

July 2003

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## Making strategic space for HR planning

**How can an aid agency plan its human resources in the middle of a crisis, with people dying and staff to dispatch? It is tough if not impossible. Having the right people, well trained and briefed, in the right place at the right time is the crucial challenge for development as well as relief agencies, so human resources planning must be set out strategically to ensure the organisation is as prepared as possible for future activities.**

Exploring several aspects of the issue of HR planning, People In Aid members and other agencies have contributed their experiences and practice to help suggest some of the priorities and pitfalls.

Save the Children UK – see page 2 – found that the conflict in Iraq proved to be an unusual crisis, offering significant time to plan how the staff in its existing development programme could prepare for their roles in the emergency.

For each major crisis Caritas Europa has planned an eight-stage response template, outlined on page 4, with HR at the centre as

it mobilises teams of staff to tackle the emergency, assess beneficiary needs and secure funds. With its recent steep growth, Concern Worldwide's HR is integrated into its strategic plan, as explained on page 4, so that it can identify the potential needs and the aspirations of its staff much earlier. The agency has also allocated 4% of its payroll to meet the cost of training. That reflects how training needs to be incorporated into the overall planning cycle, as discussed on page 5, while on page 3 Médecins Sans Frontières France explains how HR planning will improve staff retention. Page 3 also has a warning that donors may want a 100% rule – a security course for everyone likely to face risks – while Dr Mike Jones says on page 5 he wants another 100% rule, for end-of-contract medical checks. Yet a report on page 6 suggests only around 50% receive even an effective debriefing after a mission.

Hitting 100% of any target can be hard, especially in an emergency, but the contributions to this newsletter suggest HR planning will help.

### Jonathan Potter, Executive Director, writes...

**Fundamental to effective human resources is good planning. Aside from the experiences and practical tips highlighted in this newsletter, People In Aid can offer two works in progress which will service our members' needs and offer the wider sector some tools for planning. The revised Code, the ultimate prompt for HR planning for any agency, is nearly ready while work on a project for ECHO is just beginning.**

Much of the text for the revised Code is now complete. We thank a huge range of agencies for their input into what will continue to be an influential and practical document for the relief and development sector. The fact that the case studies we have gathered, for example, are being offered by agencies, both multilateral and INGO, from a wide selection of countries shows how far we have reached in a few short years.

Support from ECHO (European Commission Humanitarian Office) is enabling People In Aid to draw in experience from a wider European community in a joint initiative to improve human resources management among EU-based humanitarian NGOs.

Funded by ECHO's training grant facility this project is intended to:

- draw out good practice in key areas of human resources from a wide variety of ECHO partner agencies
- provide INGOs with analysis on INGO practice in these key areas
- offer suggestions for planning and action

If you would like to be involved in the ECHO project, or this Newsletter was not mailed directly to you and you want to receive the revised Code, please contact us on [info@peopleinaid.org](mailto:info@peopleinaid.org)

# Advance planning for the crisis in Iraq

Iraq was an untypical "emergency" in that the humanitarian crisis did not materialise suddenly, so Save the Children UK (SC UK) had time to plan how the transition from development programme to emergency programme and back again might take place without losing the long-term development perspective.

Thus SC UK was able to pre-emptively second, recruit and deploy a number of key international staff members on short term contracts to develop emergency preparedness work immediately prior to hostilities and provide a degree of continuity once the rehabilitative work began.

Following the end of the first Gulf War and the creation of Northern Iraq as an area beyond Saddam Hussein's control, SC UK has been operational from a main base in the city of Erbil since 1991 with a team of one international staffer and about 70 experienced national staff. For the past three years significant time had been put into emergency preparedness planning, with support from the UK-based Emergencies Unit, including building the capacity of national staff in the existing development programme so that they could better respond to a humanitarian disaster.

At SC UK, human resources planning takes place at various levels: in the London head office with the teams for programmes operations, emergencies and HR, at regional level and at country or programme level. HR planning for a potential Iraq war began as early as September 2002 with an exercise to consolidate a database of consultants, potential staff and internal staff who could be deployed or seconded at short notice, including:

- Organisational commitment to increase the size of an Emergency Response Team and establish a pool of qualified and experienced emergency personnel with specialisms - child protection, education, health, nutrition etc. – for deployment at very short notice for up to three months.
- Internal "regional" roster of partially pre-screened national staff in Central / Southern Asia for secondment at short notice to international posts for up to three months.
- A "rapid response register" of head office staff available for immediate short secondments.

