

A Guide to VOLUNTARY AND HUMANITARIAN WORK

- getting started, getting in and getting on

Foreword by The Baroness Caroline Cox



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October 2009 (2nd Edition)

DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to Julie Ann. She was a loving, devoted wife and mother, a deeply committed humanitarian and an inspiration to many.

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PREFACE

One of the finest pleasures that comes from working as a humanitarian is meeting extraordinary and wonderful people who have devoted their lives to helping others. Here are three recent examples. The countries, characters and circumstances are true but the names of the people have been changed to spare their modest and humble sensitivities.

1. I first met Sean outside Kampala in Uganda at a conference centre. He was surrounded by about 50 children, a few were blind, and all were well dressed and highly excited. He knew all their names and he was joking with everybody. His wife and a small group of volunteers from his church in the USA were taking the children on a picnic to Lake Victoria. The children had never had an experience like this before. He came to Uganda for a few months every year with his group to manage a social project. The team had recently constructed a well in a poor village about two hours drive from the capital. The villagers appealed to him to help many children who were from the streets or aid orphans. "We can hardly afford to feed ourselves and families, and we cannot take on these children". Sean, his wife and friends took them all and constructed an orphanage with a special blind unit. Many were sick, some had no clothes; others did not even have names! They were given health care, clothed and fed. And named. Here they were, bright and shiny and ready for their outing. (I should mention that John was 74 years old and diabetic. He was also confined to a wheel chair as he had lost the use of both legs).

2. George had a modest job as a driver for an international NGO in Sri Lanka. He was married but saddened by the lack of children. A friend asked him to care for two street children while he tried to find homes for them. George and Mary kept the children and as is so often the case after adoption, they later had two children of their own. Meanwhile the two street children had increased to six, then ten, then twenty and more! A Swedish Church adopted the cause and promised to help. A hostel was built on the small plot of land where George and Mary had their little home. The hostel was now occupied by 50 children including George and Mary's own two. They lived together like brothers and sisters in a tight family ranging from 18 months to 18 years. I met them just after the oldest girl had passed her A-level

examinations. The older ones helped the younger with chores and homework, George said goodnight to all of them, read the younger ones stories and Mary gave up her work to become 'mother' of her huge family.

This story has a sad ending. The local authority stepped in to demand that either the all the boys or all the girls be given up and sent to an orphanage. "It is not right that boys and girls should be mixed up in this way" George pointed out that many families have a mixture of boys and girls who live together. Mary, of sterner stuff, fought hard. The local authority had its own way and half the children were removed to a single-sex orphanage. You can imagine the tears.

3. The workshop was about "Caring for Disabled People". It was held in Bangladesh in the extreme north and 50% of the participants were disabled physically or sensorily. The long journey from the south had been planned intentionally by Sarah so that all could experience the problems of travelling in difficult terrain - toilet stops, loading and unloading wheel chairs, mobility management etc. On arrival the 'temporarily abled' shared rooms with a disabled friend so that the caring experience could also be shared. Some of the participants were from other countries: Nemka was from Nepal and totally blind. One evening session was disrupted by a power cut and the projector failed. Nemka heard the groan but had no idea of the cause which was explained to him with concerns about how we were going to get to dinner and then to our rooms. Nemka laughed loudly. Suddenly he was the only able person there. He knew his way around every corridor and led us, one by one, to our rooms. When he took me to mine he asked me if I would be able to manage! Back in Nepal Nemka started his own NGO for blind people. All his employees (with one sighted person to read external mail) are blind. He has found employment for about 100 and supported five blind people to complete university Master's courses!

We can change the world. Little by little; step by step. We may not cause a global revolution but we can leave it a better place than we found it. Maybe we just touch a few hearts as we go along.

FOREWORD

I was honoured - but slightly concerned - to be asked to write the Foreword for this book. Concerned, because I had not then read the text and did not know what a gold mine of inspiration and invaluable information it is! As soon as I began to skim the contents, any concern evaporated and was overtaken by sheer delight. Therefore, I am indeed not only honoured, but also delighted, to recommend this small book for many reasons.

First, because it will be an invaluable resource for anyone, of any age, background and experience who might be considering the possibility of undertaking some kind of humanitarian or aid work.

Secondly, in my experience there is no shortage of good-hearted, competent people who are very keen to explore openings for helping people in other parts of the world, less fortunate than we are. Almost every time I have the privilege of speaking about the work of our small Humanitarian Aid Relief Trust [www.hart-uk.org] people approach me to ask if and how they can become involved with the kind of work we do. But, while I am naturally very happy that there are so many people of good will who genuinely want to help others who are suffering in so many parts of our world, I have always been worried by a lack of an immediate source of advice to which they can turn to obtain relevant information as to how they should proceed. Now, this excellent publication solves that problem!

Thirdly, I certainly see no sign of so-called 'compassion fatigue' in Britain today and I am encouraged by, I believe, increasing numbers of people who are willing to consider leaving their comfort zones [not necessarily for a long-term commitment] to visit some of the dark and challenging places where people suffer from war or the aftermath of war, from oppression and persecution or from a natural disaster.

Fourthly, sadly, there will be no lessening of the need to put out hands of help and friendship to such people in need. Complex emergencies and disasters, both natural and human-made are increasing. The last decade, and the last year especially, are among the worst on record. Moreover, climate changes are

expected to increase the frequency of natural disasters, and possibly conflicts; and, as always the poorest of the poor will be the most affected

Fifth, economic crises have put millions out of work. Voluntary work may be one way of enhancing a career while looking for another position. Other people who have much to offer and may wish to consider spending some time helping others in humanitarian work include students taking a 'gap-year' between school and university (and how more valuable experience they will bring to their university studies if they have undertaken humanitarian aid work in some foreign land!). And many others with so much to offer include people with disabilities, those taking a mid-career break and older people, possibly retired, who have a wealth of knowledge and experience to share.

Finally, I am delighted to recommend this book, unique in terms of its broad range of practical advice about seeking, applying and preparing for and then developing a career in voluntary work and humanitarian employment. Other distinctive and invaluable features include suggestions for continuing educational development while in short-term contracts in different countries. And all this wealth of essential information is presented in such an easy-read way that it is a pleasure to read. Once opened, I could hardly put it down. That is a rare experience!

The authors collectively have more than seventy years of field work with management and policy experiences in governmental and non-governmental (local, national, international, academic and commercial) organisations. It is this wealth of knowledge, wisdom, practical experience and humour which have come together to make this book such a distinctively valuable and user-friendly resource.

I hope it will delight and inspire all who pick it up and that it will encourage many to embark on some form of humanitarian and aid work, which may change their lives and make a valued and valuable difference for people suffering in so many parts of our world today. Sometimes, when we look at the scale of human suffering, we can feel almost paralysed: we don't know where to begin - so we may just give up before we start. Whenever I feel like that, I remember

the words of a good friend, the late Ron Newby, founder of Global Care:

'I cannot do everything. But I must not do nothing.'

If we all do something, together we can make a difference. And I hope this book will encourage you who read it to do **your** 'something'.

Caroline (Baroness) Cox
CEO HART [Humanitarian Aid Relief Trust].

INTRODUCTION to the 1st Edition

More people are becoming employed by aid agencies as the frequency and complexity of emergency situations increase. Post-disaster intervention also requires international workers who are expert and experienced in relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction processes. While government, international and national agencies employ permanent staff, the random nature of humanitarian work means, inevitably, that many employees and consultants will be on short-term contracts. However willing, some find it difficult to enter the humanitarian field while others will have to start searching for their next post almost as soon as they begin the current one.

This booklet is intended to help altruistic people enter humanitarian employment, and those who are already there to move on and upwards. To gain most from the ideas, you will need access to the Internet in order to explore and exploit the many web site addresses given.

If you are a person with a disability, still press on. It has been the privilege of the authors to work with several wonderful humanitarian colleagues who have been disabled physically or sensorily.

INTRODUCTION to the 2nd Edition

The popularity of the 1st edition (and its forerunner *How to Succeed in your Work - a tool kit*) has elicited comments of encouragement, corrections and further inclusions from a readership all over the world. Although the 1st edition has been in existence for less than a year, there has been a clear call for an expanded version.

Last year was one of the most devastating ever in terms of natural disasters. Earlier this year the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change reported a bleak conclusion of billions of people facing food and water shortages or flooding. As always it will be the poorest of the poor on whom emergencies will have the greatest impact and these people are also the least equipped to deal with the effects. At the same time Oxfam estimated that the number of people hit by climate-related disasters is expected to rise by about 50%, to reach 375 million a year by 2015.

So the need for competent and committed humanitarians will increase during the next few years. This book aims to help people become aid workers, to develop their careers during the first cycle of employment, and to build the capacity of those involved in preparing for emergencies and alleviating disasters.

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 Humanitarian and Aid Work

To be consistent with an earlier book in this series (*Better Ways to Prepare for Emergencies*) an emergency is defined as any hazard that emerges to threaten the life, livelihood, possessions or the environment of vulnerable people. (Other terms also regularly used in this field of work are ‘disasters’ and ‘crises’). If people are not prepared, or unable to cope, the emergency can become a disaster and the vulnerable people become victims. The terms ‘humanitarian’ and ‘aid’ are often used interchangeably by many organisations to indicate the nature of assistance that they provide to vulnerable people or disaster victims. This assistance can start before an emergency to provide: a warning system, training to increase coping strategies; and it can continue throughout the disaster period and into development. However, some use ‘aid’ to refer to the immediate help given during an emergency or a disaster response, reserving ‘humanitarian work’ for longer-term assistance.

Development work is often concerned with empowering the population targeted for assistance. The role of the agency involved may also change from one of providing direct life-saving support, to one which facilitates learning, self-awareness, and self-sustained linkages to other support measures such as local government services or the provision of microfinance by the commercial sector.



In this book 'humanitarian work' will be used to cover all aspects of saving lives and alleviating suffering from natural and human-made situations. It is about helping people to help themselves; humanitarian workers have to be good listeners in order to hear what beneficiaries want or need.

While there are no figures for the total number of aid workers or agencies in the world, in the last 50 years the UN alone has helped an estimated 50 million people restart their lives. With about 16 million refugees in the world today and about 26 million internally displaced people there is plenty of work for you at home or abroad!

In addition, one billion people throughout the world suffer from hunger, a figure which has recently increased by 100 million because of the global financial crisis, said the UN (BBC Report 19.06.2009). The UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) said the figure was a record high. The director general of the FAO said the level of hunger, one-sixth of the world's population, posed a "serious risk" to world peace and security. Almost all of the world's undernourished live in developing countries, with the most, some 642 million people, living in the Asia-Pacific region. In sub-Saharan Africa, the next worst-hit region, the figure stands at 265 million. Just 15 million people are left hungry in the developed world.

1.2 Emergency and Development

Emergencies arise in several ways with variations in speed of onset, frequency, severity, area affected, and duration. The impact they have will depend upon the skills, knowledge, capacity to respond, and resources available to the affected community.

The table below summarises the main natural emergencies and the effect they had in different parts of the world during the decade 1990-1999. The total numbers tell something of the areas where humanitarians will be needed most. (The picture does not change much even in the light of the tsunami that struck Asia in 2004 where 55% of the world's population live. For completion, the impacts of conflict and the major diseases - malaria, HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis - must also be added).

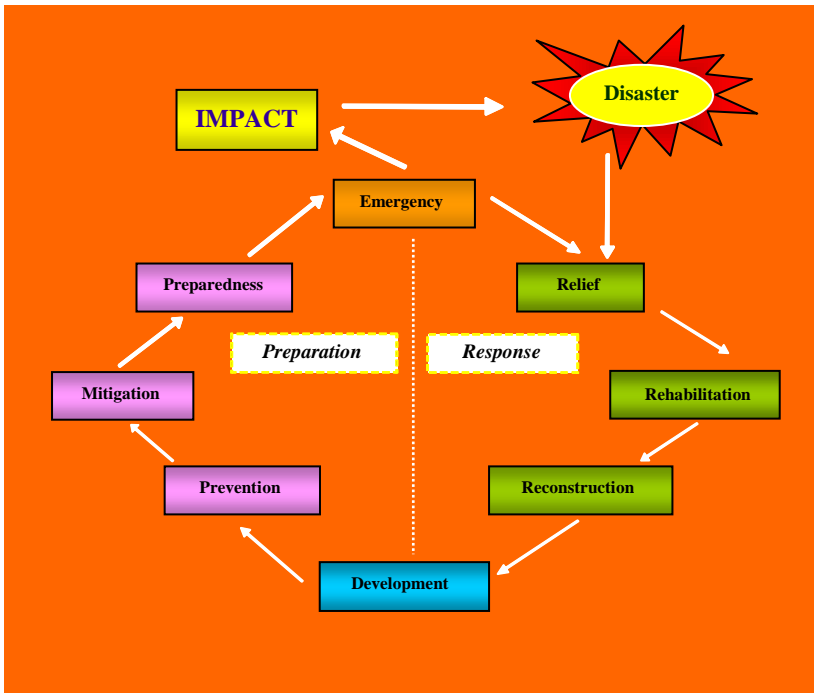
A totally new approach to future humanitarian developments can be found in www.humanitarianfutures.org, School of Social Science and Public Policy, King's College, London.

	AFRICA	AMERICAS	ASIA	EUROPE	OCEANIA	TOTAL
Droughts	65	24	31	11	12	143
Earthquakes	13	56	126	38	16	249
Epidemics	183	51	88	16	2	340
Floods	149	206	351	97	26	829
Forest Fires	6	43	20	23	8	100
Industrial/Transport	325	349	972	384	26	2,056
Landslides	7	39	83	18	6	153
Temperature extremes	5	23	39	30	5	102
Volcanoes	3	24	20	2	5	54
Wave surges etc	3	4	9		1	17
Wind Storms	39	269	332	115	66	821
TOTAL	798	1,088	2,071	734	173	4,864

World Disasters 1990-1999 (adapted from the World Disasters Report 2004)

The following diagram shows a generalized sequence of events that gives a framework to the types of humanitarian worker required. An uncontrolled emergency (e.g. the absence of a warning system or preparation training) leads to a disaster, a situation with which people cannot cope without local, national, or even international aid. (Various models exist for this chronology that can be further explored using the internet).

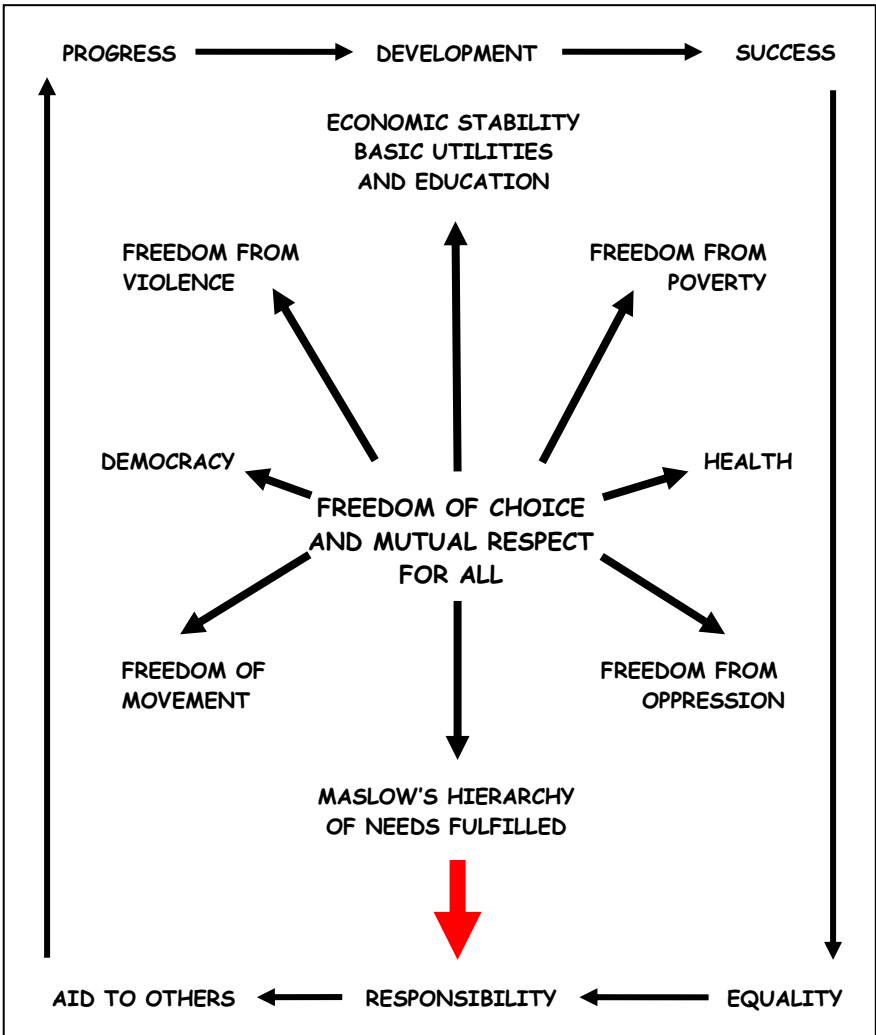
A disaster may be followed by the need for urgent and immediate relief perhaps involving search with dogs, and rescue. Clearing rubble, setting up health clinics, water supply, toilets, and feeding centres, reestablishing communications and infrastructures will precede reconstruction and a return to normality. Sometimes overlooked is the importance of providing psychological support to people traumatized, in shock, or bereaved. Logisticians will be essential to get people, goods and equipment to the right place at the right time.



The Emergency Cycle

With some disasters the cycle will not follow the above order. After earthquakes, for example, it may be necessary to clear rubble and re-establish roadways and transport before search and rescue (sometimes with dogs www.searchdogfoundation.org) can begin. The two processes may also take place together.

Reconstruction leads into development with opportunity being taken to improve provision of houses, schools, shops and hospitals as well as infrastructure, services and communications. Lessons must be learned from the response, and future plans should include ways to prevent or reduce the impact of future emergencies while training people to cope and establishing warning systems.



A Model for Development

Consider the centre of the diagram. A utopian society allows for freedom within a social framework while striving to achieve high quality for all facets of life. Progress leads to development and success. This can be measured against other societies. But equality brings responsibilities as well as rights, including the provision of aid to others less developed. Assisted societies then join the same circle of progress.

1.3 Who is Needed Where for Humanitarian Work?

It should be clear from the previous two sections that humanitarians come from all walks of life and a wide range of trades and professions to manage an emergency or a disaster response, and to assist with development. It is of paramount importance that humanitarian workers stay healthy, especially in the early stages of an emergency otherwise they become a burden and not a bonus. Humanitarian agencies increasingly place emphasis on caring for the mental and physical health of the response team.

There is room for young and old: many new graduates enjoy the experience of working abroad before settling down to a 'normal' career and domestic responsibilities. Older people and those taking retirement may wish to apply, in a humanitarian way, skills and knowledge acquired over a lifetime, before settling down to a book, fireside and slippers. Several countries are now offering their employees a mid career break. Such people can be invaluable in combining their energy and experience altruistically instead of materialistically. Some posts allow for accompanying families, although not all, and not usually in dangerous situations.

From emergency response to development work there are volunteering and job opportunities for almost every skill and occupation. The list of employment opportunities might include all of the following and many more trade skills (presently art, music and sports are under-utilised):

Agriculture: crop and animal husbandry, forestry, agronomy, fisheries, conservation, ecology, veterinary surgery, community development.

Education - training, facilitating and workshop organisation, teaching, university lecturing, researching, translating and interpreting, publishing and printing, capacity building, drama, teacher training.

Engineering and Science - mechanical, civil, electrical, building, auto engineering, microbiology, water, sanitation, waste management.

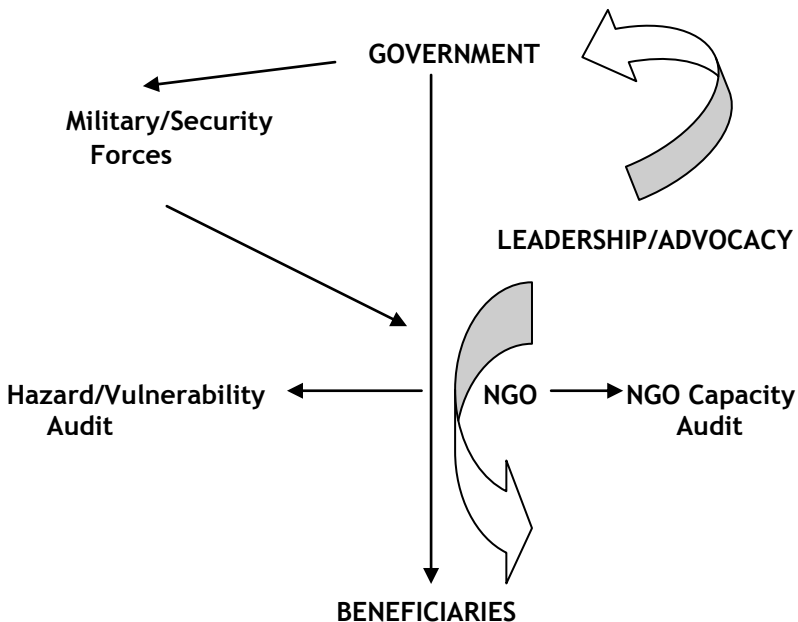
Health and Public Health - water and sanitation engineers, nutritionists, nursing, medicine, laboratory technology, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, social work, counselling,

psychiatry, first aid, epidemiology, orthotics, prosthetics, remedial art, music and sport.

Information Technology, computer operation, electronics, finance, administration, media, communications, appropriate technology.

Management - programmes, projects, offices, headquarters, logistics, human resources, stocks, vehicles, emergency, security, human rights, aircraft pilots.

Planning - architecture, surveying, town planning, writing, peace building and conflict reduction, photography/film, fund-raising, livelihoods, vocational training, law.



International, national and local non-government organisations (NGOs) generally work in emergency/development situations by invitation or registration with the host government. The government has the ultimate responsibility for people who are refugees or displaced in its country. However, sometimes the government, for political reasons or bureaucracy, may not be able to reach disaster victims rapidly, if at all, with necessary relief or assistance.

So NGOs function to assist governments with the care of refugees and the displaced. They must know their capacity to assist and that of the vulnerable to respond. Humanitarian workers may:

- raise funds for and awareness of emergency/disaster operations
- provide materials necessary for stock-piling/relief/development
- be assigned to specific roles for emergency/development
- assist with the organisation and provisions for camps for the displaced
- provide expert advice, education and training
- help in the design and dissemination of education materials
- support field workers from a desk office in the base country
- advocate and advise the government on emergency and development issues on behalf of the beneficiaries

2. STARTING OUT

2.1 How to Start

You have just watched or listened to the world news and perhaps feel a mixture of anger, sadness, guilt and frustration. For some time you have been wondering if there is anything you could do to help. In your own town there seem problems enough. World-wide the scale of suffering seems impossibly large:

- thousands displaced by floods here: victims without clean water and toilets there
- millions of refugees caused by war or natural disasters. An agency pleads for food
- children dying every few minutes of starvation in another drought-affected place
- thousands of AIDS orphans in a further country with a desperate shortage of care-givers

Money is always needed (both for direct assistance and to support the organisations providing that aid) and maybe you have responded to requests for donations. But now you are seriously thinking of doing more and moving into humanitarian work. How and where can you start?

1. You can look through local and national newspapers. You find some posts in charity headquarters perhaps that demand field experience or a qualification that you do not have; there are vacancies in other parts of the UK but outside your area of interest or expertise.
2. You go to the internet and type into Google, 'humanitarian job vacancies'. Up come hundreds of websites. Clicking on a random few leads to confusion as locations across the world and positions at all levels flash across the screen.

First stop and take stock of yourself. What are the characteristics required of a person who wants to provide humanitarian assistance?

