in a period of reconstruction – the same issues covered in the Haiti, Mozambique, and Rwanda evaluations.

According to the joint evaluation, an average of 2.6 million people were reached annually during 1992–96: 1.2 million internally displaced persons and 1.4 million “war affected” (people who had no means of support, although they were neither refugees nor displaced). By September 1997, 1.14 million tons of food had been provided at a cost of \$710 million. An estimated 80 percent of the population of Bosnia–Herzegovina had been beneficiaries of food aid supplied by the World Food Program and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees at one time or another (UNHCR/WFP 1998, 2).

The evaluation concluded that there was no widespread hunger or malnutrition in Bosnia–Herzegovina. However, security-related problems hindered access



and distribution to isolated communities and cities under siege. Air transport was used when access by land was denied, as in Gorazde, Sarajevo, Srebrenica, and Zepa. The Sarajevo airlift was the longest running humanitarian air bridge in history, lasting from 3 July 1992 until 9 January 1996. These operations were generally successful. In fact, it was only in Bihac during late 1994 and throughout 1995 that airdrops did not succeed in averting hunger (UNHCR/WFP 1998, 6).

## Targeting

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Efforts to target humanitarian aid to intended beneficiaries often run into major problems. Several ways to improve targeting and the overall effectiveness of humanitarian assistance programs involve alternative distribution channels, commodity selection, and planning.

Commercial channels may offer an alternative to other types of distribution. For example, the World Food Program contracted with Somali merchants in Mombasa, Kenya, to transport commodities to targeted sites in Somalia. This involved selling the commodities to the merchants and then buying them back with a 10 percent profit margin. WFP paid a 10 percent markup to avoid having 60 percent of the food looted. This was because bags printed GIFT OF THE USA were more likely to be looted than commodities stored and transported by businessmen.

A variation of this mechanism was to use the proceeds from the sale of the commodities to establish wage-generation programs rather than buy back the commodities. This gave people cash, creating a market that the merchants then supplied. But commercial channels are not always the solution. In Mozambique, most private transporters refused to transport food aid because of bandits and land mines and also because many that did had had their trucks stolen.

Military involvement in complex emergencies – both as protector and provider of commodities – has been a mixed blessing. The tremendous costs of military operations are generally disproportionate to the value of the commodities protected. Military humanitarianism can also get wrapped up with geopolitics and foreign policy objectives. In Liberia, for example, the Nigerian-dominated regional military force sent to Liberia for peacekeeping purposes found itself in conflict with the largest rebel force in the country (Prendergast and Scott 1996).

Carefully selecting commodities for emergency assistance can reduce looting and improve targeting. For example, rice and other high-value commodities are typically much more attractive to looters than sorghum, maize, or blended foods. But this varies by region: substantial quantities of maize were looted in Somalia. Similarly, looters are rarely interested in cooked food distributed in numerous

kitchens that are widely dispersed. Instead, they are generally interested in commodities for which there is market demand and which they can turn into cash.

Diversifying entry points for emergency supplies can help guard against empowering a particular authority. In Liberia, for example, all commodities came into Monrovia rather than across the border upcountry. By contrast, substantial food assistance was delivered to affected sites in Ethiopia (Eritrea and Tigray) via the Sudanese border.

There is an important distinction between distributing emergency commodities to affected *areas* and to affected *populations* within areas. Food aid was distributed to Rwandan refugees in camps through prefectures, communes, and finally cells; but it was not targeted to individual families. As a result, the emergency aid perpetuated the authority of the military and political leadership that had planned the genocide.

Humanitarian aid is more easily diverted when population figures are inflated. For example, to achieve purely political and economic objectives, warring factions in Liberia and Rwanda overestimated the need for food. But *underestimating* need may lead to violent competition for food. In assessing need, it is important to understand people's coping strategies and their desire to preserve their livelihoods. This may be as important as ensuring short-term hunger alleviation (Borton and Macrea 1997, 27).

In planning emergency assistance programs, experts need to be sensible and beware of over-complexity. It is also important to address capacity-building questions early on. In anticipation of rehabilitating a collapsed health service, for example, capacity building might take the form of training medical personnel. According to Anderson (1996), capacity building should be a central part of any emergency response.

Finally, Prendergast and Scott (1996) point out it is important to plan up front for monitoring and evaluation: "A commitment to adequate, independent, and continuous monitoring and evaluation of programs may reduce aid's contribution to conflict." In Rwanda, as a result of monitoring, diversion of food was reduced from 120 tons per month to 5 tons per month between July 1993 and January 1994. "It's monotonous, boring, but critical in cutting down mismanagement" (Prendergast and Scott 1996).

## **Efficiency**

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In addition to targeting, another measure of the effectiveness of humanitarian assistance is efficiency. Borton and Macrea (1997) synthesized the results of a broadly representative sample of 28 evaluations, mostly of complex emergencies, undertaken since 1991 by bilateral donors, UN agencies, and the European Community Humanitarian Office (1-2, 12). They examined humanitarian assistance in terms of cost-effectiveness, which, unlike cost-ben-

enefit analysis, does not involve the valuation of lives in economic terms. What they found is instructive: very few of these studies even considered the issue of cost-effectiveness—partly for methodological reasons and partly because of reservations about whether it should be a criterion for providing humanitarian aid. According to Kleist (1994, 301–02), the reality is that monetary costs are less important as an evaluative criterion than the number of lives saved and the security of the personnel delivering the humanitarian assistance.

Transportation (rail, road, air) is a major cost of emergency operations that varies enormously. For example, commercial air transport within the Great Lakes region was approximately 4 to 5 times more expensive than road transport, and 10 to 20 times more expensive than rail transport (Joint Evaluation 1996, study 3). Therefore, on efficiency grounds it is better to transport food to conflict areas by road or rail rather than by plane. On the other hand, using ground rather than air transportation could involve negotiating with rebel groups, thereby granting them a degree of legitimacy they otherwise would not enjoy (Hallam 1998, 21).

Cost also varied according to distribution channel and type of commodity. Military channels were estimated to be four to eight times more expensive than civilian channels (Borton and Macrea 1997, 2, 23). Moreover, replacing high-value rice with alternative less expensive cereals in coastal West Africa (bulgur wheat in Sierra Leone and Liberia, and maize meal

in Guinea and Côte d’Ivoire) improved cost-effectiveness (Apthorpe 1996). As noted above, using lower value commodities also reduced the likelihood of diversion as well as the disincentive effect on local production (Borton and Macrea 1997, 24).

## Conclusion

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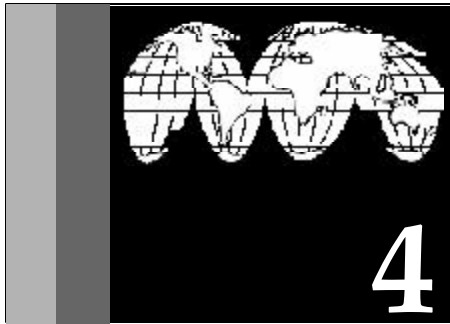
The international community is generally unable to assess with any degree of certainty the number of lives saved through humanitarian assistance provided in a complex emergency. The case of Haiti, where data were available, is the exception; the case of Mozambique, which lacked data, is the norm. Only 1 of the 28 evaluations reviewed by Borton and Macrea (1997) attempted to estimate the number of lives actually saved by international assistance interventions. This was an analysis of the 1990–94 response to the crisis in Somalia (Hansch 1994). It found that 330,000 Somalis were at imminent risk of death in 1992 and 1993. An estimated 110,000 of these were sustained (that is, their deaths were averted) by health, food, and other interventions. At least 70 percent (154,000) of the famine-related deaths that did occur in 1992 probably could have been prevented had primary health strategies been implemented earlier and more widely (Hansch 1994, cited in Borton and Macrea 1997, 2, 25).

However, another analysis of the effectiveness of humanitarian assistance in Somalia reports results with far less quan-

titative precision. It concludes that “significant numbers of lives were saved, severe malnutrition and vulnerability to infectious disease declined, the suffering of the displaced was eased, and refugee movement was slowed — *though these effects are all difficult to quantify*” (Kleist 1994, 305; emphasis added). According to Kleist, the inability to measure results with any degree of certainty reflects the fact that saving lives is of the utmost priority. Requiring answers to detailed questions about humanitarian assistance provided during a complex emergency could cause delay and cost human lives. Therefore, little upfront planning or data collection is done. In Somalia, for example, many proposals from NGOs lacked such basic information as who the target group was and where it was located (Kleist 1994, 294–95). Notwithstanding inadequate information, donors typically allocate resources to relief orga-

nizations to meet urgent humanitarian needs.

This raises a question about the degree of planning and data collection that is both feasible and desirable when an immediate humanitarian response is needed to save lives. USAID’s Bureau for Humanitarian Response has determined that one of its strategic objectives is to ensure that “critical food needs of targeted groups are met.” Two indicators are specified to determine if the objective has been achieved: (1) the percentage of target populations reached by food aid programs and (2) the impact of the assistance on the nutritional status of beneficiaries (USAID 1998b, 4). However, data must be collected for these two indicators, and data collection in the throes of a complex humanitarian emergency takes time when time is of the essence.



## Results: Political Effects and Effects on Hostilities

**H**UMANITARIANS TRADITIONALLY have tried to remain impartial and thus apolitical. There are at least two good reasons for this. The first is *pragmatic*: providing relief is often facilitated when indigenous political actors perceive humanitarian agents to be without political, religious, cultural, or other agendas. Impartiality helps humanitarians gain access to victims. The second reason to remain impartial is *principled*: each society has the exclusive prerogative and responsibility to shape its own destiny. Outsiders should not interfere except in nondisruptive ways to save lives. By helping everyone and refusing to take sides, humanitarians place themselves above the fray (Pasic and Weiss 1997, 198–99).

Nevertheless, the increasingly obvious reality is that humanitarian relief and its consequences are inevitably political, often in ways that are not self-evident. That is because aid does not just keep people alive in a political vacuum but also affects the local power structure and changes the environment in which it is given. Aid is rarely neutral.

Each of the six evaluations reviewed by Apthorpe asked whether humanitarian aid had had the perverse effect of prolonging the war or contributing to the war economy; that is, whether such aid in effect feeds conflict as well as its victims. Each concluded that although food and other humanitarian assistance are not *meant* to feed conflict, they often do (Apthorpe 1997, 95). In short, humanitarian assistance can have adverse political effects. Was this the case in Haiti, Mozambique, or Rwanda?

### Haiti

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The large quantities of aid-financed food injected into resource-starved Haiti were conspicuous and highly valued – either for direct consumption or as a political tool for those who controlled their distribution. Control over access to food aid became a new source of tension and power, and violent elements – local gangs or groups connected to political factions – hijacked food supplies. Fighting sometimes erupted among beneficiaries when food was dropped off in urban neighbor-

hoods for distribution by volunteers. Some municipal mayors used their access to food aid to favor supporters of one political faction or another or to promote their personal aggrandizement.

To their credit, the NGOs limited leakage and diversion (estimated at less than 10 percent) through regular monitoring, convoy protection, and timely adjustment of their stocking and distribution methods. They also stopped distributions in some neighborhoods in Port-au-Prince, such as Cité Jasmin. Violence, political exploitation, and local tensions consequently were reduced to manageable if not minor proportions.

Did the emergency assistance help the de facto regime in Haiti withstand diplomatic pressures and the effects of the economic embargo—before the international community finally resorted to military force? Many Haitians believe this is the case. In their view, exempting humanitarian aid from the embargo worked at cross-purposes with the policy of economic isolation. By reducing food distress the emergency assistance dampened public pressure that might otherwise have risen to uncontrollable levels against the regime. Thus, food aid may have permitted a delay in the intervention by external forces, intervention that finally proved unavoidable in order to eject the Haitian military and return President Aristide to power.

This view implies that humanitarian aid, by extending the duration and extent of the emergency and the consequences for

its victims, ironically could have caused more humanitarian distress than it alleviated. The point, of course, is speculative, and one cannot conclude with any degree of certainty that humanitarian assistance prolonged the conflict in Haiti.