A security briefing was developed specifically for all international staff being deployed as part of the Iraq emergency, and included training about weapons of mass destruction and chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear warfare. As part of SC UK's commitment to health, safety and security, the plans for rest and relaxation, evacuation and security for all Iraq programme personnel were revised, consolidated and kept under regular review. Representatives from HR and Risk Management were party to discussions on HR planning, staffing and

*'HR planning for a potential Iraq war began as early as September 2002'*

potential operational locations, allowing preparatory work for health, visas, insurance, and travel arrangements.

The transition from development programme to emergency programme is traditionally a difficult one. While not entirely free from tensions, planning for Iraq was helped by lessons from the humanitarian response in Afghanistan in 2001/02, and the Balkans (Bosnia/Kosovo) before that. SC UK's response benefited from its commitment

to managing internal expertise, and its pro-active approach to identifying and pre-screening potential future staff and consultants through phone interviews undertaken by multi-disciplinary panels.

After evacuation of the expatriate Programme Director in February this year, the national staff team was evacuated from Erbil to a safer location inside Iraq once hostilities commenced in March. They remained in constant contact with colleagues posted in the region and in London, and were able to quickly re-group and resume operations once safe to do so. International emergency staff joined the national staff team as soon as access to Iraq became possible.

Timely communications between the field, regional offices, head office, and the management disciplines involved in supporting the emergency response ensured that key staff remained informed and able to take appropriate decisions. Once again, a commitment to sound HR planning definitely increased the speed at which SC UK was able to respond to the needs of vulnerable children and young people.

**Contributed by Rachel Westcott, Global Resourcing Director, Save the Children UK**

## Time to get ahead

**Jonathan Potter reports from EPN5 in Evian**

Planning for the human resources needs of emergencies is not only possible but essential, according to aid agencies at the fifth Emergency Personnel Network seminar (EPN5).

Such preparation is helped by the changing perceptions of "human resources", as it loses its old role as a support department and becomes a central part of aid agencies' strategic planning process.

*'EPN5's main objective was to look at staff mobilisation'*

Sharing their own practice, the 52 participants from NGOs in eight countries and four multilateral agencies heard how agencies have recognised the increasing importance of HR in the organisation, for example by having it represented at their highest management level.

Though it is clear that agencies that do

not plan strategically are failing to use their HR function properly, other issues remain. The extent of HR staff involvement in operational decisions varies, so programme priorities do not always match people priorities. And there is still confusion about the role of HR: too few line managers understand that managing people is central to their job.

Under the title "Thinking Ahead – Acting Now: Proactive Human Resource Planning for Emergencies", EPN5's main objective was to look at staff mobilisation. Human resources planning became the lens through which a broad range of subjects was discussed, including recruitment, retention, rapid response teams, contract length, security and insurance, increasing the pool of aid workers, national staff and training.

Speakers from Medair, WorldVision International, Action Contre la Faim, MSF France and UNHCR all offered interesting insights into their way of working, and despite the emergency tag, much of the discussion was relevant to development work as well.

*continued on page 7*

# Secure stability with long-term staff

**Médecins Sans Frontières France has launched a three-year programme of strategic HR planning to improve staff retention, increase the number of posts for expatriates on their first mission and recognise the potential of national staff.**

To begin the process of change, the division of staff into expatriate, headquarters or national, which discouraged integration, will be replaced by two new categories based on commitment to MSF France – short term or medium and long term – that will group most expatriates in the first category and field co-ordinators, national staff and headquarters staff in the second.

The agency may specialise in short-term interventions but it is relishing the challenge of long term planning, its HR director, Amanda Harvey, told the Emergency Personnel Network seminar in Evian, adding: "People are the pillar of the organisation and investing in them for the future is essential."