- A desire to help others
- A sense of responsibility
- Ability to listen
- Decisive under pressure
- Recognition of own abilities and limitations
- Ability to work with and remain neutral with others of different life styles, cultures, beliefs even if they are in opposition to your views
- Persistence and commitment
- Altruistic more than materialistic
- Capacity to live and work in often isolated and difficult conditions
- Ability to relax; a sense of humour
- Competence with Internet, emails, word processing and use of spread sheets

You may not be the best person to decide if you have those characteristics. You might do better to discuss each one with an honest friend. And do not plan to go because of discontent with where you are: you could leave the frying pan for a much hotter fire!

Another approach is to take a career test through MAPP (Motivational Appraisal of Personal Potential). This can be done through www.mindtools.com. Following the test, the website gives a free broad outline of your characteristics, or you can pay for a fuller evaluation.

Right? You are still prepared to look for a humanitarian job? Then we need to slim down the high number of web sites listed when you typed 'humanitarian job vacancies' into Google. Here are just three to start:

1. www.reliefweb.int

ReliefWeb was launched in October 1996 and is administered by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). It is the world's leading on-line gateway to information (documents and maps) on humanitarian emergencies and disasters. It is an independent source of information, designed to assist the humanitarian community in effective delivery of emergency assistance. It provides timely, reliable and relevant information as events unfold, while emphasising the coverage of 'forgotten disasters'.

The site contains an extensive listing of vacancies that can be sent to you free on a weekly basis and arranged in order of countries or organisations. So invest some time to explore the site and gain a general background to humanitarian work and the opportunities available.

2. www.eldis.org

ELDIS is one of a family of knowledge services from the Institute of Development Studies, Sussex UK

Resources include:

- an ever-growing collection of editorially selected and abstracted full-text, online documents selected by their editors from more than 7,500 different publishers. All documents are available free of charge
- 24 subject-focused guides offer quick access to key documents, organisations, research themes, discussions and other key resources
- access to a database arranged by country, plus quick links to country briefing services on other websites
- an email news service
- a newsfeed to your website or newsreader for the latest information on 25 topics
- a selection of recent development news, announcements, email newsletters and job adverts

Additional facilities allow you to create your own website directly available to other like-minded people, and you can receive ELDIS content free on a CD Rom

3. www.charityjob.co.uk

The important strength of this site is that it advertises about 1000 voluntary jobs which are not indicated on many other sites. While it mainly focuses on UK paid jobs for over 400 organisations it also covers worldwide posts, offering a wider range of opportunities. It contains some feature articles and you can post your CV here for potential employers to read.

If you are ready to start applying, other international humanitarian information and jobs can be found in the following sites:

[Aid Workers Network](#)
[AlertNet Jobs](#)
[Association of International Consultants](#)
[Cambridge Data Systems - International Development Assistance](#)
[Careers Without Borders](#)
[Communication Initiative Recruitment and Vacancy Service](#)
[Consulting Base](#)
[The Development Executives Group](#)
[DEVEX](#)
[DevelopmentAid.org](#)
[Devjobs](#)
[DRC Development Employment Opportunities](#)
[ELDIS Development Jobs Listings](#)
[Expatriate Services - International Jobs](#)
[Foreign Policy Association Job Board](#)
[Global Health Network - International Jobs](#)
[Hot International Jobs](#)
[Idealist.org](#)
[Indevjobs](#)
[International Development Research Centre](#)
[International Jobs](#)
[International Job Sources/Opportunities](#)
[Microfinance Gateway Job Marketplace](#)
[Networklearning](#)
[Non-Profit Jobs Around the World](#)
[Overseas Jobs](#)
[Sustainable Development Job Bank](#)
[United Nations](#)
[University of Sussex Career Development Centre](#)
[URS Asia Pacific](#)
[Washington Post Job Search](#)

Other websites for job hunters will be found at the end of this book. Many international charitable organisations, such as Oxfam, Care, MSF and Save the Children, have websites in which their own vacancies are advertised. General advice on all aspects of job hunting is available free through The Career News www.thecareernews.com.

Maybe, on reflection, the time is not yet quite right for you to pack up, change your career or go abroad. You need a couple more years for the children to complete a stage of education, for your partner to retire, or to set a clearer sense of direction for yourself. If so, there are several things you can do to occupy some time and become better prepared for a major change of occupation to humanitarian work.

1. **Access to the Internet** can take you into a whole new educational experience. Type in key words (e.g. humanitarian, emergency, development, aid agencies, disasters, conflict, droughts, earthquakes, land slides, cyclones, epidemics etc). You will find many excellent articles in Wikipedia, so look out for these among the references brought up by your search.
2. **Your local library** will have books covering the subjects. You may be able to obtain literature from humanitarian agencies. Most have libraries of their own that you may be able to browse on request. The United Nations has produced a vast amount of literature. Worthwhile reading includes:
 - The Sphere Minimum Standards and Humanitarian Charter. (This can be downloaded free from the Sphere Project website www.sphereproject.org)
 - Davis, J and Lambert, R (2002). Engineering in Emergencies. A practical guide for relief workers 2nd Ed. (ITDG Publishing). ISBN: 1-85339-521-8. Do not be put off by the title. While this deals with engineering matters it covers the whole ground of emergency relief measures.
 - Wroe, M and Doney, M (2004) A Rough Guide to a Better World; and how you can help (Rough Guides Ltd). A highly valuable resource book which lets you know what to do - from a change in shopping habits to a change of job. It tells you the most effective ways of giving and gives contacts for relevant organisations. It can be obtained free or by donation through www.roughguides-betterworld.com.
3. Another way to gain insight into humanitarian work is to **Attend a Short Course** in an area relevant to some aspect of

your own expertise or interest. RedR UK (www.redr.org.uk) offers many such courses over days or weeks and some of their courses, funded by The European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Department (ECHO), offer academic recognition as they are credit-rated by Oxford Brookes University. Bioforce, Lille (France) (www.bioforce.asso.fr) provides news, extensive links and training in several aspects of logistics for development or relief. A First Aid course for Overseas Workers or a basic first aid course will always be useful.

The London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine has a programme of Masters' degrees in areas of Tropical Medicine which can be studied full-time or by distance learning. Christian doctors and nurses can attend courses arranged by www.healthserve.org. (Enquiries to healthserve@cmf.org.uk) For the more adventurous with more money, well organised programmes in emergency management can be taken in Thailand through the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center just outside Bangkok (www.adpc.net).

3. **Distance Learning** is a popular way to study courses at all levels (see Section 3.10 for more ideas on this approach).

2.2 Voluntary Work

2.2.1 General advice

You have already found out that many organisations want experienced people to fill their vacancies. The problem is how to gain experience and show altruistic commitment before getting a job. One way is through voluntary work, full-time or part-time, either at home or abroad.

'Voluntary work' is not necessarily without any remuneration although some posts are without financial compensation. However, packages for voluntary services can range through expenses cover, provision of basic accommodation to substantial allowances and other rewards including a terminal bonus which can equal the value of all the income gained. A terminal bonus is sometimes called a 'resettlement allowance'. You need to check carefully as not all organisations will readily declare what will be covered.

There are agencies which will help you find voluntary work and some charge high fees. But be warned!

“I found two English girls about 18 or 19 years old crying in a café in Sri Lanka where I had lived and worked as a volunteer for six years. Each had saved GPS 3,500 during their last two years of school and paid this as a fee to an agent who promised appropriate work in Sri Lanka. They paid their flights and came. Nobody met them at the airport and a search showed no agents office or address in the country. With the little money in their pocket they came from the airport to the capital where I met them. Fortunately I was able to take them to my own organisation where one of the local staff who had ‘mothered’ me on arrival took them under her wing and eventually saw them back home safely”.

Some towns have centres where requests for volunteers are coordinated. This can lead to help with the handicapped, charity shop work, friends of hospital groups, support for day care centres, teaching asylum seekers IT, or helping the homeless to get back on their feet. Such activities can be followed during studies or at weekends and make valuable contributions to life experiences and your CV. If you have done such work during your undergraduate years it can be a major impetus towards humanitarian work.

Another option is to seek an internship. Many Humanitarian and development organisations are willing and interested to take on young (and older) short term staff for specific learning and experience-gaining, in a variety of fields. Usually, in cases of both internship and volunteerism, some cost covering is undertaken by the organisation, in relation to accommodation, and maybe a small contribution to living costs.

2.2.2 Advice about working overseas

www.aidworkers.net is a site that is supported by about 19,000 humanitarians around the world and provides a forum for advice, for the interchange of ideas as well as answers to practical questions about anything from training to repair of village water pumps. The following is adapted from a response from the Voluntary Service

Overseas Enquiries Unit (enquiry@vso.org.uk) to a query posted on the site about voluntary opportunities:

Research an organisation thoroughly before you pay any costs. To do this you can:

- Contact returned volunteers from that organisation to ask about their experience
- Look at the organisation's website, and independent websites set up by people who've been involved with them
- If it is UK based, see if it's registered with the Charities Commission, (not all organisations need register) www.charity-commission.gov.uk Tel: 0870 333 0123. Also: Returned Volunteer Action (an umbrella organisation for all Returned Volunteers) Tel: 020 7278 0804
- Make sure you understand the terms and conditions of that organisation
- Know what work you will be doing, dates, times and activities
- Check who arranges and pays for accommodation, living expenses, flights etc
- Check who arranges and pays for health insurance, visas, and work permits
- Understand if there are other related duties/commitments you need to undertake
- Ensure that you receive as much of the information and conditions discussed in writing, either by email or in a hard copy, so that you may refer to the agreement later if required.

2.2.3 Working independently of any organisation

It can be very rewarding to find your own work, and arrange your own travel, accommodation and medical insurance. If you're focused on a specific country, or type of work, or have contacts in a country, this can be easy to arrange. There are, however many pitfalls, such as applying for work visas and residence permits, necessary for all volunteer workers in most countries. Authorities in many countries can be suspicious of foreigners travelling and working independently. It can also be difficult to be accepted for work, especially if a local person can do that job.

2.2.4 Specific leads to other organisations

- Recommendations from friends, colleagues and family should be tried first
- Other agencies you've already been in touch with

- Your local library reference section and directories
- Search engine for specific websites www.google.com
- World Service Enquiry www.wse.org.uk acts as a UK umbrella for overseas agencies.
- Volunteer Development England www.vde.org.uk membership association (Tel: 0121 633 4555) for volunteering in the UK, but also has a section on overseas work.
- Overseas Jobs Express www.overseasjobsexpress.com lists work for everyone.
- Year Out Group www.yearoutgroup.org gives advice to students on planning a gap year.
- Volunteering www.volunteering.org.uk is a useful resource of information on volunteering
- www.avso.org is the EU sponsored volunteering association in the EU and beyond.
- Timebank www.timebank.org.uk suggests ways to use your free time in the UK and overseas
- Worldwide Volunteering www.worldwidevolunteering.org matches you to relevant organisations for a fee
- Working Abroad www.workingabroad.com has a database of placements for any work overseas
- Do-it www.do-it.org.uk is the "home of volunteering on the web" and provides many links
- Idealist www.idealists.org gives free information on agencies and any work overseas

Are you living in Africa?

- Contact www.nepad.org to see how Africans are supporting Africans. You can also contact these agencies www.findajobinafrica.com, www.adrh-apave.com.

Are you based in Australia?

- See Ausaid <<http://www.ausaid.gov.au>> and www.volunteeringaustralia.org

Are you living in France?

- See the French cooperation agency www.afd.fr

Are you based in North America?

- See Interaction www.interaction.org for contacts.

Want to work in South America?

- See www.samexplo.org

Want to work in a Spanish Organisation?

- <http://www.hacesfalta.org/>
- <http://www.peopleinaid.org/>

<http://www.congde.org/index.php/vercontenido/4145> - Website of the Coordination body of development NGOs in Spain

- www.peopleinaid.org/pool/files/publications/volunteering-resource-sheet-final.pdf

- The United Nations Volunteers www.unv.org recruits volunteers from any UN country.

- Many other countries and regions have organisations that send volunteers to other countries. You can contact them through your local government authority.

2.2.5 The British Volunteer Agencies' Liaison Group (BVALG) links the work of five UK-based sending agencies: CIIR, Skillshare International, International Service (IS), the Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) and BESO. It aims to share the experience of its members and promote discussion on topics related to their work in development. The five sending agencies are committed to fostering long-term development by placing skilled, experienced, mature and motivated people to work with, develop and strengthen local institutions and to share skills with organisations in developing countries. The most common skills required are in the fields of health, agriculture, education, social development and technical training, but there are also vacancies for experienced professionals from a wide variety of other backgrounds. Assignments are generally for a minimum of two years and overseas workers are paid a local-level living allowance. Conditions of service may vary from one agency to another. For further information on individual agency contacts and BVALG publications contact the BVALG Coordinator Email: Elsebeth@unais.org.uk. Website: www.oneworld.org/is.

2.2.6 A Final Point



What you can see of an iceberg is only about 30%: the rest is underwater. Access to work in the humanitarian sphere has a parallel: most vacancies are filled through direct personal contact (underwater) and less by indirect openly advertised posts. So personally contact everybody you know and some people that you may not know who might be aware of humanitarian employment opportunities. How to do that will become clearer as you read on.

2.3 Putting Your Life on Paper

The selector or human resource officer reviewing your application will be looking for three things - 'CAN, WILL, and FIT'

1. **CAN** this person do the job?
2. **WILL** this person accept the job if offered? (If the candidate can do the work too easily without being challenged, interest may not be sustained and the candidate may leave through boredom)
3. Will the candidate **FIT** the ethos of the organisation and the team?

Generally, the first knowledge that an organisation may have of you is likely to be your CV and letter of application. Therefore it is absolutely imperative that you reflect on the age-old addendum when preparing this document or contact: "first impressions count"! Here are some general guidelines which will help the construction of your *curriculum vitae* (CV) or résumé. These are:

- Keep one full CV in which you record all the details of your professional life. This is increasingly important as you get older and your CV longer. From this you can select material specifically for answering a job advertisement. You are not likely to be the only one applying for 'that job with your name on it': tailoring your CV to specifically address the CAN/WILL/FIT factors is essential. (You can find a choice of suggested formats and headings in MS Publisher/File/New/Publications for Print/Resume)
- Start with your personal details and contact information. If you add a photograph, make sure it is appropriate. And smile!
- Include your mission statement - where you want to be in 5 years time
- Avoid using the personal pronoun 'I'
- Always be truthful. Experienced interviewers are skilful in checking consistency
- Use bullet points rather than full text
- List work experience from the latest backwards. Here there are many formats and layouts you may use, depending on the types of work experience you have gained. These experiences can be laid out in reverse chronological order, or thematically,

for example, under different headings ('technical', 'management', 'teamwork', 'training', or other specific fields). There are numerous free CV-support sites on the internet to help you structure yours, and even internet consultants that will give you free advice

- Use white space to allow the reader to add comments: do not feel obliged to fill all the space
- Do not miss out any time: missed periods raise suspicion
- Include evaluative statements in several instances but always in a positive way e.g. "This project was not completed as funding was withdrawn". "Reports were always presented on time which led to increased productivity". (This is a better approach than simply listing experiences without indicating their success or otherwise). "Currently studying French" is better than stating "Little knowledge of French", especially if the language is requested
- Use 'footer' for page number, date and file name
- Think about Indicating religious, political activities, sports and leisure pursuits. These may form a link with the interviewer who shares your hobbies/beliefs. While you are not legally obliged to give this information, some of the associated skills may be transferable. Or they can exclude you from a post in which you may be unhappy through conflict of personal interests. If you include "Reading", then add an extension e.g. "Reading Chinese poetry"



- Give referees and their contact details but add a note asking for them not to be contacted without prior permission. (Your

choice of referees tells much about your associates and may be particularly significant for educational posts.) This will allow you to contact them first to update them with your latest CV and a copy of the job description so the referees write references appropriate for the post

- Keep to three pages (two to four maximum) (difficult for older people with longer experiences!). Your CV should pass the '20 seconds' test. Remember that the person reading it may have hundreds more on the desk to be scrutinised. Ending your CV with a statement like, "I certify that this document is a true record of my life activities and contains the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth" is generally a waste of space
- Spell and grammar check it thoroughly (making sure you use the correct form of English i.e. USA or UK etc if that is the language being used). Take the opportunity to remove repetitious and unnecessary words
- Ask somebody else to read it through because your 'spell checker' will not pick up an inappropriate word. E.g. 'there' instead of 'their'
- Keep your CV updated. Important details, such as dates or publications, are easily forgotten with the passing of time.

Put yourself in the position of a Head of Human Resources. What CV changes might you suggest to Natalie, Alfred and Rose (over)? Then write your CV.

Toronto. Typing mistakes in a job application can kill a would-be employee's chance of landing a job.

A survey of 100 Canadian executives showed that more than 20% of executives said a single typo on a resume or cover letter could cost a potential employee a job, while 28% said two mistakes would kill their chances.

But 19% of the executives said they would still consider an applicant with four or more typos on their resume.

Common mistakes include: "Dear Sir or Madman", "I'm attaching my resume for you to review", "Following is a grief overview of my skills" and "Have a keen eye for derail."

REUTERS.

Natalie Craigen

345 Huan Dao Dong Road
Mei Jiang Nan Residence Zone
Tianjin
China.

Phone : +86 (0)2225 478596. Email : NatalieCr@hotmail.com



PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHER

Professional experience gained within varied practical and development roles, mainly within Modern Sport (games, gymnastics, athletics, swimming, P.E., outdoor education). Believing a mature, constructive and eclectic teaching approach and effective working relationships between staff, students and parents are crucial to a responsive student attitude, a successful learning environment and meeting the needs of children and school mandates. Now looking to make a continued significant contribution for a school in an international setting, preferably as a Classroom Teacher, a Specialist Primary P.E. Teacher, Key Stage Co-ordinator or a position of similar responsibility.

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

- Sports /P.E. Development
- Planning in compliance with N.C.
- Communication in early years
- Organising programmes
- Differentiating learning activities
- Policy and plan construction
- Primary liaison work.
- Curriculum co-ordination
- Extra curricular teams
- Organising house events
- Diversity (Equal Ops.)
- Pastoral care
- Outdoor education
- Staff mentoring
- Computer literacy
- Organising productions
- Teamwork
- Writing plans / reports

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Bachelor of Education	Junior Primary / Junior (University of South Australia, Majoring in Psychology and Physical Education).	1996 - 00
Certificate	Psychology and Child Development (Open Learning)	1995

Other certifications / professional training courses have supplemented my extensive hands-on experience: First Aid, Sports Medicine, Surf Survival, Fitness Leadership, Swimming Instructor (AUSWIM), Mandatory Notification Training, Aerobics Instructor, Taekwondo Instructor (Black belt), Numeracy strategy, Literacy insets including ESL children in literacy, KS2 Grammar for writing, Computer literacy (ICT).

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE AND SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENTS



CLASS TEACHER (YEAR 5)

Rego International School, Tianjin China (<http://www.regoschool.org>)

Oct 03 - Present

Teacher of all subjects within the Primary Curriculum, including maths, design and technology games, gymnastics, athletics, swimming and Physical Education as well as National Numeracy and Literacy strategies. Supervising one Classroom Assistant, organising events, PTA evenings and pastoral care.

- Gained experience of teaching children with English as a second language.
- Designed visual and interactive lessons and organised English language sleepovers mainly for the 90% of the students that are Korean, (speaking little or no English).
- Encouraged parents to be actively involved in many areas of school life whilst developing close working relationships an active PTA and an open door policy.
- Advised and supported staff on planning, assessment and resources, including lesson modelling.
- Organised, lunchtime and after school clubs, sponsored events and speak only English days.
- Organised the opening ceremony that involved a major performance including dance, song and music.
- Assisted in overseeing S.A.T. programme including moderation and agreement training.
- Introduced year-by-year programme of Grammar and Punctuation work.
- Planned and developed assessment procedures with P.E. and implemented IT within this process.
- Restructured P.E. programme and delivered new and successful P.E. course.
- Ran the team sports' club (many Regional Leagues).
- Met all increasing intake demands.
- Identified gaps and drew up schemes and policies to ensure a broader curriculum is covered.

Alfred D. Klass

1903 Main St. Seattle, USA 4931
(081) 585-9999
adklass@nov.ka

Globally aware graduate focused on the wide-reaching political, economic, social and cultural factors contributing to complex humanitarian issues in the developing world. Committed to an internationally focused career in conflict resolution, emergency relief and sustainable development.

“Alfred is an able young man with a tremendous heart and an unusually deep desire to help others. His dedication and willingness to sacrifice his own wants are rare and remarkable.” - Willard Morgan, Director, Maine Coast Semester

ASSETS	Ability to excel when given a high degree of responsibility; highly developed problem solving capabilities; ambition to succeed; strong interpersonal skills.
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GOAL	Position with QVY in emergency relief, peace building or health.
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EDUCATION	Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, Liverpool, England Post-Graduate Diploma in Humanitarian Assistance, June 2005, Specialist Option: Water/Sanitation and Logistics <i>Program highlights: International Humanitarian Law; Complex Emergencies; Public Health in Emergencies; Nutrition; Environmental Health; Development</i>
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University of Vermont, Burlington, Vermont
Bachelor of Science in Natural Resources, December 2004. Major: Leisure Management
Presidential Scholarship recipient

Relevant coursework included: World Food, Population & Sustainability; Community Development Economics Environmental Problem Analysis; Agriculture and Resource Entrepreneurship

University of Cape Town, South Africa
Semester study abroad program, February-June 2003

EXPERIENCE **Newport Yacht Club, Newport, Rhode Island**

Intern, Summer 2004

- Developed unique and successful curriculum and daily lesson plans for inexperienced junior and adult sailors; all participants competent at conclusion of program.
- Managed daily operations of a thriving sailing program, monitored performance of sailing instructors, handled parental matters.
- Requested to return by staff, parents and sailors.

Casa Madre Maria Clara Orphanage, Maputo, Mozambique

Volunteer, Fall 2003

- Coordinated daily activities for the children and taught English language classes.
- Assessed and managed daily healthcare needs for 100 orphans between 3 months and 18 years.
- Assisted in the purchase of food and supplies.

Center for New Life Orphanage, Dondo, Mozambique

Volunteer, Fall 2003

- Aided in the planning, development and construction of a new children's home

and farm located in a remote area of the country.

- Played a key role in expanding the children's visits to homes of relatives, enhancing familial relationships.

Leliebloem Children's Home, Cape Town, South Africa

Volunteer, Winter/Spring 2003

- Acted as a mentor for at-risk youth residing in a Cape Flats township where violence and gangsterism are prevalent.
- Evaluated behavioral issues of children in an effort to ensure professional psychological analysis.

Campus Children's Center, Burlington, Vermont

Assistant Teacher, 2001-2002

- Participated as a member of a cooperative team with the goal of achieving an appropriate learning environment.
- Utilized experiential learning techniques and contributed to the development of mentally and physically stimulating activities for children age 2-3.

SKILLS

- Computer proficiency: Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint.
- Conversational Portuguese and Spanish.

ACTIVITIES

- Volunteer, Vermont Children's Hospital, Burlington, VT, Fall 2002.
- Traveled throughout Europe and southern Africa, including Botswana, Swaziland, Namibia, South Africa, Zimbabwe and Mozambique.