## **Mozambique**

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The Reagan and Bush administrations debated whether to support the Frelimo government or the Renamo rebels when Mozambique's civil war broke out in the mid-1980s. Many American conservatives viewed the war as an ideological battle over communism and believed that the United States should therefore support Renamo. This view was buttressed by the fact that the Frelimo government had installed a socialist system and was receiving support from its socialist allies. Others, however, believed the United States should assist the Frelimo government in recognition of its support of the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa. In the final analysis, the United States provided limited humanitarian assistance to Mozambique's socialist government.

By the late 1980s, the Frelimo government had abandoned most of its socialist ideology and initiated a program of market-based economic reforms supported by USAID and the World Bank. In response, the United States greatly expanded its humanitarian assistance, much of it in the form of food aid. This U.S. assistance was provided on a government-to-government basis, which meant it went only to internally displaced persons in Frelimo-con-

trolled territories. The only U.S. assistance provided to Renamo populations was supplied indirectly through the International Committee of the Red Cross.

What was the impact of emergency food aid on the length of the civil war in Mozambique? Expatriates and Mozambicans alike consistently reported that foreign political and military support for Frelimo and Renamo—rather than humanitarian assistance—was the primary resource that fueled Mozambique’s 16-year civil war. U.S. humanitarian assistance had relatively little influence on the course of the war when compared with the military assistance provided by the Soviet Union (to Frelimo) and by South Africa (to Renamo).

Nevertheless, both Frelimo and Renamo soldiers tried to steal food aid by intimidating PVO workers and hijacking trucks. Food aid distributions in rural villages were a magnet for looting by both militaries. Thus, food aid helped support the military forces to some extent, but the effect was relatively small. As in Haiti, emergency food aid in Mozambique was sometimes politicized. Politicians at both the national and local levels reportedly used their influence over food aid distributions to favor particular factions and reinforce their political power.

## **Rwanda**

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The massive influx of Rwandans into refugee camps in former Zaire was not only a movement of people but also a

transplantation of a well-organized political, social, and security structure. The Hutu extremists (ex-Rwandan army regulars, former government officials, and allied militia) planned to use the refugee camps as a staging area for their eventual return to political power through Rwanda’s northwest. They assumed, correctly, that the international humanitarian relief agencies (and the national government and regional authorities of Zaire) would not separate them from bonafide refugees. This meant they could consolidate both military and political control over most of the camp population. In December 1994 a new government of Rwanda in exile was declared, and incursions from the camps into Rwanda began.

Mixing bonafide refugees with those who were probably guilty of genocide and other high crimes was seen by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and the international humanitarian community as a conundrum, difficult to resolve in the context of maintaining neutrality and without military intervention. As a result, UNHCR did nothing. It was important to maintain stability in an inherently unstable situation, and separating the refugees from the Hutu extremists was considered risky. Moreover, UNHCR did not believe the new government of Rwanda would welcome the refugees back home, certainly not those involved in the genocide. The Hutu refugees, themselves, understandably feared retribution (“reverse genocide”) if they returned, whether or not they were guilty of crimes and

atrocities committed in Rwanda. These fears and concerns helped create a deadlock that lasted over two years.

The inability of the international community to resolve the deadlock gave the Hutu extremists in the refugee camps a false sense of enhanced legitimacy. They used this opportunity to regroup, rearm, and revitalize themselves with food rations intended for refugees — all in the relative safety of the camps. As indicated earlier, once the camps became militarized, targeting became problematic. Beneficiary figures were significantly inflated. Food aid was diverted to and consumed by the ex-Rwandan army regulars and interahamwe militia resident in the camps. That had the unintended effect of prolonging the conflict. According to the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, Bill Richardson, “the failure of the international community to respond adequately to both genocide and the subsequent mixing of genocidal killers with the legitimate refugee population in the former eastern Zaire only served to prolong the crisis” (October 1996). It was not until 1996 that USAID became sufficiently concerned and ceased providing food aid to the World Food Program for use in the camps. The idea of providing humanitarian aid to the planners and implementers of genocide was seen as inconsistent with the stated objectives of humanitarian aid.

The crisis is not yet over. Rwandan ex-political and ex-military leadership is using former Zaire as a staging ground to

destabilize and overthrow the present government of Rwanda. Their objective is to complete the unfinished work of genocide, using a campaign of propaganda and terror to destroy the political and economic structures of the northwest (and beyond) and to gain support of the local Hutu population. In 1997, 30,000 to 40,000 soldiers began arriving in the northwest, while several thousand remained in Zaire to maintain the camps as a base of operations. In 1998, several commune offices in the northwest were looted and burned, and the officials were murdered or terrorized. By March 1999, many services had ground to a halt. Water sources had been destroyed and health problems multiplied. The government of Rwanda requested massive food assistance from the World Food Program. In response, USAID is providing both development assistance and humanitarian assistance to the northwest.

## **Bosnia–Herzegovina**

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The conflict in former Yugoslavia also raises concerns about emergency aid enabling protagonists to prolong the conflict. As early as 1994, some evidence, though inconclusive, suggested that aid supported troops, thereby releasing the authorities from responsibilities they might have had to civilians (Prendergast and Scott 1996, 11, citing Minear 1994a). This earlier evidence was examined by the recent UN High Commissioner for Refugees/World Food Program joint evaluation of the Bosnia experience (UNHCR/WFP 1998).



This joint evaluation offers two possible arguments supporting the thesis that humanitarian aid to Bosnia helped prolong the conflict (UNHCR/WFP 1998, 3). Both arguments continue to be a source of controversy. The first suggests that by giving generous support in the form of food aid, donors were able to defend themselves against the charge of inaction. But doing so in effect postponed the military intervention that ultimately was needed to end the conflict. This reasoning parallels that of the Haiti evaluation, and as noted there, is purely speculative.

The second argument suggests that humanitarian assistance prolonged the war in Bosnia because it was diverted to the combatants and thus supported their military efforts. Even if humanitarian supplies were not diverted to combatants, the aid still would have allowed resources otherwise needed to sustain the noncombatant population to be used instead to support the war effort. (Of course, combatant organizations in some complex emergencies have shown little concern over the condition of “their” noncombatants.)

It is possible that without food aid the consequent civilian suffering might have hastened the cessation of hostilities in Bosnia. However, while the conflict might have been shorter, the suffering would likely have been greater. Moreover, UNHCR/WFP suggests that the outcome would likely have been unsatisfactory: a world without Bosnia, with the country instead divided among its neighbors. Ac-

ording to UNHCR/WFP (1998, 7), there is no convincing evidence that the increased suffering that would likely have occurred in the absence of humanitarian support would have been justified by an increased prospect for a swifter and satisfactory outcome of the conflict.

The provision of aid did have some unavoidable negative political effects. First, since the authorities on the ground controlled distribution of the assistance, bargaining with them and agreeing to use the channels they controlled inevitably reinforced their authority. Anderson (1996, 3–4, 16–17) suggests that this is not unusual and that aid agencies often must negotiate with army leaders to gain access to civilian populations or to hire armed guards to protect the goods they bring. Second, in some cases military authorities levied food taxes to allow convoys to pass and seized food when they were not paid, sometimes at gunpoint (UNHCR/WFP 1998, 7).

## Policy Implications

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This assessment of the political effects of humanitarian assistance raises key questions: Should aid be given if some of it is being diverted to armed participants in the conflict? Should aid be distributed through local structures if these are considered predatory or biased? USAID clearly would not operate a *development* assistance program if security deteriorated to the degree

it did in Somalia, for example. Yet the United States can nearly always be counted on to provide *emergency* assistance, even under such volatile conditions.

Prendergast and Scott (1996) are sensitive to the possibility that humanitarian aid designed to relieve suffering and promote peace often, inadvertently, fuels, sustains, or exacerbates such conflicts by making more resources available to warring parties. They like others recognize that humanitarian aid may be given without a political agenda, but it rarely escapes having political consequences. Moreover, it can be deliberately manipulated to serve as an instrument of war by providing a means for sustaining the conflict. This can occur by (1) manipulating access to the aid, (2) manipulating population movements, and (3) diverting or looting the aid. Examples:

*1. Manipulating access.* Warring parties often manipulate humanitarian aid to enhance their power over civilian populations or weaken their opponents by denying them food. Throughout the 1980s the Ethiopian and Sudanese governments limited the amount of aid going to rebel-held areas. Warring factions also have manipulated access to aid in Bosnia, Liberia, Mozambique, Rwanda, and Somalia.

Relief agencies generally abide by the principles of neutrality and impartiality. They don't take sides, and instead give both sides equal access to relief aid. But providing aid in rebel areas necessarily helps legitimize the rebel organizations,

because it enables them to feed the populations they seek to control. The same is true of the government and the agencies they mandate to distribute relief. As a result, organizations (often NGOs) that attempt to provide humanitarian aid neutrally may support forces that carry out violence against civilian populations, as in Mozambique. But the alternative may be no better: to subject civilian populations to the double punishment of violence and hunger.

*2. Manipulating population movements.* Warring factions have used civilians as shields or "vehicles" to obtain food and other types of humanitarian aid. They position civilians near airstrips to enhance the ability of their troops or militia to remain in areas they otherwise would abandon for lack of supplies or difficulty in defending. For example, aid supplied to the refugee camps in Zaire helped maintain the former Rwandan government's control over a population that otherwise might have dispersed or returned home.

*3. Diverting or looting aid.* Warring factions tax, steal, or divert humanitarian assistance – especially food and drugs, given their easy monetization – for their own consumption, for barter, or for sale. This is a principal means to buy arms. Liberian rebels looted relief supplies and stole resources, especially vehicles and fuel to use for hit-and-run campaigns. In Somalia, food distribution operations were looted so often that as little as 12 percent of international food aid destined for refugees in 1986 reached the intended recipients (GAO

1986). Much of the remainder was taken by the Somali army and associated militia. Agencies had to negotiate for their own security because there was no national security force, and this led to diversion of goods, especially food (Kleist 1994, 298). Similar occurrences took place during the famine in northern Ethiopia in the 1980s and the wars in Mozambique and southern Sudan (de Waal 1993).

Given this negative and widespread experience, under what conditions, if any, should humanitarian aid be halted? Prendergast and Scott suggest three factors to consider in deciding whether to cease providing humanitarian assistance: lack of progress in peace negotiations; support of undesirable political factions and human rights abusers; and danger to aid personnel.

During the civil war in Ethiopia in the late 1980s, Lutheran World Relief urged agencies seriously to consider withholding aid if peace efforts failed (Prendergast and Scott 1996, 44). Should we pay endless millions for humanitarian aid, they asked, when this may only exacerbate and prolong the conflict? Perhaps we should disavow the principle that food should not be used as a political weapon and instead use it to force peace negotiations. However, others have argued that political decisions should be separate from the basic human right to humanitarian aid, and that relief should not be used as a political weapon. The rationale underlying the latter point of view is summarized in Prendergast and Scott (1996, 44) in these

terms: "The people who don't care and are not affected are the rulers."

Food and medical aid are particularly valuable to combatants. But aid agencies rarely withhold such assistance despite human rights abuses and looting, and most will not completely withdraw from an area unless the emergency is completely over or the security situation is untenable. In Liberia during 1990–93, aid agencies were subjected to harassment and robbery by warring factions. Diversion rates were close to 50 percent, according to some reports, and debate raged within the aid community about how much aid was too much. All agencies eventually withdrew operations until security improved. However, it remains unclear whether the withdrawal contributed to the 1995 peace agreement. And even if it did, was it at the cost of more human suffering? There is simply no way to measure the effect of stopping the aid.