Created in 1971, MSF France relies on about 440 expatriates and 2,000 national staff to run health programmes around the world, almost two-thirds of them in conflict or post-conflict countries. Programmes respond to emergency needs, so today the agency is in 39 countries, having opened 31 new programmes and closed 34 in 2002.

Unlike other agencies, MSF France has not found attracting skilled staff to work on short-term assignments particularly difficult. Putting considerable effort into creating high quality short-term missions both attracts good personnel and encourages them to come back again and stay longer. Short-term staff turnover is fairly high but the agency is satisfied with this as it maintains a dynamic exchange of ideas and practice. Yet there is also high staff turnover in the long-term management and field co-ordinator positions, and a trend of fewer expatriates applying for these posts,

which are vital for the stability of MSF France's international operations and in which the agency's main institutional memory resides.

The agency believes that the strategic approach to longer term HR planning will bring most benefits with long-term staff. As well as ensuring a consistently high quality of mission, the agency will introduce basic management information systems to capture – alongside appraisals – information on competencies, experience and history. Long-term national staff will contribute their unique local perspectives.

This strategy, involving not just the HR team but also headquarters and field staff, would be ambitious for any agency. MSF France recognises that combining effective longer term planning with a short-term and emergency focus will not be achieved overnight. As a mark of its commitment, the President of the MSF France Board has adopted this work as the main management objective for the coming year.

## Questioning your security

**Are you a senior manager? Is your agency involved in dangerous places? Have you made the connection between security and good HR planning? Barney Mayhew asks some more quick questions.**

Are you confident that all of your field staff can handle their own security? Are you sure that their managers can manage team security? If a serious incident happened at 3 am on a Sunday morning, would your organisation cope? Does your insurance cover all the risks your field staff might face? Have you included national staff in your thinking about the questions above? If any of your answers is "no" or "not sure", then a good time to act is now.

In most emergencies, evaluators of NGO programmes can easily find a few staff who have not received security training of any kind. In case you think they cannot have been working for your agency, beware: they include staff from most household-name NGOs. In places like Kosovo, Iraq or Afghanistan, this amounts to gross negligence.

It is not hard to see how it happens, especially if HR is not well planned and carefully managed. There are never enough experienced people available in a major crisis, so agencies feel obliged to hire at least some first-timers. There can then be a great temptation to cut corners. The next security course may not be for a month or two, so a harassed manager crosses their fingers and puts the new recruit on the plane. At the other end, the field managers are so stretched that they are hardly sleeping, so they certainly cannot provide proper training during the emergency, and even initial briefings sometimes get forgotten.

The consequence may be that the eager new aid worker is injured or killed, by a mine, in crossfire, in an armed robbery, a rape, a kidnap, an assault. Or endangers colleagues or local

people. No one has ever explained the local situation to the newcomer, or taught them basic security precautions. The fault in this case is entirely the employer's. Litigation may follow.

It is high time that all emergency agencies adopted the 100% rule, that every staff member should attend a recognised security course before first going to a medium or high-risk country. Some major NGOs have already done this. But the majority still trust some of their staff to luck.

The main problem is not money. Donors are supportive. ECHO, DFID, USAID and others are paying a lot of attention to security, and subsidise many courses. The time may be coming when donors refuse to fund agencies that do not have the 100% rule.

So why are NGOs not all rushing to the 100% rule? Is it because senior managers do not realise the risks their emergency staff are running? Are they not aware that some staff are slipping through the training net? Or is it just another symptom of a sector in which the urgent so often takes precedence over the important?

Security training is not everything. Experience, information, good management and local knowledge are all vital pieces of the jigsaw. But patchy training leaves an ugly gap in the jigsaw that threatens the whole picture. If put right, agencies will see over time a benefit throughout their work: from programme quality to staff morale, from increased retention to financial savings. Staff health should improve, as stress reduces. And the threat of litigation will recede.

The key may be teamwork. If agencies clubbed together, the demand would justify security courses at least monthly throughout the year. Agreeing a common security training syllabus would allow agencies to work together easily on

*continued on page 6*

# Agency goes for growth with

**HR planning is a vital issue for Concern Worldwide, which has seen substantial growth in recent years, expanding to 29 countries, from 14 in 1998, with expatriate and national staff numbers up by 33% since February 2002 as operations began in Malawi, Niger, Pakistan, Zambia and Zimbabwe.**

Driving force behind the focus on HR planning is Concern's Strategic Plan for 2002-2004, which sets out that it must strive to become an employer of choice, make existing staff feel challenged and fulfilled, and offer a culture of quality in all aspects of its work.