Rose Laura Malagani

Personal Particulars

Date of birth / Age	04 th November 1978 / 28 Years
Sex	Female
Marital status	Single
Nationality	Asian
Address	49 West Place, Toluene, Lulworthshire
Contact no.	0072 (0)391 6492074
E-mail	malagan@fin.com



Higher Education (BCS and NCC)

Year achieved	2005		
Professional Body	The British Computer Society		
Level	Professional Graduate	Grade	Pass

Year achieved	2005		
Professional Body	The British Computer Society		
Level	Professional Project	Grade	Pass
Description	Setting up the Information Infrastructure for a medium sized educational institute.		
Technologies Used	Windows 2003 Standard/Enterprise in a Domain Environment. Active Directory, DNS, Group Policies Installing Configuring and Maintaining ISA 2000, 2004 Beta. Installing Configuring and Maintaining Exchange Server 2000,2003 Setting up Web server using IIS		

Year achieved	2004		
Professional Body	The British Computer Society		
Level	Professional Diploma	Grade	Pass

Year achieved	2003		
Professional Body	National Computing Center [NCC – UK]		
Level	International Diploma in Computer Studies [IDCS]	Grade	Distinction

Professional Training

Oracle 9i Database Administration: Fundamentals I (1Z0-031)	Type	40hrs Course Including practices
	Specialization	Database design and administration
	Certification	Oracle Inc. http://www.oracle.com
	Trainer	Mrs. Lakshma Balasuriya (Oracle Certified Professional) DMS Software Technologies (Pvt) Ltd. http://www.dmsswt.com/

Professional Qualifications

Year achieved	2005
Certification Body	Microsoft http://www.microsoft.com/mcp
Title	Microsoft Certified Professional
Exam	Developing and Implementing Web Applications with Microsoft Visual C# .NET and Microsoft Visual Studio .NET
Score	1000/1000

Year achieved	2003
Certification Body	International Webmasters Association (IWA) and the Association of Internet Professionals (AIP) http://www.iwanet.org , http://www.prosofttraining.com
Title	Certified Internet Webmaster (Associate)
Exam	ID0-410 Fundamentals of Web Development
Score	100/80

Microsoft Certification Validation

URL	https://mcp.microsoft.com/authenticate/validate/mcp.aspx
Transcript ID	703462
Access Code	7C5671CA

Knowledge Areas

Database Management systems

Programming Languages and other packages

Developing web based applications using C#.NET (Web forms)
Web site development (Dream weaver 2005, Fireworks, Flash)
Photoshop
SQL Server 2000

Operating Systems

Setting up windows 2003 Standard/Enterprise in a Domain Environment.

Active Directory, DNS

Group Policies

Installing Configuring and Maintaining Exchange Server 2000,2003

School Education – Anula Vidyalaya Nugegoda

Examination	Subject	Grade
G.C.E O/L – 1998		
	English	D
	Mathematics	C
	Sinhala	D
	Social Studies	D
	Agriculture	D
	Buddhism	D
	Science	D
	Music	D
	Practical project	D
G.C.E A/L – 2001		
	Biological Science	C
	Chemistry	S
	Agricultural Science	B
	English	A

Employment History

Organization	IDM Computer Studies (Pvt) Ltd – Interactive Training Division
Designation	Lecturer
Duration	2003 May – Current
Lecturing Areas	SQL server 2000, HTML, ASP.NET, Multimedia, JavaScript, Microsoft Office, Advanced Excel
Responsibilities/ Nature of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Classroom Setup- Lecture notes preparation- Student assessment Installation of Application Software, Operating Systems [Windows 2000, ME, XP, 2003]

I here by certify that particulars furnished by me in this application are true and accurate and that I have not suppressed any essential information.

6 April 2010
Malagani

Miss. R. L. U.I.

NOTE: There is no ideal model for a CV. The three examples above have strengths and weaknesses. Your CV must be adapted to the post for which you are applying. If the post is directly related to the work you are currently doing, make sure this is on the front page. If it is unrelated but with transferable skills put the Work Experience section later. Should you be applying for a teaching/facilitating/training opportunity, make sure that your educational background and experience are 'up front'.

2.4 Writing Your Application Letter

Consider two letters of application.

Dear Sir/Madam

APPLICATION FOR THE POST OF

I wish to apply for the post of

I assure you that if appointed I will work to the best of my abilities and for the betterment of your organisation.

Please find enclosed a copy of my resume.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

In the first:

- it is brief and easily read
- but the letter is addressed impersonally and contains spelling mistakes. There is wasteful repetition of the post title
- there is no indication of where the advert was seen, which does not help the employer to know which of several publications are the most useful for future post advertisements
- there is no information that will entice the reader to continue reading the CV

- there is no indication, other than the promise of loyalty, of anything that the candidate can add to the required qualities
- the font type may be seen as frivolous and not business-like

Dear Ms Bluebell

I wish to apply for the post of **Assistant Project Officer – African Refugee Children** as described in “Refugees Records” (27.06.2011).

I have experience of working in the conflict areas of Asia, of working with children and young people, interviewing, training, negotiating with the local and other authorities, and I am committed to assisting the peace process in XXXXX to become sustainable.

You require	My experience
A degree in Social Work, Education, or Psychology	In-service training in Education, BSc Chemistry (with Physiology), MSc Pharmacology, More than ten years teaching experience.
Training experience	Extensive experience in training, and training of trainers for international, national and local organisations
Computer literacy	Recent update in MS Office Professional courses obtaining Merit in MS Word
Ability to work in a cross-cultural environment	In addition to working in Israel, have worked in India and Asia with Muslim, Hindu and Christian colleagues.
Psychosocial programmes dealing with children	Worked with children’s camps in the UK and with street children in Brazil.

In further support of my application I have excellent writing skills, strong organisation and communication abilities, and I can work independently (in isolation if necessary) and expect to deliver a finished product on time.

My curriculum vitae and contact details of three referees are attached and I look forward with optimism to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

In the second:

- the letter is addressed to a named person

- more space is taken up than in the first but it carries much more information and is still contained on one side of A4 paper
- the source of the advertisement is given
- the requirements are related to the qualities and experiences of the candidate
- where the candidate does not have requirements (e.g. experience of Africa) other experiences are offered that could be transferable e.g. worked in Asia. The candidate does not have an education degree but does have ten years experience in teaching
- other skills are offered which are not demanded by the post but which could well be important to the employer
- the confident ending shows the candidate is keen
- in a few seconds the reader has learned enough of the applicant to want to see the CV

When you send an application for a post put yourself in the position of the selection personnel. They are busy people who may be dealing with several vacancies and several hundred applications at the same time. If there is only one opening, it is of little comfort to know that you were the second or third choice. Your application has to stand out among the others. What devices are available for achieving this? Here are some ideas for you to consider: not all are appropriate in all situations.

1. Print your CV on lightly tinted paper or in a different font colour: dark blue is good: it must be suitable for photocopying. Choose the font type carefully and do not change this in the rest of the document
2. Address your application to a named person. You may have to telephone the company to obtain the details
3. If possible avoid sending your application by email unless this has been specifically requested. If this has to be done, back it up with a hard copy or a fax. Emails can easily be ignored and they do not carry the compulsion of attention demanded by a hard copy
4. Research the organisation thoroughly and read the advertisement/job description carefully so you supply the information that is required for the post. Show that you will 'fit' into the organisation if offered the position. When jobs are advertised, a set of key competencies or personal requirements are usually publicised. Build their key words into your application
5. Indicate that you have more to offer than is being requested

6. Knock on doors! This can be useful if you are exploring opportunities where vacancies have not been advertised. Ask if somebody in the organisation could spare you time to explain more about their activities (having read brochures or web site information). Some have struck lucky and landed a post that was about to be advertised.
7. Offer to work for nothing in order to gain experience. Many have been given this opportunity and later been offered a permanent appointment having proved their worth. However, be careful not to undersell yourself
8. Include short examples of your work e.g. a report, publication or article/brochure that you have prepared.

A thirty four year old man (with background and qualifications in electronics, outdoor sports and the music industry) decided to move into humanitarian work. After 81 applications he had only been offered one job to work in the slums of Calcutta in India, for which he was required to pay his airfare, board and lodgings, and work for free. At his expense he went instead for a holiday period to a conflict-affected country in Asia, collected a list of members of the Local Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies and started knocking on doors. Within a short time he had landed a two-year contract with a local organisation. Two years later he was head-hunted through a working contact to join an international agency for a four-year contract in the same country. On completion of this term he negotiated with another agency and moved to the Democratic Republic of the Congo in order to broaden his experience to include Africa. Now 43 years old he is a Country Director of an NGO in India. To backstop his professional life, he has almost completed a Master's Degree by Distance Learning.

2.5 Preparing for the Interview

You have been invited to attend an interview for a foreign posting! What can you expect? Almost certainly you have been interviewed before but this one might be different. Interviewers can adopt one or more of several styles and you may have to confront different interviewing groups who are looking for different information. The interview process could be brief, or spread over several days. You may be interviewed at the head office of the organization in your country, and additionally by field staff from the country for which

you hope to be destined. Rarely you might be asked to travel abroad but a telephone interview, or increasingly video interview, is more common. Be sure to confirm the local time of the call so you are available at the right time!

Approaches include:

1. Telephone interview. This is often a first step for the organisation. It is usually not too technical and undertaken by someone from the personnel department of the organisation. They may want to go briefly through your CV (so have it to hand for reference!) and get an initial 'feeling' about you. Remember they cannot see you so your tone, intonation and choice of words are vital. This is your first 'personal contact' with the organisation, and a good impression will enable you to move to the next step - either a second more technical interview or an offer to come for a face to face interview.
2. One-to-one. This may be formally across the desk of an office, or relaxed in a café or restaurant
3. Group interview. Panel members take turns to ask questions covering different aspects of the work
4. Stress interviews. Stories are told of coffee being 'accidentally' spilled on candidates to measure reactions. More likely are group games or simulations under time pressure in the presence of a management psychologist who records your leadership/team qualities, response to pressure etc
5. Scenarios. You may be given a humanitarian scenario and asked to write an essay on "How you would deal with it"
6. Psychometric tests. These are intended to measure your aptitudes and qualities or personality characteristics. Many can be freely downloaded for practice (see section 3.12)
7. Presentations. You can be asked to come prepared with a presentation on a given topic, or asked to prepare one during the interview period
8. In-tray exercise. A pile of documents needs your responses. Make sure you read all the documents before responding as some lower in the pile may modify or cancel actions suggested by those higher up!
9. Candidate groups. Generally you will not meet other applicants for a single post to prevent experience swapping.

However, if several candidates are needed to form a team, you may be interviewed with others and subjected to group activities

The success of an interview depends upon the 'connection' between you and the interviewers. The outcome is influenced by some unknowns (the psychology of the people and the 'chemistry' between them), luck (common hobbies), and known factors (the organisation ethos and needs, and your experience and qualifications). So, control the aspects within your power.

1. Investigate the organisation's culture, programmes, and finances. But resist the temptation to show off what you've researched unless you have a question directly related to your career
2. Arrive before time, and introduce yourself with a firm handshake. Look as if you already belong. Learn the dress code and err on the side of conservatism (a prior visit could establish this)
3. Listen carefully to the questions and take charge of the interview! The most successful interviews feel like friendly conversations. When your interviewer has an agenda (such as the infamous "stress interview") stay relaxed. Think of it as playing a game
4. Assume everyone you meet will provide feedback to the decision-maker(s). Some companies hand out comment forms to security guards, receptionists, and potential peers who take you to lunch
5. Communicate interest and enthusiasm by use of body language, even if you're not sure if you are ready to commit. You will rarely have all the facts until you have been given an offer
6. Know your résumé and be able to summarise your achievements. Add value judgements
7. Have a clear reason for change. E.g. Have been in current company for X years and want to become a manager i.e. a professional reason. NOT I can't get along with my boss (may not get on with next one!) May wish to extend budget, personnel management, responsibility. But tie information in to actual job

8. Try to avoid saying “No” as an answer. “Are you fluent in French?” could be a question. Perhaps not, but you could reply, “I fully appreciate the need to have an international language in addition to my English when working with an international team. My Spanish is good. I learned French at school and am working hard to get this up to speed”
9. Be prepared for *non sequetor* questions e.g. what is the most passionate article you read recently? This checks if you can think on your feet
10. Linguistically use plural forms - “If WE are working together on this project.....” This helps the ‘Can Will Fit’ syndrome
11. Start time? Do not give away too much. “I can start roughly two weeks/one month from offer”
12. Never abandon an interview part way through. Finish it well - you may meet the interviewer in another situation!
13. Have some questions to ask - the next step, computer/internet availability, starting date, opportunities to travel to other projects, potential for advancement/permanency, etc. Tailor the questions to the level of the interviewer. Don’t ask the Vice President about vegetarian food in the canteen. Sales - “What is the business plan, areas of greatest growth, what is your biggest problem right now? Why did you join the organisation? What has your career path been since you joined?” No answer means no job. Thank the interviewers at the end
14. NEVER EVER provide false information; this will definitely come back to haunt you, and with hard hitting consequences!
15. If you really do not know the answer to a question, don’t try to fudge one - it will get as sticky as the fudge you produce! Provide an honest response; “Actually, I do not know the answer to this, but in my opinion, ...”, or “This is out of my area of expertise, and this is certainly something I would be interested to expand my knowledge of. In the meantime I would propose that...” Never provide just a “No” for an answer.

To be sure that you can make the change into humanitarian work, some interviewers may ask harder questions. Some may intentionally identify the weakest point in your CV related to the job you are

applying for as a start to the interview! Here are some examples of questions that you may face:

What Are Your Weaknesses?

This is one of the most dreaded questions. Have some answers already prepared, but minimise your weaknesses and emphasise your strengths. Stay away from personal qualities and concentrate on professional traits: "I am always working on improving my communication skills to be a more effective presenter. I recently joined Toastmasters, which I find very helpful"

Why Should We Hire You?

"With five years' experience working in the financial industry and my proven record of saving the company money, I could make a big difference to your organisation. I'm confident I would be a great addition to your team"

Why Do You Want to Work Here?

The interviewer is listening for an answer that indicates you have given this some thought and are not sending out CVs just because there is an opening. For example, "I've selected key organisations whose mission statements are in line with my values, where I know I could be excited about the work, and this organisation is high on my list of choices"

When Were You Most Satisfied in Your Job?

The interviewer wants to know what motivates you. If you can relate an example of a job or project when you were excited, the interviewer will get an idea of your preferences. "I was very satisfied in my last job, because I worked directly with the customers and their problems; that is an important part of the job for me and I can relate it to humanitarian work"

What Can You Do for Us That Other Candidates Can't?

What makes you unique? This will take an assessment of your experiences, skills and traits. Summarise concisely: "I have a unique combination of strong technical skills, and the ability to build strong personal relationships especially in cross-cultural situations"

What Are Three Positive Things Your Last Boss Would Say About You?

It's time to pull out your old performance appraisals and boss's quotes. This is a fine way to brag about yourself through someone else's words: "My boss has told me that I am the best engineer he has ever had. He knows he can rely on me, and he likes my sense of humour"

If You Were an Animal, Which One Would You Want to Be?

Interviewers use this type of psychological question to see if you can think quickly. If you answer "a bunny," you will make a soft, passive impression. If you answer "a lion," you will be seen as aggressive. What type of personality would it take to get the job done? What impression do you want to make?

Why did you leave your last job?

This is also a tough one, as there may be sensitive aspects in your response related to individuals, organisational competence, the way you were treated, and so on. Remember that this is not the opportune moment to start slanging your recent employer, and try to phrase negative aspects in a neutral or balanced light.

"Professionally I felt that I had satisfied all the requirements made of me" - instead of talking about it being a dead-end job;

"Sometimes I lacked the necessary level of authority to accompany the level of responsibility I was given" - instead of talking about being totally frustrated at a lack of support in decision-making, or being kept in the dark about your role. "Clearly the Director was excellent in many aspects of looking after the organisation, for example with fund-raising, whilst at the same time it was felt that there was not enough internal follow up and feedback about our needs and staff capacity" - this could replace the fact that the guy was oblivious to the fact that he overloaded his staff, and demoralised and demotivated them with too much workload.

A candidate at a recent interview was surprised by the interviewers avoiding questions in all the areas in which he had prepared.

Seemingly unrelated to the post he was interrogated about ways in which HIV/AIDS could be mainstreamed into the programme. So in addition to researching the work programme and the organisation, educate yourself in global issues which could impact on the programme or which may be affected by it. General global background issues for which you need to acquire basic knowledge include, as well as HIV/AIDS, global warming and green-house gases,

local political and economic influences, the poverty cycle, fund-raising, gender and marginalised groups.

Moving from a traditional professional post into humanitarian work could transport you into a whole new world of mass migration, refugees, conflict and human rights abuses. Your homework may need to include a basic understanding of the monumental task of ensuring protection for people forcibly uprooted from their homes by whatever cause (The Deng Humanitarian Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement www.irinnews.org), the standards of water, food, sanitation and health that are generally applied to displaced people in camps (The Sphere Minimum Standards and Humanitarian Charter www.sphereproject.org), and the international laws that govern the rights of everybody: adults and children (www.un.org/overview/rights).

2.6 Negotiating Conditions of Service

This section is based on Feature Article 29 from the DEVJOBS website (www.devjobs.org) referred to earlier. Hopefully, you will be encouraged to explore that instructive site further.



Most of us are not comfortable negotiating our salaries even though negotiation has become a common part of today's business. It is important to feel confident in this stage of the hiring process. The employer expects some type of negotiation, and you must be ready. With the tips below, even the most inexperienced negotiator can learn the art of negotiation.

Try to avoid the question of salary, until you have an offer. On job applications under salary requirements, put "open," "negotiable," or "competitive." If a salary requirement must be given, then give ranges (usually begin your range at 10% higher than your last salary

and add 10% to get the top end your range). If you are asked directly how much you would like to make, and you are not sure yet, then try to answer in vague terms:

- "I'd rather discuss salary when we are both confident that I am a good match for the position"
- "I believe that my salary should be based on the specific responsibilities of the position and the standards of the country"
- "What would a person with my background and qualifications typically earn in this position with your organisation?"
- "Although money is an important factor, I am most interested in this opportunity because I think it represents a good match between your needs and my qualifications."
- "From the job description and salary range that you had on CareerBuilder, we are in the same range."

Note: the above responses, if handled flippantly, can be frustrating for interviewers! Present them humbly, and if pushed, make sure you at least come armed with a ball-park figure, based on the information below.

Research your market value. Before you go into an interview, make sure you are armed with the most recent information on the salary ranges for the position in the country to which you are going. Some sources are:

- *National Association of College and Employers: Salary Survey*
- *American Almanac of Jobs and Salaries*
- Professional associations or trade journals in your field
- Call directly into Human Resources and ask their salary ranges for the job you are seeking
- Compare specific salary ranges from CareerBuilder job listings
- Remember that the cost of living in a developing country may be dramatically less than that in your country

Do not take an offer on the spot. How valuable and in demand will you seem if you accept an offer the moment it's presented? Instead,

either take home the written offer or take notes on the details of the offer. Tell the employer that you would like to go over everything carefully, and set up another meeting, or finalise arrangements the next day. Now that you have some time to really think, you should examine the organisation's entire compensation package. Be sure to consider these factors:

- Insurance: general coverage, medical insurance, dental insurance, eye care insurance, life insurance, accidental death insurance, travel insurance, and disability insurance. Are other members of your family covered, and for what?
- Pension and Profit Sharing Plans: when are you vested; after how many years are you eligible?
- Tuition and Continuing Education Benefits: will these be paid?
- Salary progression expected in the first 3-5 years. Are there *per diem* payments in the field? Some organisations pay danger money and give a leave allowance covering limited travel and accommodation. Enquire about the 'extras' and use of a vehicle and a computer
- Vacation days, paid holiday, and sick/personal days: how many are you allotted, how are they earned, and what are the requirements for using them? Is there assistance with child education? How is staff health, stress or burnout managed?

A valuable exercise involves tabulating all the factors you can think of which will allow you to compare your present post with an offered one. These will include salary, salary potential, travel, time with/away from your family, job satisfaction, holidays, benefits, promotional prospects etc. Give each category a one, two or three star rating to help your decision making.

If the employer said they would ring to let you know the outcome, make sure that you can be contacted by phone at all times. If not, brief whoever is going to answer the phone to get the correct number for you to ring back. If you don't get the job, wait a few days and then ring and ask if they will give you some feedback as to why you were unsuccessful. Be positive and constructive about this and ask what you need to do to make yourself a stronger candidate for next time. Remember, not getting this job does not mean you will never get any job. The more interviews you do the better you

will get at them. Think back over the interview, and try to identify the areas where you know you were weak in your answers, and plan for better responses to those kinds of questions for the next time. There will be a next time!

Negotiate. If you were successful with the interview, and the organisation has contacted you with a firm job offer (politely ask to receive this in writing!), you are now in a position to negotiate on your package, and a much stronger one than when sitting in an interview situation. The organisation wants you! Once you have considered the things listed above, you are ready to negotiate. Enter the negotiation armed with a firm understanding of your skills and what they are worth. Know your strengths in your field. For example, say you were a keen negotiator for large corporate contracts that brought \$1 million in revenue to the company. Explain to potential employers how you generally brought x-times your annual salary package to the company in terms of corporate profitability within your first year. Even when you have orally accepted a post, there is still time to negotiate. A useful tip is to put a variety of conditions on the table - some that are a 'must have', but also some that you would be willing to forfeit. The organisation can refute the latter, and in doing so, see that they have 'won' a part of the negotiation process - the feel good factor.

2.7 Ready to Go!

So you have received an offer, and agreed on the package and conditions. Now you will need to work out the starting date and what you have to do next by way of acceptance, medicals, etc. This may also include obtaining visas and necessary travel documents, including a mission statement or terms of reference from your new organisation.

If the post is in your own country you may be familiar with travel and other arrangements for relocation. If the post is abroad, there are several aspects that you must think about and plan.

2.7.1 Health and vaccinations

The most important (and usually most costly) component of an organisation is the staff team. Their wellbeing is of paramount importance in the efficient execution of a project or programme. If

you are already on medication make sure this is available at your destination, or take supplies with you. You may need to start antimalarial medication and vaccinations several weeks before leaving. There are several excellent books on travel health.

1. Dawood, R (2002) Travellers' Health: how to stay healthy abroad. (Oxford University Press). ISBN 0 19 262947 6. This is the ultimate reference for going abroad, travelling/working and returning healthily. Its 700 pages may be too bulky for a short visit, but it is an essential component of the longer term traveller's library. Look at the web site www.travellers-health.info.
2. Wise, M (2002) The Travel Doctor: your guide to staying healthy while you travel (Firefly Books). ISBN1 55297 668 8. It includes tips on jet lag, altitude sickness, culture shock, parasites and travelling with a medical condition.
3. Lankaster, T (2006) The Traveller's Good Health Guide (InterHealth). ISBN-13: 978 0 85969 991 4. The essential health guide for backpackers, travellers, volunteers and overseas workers.
4. Books can be found and obtained through Amazon www.amazon.com/books.

You may be supplied with a first aid kit, or need to take one with you. Suggested contents are given in the Red Cross First Aid Manual. You can prepare your own list that may look similar to this:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| • adhesive dressings | • ear buds |
| • medium and large sterile dressings | • wound cleaning wipes |
| • sterile eye pads | • adhesive tapes |
| • triangular bandages | • Optrex solution with eye bath |
| • packet of safety pins | • antiseptic fluid (e.g. Povidone) and antiseptic powder (e.g. Cicatrin) |
| • disposable gloves | • ball of string to hang your mosquito net |
| • crepe roller bandages | |
| • scissors | |
| • tweezers (forceps) | |
| • cotton wool | |

Additionally you may need to take a torch - many developing countries often have power cuts. Other possibilities include disposable syringes, tampons (which may only be available in major towns), condoms, insect repellent, sun protection cream, a treated mosquito net, and a Swiss Army knife. A laptop computer and a digital camera may be essential parts of your luggage together with an ipod for recording sounds or listening for relaxation. You can shop online for most of the above items and have goods delivered from InterHealth (157 Waterloo Road, London SE1 8US. Tel: 020 7902 9000. Email: info@interhealth.org.uk. www.interhealth.org.uk). The centre also gives immunisations by appointment.

Think about reference books and journals you may want. ELDIS and TALC (Teaching Aids at Low Cost) offer CDs of library materials which can allow you to take a library in your wallet instead of an additional heavy suitcase of books.

If you have time before departure, you could take the one-day First Aid course with the Red Cross “First Aid for Overseas Workers” (a valuable addition to your CV!).

You may need to update and extend your immunisations. Country details can be found on several sites e.g. www.fitfortravel.scot.nhs.uk, or www.mdtravelhealth.com which provides much additional information on individual country health hazards.