De Waal points out that war has become synonymous with famine in much of Africa. In fact, war is often designed to create famine. War, according to de Waal, has received far less attention than it deserves — compared with other contributory causes of famine such as drought, environmental degradation, and inappropriate development strategies. This brings into question the tendency for donor governments to fund humanitarian assistance but not to address the underlying causes of war (Hallam 1998, 5). Humanitarian agencies are sometimes needed less than political or military actors. In Rwanda in

1994, for example, a well-armed UN peacekeeping force may have been able to prevent or mitigate the genocide. The multitude of NGOs responding to humanitarian needs once the genocide was over was much less effective. The issue of conflict prevention, as distinct from cure, is briefly introduced in annex C.

Though war may be a principal cause of famine (as de Waal suggests), Sen (1993) provides a compelling argument that democracy and a free press are great forces in preventing famine. Sen points out that a government cannot ignore famine conditions if (1) it has to face reelection, (2) it cannot censor the terrible facts of starvation, disease, and death that accompany famines, and (3) it has to face criticism from opposition parties and newspapers. "It is not surprising that even though famines have happened in colonial economies and in modern authoritarian states, never has a famine occurred in a democratic country with a relatively free press" (Sen 1993, 88).

## **Conclusion**

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While no aid is apolitical, humanitarian assistance provided during complex emergencies can result in substantial and unpredictable political effects, since it is

provided in the context of conflict (Hallam 1998, 12–13). The political effects of humanitarian assistance in Haiti, Mozambique, and Rwanda were mixed. According to most accounts, the assistance clearly prolonged the conflict in Rwanda. In Mozambique, external military assistance, rather than humanitarian assistance, fueled the civil war for more than a decade. In Haiti, evidence of the political effects of the assistance is inconclusive. In Bosnia, airlifting food to Sarajevo probably prolonged the war, but this does not mean that the increased suffering that would have occurred by withholding food aid would have been justified by the possibility of a shorter war.

Perhaps what is most important to keep in mind is the underlying principle that, at the very minimum, aid that is intended to help victims in war settings should not cause additional harm (Anderson 1996, 6). The challenge, therefore, is to specify, on a case-by-case basis, clear objectives and to monitor closely the extent to which the humanitarian assistance is achieving those objectives. Allowing flexible implementation and encouraging effective communication and coordination among other involved authorities (diplomatic, military) is equally important.



## Results: Economic Effects

**T**HE RELATIONSHIP between short-term relief and long-term development has been viewed as a continuum in which relief operations, in response to a humanitarian crisis, are followed by rehabilitation and then development activities (USAID 1998a, 18–19). More recent literature questions the utility of this concept of a relief-to-development continuum. According to the Department of State’s Bureau for Population, Refugees, and Migration, relief and development assistance have significantly different aims, and implementers of each type of assistance should address the appropriate aims. Messer (1998, 15) notes that “although relief officials try to make relief function as development assistance, the ‘relief-to-development continuum’ they talk about appears to be more wishful thinking than fact. The bulk of emergency food assistance is devoted to meeting basic human welfare needs.” Miller (1997, 15) believes too much emphasis and attention have been given to the concept of relief-to-development, given the relatively brief period when relief assistance overlaps with longer term development assistance.

None of the six evaluations reviewed by Apthorpe (1997, 92) concludes that relief is poorly done if it is not specifically forwardly linked to development. Two of the six explicitly reject the linear linkage as too simplistic and do not see it as the best guide to what is needed in relief aid. A third notes that the continuum concept derives from natural disasters and therefore has only limited application to complex emergencies, which are often political in nature. Apthorpe concludes that much of the literature on the relief–development continuum has little operational value.

Nevertheless, emergency programs can have an important effect on shaping the pattern and direction of subsequent economic development. Societies recovering from disastrous conflict are in the process of remaking themselves, and the economic opportunities that emerge from this process can be influenced by how emergency assistance is designed and delivered. What was the experience in Haiti, Mozambique, and Rwanda?

## Haiti

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In Haiti, USAID emergency assistance supported economic development in two main ways: employment generation and agricultural production. In addition, USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives provided small grants to various organizations to fund numerous microprojects.

*Employment generation.* The 1991–94 crisis worsened rural poverty in a country where poverty levels already were among the highest in the world. When the assembly plants in Port-au-Prince closed because of the U.S.-led economic embargo, 400,000 urban poor returned to the countryside. That increased pressure on rural households' scarce resources. USAID's Jobs Creation project was implemented during 1993–96 primarily to generate employment needed to maintain household incomes and thereby offset the embargo's economic pressures. Its secondary objective was to rehabilitate productive infrastructure.

The project created half a million person-months of short-term employment during 34 months. More than 120 individual projects were carried out, resulting in the repair of 1,000 miles of roads, 2,000 miles of irrigation canals, and 4,500 miles of soil conservation barriers (PADF). The project achieved its main objective—employment creation. However, maintenance and long-term sustainability of the infrastructure was not a project objective, and over time the infrastructure has deteriorated. Although more durable infrastruc-

ture could have been built, that would have required purchasing materials (rather than hiring labor), and the primary objective of generating employment may have been compromised.

*Agricultural production.* Another emergency activity, funded by USAID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance and administered by Catholic Relief Services, was designed to support agricultural production and reduce decapitalization of Haitian farm households. The project loaned agricultural inputs (seed and fertilizer) to farmers who were otherwise being forced to sell their productive assets to buy food; it also sold them tools at half price. Some 13,000 farming households (less than 10 percent of all farmers) and 47 farmer associations participated (Naval 1995). By supplying inputs needed for food production, the program provided emergency assistance in a way that helped maintain beneficiaries' incomes and livelihoods and at the same time reduced their dependence on short-term relief.

*Microprojects.* The Office of Transition Initiatives typically funds programs designed to bridge the gap between short-term relief (often managed by the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance) and long-term development (typically managed by resident USAID missions). These programs often inject cash into an economy to generate employment or provide commodities to meet peoples' most pressing needs quickly. They are meant to create preconditions for development and at the same time facilitate the phaseout of emergency

assistance. This is important, because successful rehabilitation is more difficult the longer relief is provided (Kleist 1994, 300, 307).

The Office of Transition Initiatives funded an \$11 million program in Haiti that supported more than 1,900 micro-projects over a 27-month period during 1994–96. (This means that, on average, more than two microprojects were initiated each day during this period.) They ranged from rehabilitation and construction of community schools, roads, markets, canals, and bridges to the organization and implementation of literacy, public health, sanitation, reforestation, and civic education activities. The projects were explicitly designed to deliver assistance rapidly, have high visibility, provide tangible benefits, and support the legitimacy of local grass-roots organizations. According to a midterm evaluation, “there is absolutely no doubt that this program has had unprecedented success in mobilizing highly valued resources to tens of thousands of needy beneficiaries all over Haiti” (Chandler 1996). The evaluation also notes, however, that the program emphasized installation more than maintenance.

In sum, employment generation activities provided short-term benefits but not permanent, off-farm sources of income. Rehabilitated infrastructure contributed to increased economic activity in the short term, but links to long-term economic development were tenuous at best. This is understandable. Relief agencies were working in an environment of social

and economic chaos in which the goal of long-term sustainable development was eclipsed by the immediate short-term need for relief. Haitians themselves were concerned primarily with physical security and survival rather than development. Therefore, emergency assistance programs generally were designed with only incidental links to economic development, and they had minimal developmental impact. Although it is desirable to incorporate long-term development objectives when designing short-term emergency responses, the Haiti experience highlights the difficulty of doing both well.

## **Mozambique**

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Apart from the Beira and Tete corridors, which were secured by the Zimbabwean Army, there was no functioning infrastructure (roads, bridges, or rail lines) or rural markets in Mozambique in 1990. They had been destroyed by years of civil war. During the war USAID provided emergency assistance to save lives and alleviate suffering. When the war ended, assistance programs turned toward rehabilitation and reconstruction. They had two objectives: to restart the rural economy and to restart subsistence agriculture. Roads were demined, rebuilt, and reopened. That helped restore the private transport sector and facilitated free movement of goods (especially food) from surplus to deficit areas, which spurred market development. At the same time, assistance was provided to displaced farmers to help them resume agricultural

production and reduce their dependence on food aid.

*Seeds and tools.* Farmers needed seeds and tools to recapitalize their farms. The total cost was small in absolute terms, less than \$50 per household. But it was large relative to per capita income. PVOs located seeds and tools (generally not available in local markets), purchased them, and made them available to farmers. Food for the Hungry International also provided agricultural inputs, conducted field trials to identify higher yielding varieties with shorter growing seasons, and introduced improved farming practices. Both programs helped restart subsistence production.

*Food for work.* USAID gradually stopped providing relief food and began supporting food-for-work projects. Doing so helped break the dependency mentality. The program supported labor-intensive rural road construction and rehabilitation, construction of schools and health clinics, and rehabilitation of small-scale irrigation works. The quality of construction was generally satisfactory, but maintenance was questionable. As economic recovery continued, the food-for-work projects evolved into cash-for-work projects. That helped create sustainable market mechanisms for supplying food and other consumer goods as the cash economy developed.

*Economic liberalization.* In 1990 Mozambique's rural markets were function-

ing poorly, and trade was limited. Civil war and socialist economic policies had taken their toll. USAID and the World Bank supported efforts to reduce state control of markets and prices and to promote privatization of state-owned enterprises. These measures helped establish the foundation for rapid growth of small markets and increased activity of private traders. They also encouraged refugees and internally displaced persons to resettle. At the same time, USAID funded a commodity import program that supplied imports needed to support economic liberalization. These initiatives together with the program to demine and rehabilitate roads helped open up trade in rural areas.

## Rwanda

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Approximately one million Hutu refugees returned to Rwanda within a one-month period in late 1996. The humanitarian community immediately was faced with the difficult task of helping this mass of humanity put their lives back together. The task of linking relief to development assumed new dimensions. USAID addressed not only development needs in agriculture, health, education, and commerce but also the preconditions for development: political stability, physical security, justice, and legitimacy of the new government.

*Seeds and tools.* The Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance supported the distribution of seeds and tools in almost every region of Rwanda in 1995 and 1996. The



largely untargeted distribution was reportedly successful. In 1997 the size of the program was reduced, and by 1999 it was terminated, except in the two northwest prefectures where continued high levels of insecurity had led to widespread looting of farm supplies. Although livestock traditionally had been used to maintain soil fertility and provide an important source of nutrition to farm families, relief organizations (including OFDA) were slow to include livestock in emergency packages. The conventional wisdom was that animals represented a level of assistance far beyond “emergency” requirements. However, most families are now acquiring animals, either through loan programs or with their own savings.

*Seeds of Hope.* Agricultural experts from the international agricultural research centers recognized that productive cropping in the various microclimates of Rwanda required adapted seed. They identified appropriate seed and rootstock from their own seed banks as well as in Rwanda where adapted seed still existed. Seed stocks were multiplied and made available in 1995. Because the experts had alerted nongovernmental organizations about the importance of planting adapted seed, more local seed was used than otherwise would have been the case. Seed multiplication is now being expanded under Seeds of Hope II. At the same time, food-for-work programs were implemented to reclaim wet lowland farming areas (*marais*) and to improve terracing and land productivity.

*Capacity building.* Most complex humanitarian emergencies have occurred in countries where the government was very weak (as in Somalia). This meant nongovernmental organizations could operate in an environment relatively free from government intervention. Rwanda was an exception. The government preferred ministry-administered programs rather than NGO-administered programs, and it found it difficult to incorporate NGOs into its programs. Communication between the two deteriorated, and in late 1995, 16 of about 60 humanitarian NGOs were expelled or asked to suspend operations.

USAID was an early and strong supporter of the government’s effort to claim control of relief and development programs. Believing that a stable, fair, competent government was key to Rwanda’s successful agricultural and economic development, USAID helped strengthen the government’s capacity. Addressing justice in response to the genocide had high priority. USAID funded the Rwandan-initiated International Genocide Conference in 1995; trained court clerks in the Ministry of Justice; supported a media campaign on the genocide trial process; and developed a central database for genocide prosecutors. USAID also supported decentralization of the Ministry of Health and helped the ministry establish an emergency response unit. Finally, USAID provided basic equipment to 10 ministries including justice, health, interior, and the president’s office. Most NGOs now work more closely with government officials and seek oppor-

tunities to help build government capacity.