Concern is committed to:

- Increase public contributions, income from donors, and the number of countries in which it works.
- Develop and include new programme approaches.
- Focus on specific competencies, such as livelihood security, health, primary education, HIV/AIDS and emergency response.
- Improve monitoring and evaluation.
- Incorporate gender and equality into all day-to-day operations.

- Put in place governance structures that are consistent with best corporate practice and facilitate plan objectives. "Since staff are Concern's most important resource, its key objective is to recruit, retain and develop them, and to promote the organisation's ethos with them through appropriate human resource policies in line with the People In Aid Code of Best Practice, so that Concern can carry out its mission as effectively as possible."

*'Staff development is the responsibility of all'*

HR planning should look ahead at the implications of organisational strategy, and take into account commercial, political and technological forces, their effects on individuals and their input in the organisation.

Concern's recruitment aims to hire the best possible people within a reasonable time frame. One key initial step was to restructure the Overseas HR team for more strategic work on overseas recruitment and HR support in the field.

Next steps will include:

- \* A more proactive recruitment strategy in which HR, working with line managers, will identify potential needs much earlier.
- \* Increase knowledge of the potential and desires of existing staff through revision and updating of the Performance Appraisal system.
- \* Targeting specific universities and other organisations to develop strategic relationships that will provide a potential pipeline of candidates in its core competencies.
- \* Formalising the system of internship.

With the commitment of 4% of payroll on training, learning has moved right up Concern's agenda, since research has indicated that it is one of the key levers that can raise innovation, responsiveness and performance.

Not only does training help highly effective staff deliver quality work to achieve the ultimate aim of assisting people to achieve major sustainable improvements to their lives, but it is valued by staff as an indication of the organisation's commitment to them.

*continued next page*

## HR at core of Caritas crisis response

**Caritas Europa has an eight-stage response to each major crisis – defined as having more than 10,000 victims – in which HR is at the core as personnel are mobilised through an Emergency Response and Support Team (ERST) and a Support Team for Emergency Programs (STEP).**

Caritas Europa is made up of 44 national member organisations and forms part of the International Confederation of Catholic relief, development and social service organisations operating in 156 countries. Since each crisis is specific, Caritas adapts its standard eight-stage response to take account of particular circumstances and needs:

- 1 Crisis alert, usually from a local partner but can be from Caritas International organisations, the UN or the media.
- 2 Needs analysis – usually within 12 hours - involves a teleconference with local partner and donor agencies within the confederation to assess needs, type of support required, local or regional capacity to respond, gaps in assessment and other issues.
- 3 Staff mobilisation uses a list of potential staff available within 45 hours drawn from the ERST database, which updates details of skills and experience every quarter. Those on the database receive regular training in security, teambuilding, trauma counseling and other subjects.
- 4 ERST members and leader are usually identified from the database within 24 hours, are briefed by teleconference, and work to standard terms of reference with an annex detailing specific circumstances.

5 ERST is mobilised, usually three to seven days after the crisis alert, depending on visas and access. Emergency response usually begins with funding from private donations. Daily situation reports are submitted and after two or three days a Special Operation Appeal is sent to head office and donor member organisations. This forms the basis of a teleconference to assess the scope for internationally-backed funding for the first six weeks and the first six months.

6 Between two and five weeks after the ERST is mobilised, a follow up is decided by sending out a STEP if the local capacity requires support to respond to the emergency needs in the medium term. Initial evaluations are undertaken, and agreement is reached on continuing response. STEP staff are usually recruited externally on three to 12 month contracts according to funding.

7 Regular meetings are held to review progress – usually two, three or six monthly meetings in addition to a formal mid-term review.

8 Final evaluation or debriefing is based on individual reports from ERST and STEP members and is known as the functioning report. An internal or external audit, depending on funding level, closes the Special Operation Appeal. A final outcome evaluation is also undertaken to improve future performance.