Perhaps you are a person with a disability. This should not be a deterrent although you will have to plan more carefully. It has been the privilege of the authors to work with valuable humanitarian colleagues who have had cerebral palsy, diabetes, been wheel-chair bound, been HIV +ve, and even blind (this friend now runs his own NGO for blind people in Nepal). Source and Handicap International have compiled over 300 of the most practical and useful disability resources in this outstanding new directory. Documents are also available on CD. www.asksource.info/res_library/disability.htm

2.7.2 Insurance, tax and banking

Your employing organisation may provide full health cover, repatriation costs and a disability allowance. If you are taking your family to an accompanied post you will need to be sure that they are also covered. You might have to arrange your own personal cover for your personal effects and your laptop, camera and other electrical

equipment. Ask about tax implications and get advice from a free independent agent such as enquiry@offshoreinvestmentdesigner.com. You may want to put your savings in an offshore account to get tax advantages when you are not a resident in your own country.

2.7.3 Country briefing

In preparing yourself for the interview you have probably already read something of the country which will be your contract home. But you may like to search further about costs of living and security risks. However, do not be too discouraged by reports in web sites: the authors have to cover themselves when describing risks. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office gives balanced reviews of countries (www.fco.gov.uk) and information can usually be obtained from your High Commission at your destination. Do not forget to take a map, or a travel guide (e.g. Lonely Planet www.lonelyplanet.com).

2.7.4 Language training

During your interview you managed to skate round a difficult question about your ability to speak a foreign language. Now you really need to cram an update. There are many good language courses available on websites, and CDs from book shops. One of the most interesting is a site offering free language training for humanitarian workers. Check out a recent and expanding site for languages and health care. www.crelearning.com provides 80 languages freely to aid workers. It claims that new languages and dialects are welcome and will be provided on request to their team of UN volunteers.

2.7.5 Travel

Ask your new organisation personnel or HR / Logistics department:

- how your tickets will be obtained
- who is responsible for obtaining (and renewing) your visa and work permit
- whether transport/costs to and from the airport will be covered
- what your luggage allowance is (some airlines offer double baggage allowances for 'missionaries and humanitarian workers'; sometimes the amount can be negotiated, or limited excess baggage costs might be paid by the organisation
- do you need to obtain local currency in advance, or what credit/debit cards will be recognised where you are going
- will you need a driving licence? What type? If a vehicle is provided, is private use allowed?

2.7.6 Pre-departure briefing.

You should know before you leave if you will be met at the airport, what accommodation will be made available, and if there will be an in-country security/emergency briefing and training. When you arrive at your destination, ensure you receive a security briefing and orientation, especially if you have landed in a conflict-affected zone. Even the biggest and best organisations sometimes forget this and it may be life-saving for you.

2.7.7 Writing a will

While not wishing to end this section on a pessimistic note we must be practical. Eventually death is inevitable for all of us, but if this terminal event occurs while travelling or working abroad, additional problems are raised for family members and estate executors. Foreign employment does contain additional risks but these must be put in perspective. Road traffic accidents kill 1.2 million people every year (an average of 3242 persons dying each day around the world), and leave 20 to 50 million people damaged. Your greatest risk may be in leaving your house and going to the airport! Nevertheless, the nature of humanitarian relief has changed dramatically in the past decade as conflicts have ceased being wars between countries and are now largely internal conflicts taking place amid the anarchy of weakened or collapsed states. Increasingly, civilians and those who try to protect and assist them, are seen as legitimate targets for extortion, harassment, rape, brutality and sometimes murder.



So write a will if you have not already done so. You can use a lawyer or download information from the internet. Guidance packs are available from some bookshops. To assist your executor(s) you may like to attach a list of helpful points such as:

PERSONAL DETAILS

Passport or ID number and date

Email address

Password for email address

National Health number

National Insurance number

National and Private Pension details

Home

Address and telephone number

Mobile number

Emergency

Contact details of close relative

Address

Tel

Email

Bank details

Address / Tel Sort Code

Accounts numbers

Name of account holder

Internet Online Membership Number 5-pin code

Debit Card pin number and Password

Other Contacts

Insurance Policy and Pension details

Tasks for Executors

- 1. Deal with Will. (Social Services booklet on "How to Register a Death" is in my filing cabinet under "National Health and Health Service")*
- 2. Close bank accounts*
- 3. Stop national and private pension payments and insurance policies*

NB. WHEN YOU ARRIVE IN THE COUNTRY IN WHICH YOU WILL BE WORKING, REGISTER YOUR PERSONAL DETAILS WITH YOUR EMBASSY OR HIGH COMMISSION. THEY WILL CONTACT YOUR NEXT OF KIN IN CASE OF EMERGENCY.

2.8 Frequently Asked Questions or Surviving in Developing Countries

GO
To the People;
Live among them;
Love them;
Learn from them;
Start from where they are;
Work with them;
Build on what they have.

But of the best leaders,
When the task is accomplished,
The work completed,
The People all remark:
“We have done it ourselves”.
(Lao Tsu)

Meeting and Greeting

1. **Why didn't they tell me that nothing happens on time, most things don't happen as planned, and some things don't happen at all?** (Who said that we have everything correct back home? We take our corruption for granted but show shock at theirs. Our Protestant 'work ethic' causes many heart attacks. Allow for the possibility that they are right and we are wrong, or maybe just different. Why did the colonialist 'protectors' not tell us about the African wisdom of extended families when they brought back the gold, cocoa and other plunder, when we have 5 million people in the UK living alone!)
2. **Why do they have such long greetings but not listen to any reply?** (In UK we discuss weather in a similar way. It is just 'club rules' - a total nonsense like wearing a tie)
3. **How can I cope with beggars?** (Offer food, not money. Explain that you are a volunteer on a small allowance. You have already offered two years of your life here and cannot give more. Explain that there are very poor people back home which are our responsibility. Africans and Asians mostly see those rich enough to come as tourists so the assumption that all 'mazungu' or 'farang' are rich is wrong. Some NGOs now run projects in the UK for the poor!)

Working

1. **Why don't they come to work regularly?** (There are reasons behind the cultural differences. No wonder they came late for work: they had to walk 3 km with two 20-litre jerry cans to get the family water for the day. Every day! The kids are late for school because firewood collection was hindered by a tropical storm. Mum is sick with vomiting and diarrhoea and could not prepare the meals that day. There is every disease that the tropics can fling at them for which they cannot afford preventative measures or treatment)
2. **Why did they not give me any induction when I started work?** (Many local people in developing countries that take on volunteers or humanitarians have not worked abroad or even left their country. Understandably they cannot imagine the difficulties and culture shock associated with employment travel. If you had never left your country and were suddenly faced with a foreigner in your workplace, struggling in English, would you provide the right information? So ask for what you need or prepare an induction programme for yourself and offer it to your boss. Then make sure you do the same for any others joining you)
3. **Why don't they keep appointments, or at least cancel them instead of just not turning up?** (Life is so uncertain with floods, transport problems and sudden illness, that responsibility to keep fixtures has not become ingrained. Use devices to help change this. Plan refreshments or food before a meeting. Then latecomers will miss the snacks and not the meeting).
4. **Space and time.** (Bear in mind that different cultures have sometimes completely different concepts of space and time. Whilst you may feel uncomfortable holding hands with someone of the same sex as you for more than 15 seconds in an introductory shake, some of these people have non-sexual same-sex physical contact all day - walking, talking with arms and hands interlocked - totally accepted and normal. Also, the standard queue to purchase a ticket, or crowd in a bus may appear to be actually glued together - you will have to adapt to this situation - all the more difficult perhaps when it is 45 degrees and 85% humidity! You may also have to adapt the time you decide to have meetings - a proposal would be to avoid if possible planning for them to start at the start of the working day, simply to avoid frustration with all the late arrivers who drift in as if nothing was wrong).

5. **Why don't they read my reports/documents?** (This can be relevant for both international organisations, as well as local/national ones. (A long history of poverty-driven lack of resources has not allowed the development of a reading culture which has been our privilege in the West. So adopt a really brief, simple writing style with bullet points in large font size to help those who are struggling in a second or even third language. Or try to write your report in Luganda! Then resolve to help others to write their documents rather than doing it for them). Another tool is to follow up the third email you have sent about a particular subject with a phone call, 'just confirming receipt'...)
6. **Why don't local people and local organisations work in teams?** (The whole of society is hierarchical, yet another sad legacy of colonial/protectorate rule. It dominates family, schools, universities, hospitals and other employment. Democracy is theoretical and not yet a reality. This is an area where you can demonstrate how advantageous it is to work in teams and share ideas)
7. **How am I supposed to cope with so many interruptions and even interruptions of interruptions with mobile phones always taking priority over all conversation?** (We need to reflect on the health damage that has been caused in the West by the introduction of technology on an unsuspecting population - TV 'teeth', repetitive strain injury, eye strain, lack of social skill development in children occupied with computer/phone games instead of playground activities and team games. We take that for granted and need patience to handle interruptions. We can set gentle but firm examples of how to handle intrusions - prioritise the person sitting with you over the vibrating and generally noisy object claiming your time from your pocket!)
8. **Why do I have to waste so much time coping with poor office procedures?** (This is not just confined to the Third World. Perhaps your long established NGO has almost reached a state of bureaucratic stasis! Set an example by making sure every document has the name of author, page numbers and date. Better still to add a computer reference in the 'footer' so another can track the document in your computer when you are absent or dead). Do not let frustration with paper-chasing win the battle - remember why you actually came here. One good solution to this is to make regular field visits to isolated

villages where no electricity exists: it puts things in perspective and provides you with a breather).

Living

1. **Why didn't they tell me it would be so bad/difficult/unhygienic?** (Usually after a few weeks). (Humanitarians and Volunteers often pass through three distinct phases.

A) Wonderment. Wonder of a new country, culture, language, environment and food (although the chilli may be so hot, it burns both ends!). The wildlife and climate are different. The people are black or brown (or yellow, or white or anything) and initially they all look the same. You can tell a new arrival a mile off: head in air, eyes everywhere; all is so new. Three on a bicycle and five on a motorbike. Children on the backs of mums, or carried by sisters hardly bigger than themselves. The loads transported on heads or two wheels seem impossible: a coffin, a double mattress, an ants' nest in an open bowl for the chickens, a double bed, endless firewood and always water. Then follows:

B) Disillusionment. Will I be able to cope with these filthy conditions on such a low allowance? My allowance is three months late - do I have to fund myself to be here? Have they never heard of salads or fruit? Why beans and steamed bananas every single day for three months? I have worked every hour in the week in spite of every impediment and even people who have asked for help with a task seem totally uninterested in the document or the outcome I have produced. It is for them; they asked for it, for goodness' sake!

"I realise this is not for me", or "the extremes to which my patience, endurance, faith in humanity, security and health and professional growth/stagnation have been tested have long been past". In this situation, get a couple of external opinions. Talk to your superior - don't just 'drop out'; taking a short break for a week may be all that is required to correct this. If ultimately you are not where you think you should be, remain professional to the end, no matter what others are doing, or how they are treating you. Leave, knowing that you did all you could in the circumstances. Nobody can ask more than that.

A few go home at this stage. Almost all see it out and many extend because:

- C) **“I came and I am staying.”** Whatever. There is so much to be done; will I finish in time? Wildlife/languages/orphans are my thing. What are the chances of getting my contract extended? How can I leave this place in less than a couple of months, my roots have gone so deep? And we just seem to have started making some progress. I can make myself understood in their language to shop, travel, and cope. Even the toilet was OK once I cleaned it. Then think of the weather back home with a terrible cost of living to say nothing of the gross materialism!)
2. **I am feeling so stressed by isolation and the difficulties and frustrations that I am thinking of packing it in!** (Please see the sections on ‘Making Two Mission Statements’ and ‘How to Master Stress’)
 3. **Why do they treat their animals so badly? I hate to see the way chickens are treated and cattle transported for slaughter.** (It is horrible. However, we should try watching a bull fight in Spain, or dog fighting, badger baiting and fox/stag hunting in the UK. We are not so ‘clean’. We cut the beaks off chickens and keep them in tiny wire cages for life. The truth is we accept our circumstances as normal and focus on differences when we see them. We may be angry with corruption here but accept the corruption at all levels in the West. Our politicians do it professionally!)
 4. **Why don’t they stop at red traffic lights?** (The law is consistent: drivers must stop - and they do unless they think it is OK to go! Sometimes motor cyclists ignore the road rules and will drive along the pavement to avoid a long way round. Look out when crossing one-way roads as traffic will often go in both directions. Somebody shouted to a driver going the ‘wrong way’, “This is a one-way road!.” And the driver shouted back, “But I’m only going one way!”).

Leaving

1. **I am out of here and soon back home. What can I expect?** (In some countries VSO arranges in-country workshops for returnees. Many find it harder to adjust to going back than when coming abroad. Your horizons have changed dramatically. Back home you will find almost nothing has changed: the same old bloke in the same old pub telling the same old stories over the same old pint. Watch them start yawning as soon as you pitch into a long response to their question about, “How was Mongolia?” You have no points of

common contact. Keep your answers short and encourage more questions. Be prepared for your own anger at the gross materialism, and unchanging attitudes especially among family and friends. It will take you less than three weeks to join them!)

We may need to remember that we are not going overseas to change their world. It may be that the most important changes that have to be made are in yourself.

We may also need to remember that we are not going to do their jobs for them, but to help them to be able to do their jobs better. “Start from where they are” - capacity build, try to do no harm, put something sustainable, however small into place, then leave.

Now you have:

- moved into your new home
- searched the area for domestic resources
- met your new colleagues
- had your in-country induction

So let's get down to work!

3. DEVELOPING YOUR CAREER

3.1 Writing Two Mission Statements

You are now established in humanitarian employment in another country that you may or may not have visited before. Your motivation is high and you want to give all you can while gaining as much as possible during the course of your contract. A job description has been provided but it may have changed during the several months between the time it was written and your arrival. Your briefing and induction are behind you (hopefully!). Sometimes your employer may be looking to you for ideas about how you will proceed.

While on contract it is good to have two mission statements. One is your professional mission and the other is your personal one.

3.1.1 A personal mission statement.

While you are in this new situation, perhaps for a year or more, you want to gain as much as you can from the experience. You must build some leisure time into your programme especially if you are inclined to be workaholic. So write a simple personal mission statement which you can share with your family or friends and indulge yourself with hobby time or a new activity. This will be almost entirely under your control, so if it fails - that will be your fault! (If your mission is only for a short term there may not be enough time for a personal agenda).

Personal Mission while in Uganda 2011-2012	
Mission	- to gain an overview of Ugandan wildlife
Aim	- to visit national parks and Victoria Falls
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- walk at least one hour 3X/week for fitness- obtain Field Guide to Birds of Uganda- maintain log of birds visiting garden- visit mountain gorilla sanctuary etc, etc

Professional Mission Statement for Jo Soper - 01.01.2011.

Manager, Child Soldier Rehabilitation Centre

Mission

To facilitate the rehabilitation and reintegration of child soldiers with their community and families

Aims

1. To manage the rehabilitation centre
2. To provide training for staff
3. To maintain an appropriate environment for the rehabilitation of released child soldiers
4. To ensure security arrangements for the buildings and occupants

Objectives

1. Participate in weekly meetings with staff
2. Provide technical advice to staff
3. Develop modalities of working processes and protocols
4. Ensure all children are interviewed on entry
5. Oversee national staff for interviewing, psychosocial provision, reporting and documentation
6. Update and maintain a highly secure database of children
7. Represent organisation at meetings with other agencies involved in the centre
8. Liaise with social work teams and other agencies involved in the release and reintegration of under-age recruits (SCF, UNDP)
9. Undertake any other work reasonably requested by Supervisor
10. Gain knowledge necessary for the above responsibilities

Tasks

1. Hold weekly staff meetings
2. Attend Friday Planning meeting in Zone Office on alternate weeks
3. Prepare for Social Work Training Workshop 15-20 December
4. Visit neighbouring Rehab Centre
5. Write Fire Precaution Guidelines
6. Create Accident Report Form
7. Train staff in Fire Precautions and hold fire drill
8. Train all staff in security using the security CD
9. Draft security and emergency procedures
10. Complete Monthly Report Form for HQ

3.1.2 A professional mission statement

The success of your professional mission will depend upon your ability and application to your work, but it will also be influenced strongly by your colleagues, the line manager, the office conditions, bureaucratic procedures, available resources and external domestic, cultural and political conditions. In the worst situation, you may not be concerned with succeeding in your work, only surviving it! In other words, your mission in this post is not totally under your control. However, draft a professional mission statement and share it with your boss or line manager. Much of the information for creating this will be found in the job description or within the log frame of the programme (so check that they exist). A bi-product of this process could be a revised job description.

A more advanced way of setting out your mission is to tabulate it in the form of a logical framework analysis or log frame. Several variations exist and a clear description of this tool is to be found under Proposal Writing in www.USAID.gov.au, the World Bank document from www.eldis.org. or www.mindtools.com.

Simply, a log frame extends the format on the previous page by tabulating alongside each objective the expected outcome, and the actual task. The logic becomes evident if you start looking at the Action which will result in the Outcome, and so on. However, the table starts to become complex as each objective may have more than one outcome. You can be helped by numbering each box as the sections and subsections of this booklet have been numbered.

Goal	Overall vision of the project	The limit of direct control by Project Manager
Objective(s) or Purpose	Objective of project which contributes to reaching	
Outcome(s)	Outcome which contributes to	
Action(s)	Action which will result in	

Additional columns can be added for ‘Indicators of Achievement’, ‘Means of Verification’ and ‘Risks and Assumptions’.

Writing a full log frame requires some practice and dedication so you might opt for a shorter version like the one above although it is improved by including indicators of achievement thus allowing you to monitor your progress. Those of you who will need to write project or funding proposals should endeavour to master the more comprehensive versions of log frames as many donors insist on their inclusion in a concept paper or proposal document.

3.2 Planning Work Strategy

3.2.1 Work plans

Work plans are only useful guides if related to a time scale. Short-term or annual contract work can be set out in the form of a bar chart (Gantt chart). This is a useful way of adjusting work loads and travel plans to fit in with climatic conditions such as the flood season, and public holidays (which will differ from those in your home country).

MAIN TASKS	2011						
	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Goal setting	■						
Reading / review	■	■					
Initial UN office visits		■	■	■	■		
Training courses			●	●			
Writing guidelines			■	■	■		
Set up District Committees.			■	■	■	■	
Develop emerge. plans			■	■	■	■	■
Agency contacts		■ ■ ■ ■	■ ■ ■ ■	■ ■ ■ ■	■		
Emergency simulation					■		
Strategy reviews		1 ↑		2 ↑			
Final report						■	
Leave							■
Public holidays	■	↑				↑	↑
Rainy Season					■	■	■

This chart can be attached to your mission statement.

3.2.2 Fundraising and accounting

Many people may not be involved in these activities during their first appointment although transparency and accountability are important responsibilities for all involved in handling the organisation's money. Usually there is a person, perhaps the office manager in smaller offices and an accountant in larger ones, who keeps the records relating to incoming and outgoing funds. If you will be involved in

these aspects, which are not discussed in detail in this book, here are a few pointers.

For help with fundraising www.justgiving.com is a UK site on which anyone can advertise a project. It has raised millions of pounds from donors searching for a suitable beneficiary. There is a USA equivalent www.firstgiving.com. Many organisations and web sites offer suggestions and provide fundraising packs e.g. the Voluntary Service Overseas, RedR UK and www.networklearning.org. Dr Phil Bartle has been a humanitarian social worker for a lifetime in Africa and Asia. Look at his guidelines (www.scn.org/cmp/modules) for getting money out of donors.

Accounting courses and free software for humanitarians, especially those working in emergency situations, can be obtained from MANGO (Managing Accounts for NGOs). Their resources are outstandingly the best and can be downloaded from www.mango.org.uk/guide. You can even use their guide to check out the financial health of the organisation for which you are working.

3.3 How to Control Your Time

3.3.1 Introduction

If you could add three hours to your week how would you spend them? Would you:

- do more work?
- spend more time with your family?
- read a book?
- go for a walk or follow some fitness activity?
- chat to friends over a drink?
- do something you have always wanted to do but have never had the time for it?
- just dream?
- other?

If you follow these guidelines thoughtfully, prepared to change yourself from a *Human Being* to a *Human Doing*, most people in work can gain several more hours in their week by managing their time better.

Time is money. Suppose you wait with 19 other committee members for 1 hour in anticipation of another colleague arriving for a meeting. What has that cost? If the average salary of your work mates is 400,000 Ugandan shillings (UGS) a month, that is 20,000 UGS a working day or

about 2,500 UGS an hour. Between the twenty of you 50,000 UGS have been lost. Now multiply this by all the meetings in a year which start late plus the appointments made but not kept, and the times you came to work late or left early (especially on Friday afternoons!), and you arrive at a huge sum which has been stolen from your employer. In addition, your own time has been wasted never to be regained. However, back in the office, much more time is lost for other reasons. Taming your time will help you to be more successful. It will help you to operate more effectively, and it will save you from stress and even burnout. It will also give you extra time.

“1) A Public officer shall have strict regard to the working hours. He or She shall not come late to office meetings and Official functions without reasonable cause (The Code of Conduct for the Uganda Public Service, 2006).”

You will need to be aware of:

- the benefits of time management
- the qualities of a good time manager
- your personal time wasters and the consequences of wasting time
- solutions to common time wasting activities

3.3.2 The qualities of a good time manager

Imagine that you are a most effective time manager in an efficient office. Your colleagues admire you and want to model their work style on yours. What qualities would they list if they tried to write them out in order to copy them? The list might include:

- effective delegation of tasks with trust and without micromanagement
- respect for the time of others
- positive thinking and decisiveness. (Sometimes the need is for a decision while the actual solution may be less important e.g. we do need to know immediately whether to drive on the left or the right hand side of the road but the actual decision does not actually matter. What matters is that we are told the rules immediately!)

- flexibility
- problem solving ability
- meeting deadlines and helping others to do the same

Add your own ideas to this list.

3.3.3 Time wasters

This list is easier to compile because they are so common to so many.

Habits

- Postponing
- Unnecessary long conversations unrelated to work
- Inability to prioritise tasks
- Just going slow
- Not having objectives
- Inability to cope with conflicting demands
- Not delegating
- Poor filing and organisation of papers: wasted time in searching for documents

People

- Informal meetings and trivial protracted greetings
- Interruptions which disturb/delay an important discussion
- Lack of punctuality
- Pressures which are not related to work
- Group therapy (“You will never believe what my partner wanted me to……..!”)
- Duplicated effort
- Confused communication leading to lack of cooperation and coordination
- Confused lines of authority

Things

- Junk email and internet surfing
- Playing computer/telephone games in work time
- Mobile phones and changing settings
- Transport
- Badly designed space
- Power cuts and no generator backup because of lack of fuel due to bad planning

Be honest with yourself. How many of these items are affecting you? Which of these are in your control and could be managed better? Are there others you could add?

“2) A Public Officer shall endeavour to accomplish planned activities on time. He or she shall desist from engaging in behaviour or conduct that disrupts or interferes with the work of other officers, such as, but not limited to:-

- a) Being lazy and idle at work.***
- b) Reading newspapers most of the time, keeping the radio loud as to disrupt concentration, playing computer games or surfing the Internet***

- irresponsibly. The only exceptions are training-related Television and video programmes, Video Conferencing, Open and Distance Learning.*
- c) Transacting private business in office and during office hours*
 - d) Engaging in private conversation and gossip during working hours*
- (The Code of Conduct for the Uganda Public Service, 2006)."*

All these lead to inefficiency, lack of a good outcome, hindrance to others, stress, and eventually loss of confidence. You have lowered morale, and lack time for yourself. Your reputation may suffer, opportunities and deadlines are lost, and productivity falls. You are definitely not succeeding in your work.