*Democratic initiatives.* The Office of Transition Initiatives has funded two activities designed to support decentralization and educate local leadership. One is the Women in Transition program, which has reached over 160,000 women. It encourages commercial interaction among different ethnic groups. As part of a broad-based program to support women in postconflict situations, it also assists women's groups in the northwest, where there has been an increase in the number of women farmers. The other democratic initiative is administered by Africare in the Ministry of Interior. It supports election education by building local decision-making processes and grass-roots organizations. The program operates in 15 communes in four prefectures.

All the activities described above were designed to meet immediate needs while preparing for follow-on programs. In contrast to long-term development-oriented programs whose success depends on their being sustainable, this was not a criterion for success in Rwanda. As the evaluation states, "relief and transition programs . . . do not have to be sustainable."

## **When Is The Emergency Over?**

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At some point the emergency ends and development resumes. But the demarcation between the two is not always clear.

In Haiti, emergency food assistance (dry rations) was still being distributed in the northwest as recently as July 1998—years after the end of the crisis. (However, it was scheduled to terminate in September 1998.)

In 1998, four years after the emergency in Mozambique ended, most of the village groups interviewed by the evaluation team in the Beira corridor were still asking NGOs for free seed, tools, food, and even tractors. Although the NGOs had informed recipients that free food would end by a specific date, many did not expect that to happen. They remained in the refugee camps until free food was actually terminated.

Donor pressure increased after the Dayton Peace Accords in 1995 to reduce emergency assistance to Bosnia. The logic was that peace would bring stability and economic recovery, making large reductions in food aid possible. There were also the usual arguments about avoiding food aid dependency and disincentives to agricultural production. In response to donor demands, the joint UN High Commissioner for Refugees/World Food Program mission recommended reducing the number of direct beneficiaries from 1.6 million to 600,000 (from over 50 percent of the population to about 20 percent as estimated by WFP in 1996) (UNHCR/WFP 1998, 8). That would help ensure that food aid was not seen as an alternative to a social welfare system. However, the joint evaluation also pointed out the importance of not scaling down too rapidly because an

effective social welfare system was not yet in place.

In 1996–97, as many as 118,000 farm families in Liberia received food rations as well as seed and tools under a program funded by the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, the European Union, and the Food and Agriculture Organization to support the transition from war to recovery. This ensured that rice seed was planted rather than consumed and also that farmers had the energy to work. As a result, rice production increased from approximately 30 percent of prewar levels in 1996 to 60 percent of prewar levels in 1997 (USAID/Liberia 1998, 13). At the beginning of 1997, 350,000 beneficiaries were receiving emergency food aid in IDP camps; by the end of the year, 150,000 had been permanently resettled in rural areas. The donors developed a plan to end general food aid distribution in IDP camps after February 1998 and to rechannel these resources to targeted activities in rural areas. These included rural resettlement of refugees and internally displaced persons, agricultural recovery, school feeding, and food for work.

In Somalia, as elsewhere, humanitarian assistance and related relief operations generated substantial local employment and purchasing power. Over 50,000 Somalis found cash or food-for-work employment. But this all ended when the relief ended, and the relief ended with termination of the donor-funded contracts with NGOs that provided the relief (Kleist 1994, 295). This suggests that the amount of food

aid provided in a complex emergency is driven not only by an assessment of needs but also by the availability of donor resources. The implication is that complex emergencies may end too quickly (with humanitarian needs still unmet) or not quickly enough—depending on what the various political interests stand to gain or lose.

Hill (1997) reports that many conflicts are unreconciled and have not ended. This is true, for example, in Afghanistan, Iraq-Kurdistan, Lebanon, and Somalia. When a conflict does subside, it is for a reason. Sometimes it is because one side wins. In the post-Cold War era, though, this has rarely been the case. More often it is because the war is no longer profitable. Of course, economic issues are not the only motives perpetuating complex emergencies. Religious or ethnic hegemony have often driven conflict (in Bosnia and Sri Lanka, for example). But whatever its causes, war is expensive and must be financed. And for those who invest in the war, it must be seen as profitable, at least eventually; otherwise, they would cease their support.

Economies in post-Cold War conflicts, as with economies in all wars, revolve around scarcity. With the disruption of outside trade, loss of incomes, and severed or restricted corridors for delivery of goods, food and other essentials become very expensive. Profits are enormous for those who have access to scarce resources and can deliver them to areas where they are needed. The combatants and their al-

lies are in the best position to manipulate and profit from this trade.

Relief organizations are not. On the contrary, relief organizations attempting to operate in conflict situations provide a rich source for exploitation. There are several reasons. They have to operate with large amounts of cash, which can be stolen. Warring factions can exact exorbitant fees from relief organizations in return for providing them protection and ensuring their access to insecure areas (as in Somalia). And they can charge rents for warehouses that are higher than market value. Some of the most obvious spoils of war derive from the blatant looting of infrastructure. In Bosnia, for example, an entire Volkswagen production plant near Sarajevo was dismantled and sold. In Somalia, almost every phone line, electric cable, and water line was taken or ripped up, put on a ship, and sold in some port on the Indian Ocean (Hill 1997, 5). Thus, peace can threaten a very profitable situation for the combatants.

Can donors help end wars by demonstrating that more can be gained through peace? According to Hill, the basic elements of reconstruction include (1) identifying and creating markets for manufactured and agricultural goods; (2) reestablishing the rule of law, especially in economic issues; (3) increasing opportunities for entrepreneurs; (4) supporting self-sustaining lending institutions; and (5) reestablishing acceptable levels of water, power, heat, sanitation, and other basic services. Education, often overlooked, is

also important. External assistance potentially has an important role to play in all of these areas.

## Conclusion

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The notion that relief assistance can be made more “developmental” or that it can be linked to development activities is highly problematic in the context of *ongoing* armed conflicts owing to the frequent lack of local social and economic structures that might legitimately be strengthened (Borton and Macrea 1997, 8). Unlike the case of natural disasters, with complex emergencies there is no institutional framework to provide security and justice, both of which are necessary preconditions for successful development activities. On the contrary, complex emergencies are often characterized by (1) a total breakdown of state institutions (Somalia, Liberia, Afghanistan); (2) large areas of territory held for prolonged periods of time by rebel movements (Eritrea, Tigray, south Sudan); or (3) a situation in which the occupying regime had not received international recognition or was subject to international sanctions (Sudan, Rwanda, Cambodia) (Borton and Macrea 1997, 30).

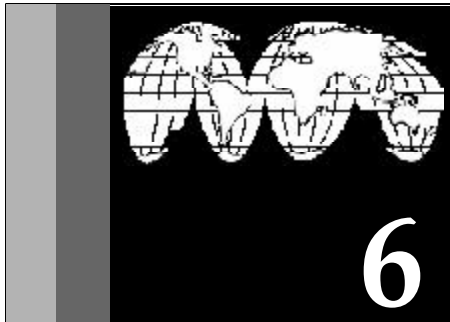
In the absence of physical security and political stability, support of long-term economic development can be risky. In Sudan, for example, water and health infrastructure that had been rehabilitated was later destroyed by military action. In Sri Lanka, the assets rebuilt by a World Bank-led emergency rehabilitation and

reconstruction program in 1987–90 at a cost of \$125 million were destroyed when hostilities resumed (Borton and Macrea 1997, 32). These examples reflect the unpredictability of warfare. They also caution against prematurely supporting long-term investments in economic development before political stability exists.

This does not suggest that relief agencies blindly ignore development-oriented

opportunities that may arise. For example, many NGOs providing emergency assistance also routinely provide funds for basic agricultural inputs, food-for-work programs, and housing construction. But experience suggests that “large rehabilitation financing may be more appropriately provided *after* resolution of the political framework, rather than during the process of political transition itself” (Borton and Macrea 1997, 30–31).





# Conclusions, Lessons Learned, and Recommendations

**S**OME OBSERVERS CONSIDER each complex humanitarian emergency unique. The implication is that past experience is not applicable to future crises. By contrast, evaluation analysts tend to look for common themes – even when assessing the effectiveness of interventions in response to complex emergencies. Their underlying premise is that past experience is, in fact, relevant for future crises. On the basis of the three country case studies (Haiti, Mozambique, and Rwanda) and evaluations of other complex emergencies, at least six common themes and four recommendations emerge. Implications specific to the Kosovo crisis are summarized in annex D.

## Conclusions and Lessons Learned

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**1. Saving lives.** *Emergency assistance programs funded by USAID and implemented by American nongovernmental organizations appear to deliver sufficient assistance to ensure the survival of a country's vulnerable poor,*

*though inadequate monitoring makes it difficult to quantify results.*

One-half million to 1.3 million Haitians (as many as one in seven) received food aid during 1991–96. In Mozambique an estimated one third of the population of 16 million depended on food aid for 60 to 70 percent of their food needs in 1989. In late 1996 and early 1997, 1.3 million refugees were repatriated to Rwanda from neighboring countries and received food aid. Without massive infusions of predominantly U.S. emergency assistance, more Haitians would have fled Haiti seeking refuge in the United States. Massive starvation and human suffering would have occurred in Mozambique and Rwanda. Emergency assistance clearly helped save lives and alleviate suffering. However, except in Haiti, data collection and monitoring were not done (or were done poorly), so it is difficult to quantify results.

**2. Relief distribution.** *Effective distribution of emergency assistance requires orga-*

*nization and control to limit theft, minimize abuse, guard against political manipulation, and protect beneficiaries.*

Distributing relief supplies was a problem to some extent in all three countries. The large quantity of food aid, in particular, became a source of violent competition – not only for its value as food for consumption but also as a source of political power for those controlling access. In Haiti, fighting among beneficiaries sometimes erupted when food was distributed. Distribution points used to stockpile food supplies were looted and supplies were hijacked. Local authorities sometimes used food to favor certain political factions or for their personal aggrandizement. In Mozambique as well there were reports of corruption, theft, and political or personal favoritism in food aid distribution. Target populations did not always receive timely and sufficient food aid. In Rwanda the military and former government leaders controlled much of the relief distribution. Thus they were able to divert food from the intended beneficiaries for their own purposes.

NGOs were mainly in charge of relief distribution in Haiti. They addressed these problems by stocking and distributing food aid in neutral settings (schools, factory yards), using ration cards to track the receipt of food aid, and having NGO personnel and occasionally police present to monitor distribution. These measures limited diversion to less than 10 percent and helped reduce violence. In Mozambique the government emergency relief agency

lacked the technical expertise to plan, organize, and manage the distribution of massive supplies of relief aid. Leakage was typically 30 percent, and at one point 50 percent was lost, stolen, or diverted. In response, donors, NGOs, and the private sector took over much of the distribution, and losses dropped to under 5 percent. In camps in Tanzania and Zaire, more food aid was supplied than was necessary, and more than usual was misappropriated. Some NGOs suspended their operations because they knew they were assisting people guilty of crimes against humanity.

**3. Political and social unrest.** *Emergency assistance can help maintain social calm and mitigate political instability. Conversely, it can exacerbate political tensions. Rarely is it politically neutral.*

The international community provided massive quantities of emergency assistance to Haiti, Mozambique, and Rwanda. The political effects of the assistance varied. In Haiti, food aid reduced the probability of food riots during a period of political and economic stress and may have had a dampening effect on political tensions; but it also may have resulted in a political status quo that enabled the de facto military regime to stay in power longer. In Mozambique, external *military* assistance provided by the Soviet Union and by South Africa fueled the war. Food aid, by comparison, had relatively little effect on the country's political dynamics, although food diverted to soldiers may have contributed to the war effort. In Rwanda, where genocidal killers were



mixed with legitimate refugees in camps, humanitarian assistance served to prolong the emergency.