**Contributed by Will De Wolf, International Co-operation, Caritas Europa.**

# h human resources planning

To further align training with its strategic objectives and staff development, Concern has prepared a Training and Development policy and procedures document, and recruited a Training and Development Specialist to create training plans with line managers.

Staff development is the responsibility of all: the organisation, its managers and its individual staff members. Given its role in developing staff, Concern has revised its performance appraisal system and introduced a process that fully incorporates

employees' views and goals.

Retaining staff is dependent on several factors. Staff must be managed in ways they perceive to be fair and transparent, feel valued within an organisation to whose work they can contribute, have a career within the organisation and receive fair pay.

Concern Worldwide's global Human Resources Policy document has been updated and expanded to give clear and comprehensive guidelines on all HR-related policies and help offer more consistent and transparent management

of HR issues. Monitoring and evaluation tools will ensure that policies are implemented effectively.

To nurture "home grown" talent, good succession planning requires increasing the pool of talent from which middle and senior managers are chosen, and Concern's appraisal, promotion and pay systems will reward enterprise and imagination.

**Contributed by Barbara Gilroy, Human Resources Director, Concern Worldwide.**

## Adding training fundamentals for success

**Effective use of training and development interventions can have a major influence on the success of an organisation's HR planning, says Ben Emmens, HR Services Manager at People In Aid.**

Yet 78% of respondents in recent ECHO research suggested that a failure to plan for training or factor in enough time were major barriers to its uptake and effective delivery.

Whether an organisation works in relief, development or both, it is vital to incorporate training and development into the overall planning cycle, with proposed interventions and timings considered in advance.

Recent crises have helped raise awareness of the need for emergency preparedness even in traditionally "developmental" programmes.

Organisations that plan to respond to emergencies can deliver essential training and development pre-emptively within the HR planning process.

If the training and development function is well established then a regular review and needs analysis will help managers identify training gaps and fill them in a systematic manner. Where processes are more ad hoc, even essential training can get pushed to the sidelines in an emergency.

But what is "essential training"? Many humanitarian professionals believe security training should be mandatory. All organisations could include this in their training plans and deliver it regularly to all relevant staff, or at least work with specialist training providers to ensure all staff had an appropriate level of expertise.

And when planning recruitment, time must be built in to allow for effective induction, briefings and training. The aim may be to select candidates with all essential competencies for the job, but recruiters must consider offering training to consolidate or reinforce existing expertise.

Drawing up a business case for such a pro-active approach to training and development could be difficult, given the lack of empirical research on the benefits.

However, external factors may force agencies to act, from insurers checking how well agency personnel are prepared for their postings when reviewing cover to potential donors examining whether staff members are fully trained to deliver programmes and meet objectives.

## Timely health checks vital

**In HR planning, how frequently should aid agency staff receive medical checks? Dr Mike Jones, Senior Physician at the Edinburgh International Health Centre, says that depends on how old they are and what they are doing.**

"Age and environment matter", he says, urging risk analysis to pinpoint potential problems, from poor accident facilities that may lead to medical evacuations or limited opportunities for rest and relaxation to reduce burn-out.

For a staff member in a refugee camp affected by diseases such as cholera, "making sure they have an annual medical with good laboratory tests is reasonable". Otherwise a check-up every couple of years "should suffice". He adds: "But as age increases, especially over 50 years, check ups should be more frequent to make sure nothing is brewing", such as heart disease.

*'Proactive planning could save a life'*

Dr Jones would like to see all agencies give end-of-contract medical checks as a safeguard and "expression of your care", with "a specific opportunity for a personal review" by an independent third party. Adequate immunisation is imperative, from polio, tetanus, and diphtheria, to hepatitis - A and B, rabies, yellow fever and more. Proactive planning could save a life. Keeping basic immunisations up to date not only avoids later logjams and allows flexible use of staff but since "most inoculations have little effect during the first week or 10 days", says Dr Jones, last minute jabs leave staff unprotected for the first few days.

### Useful sources

Edinburgh International Health Centre <http://www.eihc.org>  
Scottish Centre for Infection and Environmental Health <http://www.fitfortravel.scot.nhs.uk>  
People In Aid publications: Work-Life Balance, and Health & Safety in Aid Agencies

# Filling in the debriefing gap

Research suggests that only around 50% of all staff or volunteers returning from the field actually receive an effective debriefing, despite being an important aspect of the People In Aid Code, a workshop on the issue was told.