3.3.4 Time savers

In contrast there are some easily workable time savers and others for which you may need to advocate:

- Organise your desk
- Handle papers once: do it now then file immediately! (maybe even try not to print too much)
- Make a job list with deadlines - in order of priority. If you have to do something which is not on your list, add it and give yourself the satisfaction of immediately crossing it out
- Say "No" (nicely and diplomatically)
- Give yourself reward breaks ("I will take tea only when this section is written")
- Do a small task if you really cannot face a big one
- Make sure your communications and management lines are clear and unambiguous
- Improved technology but disciplined access to internet
- Know your objectives and responsibilities
- Plot a bar chart of your work in order to spread the load to become manageable

3.3.5 Procrastination

All of us have, on occasions, put off doing things which needed to be done. Here are some of the common reasons with ways to overcome them:

Small versus large

We may busy ourselves with the small and easy tasks leaving the bigger ones until tomorrow. But tomorrow never comes! So start a big job, then reward yourself by doing an easy small one when you have reached a part-way goal.

Perfectionist

We tell ourselves that we cannot do the job until we have all the information and the right conditions, and enough time. Perfection is the enemy of good. We must accept that a task is complete when we have done the best we can with the information at hand in the time available.

The difficult phone call

We avoid speaking to a person about a difficult matter. Try phoning at lunch time and leaving a message with another person.

Waste of time

We tell ourselves that there is no point in doing this task. If that is your belief you are not likely to do it well. See the person responsible and suggest an alternative. It is always better to tell your manager your suggested solution rather than your problem.

Avoiding risky or new work

We make excuses to avoid working in an area of uncertainty. So break the task down into small bites. A journey around the world may seem terrifying but it starts with one small step.

3.3.6 Setting priorities

Your desk is littered with papers all of which need responses. You have shuffled through them several times and still do not know where to begin. In the past many office workers simply had an in-tray and an out-tray, but there are more effective ways of managing papers.

Start by organising your documents into three piles - URGENT, IMPORTANT, and SUPPORTIVE. If you have the luxury of a desk tray, these are your headings.

URGENT: there is a pressing deadline. Trouble will follow inactivity on this one. Others depend on it. It may not be critical but it will definitely not go away

IMPORTANT: work that keeps the wheels of the organisation turning. The deadline can be far away or not even exist. This may involve planning for a possible new building as expansion is inevitable

SUPPORTIVE: in this tray there will be professional journals, reports of meetings, documents that you want to read to be better informed.

Now decide what percentage of your time should be allocated to each tray given your job responsibilities. Perhaps 50 %, 40 % and 10 %? Is that how you are managing your time? If not, set realistic time percentages and adjust accordingly.

3.3.7 Managing your day

Fortunately we are not all at our best or worst at the same time. Some function well early in the morning: others late at night. Most of us have a dull period after the lunch break. We need to be clear when we are able to do tough work and when we are better at 'busy' work (flashy but not too important). Which is more appropriate for our mood? Make up your mind about the type of work you can and should do in a low energy period. You should also think about the high and low times of your colleagues as this may indicate when the best time is to meet with your manager!

You may find that you are doing work that is not your responsibility. Here is a quick test to make you aware of the need to delegate.

QUESTION	YES	NO
1. Do you take work home more than once a month?		
2. Do you work longer hours than the people you supervise?		
3. Are you frequently interrupted because others come to you for advice?		
4. Is some of your working time spent doing things for others that they could do for themselves?		
5. Do you have unfinished jobs accumulating with difficulty in meeting deadlines?		
6. Do you spend more time working on details than planning and supervising?		
7. Do you mistrust others to do the job as well as you might do it yourself?		
8. Do you work at details because you enjoy them, although someone else could do them?		
9. Do you doubt the abilities of your staff to take on more responsibilities?		
10. Are you a perfectionist, too conscientious about details that are not important for the main objectives of the job at hand?		
11. Do you keep job details secret from staff?		

12. Do you believe that you do your best work under pressure?		
13. Are you reluctant to admit that you need help to remain on top of your job?		
14. Do you fail to ask the team for their ideas about problems that arise at work?		
15. When you delegate tasks, do you try to micro-manage that person by checking the details of what has been done?		
16. Do you believe it is quicker to do it yourself?		

Nobody is perfect, but if you have replied “YES” more than six times, you should delegate more but without breaking confidentiality, of course. With more than 12 yes’s - plan for your heart attack. It may come sooner than you think.

The other side of delegating is that others may want to delegate tasks to you and you must avoid getting swamped or overloaded. Sometimes you just have to say “No”. If this is your answer, then say it early, give a clear reason, or delegate other tasks, offer to review the situation at a later date, or propose another person.

3.3.8 Managing interruptions

Throughout the world, people enjoy greetings and these can be more protracted in some cultures than in others. “How are you? How is your day? How was your night? How was the weekend? How is your life? How is your wife?” It is good and proper to greet others, especially friends and colleagues. Sometimes a quick response is enough, “I’m fine”. But when the greeting is an interruption of an important discussion with another, or sometimes it may come as an interruption of an interruption (!) then a significant conversation can be disrupted and time lost. Your organisation pays you to deliver: you are not paid to chat endlessly in work time.

These days, perhaps the most common interruption is from a mobile phone. They ring during meetings, they ring from wrong numbers, and many just ring to chat. If you are talking to somebody, in some cultures it is rude just to break off to answer a phone call. If a call is expected, warn the person at the start of your conversation. If it is not expected, quickly explain that you will call back. It is good to turn phones off during a meeting. If the call is urgent, the caller will call back.

There are several techniques you could try for avoiding time-wasting disturbances:

- a) Use your door as an indicator. Let your colleagues know that if it is closed you should not be disturbed. If it is open a little, you may be interrupted by something urgent/important. If it is wide open, come right in.
- b) Come to work a few minutes early for a quick round of your colleagues so that greetings are finished before your time to start work
- c) Arrange to go to lunch or tea breaks with others so that chatter can be shared in a relaxed period
- d) Set an example of not interrupting others
- e) If urgency demands an interruption, ask when it might be convenient to meet for an urgent matter
- f) Hold regular meetings for the exchange of work-related information
- g) You may have to say, "I'm sorry that I cannot talk now as we are discussing an important matter. May I suggest we go to lunch together?"

3.3.9 Managing your desk

Simply:

- keep it tidy
- deal with it
- delegate it
- file it - don't just pile it!
- or bin it

"2) A Public Officer shall, during official working hours, report his or her absence from office to his or her immediate supervisor or relevant persons. (The Code of Conduct for the Uganda Public Service, 2006)."

Leave a note with contact phone number on your desk or door if you travel out of office so colleagues do not waste time trying to contact you.

3.3.10 Summary tips

- Be convinced that time management is worthwhile
- Just for one day, keep an honest diary of every 15 minutes of your time. (It might shock you!)

- Analyse your time wasters and devise strategies to overcome them
- Plan your week
- Plan your day
- Write a job list
- Organise your in-tray (or desk piles) into URGENT, IMPORTANT and SUPPORTIVE
- Be aware of low and high times and tackle jobs appropriately
- Control interruptions
- Delegate more
- Be prepared to say “No”
- Share your ideas with your colleagues
- Plan what you will do with all your extra time now that you have changed into an efficient time manager!



3.4 How to Plan a PowerPoint Presentation

3.4.1 Introduction

Anybody in a professional position may be asked to make a formal presentation to colleagues or to 'outside' audiences. How we present our talk can influence the way in which our ideas are received, and the impact that they can have on the recipients. This is particularly important when making a presentation of a proposal to a donor requesting funding for a project. A poor presentation of a good suggestion may be wrongly interpreted as a poor idea. There are simple guidelines for helping presenters to make the best impact.

Presentations have advantages and disadvantages compared with other forms of communication. They allow emphasis to be made of key points in a subject, attract interest, place emphasis on the 'U-value' ('you'), and the transfer of new ideas/data, summaries and

enthusiasm. (Enthusiasm needs to be pitched just above the level of the audience as both disinterest and over enthusiasm can have depressant effects on the listener). Supporting documents have a helpful role. However, presentations obviously demand that all concerned will be present at the same time in the same place and wanting to hear what you have to tell. Part of your task is to make and keep people interested. A significant advantage is that, having come to the presentation, people are now in a position to listen to and discuss your ideas.

3.4.2 What can be presented

PowerPoint presentations are useful in many situations. These include:

- an automated, continuously running show to accompany an **exhibition**, which can be displayed on a computer or larger screen depending on audience size. It can include music and video clips
- giving an account of your **holiday**/travels to family and friends
- selling a **product**, too large or small to actually demonstrate, to a customer
- presenting **results** of research to a scientific/social/medical group
- introducing a new **concept** to a group of colleagues for discussion
- making a **proposal** to donors for funding
- reporting project **progress** to management
- **entertainment**

3.4.3 Aspects for consideration in planning

a) **The duration of the talk.** Always aim to talk for less time than scheduled because most people tend to run out of time not content! Make sure you also allow time for comments or questions. If your slot is 20 minutes, plan for 15. If you are a beginner and need to practise your talk, do so out loud because generally we speak more slowly than we read.

b) **The type of audience and knowledge level of others.** If the audience is of mixed ability, be sure to cater for both ends of the spectrum. Start with the familiar before moving to unfamiliar ground. If you begin with unfamiliar material you are in danger of losing your audience from the outset. “I am going to explain why our hands get cold and sweaty, and our stomach turns to jelly when we stand up in front of an audience” is a better way of starting than saying, “Today I

will cover the structure and function of the sympathetic nervous system in order to help us understand our response to stress”.

c) U-value (This relates to ‘you’). Show early in the talk that the topic is relevant to the hearers. During the introduction let the audience know that the topic will be valuable for them. E.g. “All of us need to approach donors for funds and PowerPoint presentations can be a powerful tool in achieving success”.

d) Use of verbal language. Will you need an interpreter? If so, you must reduce your material and the number of slides by more than half because translation more than doubles the time taken to present a talk. Interpretation sometimes needs to be repeated or expanded for clarification. It is possible to make a presentation using only pictures, diagrams and cartoons as these can convey a message sometimes better than words where language comprehension is limited.

A common but inappropriate device for checking that people can both hear you and understand is to ask the audience at the back if they can hear. If they cannot - they will not respond. If they cannot understand, they are unlikely to admit so in public. That is clearly a waste of time and breath. More usefully start with some quick humour. If the audience laughs: continue. If they do not laugh, speak more slowly and try again.

e) Use of body language. It is important for your body to face and be in connection with the hearers. You need to face the front to make eye contact with the audience, not the screen for most of the time. (You do need to check quickly that the slide you are discussing is the one on the screen!). If you are controlling your presentation with a laptop on the desk in front of you, make sure you point to the screen which the audience can see and not your computer screen which they cannot observe.

f) An interactive talk, or just one-way delivery. There are many tools available to the experienced presenter to make the presentation interactive and this is a useful way to hold audience attention. One technique is to start by asking the audience to offer questions that they expect to be answered during the period. These can be listed on the board or chart. Then you give your talk just as intended. The audience has been converted from passive listeners to active learners, waiting to see if you cover their aspect. At the end, check through the

questions to ensure all have been covered. Be warned. Interaction needs to be controlled or it can take up too much time.

g) Keeping audience attention. Especially during a long presentation you may need to insert ways of refocusing the attention of the listeners. Techniques include the use of cartoons, introducing a short question which you ask the audience to answer after discussion with a neighbour, a picture, a photograph (especially if one of the chairperson!) or music. An unfailing device is to insert a short video clip, or break a long talk into parts with a short film in between. Every member of the audience will prefer to watch a moving picture rather than a still one. Animation of slides can also be used but excessive use of text swirling and sliding about on the screen becomes boring or even annoying. Limit its use to make a significant point, otherwise every point becomes over emphasised.

h) Does your talk need to link with other presentations in the programme? If your presentation is one in a bigger programme, a reference to an earlier slot or a later one will help to bind the programme together. A professional speaker will have taken the trouble to contact other presenters before the day to see how talks can be linked to underpin or extend other sessions in the programme.

i) Supporting documentation. The best way to ensure that your message is taken away from the meeting is to provide supporting documentation. This can be in the form of a manuscript of your discourse but there is a danger that recipients will spend time reading when you would prefer them to watch. Others may relax thinking that the document can be read later. A useful way is to provide a print of your slides in a way which allows people to add their own notes and comments. Under File/Print you will find a window in the bottom left-hand corner which allows you to print up to six slides on a page with enough white space for notes to be added. Explore this window and the several choices it offers.

j) Summary and conclusions. Many presenters finish their talk with a slide that acknowledges the work and contribution of others. That is the final message that the audience will take away. So if you need to thank others, do so at the beginning, or after the introduction. Your last slide should not be a 'thank you' slide. Just say "thank you" if you think your audience has been patient but let your last slide be your key message. It is the conclusion of your talk and it can stay on the screen throughout the question time to increase its impact.

3.4.4 Structure and sequence

There are several different ways of structuring information; you need to choose the one which is the best aid to memory for your audience. As most people can remember three or four points, but not five or more, this will dictate the number of sections you use. Each section may be subdivided, but the same rule applies.

Please do a small exercise. There are 120 ways to arrange five sentences but here are just eight examples:

1. I was on sentry duty
I opened fire
It was a lucky escape
The enemy approached
The enemy ran away
2. I opened fire
I was on sentry duty
It was a lucky escape
The enemy approached
The enemy ran away
3. It was a lucky escape
I was on sentry duty
I opened fire
The enemy ran away
The enemy approached
4. The enemy ran away
I was on sentry duty
I opened fire
It was a lucky escape
The enemy approached
5. I was on sentry duty
The enemy approached
I opened fire
The enemy ran away
It was a lucky escape
6. The enemy approached
It was a lucky escape
The enemy ran away
I was on sentry duty
I opened fire

7. The enemy ran away
I was on sentry duty
It was a lucky escape
The enemy approached
I opened fire
8. It was a lucky escape
The enemy ran away
The enemy approached
I opened fire
I was on sentry duty

Look at these groups and decide which is the best for telling the story. Of course some novels are written in a way which sets out a problem then recapitulates to explain the events which led to this situation. (E.g. "I opened my eyes and looked down the barrel of a gun!") While a highly skilled narrator can do this, most of us need a safer approach. So perhaps you chose number 5. Why? It gives a chronological account - I was on sentry duty AND THEN the enemy approached AND THEN and so on. However, there is another structure hidden here which is invaluable for any form of presentation, report or even an impromptu short speech.

Group 5 illustrates:

- a situation
- a problem
- a solution (or solutions)
- the effect
- a comment

Try it out for yourself. Think of any topic. Malaria, perhaps.

Malaria kills as many as three million people every year, mostly children (**the situation**).

The parasite is developing resistance to anti-malarial drugs and the mosquitoes are becoming resistant to insecticides (**the problem**).

We must find a way to reverse resistance or develop better ways of treatment (**possible solutions**).

In these ways, we can combat one of the world's worst diseases (**the effect**).

In achieving this we will have to feed three million more people every year (**a comment**).

This example uses only single sentences but it could be expanded into paragraphs, sections, or chapters. It can be adapted for a short or a

long PowerPoint presentation with the first four headings giving the themes of the four sections of your talk. For some purposes it may only be necessary to use the situation, the problem and possible solutions with comments after each possibility.

To summarise this section, the structure of the presentation is important and it should follow a logical sequence in not more than three or four sections. The arrangement can be based on:

- a chronological sequence
- describing the end situation, comparing it with the beginning, reviewing possible causes to explain the difference
- using situations, problems, solutions, effects and comments
- answers to a list of questions: how, when, what and why etc

3.4.5 The slides

This is the central focus of the presentation. There are good slides and bad ones. Slides must be limited to an average of no more than **one a minute**. They should be:

- visual aids and not visual distractions
- simple and clear
- bullet points not full text
- cartoons, pictures, graphs and charts as all have a place

You will appear unprofessional and a time waster if you arrive at the rostrum and start by asking the chairperson, “How do I turn the projector on? How do I turn the lights off? Is there a pointer? Is the microphone working? Can you help me focus this?” Then you start showing the wrong slides, or keep the audience waiting while you click through endless computer windows in search of your slides. We have all seen this happen too many times.

Here are some guidelines which aid the production of good slides and polished professional presentations:

1. **Get to the meeting place early** and make sure you know where all the switches are and how to work the lights, microphone, pointer and computer
2. **Put your slide set on the Desk Top** so one click starts your presentation immediately. A white screen is disturbing, so start and end your slide set with a totally black slide. This allows you to turn on

- equipment without ‘giving away’ your beginning prematurely. After your final black slide, you may add some others which could be useful in the question period. Do not be tempted to show these if they are not relevant to the discussion. All audiences and chairpersons love speakers who finish early
3. **Avoid standard slide formats that confuse** with slashes and flares, pictures of flowers or animals. They distract.
 4. **Adopt a standard format** for all your slide presentations as this will allow you to mix slide sets while still giving the impression that the sequence has been put together just for that occasion. Do not number slides for this reason. You may like to put a logo on the first slide, but it is not necessary to add a logo to every slide
 5. **Change slide format only if the change is significant.** E.g. you may like to change the background colour as you move from one section to the next. Light-coloured text on a dark background is comfortable, so you could change from dark blue, to green to brown, and then finish with your key message on a splash of yellow and red.
 6. **Be consistent with text sizes and fonts** for headings and bullet points. As a guide keep within 7 lines and 7 words to a line. Avoid wasted repetition of the same words or phrases on a slide. Use lower case apart from headings. All words in capital letters seems like shouting. Spell-check your slides and remove every single unnecessary word. What should the following slide say? Then add a picture. Use italics to make distinctions

*Good fresh high quality fish just caught
sold here in this shop.*

7. **Never put up extensive text which you read aloud.** This is insulting to an audience who may read better than you or at a different speed. If you must display a document, make sure it is legible and leave the slide in silence while others read. But bullet points are

always better if possible. In general it is better to talk about the information on a slide rather than read it

8. **Never put up a table** parts of which you ask to be ignored. Usually data is collected in tables but differences need to be shown by diagrams. Few people are sufficiently skilled to glance at a table and immediately see trends and differences. Differences in time **MUST** be shown by line diagrams or other graphs; differences in amounts **MUST** be shown by histograms or pie diagrams. MS Excel is brilliant at converting tables to charts with all axes labelled and these can be immediately transferred to PowerPoint slides

3.4.6 Summary of tips for good presentations

1. Get to the room or hall early to set up equipment, and to make sure you know how to work everything: projector, computer, lights, pointer and microphone
2. Make eye contact with the audience and smile (actors look slightly above the heads of the back row to ensure voice projection)
3. Outline the structure of the talk in the introduction. Change passive listening to active learning
4. Develop a clear structure in 3 or 4 sections only
5. Use graphs and charts not numbers
6. Make gaps between sections; change visual aid style/format only for significance
7. Maintain a logical sequence
- 8 Use visual aids not visual distractions
- 9 Start with the familiar before progressing to the unfamiliar
10. Keep the attention of audience by U-value, varying voice, cartoons, relevant examples and surprises
11. Keep to time. Later, watch a video recording of yourself for punishment!
12. Summarise and finish with your key message (not thanks)

NO!

Year	Govt. Military Expenditure (GM) (%GDP)	Effect of GM on Public Investment (% GDP)	Using Marginal Product of Investment on GDP			Using Average Product of Investment on GDP			
			Drop in GDP Growth Rate (%)	Estimated Lost GDP		ICOR	Drop in GDP Growth Rate (%)	Estimated Lost GDP	
				Rs. Mn (1996)	(Per cent GDP)			Rs. Mn (1996)	(Per cent GDP)
1984	1.61	-0.79	0.07	283	0.07	5.11	0.15	615	0.15
1985	3.46	-5.21	0.47	1,956	0.45	4.81	1.08	4,527	1.03
1986	5.41	-9.90	0.89	3,913	0.86	5.53	1.79	7,913	1.73
1987	5.79	-10.81	0.97	4,476	0.97	16.05	0.67	3,125	0.68
1988	4.83	-8.51	0.77	3,579	0.75	8.44	1.01	4,697	0.99
1989	3.49	-5.30	0.48	2,282	0.47	9.65	0.55	2,633	0.54
1990	4.54	-7.81	0.70	3,431	0.67	3.60	2.17	10,607	2.06
1991	4.21	-7.01	0.63	3,279	0.61	4.96	1.41	7,448	1.38
1992	4.23	-7.07	0.64	3,457	0.61	5.67	1.25	6,824	1.21
1993	4.16	-6.90	0.62	3,518	0.58	3.68	1.88	10,687	1.78
1994	4.41	-7.50	0.67	4,086	0.64	4.80	1.56	9,565	1.50
1995	5.24	-9.49	0.85	5,464	0.81	4.72	2.01	12,974	1.94
1996	6.02	-11.37	1.02	6,915	0.99	6.45	1.76	12,045	1.73

Yes!

Gap Identification Worksheet

	UNHCR	WFP	CARE	RC	MIN/INT	MIN/TRANSP	MIN/WATER	Refugees
FOOD	X	X	X	X		X		X
WATER	X						X	X
SANITATION	X							X
SECURITY	X				X			X
SHELTER	X					X		X
LOGISTICS		X	X			X		X
EDUCATION								

3.5 Preparing a Report

(This section is based on a manual compiled by Lia van Ginneken and available in original form on www.networklearning.org)

3.5.1 Introduction

Reports are important management tools for influencing future actions. Through reports, information can be shared and consequently lessons learned. However, good report writing is not easy and it is time consuming. In addition, if a report is not easy to read, it probably will not be read at all.

In these guidelines attention is paid to report writing in general and, in particular, to the Project Progress Report. If the ideas or words being used in these guidelines are not familiar to you, please look at the manual 'How to build a good small NGO', chapters 3 through 6, on the www.networklearning.org site.

3.5.2 Preparation for report writing

Subject: Decide which kind of information needs to be in the report. Be as precise as possible. For donors, four types of information are usually needed:

1. What the results are so far of the implementation of the project (Impact development information)
2. Which activities have been implemented so far. Is this according to the project proposal? (Activity implementation information)
3. How was the money spent? (Finance/budget information)
4. Information about the project staff.

Purpose: Determine what the purpose of the report is. Is it to inform others so that they become interested in the project? Or is it a presentation of the results of the project to, for example, your donor?

Layout: Check whether the report needs to be written in a compulsory layout (e.g. type of paper, headings footings, standardised form, etc.)

Target group: Determine who the readers of the report will be. The contents of the report need to be adjusted to the people who will read it. E.g. how much information do they already have about the project?

In a progress report with the purpose to keep readers informed, only the latest information is needed. If you want to present the project to a potential donor, or you want to inform other outsiders, you need to be more elaborate in explaining what the project is all about. The target group will also determine the level of language you need to use.

Structure: Check how the contents of the report need to be arranged.

Length: Determine the maximum number of pages in consultation with whoever commissioned the report.

Time span: Check out when the report needs to be ready. Then make a time plan for yourself for writing the report (date for completing the first draft, date for having it checked by a senior colleague etc).

The actual writing of the report

Collect the information needed

Important sources are: reports, notes which have been written earlier, books, information from your monitoring system, interviews with staff/target groups etc.

Arrange your information in a logical way and take care the structure is well balanced

The way the report is divided determines the structure. Make use of chapters, paragraphs, sub-paragraphs. Chapters need to be roughly the same length. Paragraphs should be a logical subdivision of the chapters. Keep each short and make sure that one paragraph covers one subject.

Write in the language of your reader - not childish or over-sophisticated. Avoid long and complicated sentences (not longer than 15-20 words). Take care that the report is easily readable without reference to other literature. If needed, use footnotes to explain certain concepts/ideas.

Try not to make any spelling mistakes.

If you are writing on a computer, use the spell-check. Remember that spell-checking will not pick up correctly spelled wrong words. Ask a colleague to read it as it is easy to read what you think you have written instead of what is actually there.

Make sure the layout is well organised.

The reader will give up quickly if it takes too much effort to follow the line of your argument. Make sure that there is enough space between the lines, paragraphs etc. Be sure to leave enough margin space if the report will be put into a ring binder folder.

