

So you think you want to be a relief worker?

Berlin, 28th October 2011

Aims



- To help those thinking about becoming involved in relief work to decide whether or not it is a suitable field for them.
- To give an overview of the sector and consider motivations and methods for entering it professionally.

Objectives



- Understand how the humanitarian sector works
- Examine motivations for entering the sector
- Question and learn from humanitarian workers
- Identify what to do next and how to go about it

Thinking an Outline

- Humanitarianism
- The relief sector and the key players
- Motivations for relief work
- What the agencies want
- Personal skills and qualities
- Q&A - Relief workers and agencies
- What next?

Some other RedR UK courses

- **Essentials of Humanitarian Practice**
- **Personal Security in Emergencies**
- Implementing Sphere
- Environmental Health: Principles & Practice
- Sanitation in Emergencies
- Field Logistics in Emergencies
- Needs Assessment Workshop
- Training of Trainers

What is humanitarianism?

Humanitarianism is about the considerations that govern our interventions – not just what is done but how and why.

‘The EU is firmly committed to upholding and promoting the fundamental humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence.’

The European Consensus on
Humanitarian Aid-2007

What is humanitarianism?

- Humanitarianism is constantly evolving. Legal
- SPHERE project
 - Humanitarian charter and principles
 - Minimum standards
- Code of conduct
- The Case of German Aid in Afghanistan