**4. Demobilization.** *Demobilization, disarmament, and reintegration of armed forces is vital in ending a complex emergency and beginning a period of recovery.*

Demobilization of Haiti's armed forces removed one source of violence in the country. However, many of the demobilized soldiers retained their arms, and because most were unemployed owing to the weak economy, they are believed to have caused at least part of the post-1994 rise in theft and street violence. In Mozambique, demobilization of Renamo and Frelimo armed forces and their reintegration into civilian life was essential for the transition from relief to recovery. As in Haiti, though, many weapons were not turned in and that contributed to a rise in crime. In Rwanda, soldiers and militia loyal to the former government remain armed. They are still trying to destabilize the present government of Rwanda by using a campaign of propaganda and terror to destroy the political and social structures of the country, beginning in the northwest.

**5. Relief to development.** *Emergency assistance that enables people to protect their livelihoods (as well as meet immediate needs) helps reduce dependency and contributes to long-term economic development.*

In Haiti many urban factory workers lost their jobs, and some farmers were

obliged to sell their agricultural and household assets to survive. Numerous farmers in Mozambique and Rwanda also lost their productive resource base when they fled their villages. These people became dependent on emergency relief. USAID and the NGOs responded – not only with food assistance but also with agricultural inputs (seeds and tools) and household goods. That assistance encouraged refugees and internally displaced persons to return to their villages. It enabled them to resume food production and decreased their dependence on food aid. NGOs in all three countries also implemented food-for-work programs that created short-term jobs and helped rehabilitate productive infrastructure (roads, irrigation) needed for economic development. Often, though, the infrastructure was not maintained.

**6. Donor coordination.** *A clearly designated, agreed-upon central authority can make the delivery of humanitarian assistance more effective.*

In Haiti the United Nations officially designated the Pan American Health Organization as the coordination point for overall health planning and services during the U.S.-led embargo. That enabled numerous NGOs to deliver medical supplies and food to vulnerable populations more effectively. In Mozambique, by contrast, donor efforts at times overlapped or worked at cross-purposes. One donor was giving free seed while another was selling it; one donor was shifting to development assistance while another was still providing grant relief. That confused ben-

eficiaries and undermined efforts to reduce dependency. Similarly, lack of donor coordination was a serious problem in Rwanda.

## Recommendations

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Four key recommendations emerge from these six conclusions and lessons learned. They are mainly management oriented.

**1. Monitoring and evaluation.** *Establish a central monitoring and data-collection unit to serve all donors during the early weeks of a complex emergency.*

Baseline data for socioeconomic indicators (e.g., malnutrition rates, food prices, population displacement) can help managers identify appropriate kinds of emergency relief, target its distribution, and subsequently measure and evaluate its effectiveness. Close monitoring enhances donor coordination and is essential for assessing aid needs, avoiding work at cross-purposes, identifying recipient groups no longer needing emergency aid, shifting from relief to reconstruction and development, and designing and adjusting economic policies.

**2. Adverse political consequences.** *Be alert to potential undesirable political or social effects that relief aid may cause.*

Emergency food distribution, in particular, can have unintended and undesir-

able political consequences. Control over final distribution often has reinforced the power of local authorities or political factions. It has strengthened their relative position during or after the conflict and facilitated their self-aggrandizing, often exploitive, behavior toward the intended noncombatant beneficiaries. Decisions to continue, withdraw, or modify aid distribution should be made as a matter of deliberate policy on a regular basis by each individual donor.

**3. Reducing dependency.** *Give refugees incentives to return home and impose disincentives on those remaining outside their country of origin.*

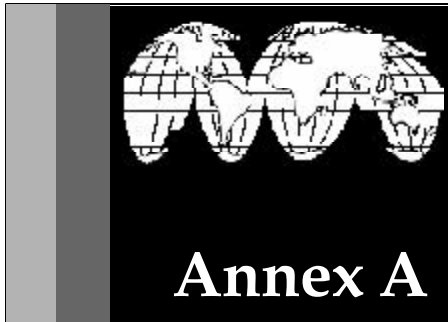
Generally, the longer encampment or temporary foreign residence lasts, the less willing refugees are to return home. A combination of “push” factors (such as terminating free food distribution) and “pull” factors (such as including seeds and tools in resettlement packages) is likely to accelerate the repatriation process. But for reasons of political and bureaucratic self-interest, local governments may not remove from the rolls those no longer needing relief. Therefore, donors must monitor each situation closely, recognizing that both relief and development assistance may be needed if some areas remain in emergency status while others stabilize more quickly. After populations have been repatriated and are settled, the agricultural base begins to be reestablished, dependency on free food distribution drops, and long-run food security is enhanced.

**4. Capacity building.** *Train technocrats to manage the postconflict economic transition, and train others in skills for which there is employment demand.*

Complex emergencies seriously weaken the capacity of governments to provide basic public services. Economic recovery requires a cadre of high-level technocrats with both management and conceptual skills, especially in macroeconomic and sectoral policy formulation.

Such skills are likely to be in short supply, especially if preconflict professionals and the intelligentsia were targeted for deliberate elimination or have permanently left the country. Recovery also needs to be dovetailed with postconflict economic realities. Job training is fruitless if unemployment in the depressed economy remains high. Training is especially critical for demobilized soldiers who, because they often remain unemployed, tend to turn to destabilizing criminal activity.





# Humanitarian Emergencies and Donor Assistance

**T**HE TABLE BELOW indicates the number of people affected by humanitarian emergencies in recent years. The four figures in this annex show changing levels of official development assistance and humanitarian assistance provided by the donor community and the United States over the past 30 years.

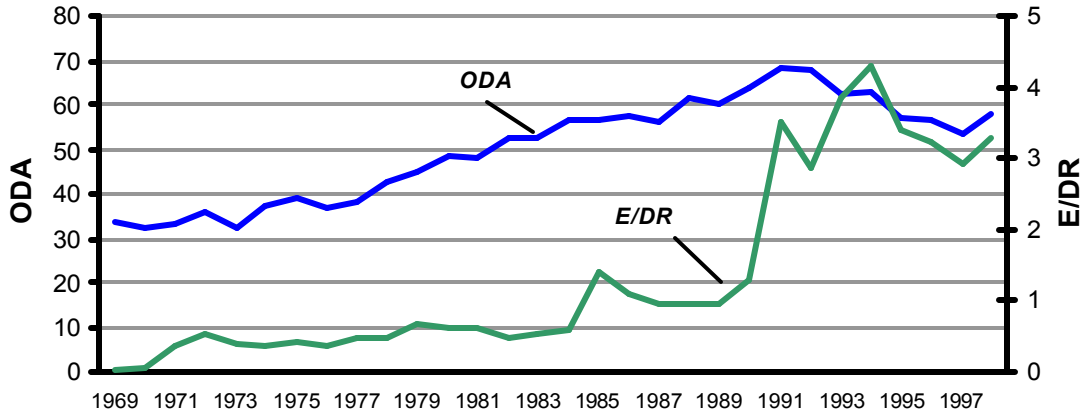
**Table A1. Ongoing Humanitarian Emergencies and Number of People Affected (Millions), 1996, 1997, 1998**

	January 1996	January 1997	April 1998
Afghanistan	4.0	3.5	4.1
Angola	2.5	2.5	2.5
Azerbaijan	0.95	0.78	0.77
Bosnia and Herzegovina	3.7	3.1	1.5
Burundi	0.8	1.0	0.75
Colombia			1.0
Croatia	0.5	0.48	0.45
Eritrea	1.0	0.7	0.30
Ethiopia	3.5	2.5	0.85
Georgia	1.0	0.3	0.3
Haiti	1.1	>0.5	0.5
Iraq	2.65	2.1	1.7
Liberia	1.5	2.0	1.1
North Korea		>5.0	>7.4
Russia (Chechnya)	0.3	0.35	
Rwanda	1.0	0.63	0.3
Sierra Leone	1.8	1.5	>1.0
Somalia	1.0	1.0	1.0
Sri Lanka	0.85	0.85	0.7
Sudan	4.0	4.4	4.4
Tajikistan	1.0	0.63	0.9
Uganda			0.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>33.15</b>	<b>33.82</b>	<b>31.92</b>

*Source:* U.S. Mission to the United Nations, April 1997 and September 1998. Figures are based on data provided by the U.S. Committee for Refugees.

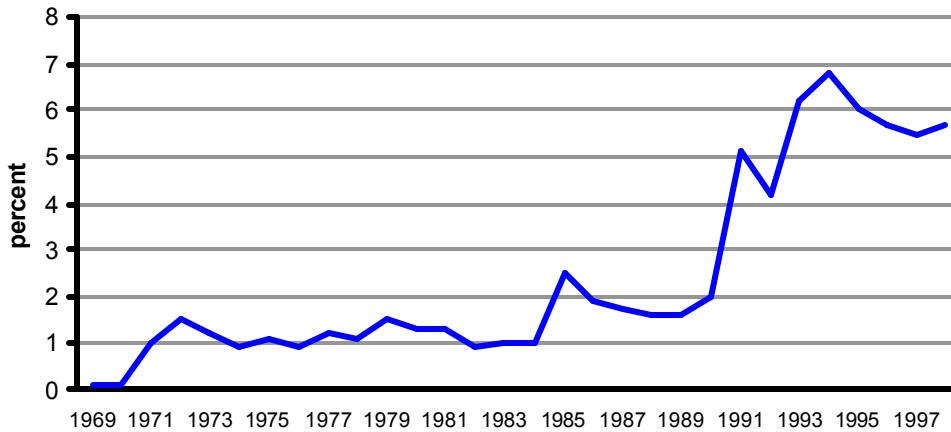
*Note:* The table includes only major emergencies, those in which at least 300,000 people required international humanitarian assistance to avoid severe malnutrition or death.

**Figure A1**  
**Official Development Assistance and Emergency/Distress Relief, All Donors, 1969–98**  
**(billions \$US 1998)**



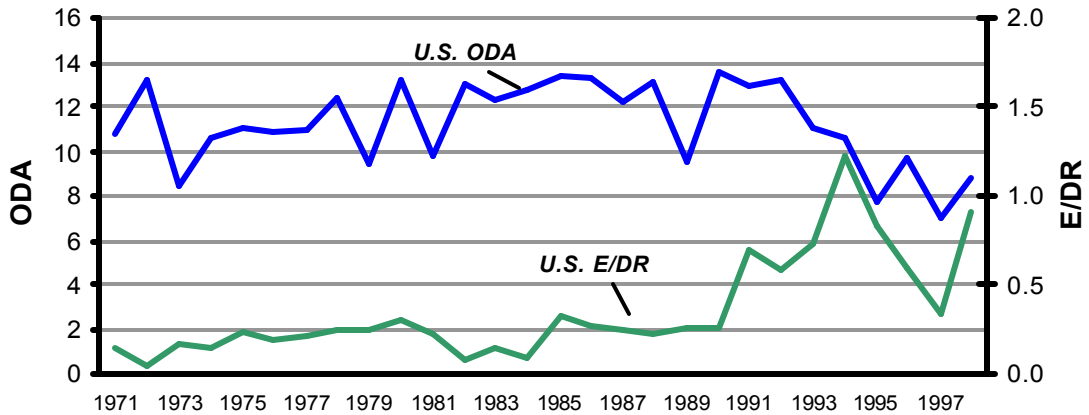
Source: OECD/DAC

**Figure A2**  
**Emergency and Distress Relief as a Percent of Official Development Assistance,**  
**All Donors, 1969–98**