Check the result by asking the following:

1. Does the report answer the questions raised by whoever commissioned it?
2. Is the structure logical and well balanced? Is the order of the topics correct?
3. Have the pages been numbered and is this according to the Index?
4. Has somebody else read the report and been asked for feedback, before you send it to the person who commissioned it?

3.5.3 The different parts of your report

Depending on the purpose of the report, you can choose different ways of arranging the content. The following division is one of the most common:

The cover: (preferably of a better quality of paper than the rest of the report). On the cover it should mention:

- The title of the report;
- The sub-title (if appropriate);
- The name of the author(s);
- The date of the presentation of the report.

Depending on whether your report is for internal or external use, you can mention your own organisation and/or the organisation for which the report is written, e.g. the donor organisation.

The title page: this is not always necessary. Usually the information of the cover page is repeated. If applicable, information on copyrights, distribution, etc. could be mentioned here.

The Index: this should be a separate page on which the chapters and paragraphs are listed next to the appropriate page number. Only the first page number of each chapter is listed.

The foreword: this is not always needed; it depends on the type of report. In the foreword issues are mentioned which are not essential to the contents of the report, like: words of thanks, for whom the report was written, by whom and why, etc.

The summary: the summary is important because not everybody has time to read the whole report. In the summary, the most important points are presented:

- the reason why the report was written;
- the questions which are to be raised (problem statement);
- the solutions;
- the arguments used for the solutions;
- important conclusions and advice.

The main text of the report: The main text is most commonly divided into the following chapters:

Introduction: this indicates the structure of the report. In the introduction often issues are described which are obvious to the writer of the report, but not to the reader. By reading the introduction, the reader should understand exactly what the report is all about; which topics are included, which are not, and why; how the information was obtained; why the report was written; what the aims of the report are (e.g. is the report written to present information, to advise, to evaluate?).

Clarification of the problem statement: this chapter explains why the information is needed, which information is needed and how the information obtained will be used. (Or what the problem is, why the problem needs to be solved and which information is needed to be able to solve the problem).

Methodology: a short description of how the information was obtained.

Results: graphs and charts are always more helpful than tables of numbers. Provide an interpretation and description of the information obtained.

Conclusions of the results

Recommendations: it is better to make recommendations for each conclusion or group of conclusions.

Annexes: if information or explanations, which take up a lot of space and attention, are in the text then they can make the report difficult to read. This type of information is better put in the Annexes. For example: a literature list (references to literature used in the report), detailed explanations, examples, drawings, maps, list of abbreviations, etc.

Annexes should be numbered and should have a title. In the main report, references should be made to the annexes when needed. Annexes are also listed in the Index.

3.5.4 About Project Progress Reports (PPRs)

Extra attention should be paid to the PPR. A project manager should prepare them on a regular basis. They are often for internal use and are based on your monitoring. Many organisations have their own formats but they may not always explain how to complete them.

The information will help you to know how the project is going. You can share this information with colleagues or beneficiaries; you can discuss its contents with more senior management or with other units and you can feed the lessons learned back into the next round of planning. These project progress reports will also form the basis for your reports to authorities and donors.

Project Progress Reports may be produced monthly, quarterly, annually or according to any timetable that is agreed on. They may be structured or presented in a number of different ways. By standardising the structure of the report they will be easier to complete. More importantly, comparison can be made between reports over time.

The basic layout of a progress report should include the following items:

- the activity or work area being considered;
- a time schedule for the period you are reporting on and completed activities;
- targets which have been reached during the period;
- budget and actual expenditures (inputs and costs);
- problems/constraints experienced and management action required.

In addition there may be details about revenue and manpower, and reference to activities related to the project but not directly under the project manager's control.

The reports usually contain a mixture of narrative comment and quantitative data. They should make clear what was planned and what was achieved or when targets were not set, what was achieved in the same period the year before.

PPRs provide an important source of information over time about activities and their outputs. Their usefulness will depend on the regularity with which they are completed and their quality. The common problems of PPRs are that they are too lengthy, with poor or incomplete coverage of the key issues. They are often largely descriptive, rather than focussed on performance and management action.

3.5.5 Checklist for writing a PPR

a) Objectives. A PPR should refer to all the objectives of the project components reported on and to the outputs.

b) Indicators. Progress should be reported on the basis of indicators which are described in the project proposal. PPRs should use the same indicators throughout the project period. This way, performance over a long time period can be analysed.

c) Targets. For each indicator there should be a target and preferably the targets should be all of the same consistency: e.g. all targets are (bi) annual. This makes them easier to compare and interpret.

d) Narrative content. The purpose of writing PPRs is to identify progress towards producing outputs and meeting objectives. It should be output-oriented. In practice, many PPRs tell what has

been done in the style of a diary. Though often interesting, this is less helpful.

e) Management analysis. This should focus on actions that require the attention of more senior management, or other units, divisions or departments not under the control of the project manager.

The purpose of the analysis is to improve and support the implementation of the project. Specific attention should be paid to distinguishing between the following types of possible problems which may have an impact on the achievement of the project:

- objectives
- project design weakness
- accuracy of planning and budgeting
- resource constraints
- coordinating problems
- management problems internal to the organisation
- adverse external environmental factors
- assumptions made which might have a bearing on the report

Understanding the nature of the problems being faced will help ensure that appropriate action is being taken.

A Tip for Report Writing. Staring at a blank piece of paper or white screen can be daunting. So set out the structure headings of your report and jot down ideas in appropriate places as you collect information or have ideas. Just 'throw' them into the space and then write up the sections once you have completed the information. You can even write up sections in any order, leaving the summary as the last task.

3.5.6 Flash reports (brief reports used in emergency situations)

Such reports should be limited to one page only and are designed to highlight key issues while requiring the minimum amount of paper work. The flash report is ideally suited to be a regular update for transmission through a fax machine.

Note well. It is essential that all documents include the name of the author and the date. If this is not done much time can be wasted in

trying to locate the author for further discussion, or in trying to ascertain which document of several drafts is the current one.

When reporting on emergency situations it may also be necessary to add the time as several reports may be made during the course of the same day. (It is sensible to include the file storage location in the footer to enable others to find the electronic version later).

3.6 Managing a Meeting

3.6.1 Introduction

Meetings are a normal, everyday part of humanitarian life. Many of us have experienced coming away from a meeting with a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction, without necessarily knowing why the meeting was successful. Perhaps all of us at sometime remember leaving a meeting with feelings of anger and frustration, wondering what could have been done to have produced a better outcome.

These guidelines are intended to help relative beginners to meetings management avoid some of the pitfalls, to present some best practices, and to help experienced chairpersons, administrators and recorders of minutes do an even better job. Participants should also be able to gain more from formal meetings, and to help the process towards a successful outcome.

Meeting purposes

Formal meetings take place when people agree to meet for a specific purpose in a set place at a specific time. Such meetings deal with formal agenda items in a systematic manner. But participants and meeting officials may also have their own hidden agendas, perhaps hoping to take the opportunity to air ideas not necessarily related to the matters intended for discussion. These hidden agendas can be legitimate or illegitimate and chairpersons will need to be aware of these possibilities while attempting to complete the formal agenda on time.

Meetings may be arranged for several reasons of which the following list includes some, but not necessarily all, of the main ones:

- To exchange or discuss ideas
- To inform or raise awareness
- To negotiate positions

- To solve problems
- To cover or review a range of different routine issues
- To plan a future activity
- To welcome and introduce new staff/visitors, build relationships, review progress; discuss budgets, strategies, domestic arrangements, outcomes, and planning, and to finalise decision-making processes

Meetings may range from a small group of staff that meet regularly and frequently, to many hundreds of people attending an annual general meeting for the main purpose of receiving progress reports, and electing officials. Similar guidelines can be applied to both of these situations. However, it is important to determine at the earliest stage of planning, whether a meeting is really necessary at all. Potential costs (money, people's time) may indicate that objectives can be reached adequately by the use of a chat in the corridor, a circulated document or a telephone conference.

Telephone conferencing is becoming increasingly available in many countries. Video conferencing requires a microphone, a digital camera, appropriate software and a fast internet connection. These systems can work well especially with relatively small numbers of people who are geographically widely separated, saving travel time, costs and jet lag.

Important preliminaries

There are two decisions that need to be made at the outset. Once the need for a physical and formal meeting has been determined, the first important task is to establish the purpose and the expected outcome or outcomes of the meeting. These must be clearly understood by all concerned, for without these the meeting is unlikely to prove valuable. If common objectives are shared prior to a meeting, the 'flow' will certainly be better.

Second, the people invited to attend must be given careful thought. (The number of participants will depend upon the organising body and the reason the meeting has been called). Is their presence essential? Can they afford the time? Will they be needed for all or only part of the meeting? Have all the stakeholders been considered? Will all the different interested groups be represented in the right balance? How many in total will be expected to attend? How will the attendees be

informed of the purpose and expected outcome? How will they know what preparation (reading documents, obtaining information) is required of them?

An additional consideration is the use of language or languages. If translation is needed, time must be allowed for this as the meeting will take more than twice as long. It will be important to check that key messages cross language barriers.

3.6.2 The meeting place

Choice of Location

Care must be taken when choosing and deciding on the location of the meeting place if meetings are to work with maximum efficiency and effect. You must be sure that all participants can access the meeting. Locations can vary depending on the country, available facilities and other circumstances. Neutral territory may be preferred if participants are divided for any reason. If some do not have their own vehicles, or a lift from others, then availability of public transport must be required. Humanitarian workers are often involved with physically disabled people who may need wheel-chair access, special toilet or other facilities.

Most meetings need private space. However, some are better held in public to allow discussion to be heard openly, so that members of the general community, not directly involved in the meeting, appreciate that agendas concerning themselves are not 'hidden'. Yet, open-air meetings can only be held with consideration for the weather or the need for a generator if certain visual aids or lighting are required. However, even indoor meetings may be halted by the noise of rain on a tin roof!

Outside or inside, weather conditions, temperature, mud, bad smells, lighting and generator (noise) can all be disruptive to meetings. If meetings are disturbed, the chairperson should obtain agreement from all participants, and then relocate or reschedule to ensure a productive continuation and outcome.

Consider the space:

- Big enough? Space for small group discussions?
- Columns in the way?

- Windows (use of wall space for maps, charts etc.)
- Proximity to noisy/smelly areas
- Traffic patterns and public transport
- Location of toilets
- Wall space and surface. Floor space for observers and wheelchair participants
- Electrical outlets
- Lighting
- Temperature control/fans

Room Layout

Meeting organisers should choose the layout that is best for the occasion so that all can hear the proceedings, see visual aids or engage in small group discussions as appropriate. Possible arrangements include:

- **Classroom style.** Seating arranged in straight lines with chairperson at the front.
- **Palais style.** Lines are curved to allow participants to see and hear each other more easily.
- **In-the-round.** A circular arrangement lets all have eye contact, and reduces the dominance of the chairperson.
- **Small group/café style.** Small individual tables place people in groups as in a café.
- **The doughnut.** Participants are seated in a rectangle or circle of tables with a central space.
- **The horseshoe.** All sit around a large central table. The chairperson may be at one end or in the centre of a long side.



A Village Meeting

Many serious, formal village-level meetings are **floor-based**. Floor seating may require mats for comfortable informality or formality. A single mat provides a centre of focus.

Lastly, attention should be given to factors that can help or hinder the progress of the meeting. Some participants may be advised to reposition themselves in order to see visual aids more easily.

Domestic Arrangements

Provision of tea, coffee, lunch, sweets or water can all support a comfortable atmosphere that can help the business of the meeting proceed smoothly. Make sure that caterers are primed with break times and stress prompt service. For some meetings pens, paper or other materials such as folders may be needed or even expected. Where time must be saved, or numbers are large, the use of name tags for clothing or tables can speed introductions between unfamiliar individuals.

3.6.3 The agenda

Notifying Participants

As well as indicating the organisation/structure of the meeting, one function of the agenda is to notify others of the forthcoming arrangements. The agenda can be posted on a notice board or distributed. This should be done at least one week before the meeting (at the latest, two days) to allow people to make arrangements for travel, obtaining/reading documents, personal work allocation, or cover. The agenda may need an accompanying explanation stating the purpose and expected outcome if it is the first of a series, or a single event. For the benefit of newcomers, the agenda can be accompanied by the minutes of the previous meeting. This will provide information about the kind of matters that are discussed, and the names of the other participants.

Document Identification

It is most important to date all documents and indicate the source or author. This is particularly significant during emergency situations, or when meetings concern security conditions that are changing rapidly. In these circumstances meetings can be frequent, so the current agenda and associated documents should be clearly identifiable. (Much time can be wasted, even dangerously, in trying to work out which document is current). Furthermore, participants may wish to contact the source in order to ensure adequate preparation or obtain clarification. So every document in a well-organised office will include a date, the sender's name, name(s) of recipient(s), and the action expected.

It is self evident that the agenda should indicate clearly the date, time, duration and place of the meeting. In addition, to help successors, or in anticipation of others having to retrieve documents in case of leave/sickness/end of contract/death, use of the 'Footer' can include the computer location where the document can be found. The footer can also be used to ensure that the name, date and page number occur on all pages of a multi-page document (that has a habit of losing first or last pages!)

Agenda Structure

There are several possible formats in which an agenda can be produced. Print should be large and items spaced to fill the page. (Try to leave enough space between points to allow participants to write their own comments). Information might include:

- **Date, time, and place of meeting**
- **The language medium** so expatriate time is not wasted
- **Expected duration** of the meeting
- In the case of a new meeting, **purpose and expected outcome**
- **Introductions** if necessary. Some meeting organisers list the names of those to whom the agenda has been sent
- **Approval of minutes** of previous meeting and corrections if necessary
- **Matters arising** from the minutes of the previous meeting. These should be of small importance. If major, they will be included in the main agenda
- **Items** should be carefully arranged in order to allow major discussions to be completed in an unhurried fashion. Contentious issues can be placed before a break to allow discussion time to be limited easily by the chairperson. Breaks can also be useful in helping cool the atmosphere if heated
- If **papers** are being provided and attached in support of items, this should be indicated alongside the item. This helps readers to prepare appropriately. (It is common but bad practice to table supporting papers at the time of the meeting. This makes no allowance for people reading at different speeds. If this is absolutely unavoidable, then the chairperson should allow time for reading. But the discussion is unlikely to be based on careful reflective thought as the time provided for reading may still be inadequate for some, and wasteful for others)
- Sometimes a **person** will be identified to deal with a particular matter, or to lead discussion on that topic. The item will also indicate this. Participants can be helpfully guided by showing approximate **discussion times** by the item; this draws attention to which matters are most or least important

- Sometimes **meetings may be divided** to allow participants (from different geographical areas, or with specific responsibilities) to attend clearly defined sections of the meeting e.g. “09.00 - 10.45 for those from the south and 11.15 - 13.00 hours for those from the north”: the intervening break allows ‘north’ and ‘south’ to meet as well as providing some flexibility. In this way time wasting is minimised and the meeting can finish on time
- **Any Other Business.** This should not be used to encourage latecomers, and topics introduced at this late stage in a meeting should either be added to a future agenda, or only dealt with in emergency
- **Date, time and place of next meeting.** These details are most easily agreed when all participants are present, and temptations to offer phone calling to arrange details later should be resisted. (This is especially important in emergency situations when participants are likely to be spread in the field). It should be remembered that busy people are unlikely to be available at short notice and it can be difficult to make short-term future arrangements that are convenient for all. Difficulties can be avoided by planning meetings at the same time each week or month. This allows meetings to be fixed for long periods ahead. (Ideally, departments or organisations will agree an overall meetings programme and this can be most helpful where information generated from one type of meeting is required for another).

Look critically at the example of an agenda on the next page and suggest ways in which it could be improved. Can you spot what is missing? (See 3.6.3 for the answer).

Staff Team Meeting

On: Monday 9 February 2004

In: Seminar Room, Accra Office

At: 09.00 to 13.00 hours

Distribution: all programme staff in Head Quarters (HQ) and Field Offices.

NB. HQ staff are requested to attend entire meeting; Field Staff to attend 1st or 2nd part as appropriate although staff may attend whole meeting if they wish. Written suggestions re Items 4 and 7 should be sent to Samuel by 16th February.

AGENDA

Chair: Samuel Abouti

1. Welcome for new staff member, Affua Tamaklo, to HQ,
2. Minutes of the meeting of Monday 2 February 2004
3. Matters arising from the minutes
4. Possible joint training activities with Seva Ghana (20 minutes)
5. Catch-up education (see Paper 1. John Aduwasi to lead discussion) (45 minutes)
 - a) In south
 - b) Single-parent women
6. Fire/First Aid Training (see Paper 2: attachment from last meeting)

10.45 - 11.15 COFFEE BREAK

7. Visit of Consortium President to Agriculture Training Programme
8. Proposal for Micro Finance Programme in the North (see Paper 3)
 - a) Planning seminar
 - b) Partners?
 - c) Funding?
9. Any Other Business
10. Chairperson and Minutes Secretary for next meeting

Next Meeting in Field Office: date, time and place

3.6.4 Charing a meeting

The Role of the Chairperson

The chairperson or meeting facilitator has many responsibilities. She/he has to prepare the agenda after giving consideration to the purpose, intended outcome and the participants. But the participants or the group may not all share the same ideals and may be present for several reasons, such as:

- need to know
- job requirement - (they were told to go)
- legitimate concern and interest in the topic
- career advancement
- substitute for the “real” participant
- a good way to get out of other work
- love of learning
- some combination of the above and other reasons

As any chairperson knows, it is not easy to start the meeting on time, keep to time, and finish on time while achieving the task as well as satisfying individual and group needs. How many meetings start late because someone thinks that somebody may be coming - then they do not turn up! (Just multiply the time delay by the number of people present to find the total time wasted. Put a notional value on the average working hour of those concerned and you can see how much money and time have been wasted by late starts).

So start meetings exactly on time and after several meetings, latecomers will learn that you mean business. There are even gentle ways of making latecomers feel embarrassed, such as not leaving empty chairs, or apologizing for starting the meeting on time! Certainly, do not go over the business again for the benefit of those who could not travel with sufficient allowance for traffic etc, when others have met the deadline.

Start the meeting on a positive note by thanking participants for making the effort, and making sure that everybody knows the others, and why the meeting has been held. Take care to introduce new individuals. It is good practice to have a pack sent to newcomers so they know the framework of the business. What might be included in the pack? - mission statement of the group, dates of planned meetings, previous minutes, list of members. All this helps to get newcomers on board and active fast. This is particularly significant in

the humanitarian world where contracts are short and turnover of staff is frequent.

It is strongly recommended to ask people to turn off telephones (especially if key personnel are likely to receive calls. One disturbing call can waste the time of many others).

The chairperson also needs to consider refreshment times in relation to agenda items. For longer, all-day sessions, the chairperson must start with a quick overview of the agenda including refreshment times. Try to avoid the distribution of coffee/tea, bananas, cakes etc while discussion is continuing, for obvious reasons. This does not save time, but rather leads to frustration and lack of concentration. Either stop the discussion, or take a complete break. For a short meeting, refreshments can be taken before for the benefit of those who have come long distances. There is an added advantage that latecomers miss the refreshments and not the meeting!

The matter of supporting papers has been mentioned in the previous section but it is worth repeating, that supporting papers will only be supportive if time before the meeting has been given to allow participants to read the material in a careful and reflective manner. Different people read at different speeds and the meeting is not the time for reading.

Observing Protocols and Voting

There are generally accepted and standard ways of conducting meetings that allow them to proceed smoothly and efficiently. Protocols for achieving this are there to help all concerned and should not be used to stifle discussion or progress. There are two main areas of concern. The first relates to the manner in which participants communicate, and the second deals with the ways of handling proposals and amendments.

Unless small group discussions are planned as part of the arrangements, participants should only speak one at a time, or else important contributions may be lost. The sensitive chairperson will be a student of body language and be aware, by keeping an eye on all the participants, when somebody wishes to add a talking point. A person wanting to join the discussion will usually lean forward, attempt to make eye contact with the chairperson, perhaps cough or move papers or water glass to attract attention, and raise a hand or an arm. The chairperson can indicate by nodding or pointing that the individual is free to speak. Sometimes many people wish to contribute to the

discussion at about the same time. If the meeting is to be kept in control, the chairperson must ask participants to indicate intention to speak by raising a hand, then noting and keeping to a strict order of the contributors.

In larger assemblies, where participants are not all in direct sight of each other, it is better for the contributing individual to stand up before speaking. Then it is easier for all to be aware of the standing contributor whose voice will be heard more clearly throughout the meeting place. In even larger assemblies, it is usual for speakers to announce their name and affiliation. This will help the hearers appreciate the background of the comment, and will also be of benefit to the person recording the minutes. Normally a presenter should direct comments to the chairperson and not to some other individual in the audience. This serves to reduce the possibility of generally unheard local conversations (that in some cases could lead to personal attacks), and for the chairperson to redirect the topic to others if appropriate.

The second important protocol concerns proposals and amendments. It is easy for the meeting to become confused if these matters are not dealt with in an orderly manner. For example, someone proposes that an agricultural project should be started in the north of the country next year. This proposal contains three ingredients: the nature of the programme, the location, and the time. Immediate voting becomes difficult when people may not agree/disagree with each of these components. Then somebody wishes to amend the proposal to suggest that the project would be more appropriate in the south, while a third person feels strongly that the project should commence this year and not next. Yet another person thinks that, if there is to be a project in the south, the proposal should be amended to education and not agriculture. Discussion becomes heated; people reiterate their views not wanting their point to be lost. At some point, the chairperson must call a halt and allow voting to reach a democratic decision.

So how does the chairperson ‘unpack’ all the points? Experience has shown that it is better to vote first on the amendments before obtaining a decision on the main issue. One way of dealing with the complications above is to vote on the issues in the following order:

- a) Is a project to begin this year, or next? (I.e. When could resources/funding/capacity be available?)

- b) Should the project be in the north or the south of the country? (Where is the greater need? Is an initial needs assessment required?)
- c) Then the main proposal can be presented. Should the project be in agriculture or education?

Before voting, and if time allows after the chairperson has clarified the decision point, further discussion, for clarification only, can be allowed. At this stage it is usually wise to allow a person to speak only once, otherwise some may attempt to force opinion by force of voice! Often, at this stage, there are some who would like to change the order of voting. But if two people sit on a horse, only one can be in front, and it is essential for the chairperson to keep the lead. This does not mean that the most senior person must always be in the chair.

The voting follows by a show of hands (or use of ballot papers in large general and formal situations), recording those who are for, against, or abstaining. It is important to note abstentions, as a simple majority of 'fors' may not truly reflect the will of the meeting if the number of abstentions is high. In fact, the chairperson needs to make clear, before the voting takes place, what is required for an acceptable majority decision.

Give thought to the **voting process**. In delicate situations voting should be anonymous as voters can be influenced in their decision if they know others can see which way they are voting. Furthermore, even in democratic situations, it may not be desirable for junior staff to be seen to vote against the opinion of their seniors.

Once the voting has taken place, no further discussion is appropriate. The decisions have been taken and there is neither need nor use in allowing a minority, who may feel aggrieved, to have the opportunity to reiterate their position.

3.6.5 Managing the meeting

The work of the chairperson is far from easy and practice is required to find the balance between encouraging the quiet ones, limiting the outspoken, and not taking the opportunity of the dominant position in the meeting also to dominate the discussion. The latter is particularly difficult when the chairperson may be better informed on a topic than others. Many meetings should be run on democratic lines and all opinions carefully heard and discussed. At other times the chairperson may need to be authoritative, taking decisions in a required time,

controlling content, or disciplining unacceptable behaviour. Issues need to be highlighted and summarised so that all are kept in the conceptual arena. Special care and patience must be given to those who may be communicating in their second or third language.

When numbers are large and time is short, there may be a need to ask participants to speak only once on a topic. This can be particularly important when interpretation is required.