The Effective Debriefing workshop – a rerun of last year's popular event – attracted more than 25 representatives from a wide range of agencies working in relief and development to network, share practice and learn.

Workshop facilitator Dr Debbie Lovell-Hawker is a clinical psychologist based at Oxford University with more than eight years experience in debriefing staff for humanitarian organisations.

The workshop highlighted the importance and necessity of debriefing for all staff and volunteers and provided a comprehensive overview of the ideal process and content.

The focus was on personal and critical incident debriefing and participants developed tools and skills through role plays and group discussions on case studies covering a wide range of scenarios involving both staff and dependants.

Hosted by People In Aid supporter member the British Council, the day provided particularly useful guidance on how to structure the debriefing session itself, and how to follow up with staff suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder.

*For details of a follow-up "practical session" on debriefing on 16 October see Forthcoming Workshops, below.*

*A course handbook is available from People In Aid at £7.50 (members), £10 (non-members).*

*If any other members are interested in hosting a workshop at their offices, please contact People In Aid.*

## Forthcoming People In Aid Workshops

### 16/10/03 Effective Debriefing Practical Session

This session is aimed at individuals who have already participated in the very successful Effective Debriefing Workshop or have had some practical experience of debriefing. It will be a small group who have had the opportunity to utilise what they learnt in the workshop or in practice and can share experiences, discuss difficulties which may have arisen, ask questions based on experience, receive supervision, and have the opportunity to carry out role-plays to enhance skills.

### 23/10/03 Distance Management

This seminar will consider the issues around management of staff in remote locations. Both HR and operational staff will benefit from the discussions and exercises arising from speakers' points of view and experiences. The main areas to be looked at will be the ways in which remote staff might be disadvantaged and what methods of staff management, organisational and individual, can address them.

**These training events will take place in London  
Booking forms are available from [info@peopleinaid.org](mailto:info@peopleinaid.org)  
or 020 7520 2548**

*continued from page 3*

security issues in the field, staff to move from agency to agency without needing security retraining, and refresher courses to work from common foundations. Returning field staff, properly trained to teach, could supply the extra trainers needed.

If a number of agencies jumped together, the rest would not want to be left out.

**Barney Mayhew ([bmayhew@btinternet.com](mailto:bmayhew@btinternet.com)) is an independent consultant based in London. He works to improve the effectiveness of interventions in emergencies, particularly through training, co-ordination and support to field managers.**

Are you updating your security policy? You may find People In Aid's security 'policy pot' useful – see page 7 for details.

## Time for the agency doctor

**Aid groups could use "organisation development practitioners" like physicians to help improve the effectiveness of the agency and its staff, a People In Aid workshop heard.**

The Develop Your People and Organisation Workshop attracted 13 representatives from 11 international aid and development agencies, who discussed organisational development from three perspectives: macro or organisational level, group or team level and individual level.

Alison Lewis, from Spiral Training, who is also Corporate Learning & Development Manager at Oxfam GB, facilitated the participatory workshop, which examined how organisation development practitioners could work with agencies to:

- Establish relationships with key personnel in the organisation
- Research and evaluate systems in the organisation to understand their goals and dysfunctions
- Identify approaches or interventions to improve agency and staff effectiveness
- Apply approaches to improve effectiveness
- Evaluate ongoing effectiveness of the approaches and their results

As well as strategies for systems-wide change, the workshop discussed development of teams – whose members share common goals and rely on each other to achieve results – and groups – whose members share a job title, learning need or learning intervention – such as "action learning" in which organisations and staff flourish if the rate of learning is greater than the rate of change.

To identify cost-effective ways of developing people and ensuring that learning has a positive impact on performance, the workshop examined three interventions in detail – coaching, mentoring and on-line learning – of which the first two are already popular methods within aid agencies.