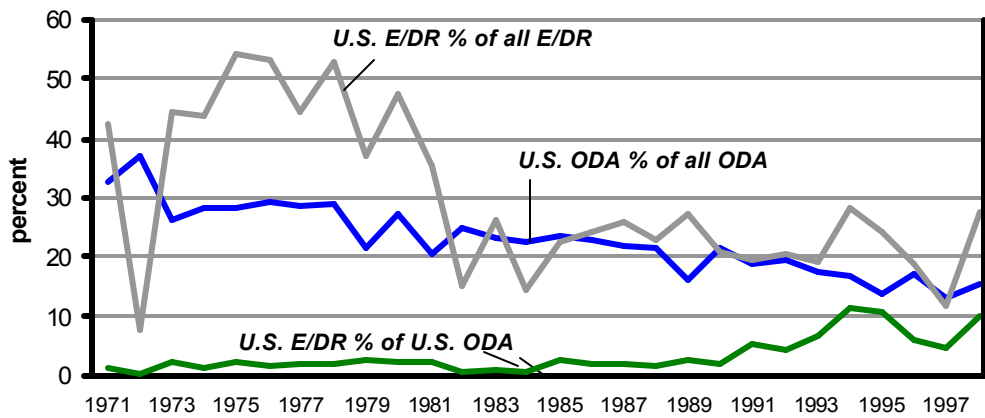
Source: OECD/DAC

**Figure A3**  
**U.S. Official Development Assistance and Emergency/Distress Relief, 1971–98**  
 (billions \$US 1998)



Source: OECD/DAC

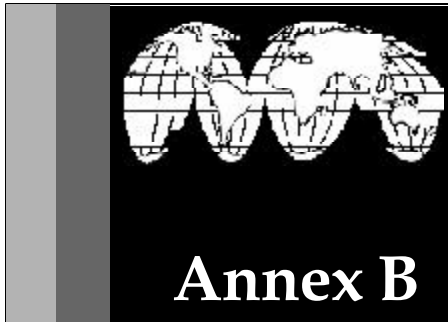
**Figure A4**  
**Trends in U.S. Official Development Assistance and Emergency/Distress Relief, 1971–98**



Source: OECD/DAC







# Evaluation Objectives And Constraints and Implications for Donor Coordination

## Evaluation Objectives

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**T**HE OVERALL OBJECTIVE of the CDIE evaluation was to assess the effectiveness of U.S. emergency assistance in response to complex humanitarian emergencies.\* It covered all types of relief assistance including (1) food, (2) water and sanitation supplies, (3) medical services and health care, and (4) clothing, shelter, and resettlement assistance. The evaluation in each country examined the political and historical events that caused the emergency as well as the effectiveness of the U.S. humanitarian response. Conclusions and lessons learned are cast in terms of management recommendations to help guide USAID's future policy, program, and budget decisions in humanitarian assistance.

## Evaluation Methodology

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The evaluation looked at three main topics framed in the form of these questions:

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\*The "Emergency Assistance" concept paper (11 December 1997) provides the underlying rationale for the assessment.

1. Did U.S. emergency assistance save lives and alleviate suffering during the complex emergency?

2. Did U.S. emergency assistance affect social and political hostilities (or tensions) associated with the complex emergency?

3. Did U.S. emergency assistance contribute to economic development?

The first question derives directly from legislation that gives USAID primary responsibility within the U.S. government for responding to overseas disasters. Questions 2 and 3 are not directly related to the overarching mandate to "save lives and alleviate suffering." The second question concerns the potential political impact of emergency assistance and whether such assistance has had the unintended effect of prolonging complex emergencies. The third question addresses the potential economic impact of the assistance and the so-called relief-to-development continuum.

Background work for the evaluation was carried out in Washington, and fieldwork was conducted in Haiti, Mo-

Zambia, and Rwanda. During the first phase, desk studies for each of the three countries were completed, a workshop was convened to review the desk studies, and two topical guides were developed to help structure key informant interviews and field observations. One topical guide was for implementers and experts and the other was for beneficiaries.

The second phase involved fieldwork in each of the three countries. Evaluation teams sought answers to the three questions above through careful analysis of secondary sources not available in the United States (reports, evaluations, agricultural production surveys, health statistics), interviews with key informants and focus groups, and site visits. The results of the three case studies were synthesized during the third phase.

During the second phase, evaluators talked with a broad range of national and expatriate experts (field technicians, program directors, administrators) who had managed or implemented emergency assistance programs. These people typically included donor agency staff, NGO partners, host government officials (both national and provincial), UN agencies, and some academics and journalists. Beneficiary-level information was collected in both urban and rural areas. Site visits produced valuable insights and helped corroborate information from other sources and to ground-truth the teams' interpretations. The process of interviewing and listening produced answers and also generated secondary questions.

This mainly qualitative methodological approach does not produce statistically valid proof of impact. Rather, it allows an interpretation of the links between a USAID intervention and various effects that plausibly can be associated with that intervention. Given the characteristics of humanitarian assistance, a more scientific approach is rarely feasible (Hallam 1998, 28). One can judge the validity of the interpretations on the basis of several criteria: the logic and consistency of the arguments substantiating them, the strength and quality of the evidence, triangulation, and the reputations of those involved. This is sometimes called the common-sense school of evaluation: impact is deduced from a combination of information from key informants and from the evaluators' own sense of how the world works.

## **Evaluation Constraints**

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Donor agencies that provide relief in the context of conflict or civil war must consider factors they normally would not need to. These factors include sovereignty, international law, the appropriate balance of aid between opposing sides, and perhaps national foreign policy interests. The political and legal questions associated with humanitarian assistance in conflict areas make the evaluation of relief programs far more sensitive than that of development programs (Borton 1994, 11-12).

Moreover, difficulties typically associated with evaluating development assistance programs seem to be magnified

when evaluating relief programs. These include (1) lack of adequate baseline data; (2) difficulty in identifying control groups; (3) the dynamic context of relief programs, which makes it difficult to isolate the effect of the relief intervention; (4) the limited utility of cost-benefit analysis; (5) the large number of agencies involved; and (6) the high political and media profile of relief programs (Borton 1994, 12).

There is yet another difficulty with evaluating relief programs: the prevalent attitude among many relief agencies that assessments of their programs are unnecessary. To paraphrase their view: our motives were well intentioned, we did our best under difficult circumstances, why should we now subject ourselves to a critical examination? (Borton 1994, 1). Relief agencies also may believe that “all disasters are different, so what is the point in trying to learn the lessons of our response to this particular disaster?” (Borton 1994).

According to Larry Minear (1998), four characteristics of humanitarian organizations make them resistant to change:

1. As just noted, humanitarian organizations tend to approach every crisis as unique. “As long as every crisis is perceived as wholly without precedent or parallel, there will be little scope for institutional learning (10).” Correcting this tendency will require greater institutional memory, greater attention to comparative analysis, and more support for in-house evaluation.

2. Humanitarian organizations are action oriented. As a result, evaluations generally are not read and lessons are not learned (11).<sup>\*</sup> Although the action orientation of NGOs is a positive attribute, it should be informed by past experience as well as current political, military, and social realities. Unfortunately, NGOs sometimes ignore this experience rather than use it as a basis for more strategic intervention.

3. Humanitarian organizations are often defensive about criticism, even constructive criticism. As such, they are unlikely to use it to improve their effectiveness (12). Nevertheless, constructive criticism can be valuable, which highlights the need for independent research and evaluation.

4. Humanitarian organizations often lack accountability. They are not held responsible for their actions: everybody – and thus nobody – is responsible. This lack of accountability will be difficult to rem-

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<sup>\*</sup>The multidonor *Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda* demonstrates the importance of evaluations but also demonstrates their limited ability, in and of themselves, to produce institutional change (6). This comprehensive evaluation reviewed aid programs that cost \$1.4 billion from April through December 1994. It was done by 37 institutions (governmental, intergovernmental, and nongovernmental), enlisted 52 consultants, produced a five-volume report, and cost \$2 million. The broadest of its 64 recommendations were ignored; those stressing “coordination by command” were rebuffed; and only the least radical options were acted on to some degree.

edy because of the accepted approach of coordination by consensus (or default) rather than coordination by command (12–14).

## **Implications for Donor Coordination**

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This raises the issue of donor coordination. Coordination is a concept approved by all but defined by few (Prendergast and Scott 1996). A major emergency assistance operation can involve numerous bilateral and multilateral donors, hundreds of NGOs, a range of UN agencies, military contingents, and national governments. An effective division of labor among these and other actors is needed to maximize the comparative advantage and impact of each.

Donor coordination is often perceived as a role for the United Nations. That body expanded its peacekeeping operations at the end of the Cold War when complex emergencies proliferated. But peacekeeping operations required endorsement by the Security Council. This meant the Permanent Five could control UN peacekeeping and enforcement operations given their veto power and control over finances. In the case of Rwanda, the major powers on the Security Council (except France) made clear they were not interested in a small African country that was marginal to their economic or political concerns and peripheral to international strategic rivalries. This experience suggests that the

United Nations is not always best equipped to coordinate an international response to a complex emergency.

The only country with a demonstrated ability to energize the United Nations and the Security Council in a crisis is the United States. But in the case of Rwanda, even the United States, haunted by the memories of Somalia, was determined not to get involved in another African conflict. Not crossing the “Mogadishu line” became the guiding principle. Washington was also preoccupied with crises elsewhere, especially in Bosnia and Haiti, and the potential financial burden of Rwanda was a major concern. The United States at the time was assessed 31 percent of the costs of all UN peacekeeping operations. (Joint Evaluation 1996, study 2, 11). In short, even the United States is not always well positioned to coordinate an appropriate humanitarian response to all complex emergencies.

Lack of donor coordination in providing humanitarian assistance is well documented. This is true within a single organization as well as among several organizations. For example, within the UN system, UNICEF has responsibility for women and children; but UNHCR has responsibility for refugees, including women and children. Similarly, WFP has responsibility for food assistance; but UNICEF and WHO may be involved in actual program operations. Lack of coordination can result in inefficiency. For example, in most situations each agency arranges local

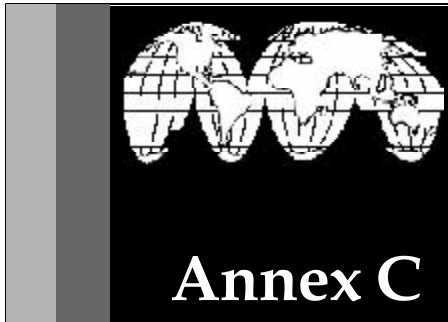
transport for its own supplies, but this process only bids up prices. Another issue having cost-related implications is that humanitarian organizations are heavily weighted toward mop-up operations; they are reactive, not proactive. Too little attention is given to investments in conflict prevention (Minear 1994b, 4, 6); see annex C.

The creation of the UN Department of Humanitarian Affairs (and subsequently, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs) is generally seen as a positive step. Nevertheless, the UN is often criticized. For example, each of the six evaluations reviewed by Apthorpe calls for some type of reform in the United Nations. James Ingram (former head of WFP) is more draconian: he believes there is no reason that a coordinated international re-

sponse to future complex emergencies should necessarily be built around the UN—and suggests there are a variety of reasons why it should not. He recommends the International Committee of the Red Cross or a new organization outside the UN system (Apthorpe 1997, 96, 98).

In disaster after disaster, local institutions and people provide the first line of response. By contrast, the world's humanitarian system relies heavily on outside resources that marginalize local resources and expertise. The idea seems to be fixed that in complex emergencies there is simply no alternative to using donor resources delivered by NGOs. This may be true. If so, donor resources should be provided to support existing livelihoods or coping strategies as much as possible.





## Are Complex Emergencies Predictable?

**I**N REFERENCE to the Rwanda crisis, James Kunder notes that “an ounce of prevention is worth 25,000 tons of food aid” (Minear 1994, 9). The point is well taken. It is far better to prevent complex emergencies from occurring in the first place than it is to respond to victims’ needs afterwards. What factors seem to be responsible for igniting complex emergencies? Are complex emergencies predictable? Regions that are particularly prone to seasonal natural disasters (for example, cyclones in India, hurricanes in Florida, drought in the Sahel) have developed early-warning systems designed to predict the next natural disaster and to mitigate its effects. Such is not the case with complex emergencies. However, studies have been undertaken to help explain the causes of civil wars and complex emergencies, and that may be the first step in predicting their occurrence. This annex summarizes the results of several of these studies.\*

The ethnic model is the prevailing approach to explaining complex humanitar-

ian emergencies. It postulates that ethnicity (based on differences of language, race, tribe, religion, national origin, or some other cultural sense of identity) is the primary factor underlying a complex humanitarian emergency. By contrast, the economic model views complex humanitarian emergencies and ethnic conflict in the context of economic development and structural change. In this model, economic factors are pivotal in shaping conflicts, though these conflicts may be triggered by political or ethnic causes. That is, economic factors create the conditions for ethnic or political explosions that in turn lead to complex emergencies (Nafziger 1996, 3-4).

Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler (1998) are among those who explain the phenomenon in economic terms using economic analysis. They identify four variables that they hypothesize are associated with civil wars: per capita income, size of the natural resource base, population size, and ethnolinguistic fractionalization. Using a sample of 98 countries (of which 27 had civil wars during 1960-92), they analyze the relative importance of these four variables. Their results show that all four vari-

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\*A substantial body of literature has developed on this subject. This annex only scratches the surface.

ables are significant determinants of both the probability of civil wars occurring and their duration. Specifically:

1. *Per capita income.* The study shows that civil war is overwhelmingly a phenomenon of low-income countries. Other things being equal, the probability of civil war is substantially greater in countries with a very low per capita income than in countries with a relatively high per capita income. Moreover, the predicted duration of civil war is much shorter in countries with a higher per capita income. This is because a high-income population has more to lose during a conflict, and the costs of rebellion increase with its duration. Conversely, the opportunity cost of being a rebel and prolonging a conflict is low for a low-income population.

2. *Natural resource base.* The effect of natural resource endowments is not as straightforward. Initially, increased natural resources increase the risk and duration of civil war. This is because the taxable base of the economy constitutes an attraction for rebels wishing to capture the state. But at a high level, natural resources start to reduce the risk of civil war. This is due to the government's greater financial capacity to defend itself through military expenditures.

3. *Population.* Countries with larger populations have a higher risk of civil war and wars that are likely to last longer. This reflects the greater likelihood that countries with larger populations will have a larger number of diverse groups, which

in turn suggests there would be a greater likelihood of various ethnic groups wanting to secede owing to cultural and linguistic disparities. (Note, however, that the effect of population size is ambiguous because potentially it could be inconsistent with point 4, next.)

4. *Ethnolinguistic fractionalization.* This characteristic is an index that ranges from 0 (complete homogeneity) to 100 (maximum fractionalization). The index would be 100 when each individual in a country was in a different ethnolinguistic group. Conversely, the index would be 0 in a society with a single ethnolinguistic group. Contrary to conventional wisdom (and to point 3, above), the authors find that more fractionalized societies are no more prone to civil war than highly homogeneous ones. Rather, the danger of civil war arises when a society is polarized into two groups. Polarized societies have a much higher probability of civil war than either homogeneous or highly fractionalized ones. Thus, a country with two similar-size ethnolinguistic groups could reduce the risk of civil war either by partition or by union with other countries.

Not surprisingly, Collier and Hoeffler conclude that the "ideal society" (one endowed with the most favorable of each of these characteristics) has less risk of civil war than the "catastrophic society" at the other end of the spectrum (one with the least favorable of each characteristic). They also conclude that poverty is the main cause of civil war. Table C1 lists the sample of 98 countries in their analysis. Countries



**Table C1. Countries With and Without a Civil War, 1960–92**

With a Civil War	Without a Civil War		
Algeria	Argentina	Hong Kong	Sierra Leone
Burundi	Australia	Iceland	Singapore
Chad	Austria	Ireland	South Africa
Dominican Republic	Barbados	Israel	Spain
El Salvador	Benin	Italy	Sweden
Ethiopia	Bolivia	Ivory Coast	Switzerland
Guatemala	Brazil	Jamaica	Syria
India	Burkina Faso	Japan	Tanzania
Indonesia	Cameroon	Kenya	Thailand
Iraq	Canada	Korea	Togo
Liberia	Cent. African Rep.	Madagascar	Trinidad and Tobago
Mauritania	Chile	Malawi	Tunisia
Morocco	Congo	Malaysia	United Kingdom
Mozambique	Costa Rica	Mali	United States
Myanmar	Denmark	Malta	Uruguay
Nicaragua	Ecuador	Mauritius	Venezuela
Nigeria	Egypt	Mexico	Zambia
Pakistan	Finland	Nepal	
Peru	France	Netherlands	
Philippines	Gabon	New Zealand	
Somalia	Gambia	Niger	
Sri Lanka	Germany	Norway	
Sudan	Ghana	Panama	
Turkey	Greece	Papua New Guinea	
Uganda	Guyana	Paraguay	
Zaire	Haiti	Saudi Arabia	
Zimbabwe	Honduras	Senegal	

Source: Collier and Hoeffler 1998, 573.

in column 1 experienced civil war during 1960–92; the rest did not.

Nafziger also identifies economic factors as primarily responsible for complex emergencies (Nafziger 1996, v). He specifies four, some of which parallel those identified by Collier and Hoeffler:

1. *Prolonged stagnation.* The majority of countries with humanitarian emergen-

cies have experienced several years (or even decades) of negative or stagnant economic growth. Below a given threshold, a protracted decline in incomes is likely to trigger increasingly fierce competition for scarce resources, jobs, and opportunities (5).

2. *Unequal growth.* The situation is likely to deteriorate more rapidly if income and asset distribution worsen. Skewed

economic growth increases the relative deprivation of substantial sections of the population, even if it does not cause absolute deprivation (6).

3. *Population pressure on resources.* Rapid population growth coupled with environmental degradation and resource depletion can contribute to diminishing returns to agricultural land. Declining agricultural returns, often exacerbated by maldistribution of land and water, are a source of conflict (8).

4. *Distributional shifts owing to adjustment programs.* Large and abrupt shifts in the distribution of income and wealth during stabilization and liberalization programs can affect the distribution of power within a country (9).

According to Nafziger, the way in which elites react to these four factors influences the probability of political conflict and humanitarian disasters occurring (Nafziger 1996, 10).

De Soysa and Gleditsch of the International Peace Research Institute, Oslo, analyzed 103 armed conflicts that occurred during 1989–97, since the end of the Cold War. They found that political instability that led to violent conflict has sprung mainly from economic concerns, rather than political or ideological differences. They also found that most contemporary armed conflicts have occurred in impoverished countries where agriculture was the mainstay of the economy. Armed con-

flicts were often fought over issues related to agriculture, such as land ownership, environmental change, water scarcity, and food shortages. However, divisions over these issues often fall along ethnic lines, obscuring the fundamental causes.

The researchers conclude that conditions in poor countries that undermine the rural economy can generate political grievances that result in endemic armed conflict. Agriculture is the dominant economic sector in most poor countries. Poor countries that invest in their agricultural sectors provide livelihoods to people and thereby lower the incidence of conflict. People do not need to turn to violent movements as a means of survival. These findings, like those of Collier and Hoeffler and Nafziger, stress the importance of economic factors in explaining the outbreak of complex emergencies – and in particular, the importance of agriculture.

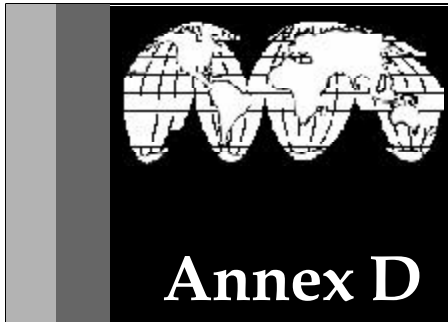
Finally, Mary Anderson also identifies economic considerations among the key underlying factors that contribute to civil war. She suggests that some engage in civil war because they have little to lose; others, because they have something to gain. Those with few economic alternatives (the poor) are often the rebels who have little to lose. They are often supported by those who have something to gain (arms merchants and other profiteers). Others who stand to gain include those whose employment depends on continuation of the war and the funding it generates.

Although many leaders claim to be engaged in a struggle against past injustices, the evidence available suggests that justice and fairness are neither the fundamental motives nor the likely outcomes of their wars. Rather, these leaders seek power. However, once a civil war starts, the war itself creates a spiral of atrocities and reprisals and hatred that become the legitimate root cause for its continuation (Anderson 1996, 10-12). As reported in one anthropological study, vengeance is

the major reason for civil war in 75 percent of the cases.

In sum, complex emergencies clearly are not predictable. Moreover, the inconsistencies among the findings of the studies just noted illustrate that there is no generally accepted theory of conflict. It seems equally clear, though, that economic factors are of major importance in generating these crises, and they may well have an important role in preventing them.





# Implications for The Kosovo Crisis

**I**N MAY 1999 the Kosovo crisis embraced much of the Balkans in one way or another. Various proposals were being mooted for international and regional action to secure a stable peace when the conflict ended. The length of the conflict, the extent of casualties and population displacement, the amount of physical destruction, the postconflict sovereignty configuration, and the lingering political and social effects on the states most affected were all unpredictable at that time.

This annex identifies lessons from this and other evaluations of complex humanitarian emergencies that might be useful in coping with the Kosovo crisis. Applicability of any individual lesson depends, of course, on how the crisis develops, how it is resolved, and what postconflict political architecture emerges. The lessons and observations have been culled from documents prepared by the following: CDIE, the

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Robert J. Muscat prepared the original version of this annex (25 May 1999). In anticipation of the end of the Kosovo crisis, Muscat synthesized lessons from this and other evaluations of complex humanitarian emergencies for possible application in Kosovo.

Department for International Development of the UK, the Directorate General of International Cooperation of Netherlands, the Danish International Development Agency, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development/Development Assistance Committee, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees/World Food Program, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/Operations Evaluation Department, the International Crisis Group, and this author.

## Crisis Management

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**1. Coordination.** *The Kosovo crisis demands an effective coordination mechanism.*

Virtually all evaluations dealing with complex humanitarian emergencies cite inadequate donor coordination as causing serious problems – inefficiencies, waste, lost leverage. Complex emergencies typically face unusually complex coordination problems: large numbers of multi- and bilateral donors and nongovernmental organizations working in a context of con-

tested or collapsed governance, sometimes with external military organizations involved (Bosnia, Cambodia, Kosovo, Somalia). Coordination has ranged from voluntary, committeelike structures to more hierarchical, or command, systems involving lead agencies or even a UN or other sanctioned authority with powers of direction (Bosnia, Cambodia).

Postconflict Kosovo is likely to have an interim international administration under which a centrally guided coordination system would be appropriate. Of all recent complex humanitarian emergencies, the Bosnian and Cambodian experiences have the most relevant lessons in this regard, especially concerning the security-political-economic interfaces and the exercise of authorized powers. (Extensive independent and internal agency evaluations of the international administration experience of these two cases are available.)

**2. Monitoring.** *A central monitoring and data collection unit should be set up to serve all donors.*

Complex emergency information-sharing and monitoring systems have also been evaluated negatively. A central unit to collect and analyze socioeconomic data and program information, one that serves all donors (again, as in Bosnia or Cambodia), is needed to ensure donor coordination. Close monitoring is essential for assessing needs, avoiding work at cross-purposes, identifying recipient groups no longer needing emergency aid,

transitioning from relief to reconstruction, and designing and adjusting economic policies. The Rwanda experience demonstrated that good information on the concerns and expectations of encamped refugees, and on the power and leadership structures in the camps, is critical for maintaining orderly relations and confidence among refugees, assistance authorities, and host governments.

**3. Food distribution.** *Local food distribution organizations commonly need close monitoring to avoid factional diversion or politicization.*

Judging by the international community's generally successful humanitarian response record, malnutrition or disease is unlikely to become a significant complication of the current crisis, with two important caveats. First, given internal displacement, exposure to ethnic cleansing, and the bombing of supply infrastructure, those remaining inaccessible inside Kosovo could suffer severe privation, depending on how long the conflict lasts. Second, Kosovo, Albania, and Macedonia each have deeply divided political factions and parties. In similar cases (Ethiopia, Sudan), factions that controlled food aid distribution have withheld food from entitled beneficiaries loyal to rival factions. Thus far, the political dynamics in Albania and Macedonia have reportedly facilitated rather than hindered aid distribution to refugees. Given the fragile politics in both countries and the stresses generated by the crisis, the integrity of emergency aid distribution should be closely

monitored. If postconflict arrangements retain Kosovo's ethnic Serb minority, the problem could arise there, unless distribution is well controlled by external agencies.