When the atmosphere is most energetic, or even **heated**, sometimes it is better to postpone the decision-making process. Decisions are best taken when tempers are cool and calm. In extreme cases it may be necessary to take the matter to a higher forum for a decision to be reached.

When some participants are not participating, give pointed opportunity by requesting views from individuals or organisations. And give encouragement to the responses. Some participants hold back because they:

- Fear rejection
- Feel pressure from other more senior people
- Lack preparation
- Have an incomplete understanding of what has gone before

When actions have been decided, identify the person responsible and clarify the action required; and by when? Sometimes it is good to provide a 'supporter' who also checks that action has been taken!

This is an oversimplification of meeting facilitation as any chairperson knows, and there are many impediments to the process. Several techniques are used to disrupt meetings. They can occur at any time, often unexpectedly, and the chairperson must be prepared for:

- Personal attacks
- Sleeping
- Abusive speech/behaviours
- Filibusters (a person who uses, or even abuses, procedures to delay the process)
- Those who just say "NO" to any issue (Nay sayers)
- Late comers

The smart chairperson will:

- Identify potential problems before they occur - talk through the agenda with participants beforehand if possible.
- Take pre-emptive action
- Keep calm and not panic.
- Maintain a sense of humour
- Be willing to change to a better plan

If matters become really serious then:

- Deal with it outside the room.
- Call a break if necessary
- Set up a group task force
- Enrol the help of other participants
- Set up a committee or small group to represent participants' particular needs or interests
- Remain neutral. Do not take sides generally, but be prepared to take assertive authority if the occasion demands

If confronted with complete disorder and disruption,

- Never get upset or emotional yourself
- Isolate one element and try to deal with it to reduce the overall temperature
- Agree before resuming
- Call for a few minutes of complete silence
- Call a short break
- Put the item aside until later
- Abandon the meeting

Out of Control

The **good chairperson** is creative and will:

- Always remain in control of time
- Actively stimulate creative thinking
- Personally contribute new ideas or steer the discussion in new or unusual directions
- Find new ways of looking at things
- Consider novel approaches and give them a chance
- Aim to solve problems, not tread familiar pathways

Concluding the Meeting

A well-directed meeting will have:

- Focused better on its objectives
- Fostered more constructive discussions
- Led to a thorough review so that *ad hoc* decisions are avoided
- Encouraged all sides of the argument or case to be considered
- Resulted from business-like proceedings

At the **end of the meeting** the chairperson should:

- Review the key decisions
- Indicate issues for future discussion
- Fix time and place of next meeting. Remember that this is particularly important in emergency situations
- Thank the participants for coming
- Declare that the meeting has ended. (If this sounds a little heavy or obvious, wish participants something pleasant so that the meeting starts and finishes on a positive note, even if the middle part has been difficult to handle!)

3.6.6 Meeting records

Types of Minutes

Without a written record of the proceedings the intentions of the meeting will almost certainly be lost. If minutes are not kept, hours of time may be wasted by re-discussion at a later date, or argument occurs about what was actually agreed. Several different kinds of minutes can be recorded. At one extreme there can be a full record of all the discussion on almost a word for word basis. This is usually unnecessary: ideas develop and opinions change during the discussion. Progress and improvement develop from a conflict of views, and usually there is little need for or value in recording the modifications of views as they occur.

So the group or the chairperson needs to agree the nature of the records. These can be:

- A **word for word account**. This may only have value in reporting a highly contentious and significant discussion of extreme importance e.g. when two political or warring parties are being brought together, or when a prisoner is interviewed by the police. In such situations it is best to use a tape recorder for

later transcription. But be consistent when deciding to use first or second names, and the name of the organisation

- If a **relatively full account** is needed in a situation less important than the above, just the main arguments can be recorded that led to a particular conclusion or decision being taken
- Most usual are **minutes** that only record attendance, apologies for absence, decisions and required actions, and details of the next meeting; this is sufficient for most routine situations
- Of great value when time is short and people are under pressure is the **tabular form of minutes**. This method is under-utilised. The table can be completed during the course of the meeting, photocopied and distributed immediately. The table includes the key agenda points, a required action, who is responsible, and the agreed date by which the action will be completed.

Minutes of Programme Staff Meeting: Accra HQ on 04.11.2011 at 09-11.00 hours			
Agenda item	Action required	Person responsible	To be completed by:
3. NGO Vehicles	Replace tyres on car	John Brown	04.12.2011
5. Budget	Draft WatSan proposal	Sally Baidoo	11.12.2011
Etc.....			
Michael Wahid (Chair)			

- For ease of reference the numbering of Minute Items should correspond exactly with the numbers used in the Agenda.
- Number all pages. The format ‘1 of 5, 2 of 5 etc’ is useful as it makes clear if pages are missing or duplicated.

Distribution of Minutes

Minutes are best circulated within 24 hours of the meeting. Rapid distribution gives maximum time for actions to be effected while the matter is still fresh in mind. Sending out the minutes with the next agenda just before the next meeting is common practice but is usually too late to be effective as participants need action reminders as soon as possible after a meeting and not just before the next one.

A useful way to be sure that minutes are distributed to all attendees is to ask all participants to sign an attendance sheet giving postal or email addresses. If the meeting has been interpreted, then the minutes will also need to be translated before distribution.

For meetings that may have a highly significant impact, it is sometimes useful to indicate that minutes are in draft form until they have been agreed. Another approach is to send out minutes to a limited group for feed-back or correction before they are finally distributed to the wider audience. If this is done, the process must be clearly transparent and the meeting should be informed before this occurs.

3.6.7 Checklist of actions required

Decisions and Actions to be taken

- Determine the purpose(s) and expected outcome(s)
- Decide who should be invited and the total attendance anticipated. Will translation be necessary?
- Book the location; check audio-visual aids and materials required (flip chart, pencils/ball pens, pads, name labels etc)
- Arrange refreshments (water, sweets, tea, coffee, biscuits, lunch arrangements), and decide their timing in relation to the agenda
- Draft agenda
- Select a secretary to distribute the agenda and take minutes. (The most useful person will be competent and have a knowledge of the subject)
- Prepare papers to be attached to agenda items for precirculation
- Finalise the agenda and circulate. Post a copy on a notice board
- Arrive at the meeting place early to check room or space is available and that domestic arrangements (audio-visual aids/name tags/seating) are in order
- Start the meeting exactly on time
- Ask all to turn off mobile telephones

Actions to Avoid

Many problems in meeting organisation arise from leaving decisions and actions too late for general comfort. So avoid:

- Delays in making decisions about the need for, purpose and expected outcomes of meetings
- Leaving bookings for rooms, domestic arrangements, visual aids until the last minute
- Presenting supporting papers at the meeting. People cannot read them while concentrating on the matters under discussion. If extreme circumstances force papers to be tabled, chairpersons must allow time for them to be read making special allowance for those whose native language is not that used in the paper. Tabled papers can cause confusion, disruption, and raise suspicions that an item is being 'bulldozed'. To ensure that papers are always pre-circulated, either with or even before the agenda, allow time for electrical/photocopier/postal and other failures.

A good meeting needs concentration and interruptions must be minimized.

- Don't be sidetracked
- Beware of meetings within meetings. Insist that participants speak only once to a topic if individuals are getting repetitive or too dominant
- Beware of digressions

3.6.8 A final word to participants

Each time a meeting is convened, ask yourself:

- Is it really necessary to attend? (Make a conscious decision about attending)
- What can I contribute?
- What can I get from it?

Come to definite answers before you set out. And be determined to go to the meeting on time, not late! If you arrive early, then use the time to network and the time will not be wasted.

- Read supporting papers in advance
- Prepare your contribution controlling your nerves

- Annotate any relevant documents and make notes as necessary
- Plan questions that you will need to ask
- Note who will attend
- Put information over in a way that is explicit, accurate and precise
- If your name is put against an action point, then take seriously the responsibility to follow up with action, and complete the task in time

Do not

- Monopolize the conversation
- Talk to the person next to you during the meeting
- Constantly interrupt others
- Become emotional or argumentative to no good purpose
- Make it difficult to stick to the allotted time
- Appear unprepared, undisciplined or a troublemaker
- Digress pointlessly from the topic

3.7 Helping a New Colleague

3.7.1 General help

A new colleague arrives in your Department. To assist that person to become a productive member of the team as soon as possible has obvious benefit. If new colleagues are left to find their own way they may have feelings of insecurity and make mistakes. A better way is for the line manager to appoint an experienced peer to act as a mentor initially and for as long as necessary, or for a period of time agreed between the two people.

On the day your new team member arrives, with some preparation, only two or three hours are needed for the following programme.

Start by checking that satisfactory accommodation has been obtained. Then give:

- An introduction to the site and where to go for domestic facilities (toilets, refreshments, and emergency health care)
- Background information about transport, banks and other facilities in the locality
- An introduction to colleagues
- Background to the District

- Building arrangements and office space - chair, desk, electricity for computer if needed, filing cabinet or storage space, (or description of current and future building plans)
- Security arrangements and briefing: security guards, room cleaning and locking/unlocking of doors
- Discussion about the structure of the organisation and systems
- Terms of reference - salary, leave, sick leave, expenses/claims for travel
- A letter of appointment or work contract
- Schedule of meetings to be attended
- Detailed discussion of Work Plan proposals, ways to be of use, and immediate activities in your group
- A map of the area and travel methods for field work (if applicable). Census data may also be appropriate
- Guidance on procedure for contacting outside organisations
- Information about administrative matters
- Daily signing in arrangements
- Obtaining stationary
- Administrative assistance with typing, procuring etc
- Photocopying
- Computing facilities
- Printing documents
- Internet facilities
- General discussion on protocols (dress, address for politicians)
- Arrangements for weekly meetings for awareness of events and activities
- Access to relevant files and their locations - Annual Work Plan, Financial Year, others?
- A staff list of key personnel and contact numbers

3.7.2 Managerial induction

You may have had an input into the new appointment or even been totally responsible for the arrival of a new colleague. If so, your induction programme will need to be more detailed. The following can serve as guidelines which have been well tested in Sri Lanka in an organisation with a UK-based Headquarters: they may need to be adapted for the country in which you are serving.

Induction for Staff Coming to Sri Lanka

1. Pre-induction Information (sent by post in UK)

- Introduction to organisation
- Original assessment of the situation
- Policy documents
- Job description
- Contract
- Information about expenses and study grants
- Handover notes from previous incumbent
- Who is Who, and Who Was Who
- Map and country information
- *Better Ways to Keep Healthy in Asian Tropics* (free download from www.voluntaryhumanitarianwork.com)
- Advice on immunisation

2. Induction Day in UK

2.1 Administration

- Ticket and travel arrangements
- Notification and briefing for next of kin
- Reserve US dollars
- Arrangements for payment, expenses, advances
- T-shirts

2.2 Programme

- Objectives and overview
- Funding
- Past and present activities

2.3 Security

- Security review
- Mission orders in local languages and English
- Identity Card
- What to carry - first aid kit, torch, condoms etc
- Medicines - anti-malarials, etc
- Check vaccinations are current

3. Arrival in and Leaving Sri Lanka

IN: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Security briefing2. Country briefing3. Accommodation4. Security money5. Contact list6. ID7. Visiting cards8. Phone and sat phone9. Safe combination10. Keys to office and house	OUT: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Handover notes2. Finish reports3. Return house and office keys4. Return telephone and charger5. Change currency6. Claim expenses7. Schedule UK debrief8. Reconfirm flight9. Book car to airport10. Pay airport tax
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3.8 Self and Peer Assessment

Many organisations will have probationary periods, and appraisal systems which may be quarterly, annually or at contract end: it is common for a final review meeting to be held between employee and employer. This may be formal, informal or conducted through completion of appraisal forms. However, the smart employee will want to be aware of progress during the contract so that adjustments can be made if necessary. There are several ways of achieving this.

One approach is to set out the original objectives in a monthly tabular form and to give yourself a mark (perhaps on a scale of 1-5 or 1-10) for each objective. This will focus your attention on each of the job areas you are addressing. An extended version of this method is to photocopy the table and give it to two or three trusted colleagues who might be familiar with your work, and ask them to assess your activities. Then their assessments can be compared with your self-assessment. Differences can be discussed. The exercise can be extended to the appraisal of your colleagues and repeated for them. You can add notes of explanation and repeat the exercise on a monthly basis.

First Monthly Review for J.S. - 30.09.2011

1. Overview

The first Strategy document (08.06.2011) remains essentially unchanged. The time scale of activities has been elaborated (appendix 1) and summary notes on each section are provided. No changes have been made to the Mission, Aims, Objectives, Activities, Potential Partners, and Log Frame.

2. Goal Setting

The following activities are all directed towards achieving the goal.

3. Reading / Review

Major UNHCR and other UN publications have been read. "Refugees" and other journals are scanned or read depending on interest. One paper (The Global Disaster Situation) has been written for the National Disaster Management Centre. Another (Village Life with Dignity for the Displaced) has been drafted for publication. **Progress 6/10**

4. Field Office Visits

Discussions for briefing and EP working sessions have been held with colleagues, Jaffna (one visit and another planned), Trincomalee (two visits) and Vavuniya (three visits). Visits to Mannar and the uncleared Vanni (Maddhu and Mallavi) have not been possible although discussions have been held with colleagues from the area. Initial resistance.....etc

360 degree feedback is a powerful tool which enables individuals to gain specific feedback about their skills and behaviours at work from the people that work most closely with them. It is commonly used as part of a performance management / appraisal process or as a component of a personal development or coaching programme.

The participant and those providing feedback are all asked to complete a confidential online questionnaire which focuses on behaviours such as leadership, teamwork, developing others, etc. It is good to involve beneficiaries at this stage. The feedback is collected anonymously and the results summarised, ensuring that no single person's feedback can be identified.

A detailed report outlining the results of the feedback is produced and a feedback session is provided for the individual. However, although a powerful tool, it can be costly in time, may raise antagonism and could open a can of worms!

3.9 Coping with Stress

3.9.1 Biology of stress

Our bodies have survival mechanisms for responding to immediate and long-term stress. However, one man's stress can be relaxation for another. While some are scared of spiders or walking along a cliff edge others actually enjoy the 'adrenaline rush' induced by bungee-jumping, mountaineering, extreme sports and free-falling from aeroplanes!

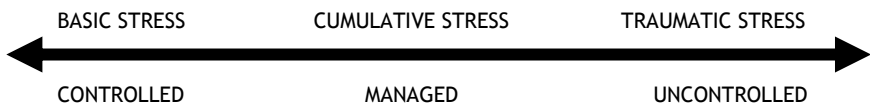
The immediate response to stress is dilatation of the eye pupils, an increase in heart and breathing rates, a rise in blood pressure and a shift in blood from the internal organs ('butterflies in the tummy') to the muscles of the arms and legs. Energy sources are mobilised into the blood stream from the liver. This has been called the "fright, flight or fight response". It is initiated by a special part of the nervous system and is reinforced for a longer period by adrenaline and other hormones released from the adrenal glands. In fact these physiological responses can be induced just by thinking about sitting in the dentist's chair! All this makes good physiological sense as the deer flees across the savannah ahead of a hungry lion; the mobilised energy compounds can be life saving in providing endurance.

However, if acute stress is not followed by exercise, then the mobilized energy chemicals can become dumped in the blood vessels later to form clots and the blood pressure spikes can lead to damage in the brain or elsewhere.

Now humanitarians may experience many stresses - lack of achievement through factors beyond their control, a sense of uncertainty and insecurity, linguistic isolation, deprivation, lack of family and friends, unfamiliar culture and food so spicy it burns both ends, high temperature, risk of tropical diseases, experience of conflict and life threatening situations.

3.9.2 Effects of stress

If stress becomes chronic and is not recognized or managed it can lead to several undesirable changes. These are mostly symptoms, not signs.



They can include feelings of loneliness, emptiness, anger, hatred, frustration, swings in energy level and mood, concentration problems, restlessness, irritability, anxiety, fear, depression, sleep and digestive disturbances, re-experiencing events, self-reproach and guilt, even psychosomatic illness.

Sometimes pathological stress responses are not experienced until post-deployment. The Voluntary Service Overseas offers an excellent short course to volunteers before they return home, warning of the reactions which may be experienced. Other organisations are giving more focus to the importance of self-awareness and care for colleagues who may be unaware that they are approaching burnout or total collapse. One or two specifically provide support to agencies committed to improving human resource management. Organisations providing guidance on personnel support include:

- the Center for Psychology and Society ehrenreichj@oldwestbury.edu
- the Antares Foundation pietersom@antaresfoundation.org
- and People in Aid www.peopleinaid.org

The United Nations has produced a thorough booklet covering the subject for staff and trainers (Managing the Stress of Humanitarian Emergencies, Geneva, July 2001); the older version (1995) included a simple self-test which allowed alert to early stress signals.

3.9.3 Techniques for coping

Stress must be avoided or managed. Care can be taken before, during or after working abroad.

Before

- Ask your family and friends to keep in touch to keep a sense of belonging and stability
- Research well the country to which you are going to prepare your mind for the changes to avoid surprises or shocks
- Obtain a security briefing from the organisation or your High Commission/Embassy/Consulate
- Take family/friends/personal photographs for display in your room and for sharing with new friends

On Arrival

- Obtain an updated security briefing
- Plan two mission statements (see Section 3.1)

- Plan for leisure time and exercise
- Keep contact with home base
- Start a journal in which you express your feelings. This can serve as a letter to family and is most cathartic in the process. In high security contexts, be careful what you write in this, don't use names, and preserve confidential information. It may be read by undesirables!

During

- Maintain your exercise and leisure schedule
- Stay aware of stress signals in yourself and colleagues
- Remind yourself that the contract is not for ever
- Discipline yourself to say "No" to further requests for help/work
- Learn meditation (especially easy if you are in Asia. Try a Vipassana 11-day silent meditation programme at a Goenke Ashram which can give you valuable life-long mental tools)
- Network socially with compatriots
- Develop muscle relaxation techniques. These can be useful sleep inducers or used during sleepless nights without having to resort to hypnotic medicines. A stressed mind causes tense muscles (ready for Flight or Fight). If you can relax the muscles, you can also relax the mind. Here are four well-tested methods:
 1. Experience a good massage from a professional. But be selective as many massage parlours have other intentions. (Disabuse your mind of the idea that a sauna is relaxing - physiologically it is highly stressful).
 2. Lie on your back and rest your hands on stomach or thighs. Now work through your body, starting with your feet and progressing to your face. Tense. Hold it - and relax. Bend your feet towards your knees hard; hold them in tension for a few seconds. Then relax. Repeat for your calves, thighs, buttocks, back, abdomen, chest and arms, neck and face (in a silent scream). Make sure the relaxation is complete and check from time to time that muscle blocks stay limp after tension. There are good tape recordings of music and instruction available if a prompt is needed.
 3. A more advanced approach is to leave out the tension components and use your mind alone to ensure relaxation using the same progression from feet to head. This can be combined with observing the sensations in your skin where it contacts with the bed, and registering the sensations in your mind with detachment and equanimity. Just be aware, and

survey the whole surface of your body systematically. Do you feel itch? Tingling? Pressure? Discomfort? With practice you can extend the approach to leaving the skin and entering body cavities such as the ears and mouth.

4. Slow breathing has been demonstrated to lower blood pressure, slow the heart rate and induce relaxation. We usually use two sets of muscles for breathing: the diaphragm and those between the ribs. While you are reading this, place your left hand on the bottom of your rib cage under your right arm. Try breathing only with your diaphragm when no movement will be felt here. Now take a huge breath in as if in panic; your rib cage will move up and out as in excessive exercise.

While lying on your back you are going to change your breathing from about 12 times a minute to half that amount. Concentrating on diaphragmatic breathing, Inhale maximally for six counts (seconds), hold for three, exhale totally with a deep sigh for six, and hold for three; repeating the controlled breaths. Do this ten times for a start and increase to slow breathing for 15 minutes later on if you can.

The last three exercises are best done lying on your back in bed but they can be practiced anywhere and at any time, even sitting at your computer or standing waiting for a bus.

There are other approaches to help relaxation; they all have in common a simple discipline which requires concentration and thereby the exclusion of stressful thoughts. Two other possibilities are to finish your day by reflecting on the worst thing that happened, and then the best thing that happened so the day finishes with a thought of satisfaction. A more detailed version is to start in the present and think in detail of actions which led to it - I climbed into bed, I brushed my teeth, I dried myself after my shower etc.

Sleep disturbance over a long period can cause sickness. This has recently been confirmed by scientific studies (Sleep Disorders Centre, St Thomas's Hospital, London) on night workers. Not all are affected by disturbance to their circadian rhythms but **general approaches for those undergoing stress** include the following:

- Avoid caffeine (in strong tea, coffee and coco cola drinks after 14.00 hours)

- Take some exercise between 16.00 and 19.00 hours (“After lunch rest awhile: after dinner walk a mile”)
- Have a milky drink and warm bath/shower before bed
- Use ear plugs and eye shields to block out disturbing sounds and light
- Listen to soft music to blanket thoughts and other sounds. Reading some light literature before turning off the light and settling can have the same effect
- Take regular breaks from work
- Sleep in the fresh air (if it safe to do so. Do remember your mosquito net)
- Try eating bananas or other fruit as a change to your normal supper
- Take one day of total rest each week (impossible, of course, in emergency situations, but this is highly desirable when possible)
- Learn meditation and relaxation
- Try using a smaller cushion for your head or placing a small cushion between your knees. A high cushion under the head causes the head to press on to the spine when sleeping on your side; a smaller cushion allows the head to fall away from the body when sleeping on your side putting the cervical region under gentle traction
- On returning home do seek help or counselling if you need it (this is automatically provided by some NGOs). There is no shame associated with returning home wounded/traumatised after a tough assignment.

The most important (and usually most costly) component of an organisation is the staff team. Their wellbeing is of paramount importance in the efficient execution of a project or programme and in preparing for and responding to emergencies. Emergencies place enormous burdens of responsibilities and stress on aid workers. Failure of their health, physically or psychologically, can change them from a bonus to a burden in the community.

Several organisations have recognised the importance of caring for personnel and have appropriate policies in place. One or two specifically provide support to agencies committed to improving human resource management. Such help is based on several principles. The following can be used as a check-list for your agency:

1. My agency has a written strategic plan that accepts overall organisational responsibility for reducing the sources of stress, acting to prevent or mitigate the effects of stress, and responding to the unavoidable effects of stress
2. My agency systematically screens or assesses the suitability of staff members before hiring

3. My agency ensures that all employees have appropriate pre-employment briefings and training
4. My agency monitors the response to stress of its field staff on an ongoing basis
5. My agency provides support, on an ongoing basis, to help its staff deal with the expected stresses of humanitarian aid work
6. My agency provides staff with specific support (psychological first aid, psycho-education, evaluation, and referral to follow up support and care when appropriate) in the wake of critical incidents and other unusual and unexpected sources of stress
7. My agency provides all staff members with both a personal stress assessment and review and an operational debriefing at the end of their assignment or at the end of their contract
8. My agency provides both practical and emotional support for staff at the end of an assignment or contract

3.10 Following Further Studies

Humanitarian employees may face stresses abroad which they have not encountered when employed in their own country. They may be operating in a hostile and dangerous environment, surrounded by local people suffering appalling tragedy, separated from family and friends, and trying to cope with extreme deprivation, language, geographic/climatic and cultural differences. In such circumstances career development and further learning is not easy. Yet it is possible although there is a need for more discipline than is required of those who sit in formal class rooms on a full-time basis.

3.10.1 Reading

Have your professional journals redirected, perhaps to your local country headquarters. Ask your colleagues if they have books, magazines or training materials that they can share. Your organisation may have a library with reading resources, videos and CDs that could be used for learning and leisure. Perhaps you have already arranged for CDs of literature to be supplied to you by TALC, ELDIS or another organisation. Then set aside at least one hour a week for reading. Perhaps a colleague shares similar interests: two or more people reading the same material can form the basis of useful discussion as well as reinforcing the study discipline. A good source of literature is the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) which is Britain's leading independent think tank on international development and humanitarian issues - www.odi.org.uk.