*A handbook with useful guidance for those considering introducing coaching, mentoring and on-line learning is available from People In Aid at £7.50 (members), £10.00 (non-members).*

continued from page 2

Among the suggestions debated were:

- Widen the pool: develop development workers, use the retired, take private sector secondments, give university talks to encourage students, value motivation and life experience if no field experience.
- Offer what French agencies call "parcours individuels" – rather than career planning - that look at the employee's skills and give them diverse experience and training.
- Pre-selection training for a week or more to contribute more personnel to the sector, rather than just individual agencies.
- Since instilling motivation early is a key to longevity, ensure inductions effectively convey agency objectives.
- How to decide which staff are "mercenaries, missionaries or misfits".
- Making managers accountable for development of national staff.
- Mentoring by senior staff or shadowing by potential senior staff.
- Human resources personnel staying a month with a programme.
- Importance of growing future managers and leaders in-house.

Having chaired the EPN5 steering group, People In Aid will ensure members are kept updated about EPN6, for which there was overwhelming support.

The EPN web pages with reports and useful resources can be found on [www.redr.org/epn](http://www.redr.org/epn)

## Policy Pots

The fourth in the People In Aid series of guidelines to essential policies is now available. Covering **Security**, a pdf of the guideline is available upon request, via the website or by emailing [info@peopleinaid.org](mailto:info@peopleinaid.org). The series now includes guidelines on:

**Critical Illness**  
**Rest and Relaxation**  
**Security**  
**Whistleblowing**

All of which are available free of charge.

# Legal risks for aid agencies

**Two recent landmark legal cases have shown that employers' responsibility for international and national staff goes further than previously thought, highlighting potential risks for aid agencies.**

In June, the families of three telecoms engineers who were kidnapped and murdered in Chechnya in 1998 won a high court battle for compensation. Their families had argued that their employer, Granger Telecom, was negligent to send them to a war zone and that they did not have adequate preparation or security measures in place.

In what one lawyer described as "a momentous decision in terms of widening the jurisdiction of employment tribunals", an Employment Appeals Tribunal ruled in March that a security consultant who worked on Ascension Island in the South Pacific was entitled to bring a claim for unfair dismissal against his UK-based employer even though he lived, worked and was managed abroad.

But other cases show that employers can protect themselves from litigation. In February this year, the high court ruled against British Gurkhas who claimed that the Ministry of Defence had breached their human rights and unlawfully denied them

equal pay and conditions because of their race and nationality. The court dismissed seven test cases ruling that it was lawful to make different pension arrangements for Nepalese citizens who will retire to Nepal.

In 2001 the oil company United Texas Petroleum successfully defended itself against a claim of negligence brought by families of four of its employees who were murdered in Karachi in 1997. Although UTP had paid compensation, the families brought a civil case claiming \$90 million of damages. UTP was able to show that it had thorough security training and audit processes in place and it was not liable.

People In Aid Executive Director Jonathan Potter said: "While all of these cases arose in the commercial sector they clearly have implications for agencies who employ staff abroad and national staff. This is an increasingly litigious society and it is only a matter of time before we hear more of these sorts of cases cropping up in the aid sector.

"We need to be more prepared to answer them by having good policies and procedures in place. The People In Aid Code itself is a useful organisational risk management tool."

How does your agency guard against legal action from staff or their families? Do let People In Aid know.

## Members Update

### Profile

Concern Universal works in partnership to fight poverty in 10 countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Concern Universal responds to local needs and thus is involved in a range of initiatives, including food security, water and environmental sanitation, and organisational development. Its in-country teams work in support of local partner organisations, targeting areas where it can make the greatest difference; distinctive country strategies emerge from this.

The anti-poverty cause to which Concern Universal is committed is driven by people: its employees and volunteers, employees of partner organisations, members of community-based organisations and others.

To play a leading role in addressing poverty, Concern Universal recognises that it must demonstrate the value that it places in the people involved in its work.

To this end, Concern Universal has articulated a Human Resource Strategy and Action Plan that details a range of initiatives that it hopes will enable people in Concern Universal and its partner organisations to play an increasingly efficient, effective and influential role in the fight against poverty.

Concern Universal says that its membership of People in Aid "will provide us with an important opportunity to both learn from the experience of other NGOs and to share the lessons from our own efforts to enhance our support to the people involved in our work".