Introduction to the sector –Alphabet soup

UNHCR

UNICEF

(UN)OCHA

UNJLC

UNDP

WFP

Clusters

WHO

ICRC/IFRC

NGOs

CBOs

DFID

IDPs

WatSan

WASH

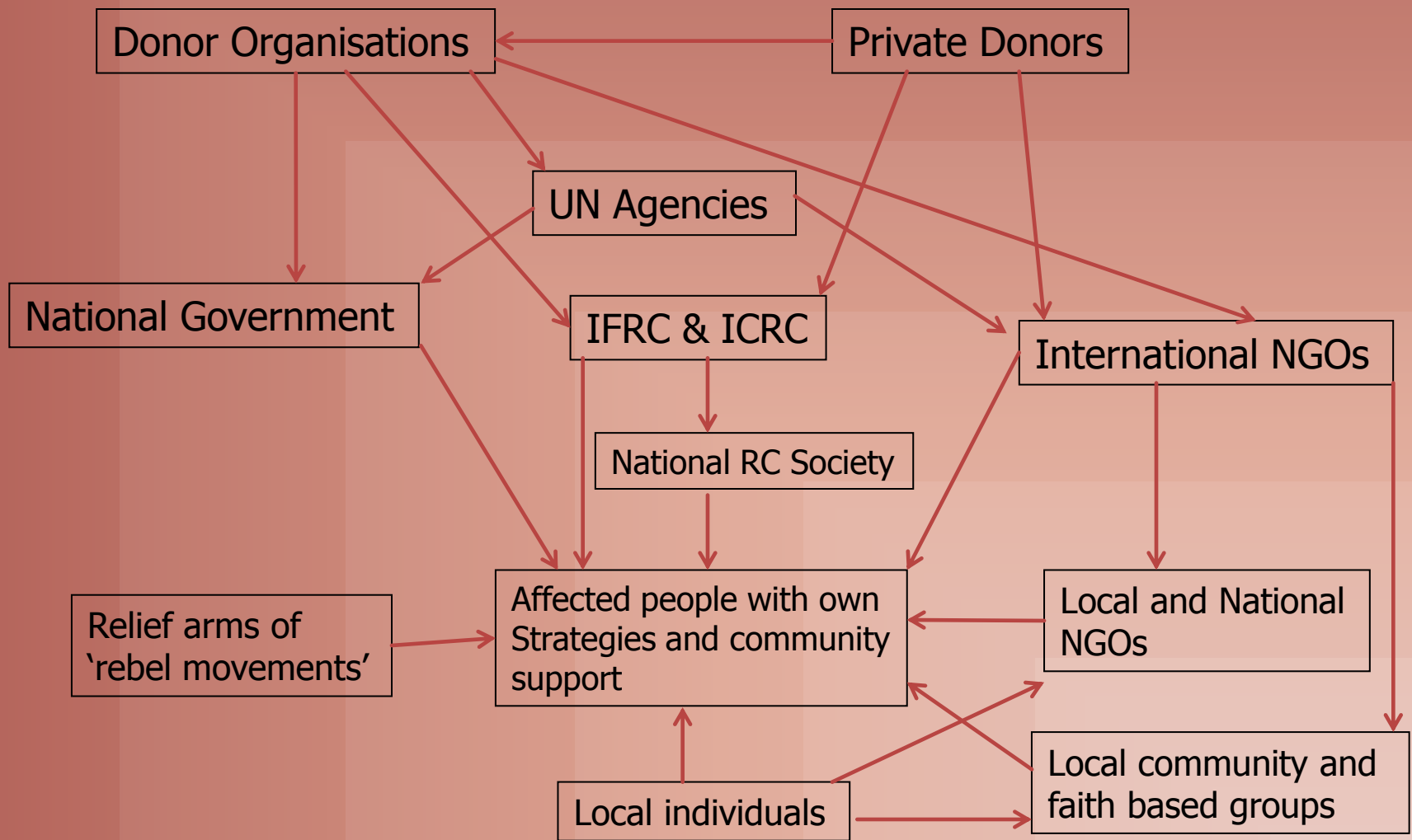
NFIs

Logframes

MSF

Save

ECHO



Security

- 4th Most Dangerous Profession in the World (first is deep sea fisherman)
 - 1 dies every three days
 - Largest single cause—Car Accidents
 - Kidnap/ Abduction – for money, propaganda, revenge

Humanitarian Space and Humanitarian Principles

WHY?

Humanitarian employers

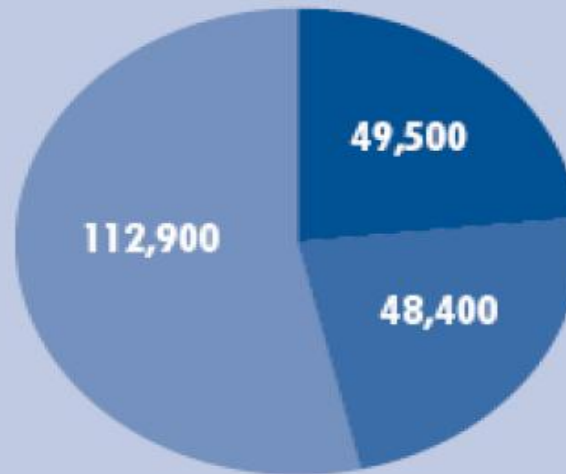
- Many NGOs and International Organisations with different focus
 - Disaster response
 - Post-conflict/ Complex Emergencies
 - Rehabilitation/ Recovery
 - Development
- Difficult to categorise
- Blurring of boundaries

Recruitment in the aid sector: context

- Complex situations on the ground
- Higher risk
- “do no harm”
- Professionalisation of NGOs
- Emphasis on local staff and local partners, increasing local capacity
- Expat staff required need to have higher and more specific skill levels

Estimated number of field staff and distribution

Total field staff: 210,800



- UN humanitarian agencies and International Organization for Migration (IOM)
- International Movement of the Red Cross/Red Crescent
- INGOs

95% of staff working for INGOs and 89% of staff working for UN agencies are nationals of the host country.

Issues for agencies

- Massive pool of keen people
- Shortage of experienced people
- Difficulties in retaining staff
- Cannot afford to take a risk
- Cost of sending expats overseas
- Huge number of applicants for each post, most are unsuitable

Technical Skills - What the agencies

want

- HIV/ AIDS Specialists
- Capacity Building expertise
- Nutritionists
- Engineers
- Security Specialists
- Business skills (e.g. finance, HR)
- Logisticians
- Midwives
- Food security specialists
- Anaethetists, Surgeons, GPs
- Psychologists
- Managers
- Public Health Engineers

Personal Skills - What the agencies want

- Teamwork
- Leadership
- Commitment to humanitarian principles
- Ability to build relationships internally and externally
- Resilient - able to manage stress and heavy workload
- Professionalism
- Cultural Sensitivity
- Plan, prioritise and organise own work
- Flexibility
- Willing to learn

Enhancing your employability

- Gain skills & experience – commit to the “long-haul”
- Build up knowledge and exposure to relief work and issues
- Consider qualification and training in appropriate technical/professional area
- Get appropriate experience overseas
- Consider volunteering in Head office of relief agency
- Keep up to date with political issues and consider impact on relief work
- Consider getting involved in fundraising activities/events for humanitarian agencies - gives greater exposure to the work of the organisation as well as shows commitment and interest.

Six key areas for moving forward

- Researching – depth of understanding
- Networking – who you know
- Training – specialisation and performance
- German Domestic Work – transferable skills
- Cross-cultural experience – travelling & at home
- Volunteering – awareness, language, style

Further training

- RedR
 - Essentials of Humanitarian Practice
 - Personal Security in emergencies
 - Needs assessment
- VENRO (development focus)
- CILT (logistics)
- Universities
- Reliefweb list courses