**4. Refugee repatriation.** *Refugees may require incentives to return home.*

Generally, the longer encampment or temporary foreign residence lasts, the less willing refugees are to return home (Mozambique). A combination of incentives for returning to Kosovo and disincentives for remaining outside may be required if NATO's expressed optimism about early return does not materialize.

**5. World Bank coordination of reconstruction.** *Several mechanisms can be used to strengthen World Bank performance.*

The international community has recently relied on the Bank to take the lead in reconstruction, monitoring, and other nonpolitical and nonmilitary functions. On the basis of the Bank's own evaluation, its effectiveness in complex humanitarian emergencies has varied, depending to a considerable extent on senior management's level of interest and commitment as reflected by (a) authorities and size of staff of the in-country resident representative's office, (b) speed of headquarters' processing and willingness to cut bureaucratic corners, and (c) size of administrative budget.

The Bank's performance in some cases has been enhanced by (a) receipt of (grant)

trust funds from donors interested in inducing and supporting a larger Bank effort than might otherwise be the case, and (b) strong advocacy, by one or more board members, for maximum Bank performance.

## **Relief to Development: Transition and Links**

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**1. Funding discontinuities.** *USAID should avoid interruptions in funding and operations during the transition phase.*

Relief funding affords considerable flexibility compared with the procedural complexity and slower pace of long-term development operations. Thus, USAID and NGOs have experienced funding gaps and program interruptions between the phase-out of relief assistance and the phase-in of development assistance (Mozambique). The two funding systems may need to operate simultaneously in countries where some areas remain in emergency status while other areas have stabilized. The existence of land mines in Kosovo could necessitate operating in both modes at once. Projects undertaken as rapid transition responses should not ignore longer run reconstruction and development objectives. This may require close coordination among USAID's units responsible for different funding sources and operations.

**2. Resettlement planning.** *Realistic planning for resettlement in Kosovo should already be under way.*

The needs of returning refugees during the initial stages of resettlement may seem obvious. In practice, though, resettlement planning has often been deficient, based on unrealistic assumptions, inadequate information, and poor analysis of the conditions prevailing in repatriation destinations (Cambodia, Haiti, Mozambique). If repatriation begins as early as autumn 1999 (as NATO spokesmen have asserted), then planning, preparation, and financial provision should already be under way, including mobilization for community and home demining.

Since repatriation will occur at the onset of winter, the repatriation package will need to include housing reconstruction (fraught with problems of finance and implementation), food aid until the next harvest, agricultural assets and inputs for next season's cultivation, and household items including fuel, livestock restocking, and perhaps cash (if press accounts are correct that departing Kosovars have been stripped of their money and valuables). If early return proves infeasible, contingency planning for winterizing the camps should also be undertaken immediately.

**3. Agenda for negotiating settlement.** *Economic dimensions should constitute a key element of future negotiations to settle the conflict.*

Conflict-settlement negotiations and arrangements should address not only political and security dimensions but also economic implications, with due attention given to the policy framework and man-

agement requirements. Otherwise, rehabilitation may be impeded. Development was delayed and opportunities missed in Cambodia because the interim UN administration interpreted its mandate – against the advice of its economics unit – as limiting its authority in economic development; the intent was to leave such decisions to the successor national authorities yet to be established. The economic recovery of the resettled Kosovar population should not be delayed by making the interim international administration's economic scope too restrictive.

**4. Economywide distortions.** *Monitor the effects of external interventions to detect inflationary and other economywide distortions.*

Local expenditures made by large numbers of international military, civilian, and NGO personnel can have major positive and negative effects on fragile crisis and postconflict economies. Such expenditures can help stimulate the recovery of local production and service sectors, but they can also have inflationary and other adverse effects. For example, they can affect local housing markets, wage levels of scarce local professional and technical personnel, and wages and perks (including supplements) of civil servants seconded as aid-project staff. Well-positioned officials and other elite may capture much of this expenditure, producing new, large income disparities and consequent resentment. The obverse may also be a problem: economic downturn and employment loss when stabilization allows major reduc-



tions in external military and other personnel. Monitoring such effects should be initiated right from the start.

**5. NGO experience.** *Benefit from the experience of nongovernmental organizations.*

NGOs play a major role in complex humanitarian emergencies, and lessons from their experience should be identified, especially in Bosnia and Croatia. Among those lessons:

a. NGOs emerging in response to the unprecedented availability of funds for civil society often have only shallow experience; they should be encouraged with small grants for an initial testing period.

b. Technical assistance is often essential; it can bring even small NGOs to the point of effective management.

c. Most Bosnian and Croatian NGOs were founded and managed by women—teachers, mental health workers—responding to the emergency need to assist displaced families and then to promote resettlement, normalization, and community reconciliation.

d. Youth and women often appear more ready than adult males to reconcile across ethnic lines. If this is also true in Kosovo (assuming postconflict Kosovo is not monoethnic), the bias toward reaching youth and women and neglecting adult males needs correction for reconciliation to work.

e. NGOs dedicated to specific beneficiaries and discrete activities (traumatized women, youth voluntarism, sports, family therapy, interethnic reconciliation, cultural revival) should not be pressed into new activities in which they lack expertise (e.g., microenterprise) merely because donor priorities have shifted. Instead, donors should encourage the creation of groups of NGOs (“strategic” rather than ad hoc) with complementary capabilities and objectives suitable for the array of problems that need attention in specific communities.

f. Financial support for local NGOs from the ethnic Albanian Diaspora can facilitate the gradual phaseout of aid dependence, but political capture of such remittances can create disillusionment and choke off these funds, as demonstrated in Croatia.

g. Local staffs of the International Rescue Committee and other strong NGOs in Bosnia and Croatia could be valuable resources for aid-funded projects utilizing (or assisting) Kosovar (or other) local NGOs. For example, the experience of agencies helping reconstruct housing in Bosnia (such as Mercy Corps International) also may be valuable in Kosovo. Finally, Kosovar NGOs that may be intact in refugee status, outside Kosovo, should be supported to ensure their survival pending return.

**6. Safety nets.** *Anticipate a need for aiding widow-headed households.*

When the fate of the large number of missing Kosovar males becomes known, Kosovo may join the ranks of other countries that have emerged from complex emergencies with tragically distorted demography. A major loss of adult males could create a severely disadvantaged group of widow-headed households, especially for Kosovo's large rural population. The need for effective safety nets and the need to restore such households to economic viability should be anticipated. Other disadvantaged groups needing tailored support may include the elderly, widower heads of households, single mothers, and the disabled.

**7. Employment-oriented training.**

*Train people in skills for which there is employment demand and link training with startup capital.*

Recovery activities need to match postconflict economic realities. Job training for youth, women, and demobilized soldiers (who have often turned to destabilizing criminal activity when they remained unemployed) is virtually fruitless if unemployment in the depressed economy remains high. Although opportunities for self-employment in microenterprise may also be limited, they are likely to be enhanced if the training is linked to the provision of seed capital.

**8. Commodity procurement.** *Maximize regional procurement to help stimulate economic recovery.*

Purchasing aid-funded goods and services internally and from the affected neighboring countries (with an eye to the possible price effects, as noted above) can contribute to regional employment, economic recovery, and the restoration of cross-border economic relations. This may require flexibility in the application of procurement regulations in the affected countries.

**9. High-level technocrat training.**

*Training technocrats to manage the postconflict economic transition should begin immediately.*

Reconstruction and development in Kosovo (under non-Yugoslav administration) is likely to be associated with a new set of economic institutions and rules of the game that mirror Western European norms. As with many complex humanitarian emergencies, overall macroeconomic and sectoral policy formulation during recovery-cum-transition is likely to require broad conceptual and management skills. Those skills are likely to be in short supply, especially if the preconflict professional and intellectual cadre have been targeted for deliberate elimination.

Although Kosovo's civil society had developed considerable institutional experience (mainly in social and cultural sectors) during the autonomy period of 1974–89, the fate of many civil society leaders is unknown. If possible these cadre should be found, perhaps among the refugees, and readied for return to Kosovo to help

revive the social infrastructure and prepare for economic recovery. A balance will be needed between foreign implementing agencies and contractors on the one hand and Kosovar organizations on the other. Otherwise, the recovery may be jeopardized either by overburdening the Kosovars or by sinking them with overbearing disregard.

## **Political Effects**

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### **1. Potential political consequences.**

*Monitor emergency aid distribution for possible unintended and undesirable political consequences.*

Emergency aid (especially food commodities) are a source of power. A flawed distribution process can have unintended and undesirable political consequences. In several cases (especially Rwanda), control over final food distribution reinforced the power of local authorities or factions, strengthened their relative position, and facilitated their self-aggrandizing, often abusive, behavior toward the intended noncombatant beneficiaries. Consequences of this sort would not be surprising under prevailing conditions in Kosovo and neighboring countries. Reconstruction aid in the Balkans will far exceed emergency food aid in amount and potential political consequences. It also will need careful monitoring.

**2. Peace conditionality.** *Use aid as leverage to enforce adherence to the peace accords and responsible governance.*

In an evaluation of its own postconflict experience, the World Bank asserted that donors could have and should have exerted more forcefully the leverage they had during the initial postconflict period. This is typically a period of almost total dependence on external financing and security. The study refers to governance functions within the normal scope of the Bank's mandate (e.g., fiscal practices). The point applies as well, though, to the notion of peace conditionality – that is, making provision (or withholding) of aid flows dependant on local authorities' adhering to the political commitments in the peace accords (or comparable instruments). Lack of donor consistency in this regard can undermine such potential (Cambodia), which reinforces the need to design an effective coordination structure. The Bosnian experience with peace conditionality is perhaps the most pertinent for postconflict Kosovo.

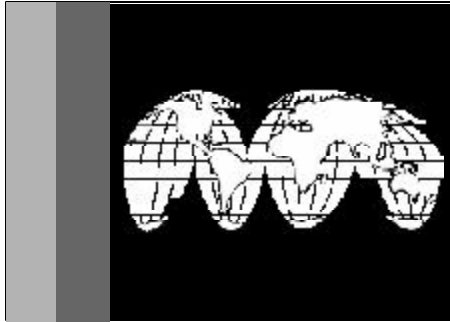
**3. Regional destabilization.** *Non-project aid for budget support can help front-line states maintain domestic stability.*

There is concern that the Kosovo crisis may destabilize Albania and Macedonia. The presence of Kosovar refugees and the burdens they impose jeopardize the ability of the two governments to continue to finance and sustain precrisis levels of service delivery to their citizens. Aid in the form of nonproject budget support could help them sustain domestic budget outlays. It could also help diminish the potential for ethnic polarization in

Macedonia (e.g., by enabling the government to maintain pensions and civil service salaries) and the deepening of the so-called left-right polarization in Albanian politics. Fast-disbursing aid flows may also be critical for sustaining the positions of these governments regarding the conflict itself, a political point beyond the scope of this note. Understandings and commitments regarding allocation of the local currency counterpart should be explicit and should be monitored to ensure compliance. Disbursements in tranches should be considered to encourage compliance.

**4. Resentment of refugees.** *To avoid resentment, keep refugee support standards modest in relation to host-population standards.*

Political problems have arisen in host countries when encampment extends for some considerable period. This may well be the case with the Kosovar refugees owing to mines, housing destruction, and other problems. (One recent estimate assumed 3–5 years, security considerations aside.) Evaluations have stressed that refugees should not be supported at a standard that evokes resentment among the host population. Resentment can also stem from refugees competing for scarce local employment. After resettlement, resentment could arise if country allocations of reconstruction aid are perceived as unfair or unjust. Aid to refugees should therefore conform with regional living standards.



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