### Recent New Members

Other new members welcomed by People In Aid are:

**Plan International UK** and supporter members **Organisation Resource Counselors**.

## Forthcoming Training events

When?	Course	Where?	Who?
July 17th	Action Learning Sets	UK	Bond
Sept 15th – 19th	Effective Management for Development	UK	INTRAC
Oct 15th	Setting up a Work Place Mentoring Scheme	UK	Interchange
Oct 16th	Effective Debriefing – Practical Session	UK	People In Aid
Oct 23rd	Distance Management	UK	People In Aid
Nov 3rd	Managing People and Projects in Emergencies	UK	RedR
E-learning	Becoming A New Employer	Web-based	Charity Skills
E-learning	HR for Charity Trustees	Web-based	Charity Skills

## Contacts:

### Bond

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### Charity Skills

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### Interchange

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### INTRAC

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### RedR

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[www.redr.org](http://www.redr.org) ▲

# Join People In Aid!

Join a global network of relief and development agencies committed to good practice in the support and management of their staff. Join People In Aid, which offers you:

- Opportunities to share experiences with your peers.
- Opportunities to stay abreast of current issues affecting staff, and the quality of your programmes.
- Practical training in areas seen as important by you.
- Information to benchmark your agency in the sector.
- Support in the implementation of the Code of Good Practice.
- Access to resources and policies specific to your sector.

These are some of the reasons for joining People In Aid – and improving the

effectiveness of your programmes. Donors are also taking an increasing interest in matters of quality and accountability but above all we are certain that your staff, current and future, will be pleased to know that you are joining People In Aid.

You will benefit from your membership whatever your organisation's size, structure or country of origin. We welcome agencies, which operate internationally and those which don't. There are three categories of membership:

- **Full** — operational agencies, primarily charities actively involved in international relief and development work.
- **Supporter** — organisations which support the aims of People In Aid and wish to share in our output.
- **Individual** — for individuals who wish to stay in touch with our activities.

There are many benefits for each category of membership, which are summarised in the table. In return we ask all our members to help to promote the Code to agencies, donors, potential supporters and individuals. Also we hope members will pass the Code to agencies which are visibly involved in bad practice.

**Kitemarks:** Full members implementing the Code will be awarded kitemarks to show stakeholders (staff, applicants, donors, peers, beneficiaries and more) of their commitment to improving their hr management. The first is available at the beginning of the process, the second one after an external social audit. Implementing agencies are asked for a contribution over and above the membership fee.

Annual membership fees as of April 1st 2003:

### • Full Members

For agencies based in the UK membership is based on annual income as follows:

Less than £100,000 .....	£100
£100,000 — £500,000 .....	£125
£500,000 — £1,000,000 .....	£275
£1,000,000 — £5,000,000 .....	£400
Over £5,000,000 .....	£600

For agencies based:

In Ireland .....	Euro equivalent of above rates
Elsewhere in the EU .....	Euros £150
In the South or East .....	US \$50
Elsewhere .....	US \$150

- **Supporter** .....
- **Individual** .....

BENEFITS	Full	Supporter	Individual
<b>Code implementation process</b>	Support provided	n/a	n/a
<b>Kitemarks</b>	Eligible	n/a	n/a
<b>Copies of Code of Best Practice</b>	Multiple free copies – any language	Up to 15 free copies – any language	One copy free
<b>Members' area on website</b>	Access	Access	n/a
<b>Workshops</b>	Concessionary rates	Concessionary rates	At full rate
<b>Research publications</b>	Free or discounted	Free or discounted	At full rate
<b>Quarterly newsletter</b>	Free	Free	Free
<b>People In Aid deals</b>	Concessionary rates	Concessionary rates if available	Concessionary rates if available
<b>Members' Forum</b>	Invitation	n/a	n/a
<b>Annual General Meeting</b>	Access and voting rights	n/a	n/a
<b>Representation on People In Aid Board</b>	Allowed by our Constitution	n/a	n/a
<b>Updates on issues, resources etc.</b>	Regularly by e-mail	Regularly by e-mail where appropriate	Regularly by e-mail where appropriate
<b>Resource centre</b>	Unlimited access	Unlimited access	Unlimited access

### Please contact People In Aid at:

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