3.10.2 An Aid Club

In a more relaxed situation a group of colleagues can arrange to meet on a regular (weekly or monthly) basis. People take turns to present a topic for discussion. This can take the form of a 20-minute presentation followed by an open forum. It is important to stimulate the conversation by raising issues in the preliminary chat without supplying all the answers. The topics can be a mixture of cultural and humanitarian issues; these can break down barriers between international and local staff as well as providing practice in language and presentations.

3.10.3 Short courses

Some organisations allow time out to attend courses and conferences in country or abroad. However, few offices optimise the learning by insisting on a brief report or presentation to colleagues on returning to the office or field. Such knowledge or skills gained from a short course or workshop can be shared through an Aid Club.

3.10.4 Self-constructed study

This is easier if there is regular and good Internet access. It involves selection of a particular subject area (best relevant to your work, if you want the support of your boss!) and choosing a single website that contains literature and/or a group of discussants associated with it. Here are some examples related to the work of many humanitarians but there are others. Explore the site, design your programme - and start!

- a) **Community Capacity Building and Development.** www.scn.org. This site has over five thousand documents in more than thirty languages. A good place to start is the list of [Modules](#). If you click on the first document under each module listed here, you will go to the module introduction, which, in turn, lists the other documents in that module. These can be read online or downloaded free. Go through the topics and write out your own agenda or curriculum.
- b) **Management.** www.ngomanager.org. This site has resources relating to a wide range of management subjects and has a readership of over 4,000 from 70 countries. The organisation is managed by a highly experienced humanitarian who directs a management school in Geneva running courses here and elsewhere.

- c) **People in Aid.** www.peopleinaid.org. Their Code of Good Practice is an internationally recognised management tool that helps agencies enhance the quality of their human resources management. This site has extensive resources, runs courses and has discussion groups of which the one concerning human resources for emergencies (EPN) is highly active.
- d) **Free Manuals and Books.** www.networklearning.org has a library of free manuals. There is even a manual on how to write manuals. Writing a manual is a valuable and disciplined way to learn a subject while making a useful contribution to your CV. www.hesperian.org has free books available relating to aspects of health.

3.10.5 Distance Learning

3.10.5.1 Who is it for?

This section is a practical Study Guide for people who want to put their experience and knowledge in a wider context by studying a course through 'distance learning' methods and it is suitable for those who need an introduction to the subject. It is valuable for humanitarians who cannot afford time out for full-time studies or who are on short-term contracts in a sequence of different countries. Such students will be helped if they can also attend a short full time course in a related area to provide the added advantage of sharing experiences with others. Distance learning is usually based on a combination of reading materials, assignments and sometimes field or practical work under the guidance of a tutor. The programme may be supported by audio-visual material, interactive CDs, computer links and virtual class mates through internet. These may form a group for mutual support and encouragement, and may be spread over wide areas yet never actually meet.

Aims

This guide aims to provide

- an introduction to distance learning
- an indication of the advantages and problems associated with distance learning
- suggested study techniques for overcoming the problems

How long will each module take?

Distance learning (sometimes called ‘open learning’) modules may form complete courses or be components of a larger programme. The time taken will depend on the level and the ability of the learner and their previous experience. You can just read this Study Guide or work through the exercises which will take about one hour of work.

Advantages of open learning

Open learning gives you the choices to study when, where, and for as long as you wish. You also have freedom to concentrate on those areas that are more interesting to you or that are more relevant to your work. However, you will need self-discipline and may still need support from others.

Can I cope with distant learning?

Universities and colleges in many countries offer distance learning programmes of study. Of the 70 universities in the UK, the Open University is the largest with over 200,000 students worldwide. That is only one of many universities and other organisations established globally which use distance learning methods.

A **Continuing Education Unit (CEU)**. The CEU is an internationally accepted unit for continuing education and professional development. It is based on criteria and guidelines established by the International Association for Continuing Education and Training (IACET) and is a measure used in continuing education programs, particularly those required in a licensed profession in order for the professional to maintain the license. Examples of people who need CEUs include educators, nurses, mental health professionals, and social workers. Generally, a CEU is defined as ten hours of participation in a recognised continuing education program, with qualified instruction and sponsorship. CEU records are widely used to provide evidence of completion of continuing education requirements mandated by certification bodies, professional societies, or governmental licensing boards. The records also provide employers with information on training pertinent to particular occupations.

Websites that provide CEUs online allow professionals to take courses at their own pace and at convenient times and places. Expense and travel time savings from online completion of CEUs can be significant.

Many universities provide distance learning programmes and CEUs so that it is possible to obtain a certificate, diploma, degree or postgraduate qualification with modules studied through different providers. Thousands of ordinary people have progressed by this means - so can you. Nevertheless, you will have to take more control of your studying than you did when you were in a more traditional learning situation such as at school. There follows an example showing how modules from different sources can be put together.

An Example of a Distance Learning Programme

For 18 years, the University of Wisconsin - Disaster Management Center (UW - DMC) has provided professional development in international disaster/emergency management through traditional training and distance learning. Since 1988, some 6,000 individuals from more than 100 countries have enrolled in the UW-DMC curriculum of self-study courses. The UW-DMC has collaborated with UNHCR since 1985 in refugee emergency management training as well as the delivery of a Diploma.

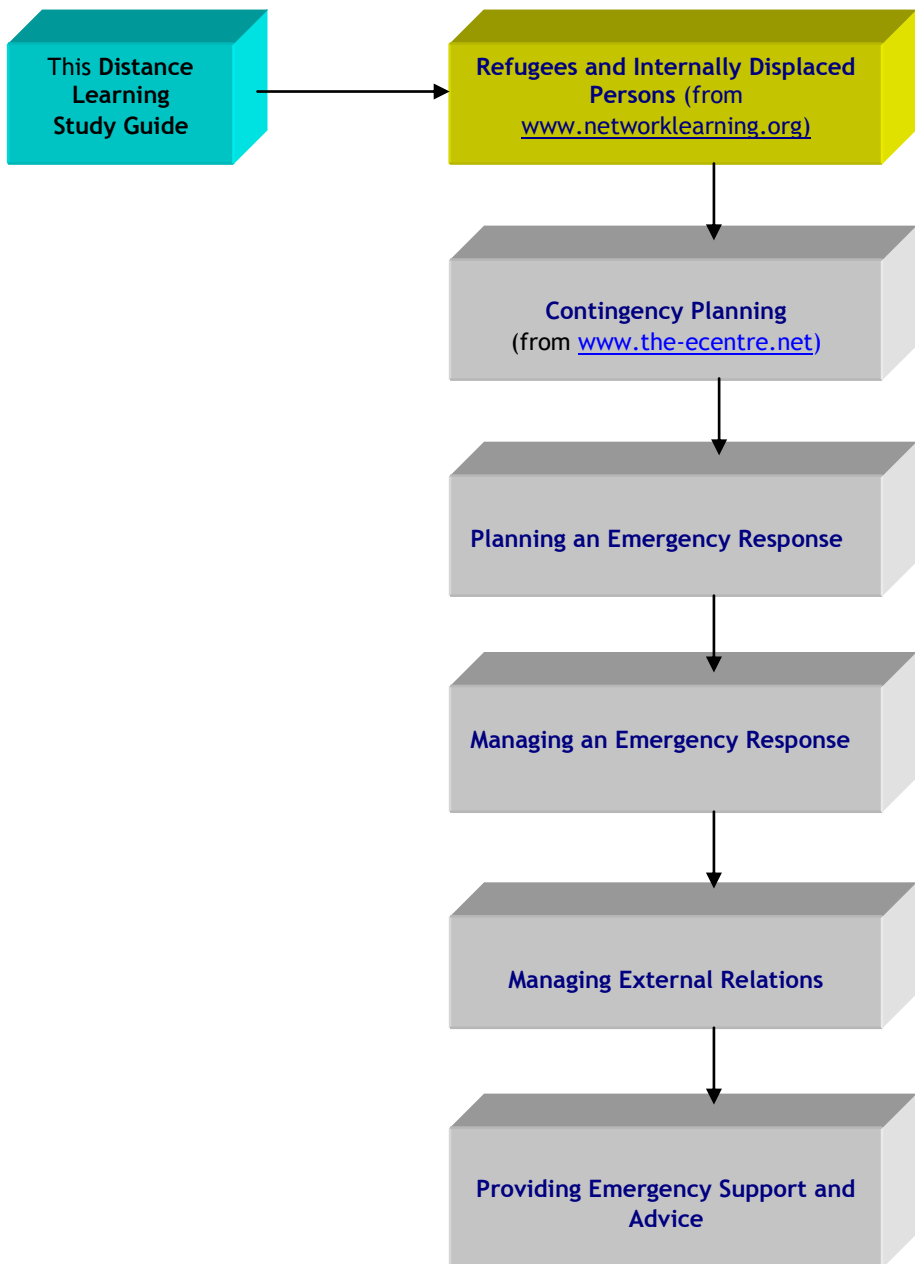
The Diploma in Disaster Management

This personal study programme can combine UW - DMC self-study courses with courses from anywhere in the world. The Diploma requires 60 CEUs, combining 25 CEUs from UW-DMC self-study courses, 25 CEUs from professional electives (disaster/emergency and general) from any recognised organisation and 10 CEUs from a Professional Study Project. There are no residency requirements. From more than fifty countries, there are many professionals enrolled in the Diploma Program.

Upon successful completion of the examination, the University of Wisconsin will record your Continuing Education Units (CEUs) on a University transcript and send you a Certificate of Completion for each course. Completion of each UNHCR course earns at least 1.5 CEUs towards the UW-DMC Diploma in Disaster Management.

For more details, contact the University of Wisconsin through www.engr.wisc.edu/dmc, or through www.the-ecentre which is the UNHCR Regional Centre for Emergency Training.

An example of how modules from different sources can be combined to form a study programme is illustrated in the following diagram. An example of a university offering distance learning programmes can be found in www.rmit.edu.au. The Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology is one of Australia's original and leading educational institutions. With more than 60,000 students studying at RMIT campuses in Melbourne and regional Victoria, in Vietnam, online, by distance education, and at partner institutions throughout the world, the University has built a worldwide reputation for excellence in professional and vocational education and research. A vibrant alumni community now stretches across more than 100 countries.



3.10.5.2 What learning techniques will I be using?

Distance Learning programmes may include:

- pre- and post-module tests
- frequent tasks and activities
- ‘stop and think’ breaks
- fieldwork to be done away from your desk or work place
- interviews and fact-finding exercises
- broader questions and topics to think about and discuss
- case studies drawn from a range of countries
- suggestions for group discussions with friends and colleagues
- suggestions for further reading and study

3.10.5.3 How can I plan my study?

To get the most out of your course you need to plan your approach to studying. Many people also benefit from encouragement to keep going. So select a ‘study-buddy’ (a teaching helper or mentor) with whom you can talk about the course and who will undertake to check your progress from time to time. The study-buddy could be another student of the same course, or may be a colleague or friend who has an interest in the subject, but need not necessarily be a person experienced in the subject. A learning helper will provide the opportunity for meaningful and stimulating discussion. This is most important for the testing, expansion, and reinforcement of the ideas and concepts that you will gain from the course. Once you have chosen a study-buddy, you need to negotiate with that person what his or her role will be. The study-buddy could:

- check your progress regularly
- comment on your written work
- discuss suggested topics with you
- give you advice about field work locations
- provide encouragement

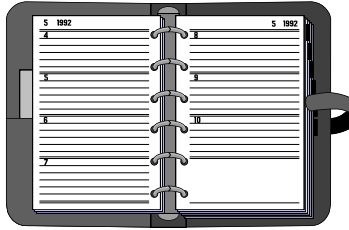
Do I need personal objectives?



Yes, you do. You will need to think about why you are taking the course and what you hope to gain from it. You may need something to do at the weekends, or you hope to be better at your job. You may want to see if you have the ability to cope with a more advanced course of study by distance learning. Or perhaps you just want a break from the pressures of your employment. Any of these is a valid reason for study and you may have other ideas.

Self-study is more demanding than traditional classroom instruction because you will need to provide your own framework for study instead of having it imposed on you by the course or workshop timetable. You will have to be self-motivated and disciplined enough to continue when a ‘voice inside’ is telling you to stop and go for a drink. One of the problems of self-study is that some people begin with great enthusiasm at a pace that cannot be sustained. The best way to start a self-study course is to plan your own study schedule over a pre-set period by thinking ahead and making your own timetable.

Your **timetable** will specify the days and the hours that you have set aside for study each week. Ideally, these arrangements will be agreed with your study-buddy who can support you in this resolve. So write the scheduled time in your diary or on a chart displayed over your working area. You may be able to get the agreement of your boss or colleagues to allow some of the study time (on a regular and undisturbed basis, of course!) to be included within working hours. Organise your work area to allow this.



Schedule your timing around events, such as holidays or travel or high-stress employment times.

Here are other methods to help your learning:

1. Develop a study reflex by studying consistently in a place, which you associate with work. Do not try to study when lying on your bed.



This location is associated with sex, or sleep - and that is what will happen!

You will study best if you always study in the same chair in the same place with a good light. This will help you develop a 'study reflex'. If your concentration starts to fail then move to another place and relax. Keep that study place for concentrated work, not for other trivial activities such as eating and relaxing. If you have only one place, then simply make another by turning your chair through 180 degrees, or placing it at the side of the same desk or table.

2. Reward yourself with short breaks of physical or different activities or cups of tea *after* you have completed a particular task or studied for a predetermined period of time (e.g. one hour).



3. Discourage ‘study busters’ among your friends and family by putting a notice on the door saying, “GONE AWAY”. You may also hang a line of dirty underclothes, socks and other washing across the inside of the door to discourage those who are really determined to disturb your concentration!

The most demanding study busters are children. Especially your own. It is difficult to explain to a three-year old child who is appealing for attention that Mum or Dad must not be disturbed “because they are engaged in cerebral activities associated with an important distance learning programme of international significance concerning emergency management”! Unusually supportive collaboration between partners is needed to cope with this situation.

4. Travelling and waiting time can be used for revision. Prepare notes in small writing on pocket-sized cards or pieces of paper (one quarter the size of this page) which can be carried easily in pockets or bags, and refer to them while waiting for bus, train or ox/camel cart.
5. Use *active* learning techniques. This means asking yourself questions that you or your study-buddy would like answered *before* you read the material. Then search for the answers in the material provided. At the end, review the main points *and explore their use in your work*. Only when knowledge is applied does it becomes a skill.

*“I hear, and I forget.
I see, and I remember.
I do, and I understand.”*

3.10.5.4 What do I do if I get behind with my work?

Unexpected events may occur to delay your progress. Don’t panic! This is a common experience.

1. Read the regulations that govern your course again. There may be allowances for some assignments to be skipped or delayed
2. Check that you have set yourself realistic goals and adjust them if necessary
3. Inform your tutor and ask for guidance rather than inventing excuses

4. Seek support or suggestions from your study-buddy or a fellow student
5. Remember that 'perfection' means doing the best that you can in the time available. It does not mean putting into your assignment, every single example and reference. Be selective. In the last resort you may need to complete some tasks at a lower standard than you normally set for yourself to help you catch up. *Perfection is the enemy of good!*

Reinforcement of your knowledge. Ask any teacher or lecturer when they best learned their subject – when they were students, or when they taught the subject. All will say that mastery of a subject is best acquired by teaching it to others. So teachers are the best students and you will have to become a teacher if you are to become confident about your knowledge in your new field of study. This module, therefore, will conclude with a small teaching exercise. Be prepared for it!

Take every opportunity to teach others about the things you are learning.

A last piece of advice before you start a module

THE SQ3R READING METHOD

Any distance learning and self-study programme will involve a large amount of reading. Perhaps you have already had the experience of reading a page of a book, or a whole chapter, after which you realise that none of the information has been registered or remembered. Indeed, it is possible to read even a short paragraph mechanically while your mind is far from the subject. This can easily apply if you are feeling tired, or you have had a stressful day at work.

The SQ3R (survey, question, read, recall, review) reading method is well tried, world-wide, and it can also help you to overcome concentration and memory problems with reading.

Survey

Before studying a book, a chapter, or any written material, survey the whole piece of writing by scanning it quickly to get an outline of its content. Key information is often contained in the introductory or concluding (summary) paragraphs. Important information is often to be found in the first sentence of a paragraph, while the rest may be an expansion or development of the same idea. Look at the table of contents, glance at the tables and figures, and note especially lists of important points. This will tell you if you should spend more time reading the material carefully.

Question

Your reading will lead to active learning and be more easily remembered if you formulate a few specific questions for which you are searching for answers. If there are headings in the material, turn the heading into a question. E.g. If the heading is "Impediments to Returning", change the heading (in your head) to "What are the Impediments to Returning?" But ask yourself other questions as well.

Read

Read at whatever speed is comfortable for you. At the same time make notes about the information in your own words, or use a highlighter pen to indicate important ideas. (However, you should not make marks in a book or journal which has been lent to you by a friend, or borrowed from a library!)

Recall

Now close the book or other volume, and work hard to recall what you have read, section by section. This is more valuable than rereading because it forces you to actively remember. You are not expected to recite the text word for word, but to see whether you have picked up the main ideas and facts. For maximum learning, the recall should take place *as soon as possible* after the reading. The longer you leave it, the more information will be forgotten. If you do not try to recall, you may just fool yourself into thinking that you have done some serious work.

Review

Finally, review what you have written and read. Again, this is most effective if done soon after the initial study. It is far better to do this than leaving the review to a 'swotting period' just before a test or examination, and perhaps long after your initial study.

STOP AND THINK.

Then write down the answers to the following 8 questions:



1. What are your personal reasons for studying this course?
2. Who would you like as your study-buddy?
3. What would you like your study-buddy to do?
4. What will you do for your study-buddy in return for the help?
5. To what extent will your partner/friends support your studies? Ask them to protect your study time.
6. Plan your study times and write them in your diary, or make a chart. How many weeks have you planned for each module?
7. Where have you decided to study?
8. Have I asked my boss if I can study at work?

ACTIVITY

Explain to your study-buddy the advantages and disadvantages of distance learning. What techniques can you use to overcome the difficulties? Then teach your study helper about the use and value of the SQ3R reading method without referring to this document. Give your helper a relevant article and test the method together.

For those who are beginners in the field of humanitarian work you may like to obtain a free distance learning module called “Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)”. Download it from www.networklearning.org.

This module will allow you to explore distance learning without any outside commitment. It is self assessed and covers an introduction to disaster terminology, the global disaster situation, the differences between refugees and IDPs, the Sphere Minimum Standards, the Deng Humanitarian Guiding Principles, and a case study from Sri Lanka.

YOU ARE NOT ALONE IN CYBERSPACE!

Distance learning can be lonely but it need not be. Access to internet and e-mail facilities gives you access to information and also to people. People like yourself who are following the same programme. There are people 'out there' with whom you can share ideas and mutual support.

Use Internet to:

1. Obtain documents. The world library is available from your keyboard.
2. Create virtual classrooms with class mates. You can keep in touch by e-mail, listserve (regular topics for those interested in the same subjects), newsgroups, and live chats through programmes like Yahoo Messenger and Skype. The latter is truly fantastic. It can be downloaded free and if you have internet facilities you can talk free of charge to anywhere in the world providing your correspondent has obtained the same facilities. With a cheap headset you will think your Skype partner is in the same room as yourself. You can also use Skype to phone other non-Skype users for almost nothing.

Knowledge comes from college but education comes from travel

3.10.6 Research projects

Research does not necessarily mean ivory towers, boffins and zillions of dollars-worth of equipment. Fundamentally a researcher is a person who is simply nosey, who is curious and persistent enough to want to know what is happening, or how a system works, or how many, how much, where and when.

There are two kinds of research:

a) **Descriptive research.** This involves keeping records of what is happening. It needs pen and paper although a calculator or computer may help in tabulation and adding up results.

E.g. How many patients attended the clinic? How many males/females/adults/children? What were their conditions? How were they treated?

E.g. How many disabled children attend school? What are their conditions? Are the staff trained appropriately? Are the parents encouraged to help them? What is the attitude of the society towards disability?

E.g. (For leisure). How many different species of birds do I see in my locality? At what time of day? Is there an educational programme about conservation in the schools?

Date, time, conditions, location, map coordinates can all be recorded.

b) **Experimental research.** This often arises from questions developed from a). What would happen if....? It can involve making several measurements of the same thing at different times, or making comparisons between different locations. Mostly it involves changing something and measuring the outcome.

E.g. Would we reduce the accidents happening to colleagues if every office had a qualified first-aider?

E.g. Would the donation of a buffalo to the villagers increase their productivity?

E.g. Would poverty be reduced if we taught loom construction as well as its use?

What happens if this changes? That is the fundamental of experimental research.

Many have embarked on research, published an article and registered for a higher degree. A few have achieved this even without an undergraduate qualification.

In the [United Kingdom](#), [United States](#), [Australia](#), [New Zealand](#), [Hong Kong](#) and some other countries, the **Master of Philosophy** (M.Phil.) is a research degree, requiring the completion of a [thesis](#). It is a lesser degree than the [Doctor of Philosophy \(PhD\)](#) or [Engineering Doctorate](#) (EngD), greater than (or sometimes equal to) the [Bachelor of Philosophy](#) (BPhil,) and in some instances may be awarded as a substitute for a PhD thesis which is a marginal fail. It may also serve as a provisional enrolment for the Ph.D. It is generally thesis only, and is

regarded as a senior or second master's degree. An M.Phil. is generally considered equivalent to the French Diplôme d'études Approfondies or [DEA](#), Spanish Diploma de Estudios Avanzados [DEA](#), or First Doctoral Degree. It is a good way to extend your career, keep yourself from losing sanity, and enhancing job prospects. (Some universities allow you to back-date a registration which allows the inclusion of data collected earlier). Others have done it - so can you!

3.11 Being a Consultant

You are weary of incompetent bosses and have become a confirmed disciple of the 'Peter Principle'. (If people are competent they become promoted: thus everybody finishes up in a position of incompetence in which they stay until retirement). You are qualified, experienced, ambitious, and still adventurous. Colleagues and others ask for your opinion. You could earn more and you could certainly use the extra cash. As you are often consulted, you think about becoming an independent, free-lance consultant. Or, maybe you are between contracts and wish to fill the time in a worthwhile manner. That is better than having a blank period on your CV. And it would give you the flexibility to go and do those things that you have wanted to do for ages but for which you have not had the time or energy.

Beware! Free-lance consulting can be a life of 'feasts and fasts' although it can be satisfying and rewarding.

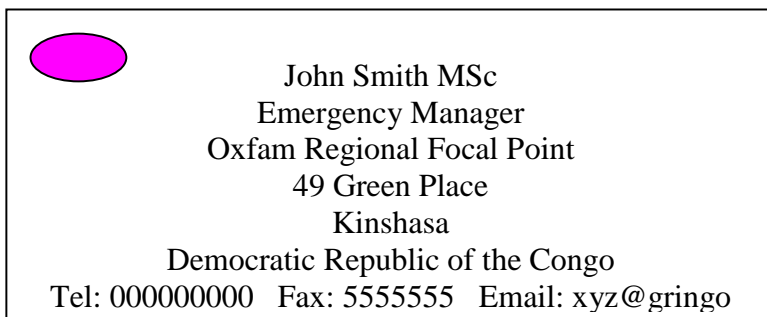
First of all, think about all the facilities that might have been available to you from your organisation and which you may have taken for granted:

- **consumables:** pens, highlighters, paper, envelopes, postage, post-its, stapler, hole puncher, files and folders
- **equipment:** photocopier/printer, notice board and marker pens, flip charts and paper, overhead projector, slide projector, multimedia projector, laptop computer and CDs, filing cabinet, desk and chair
- **services:** office cleaner, tea/coffee/water provision, transport, electricity supply (from grid, generator or solar panels), IT support, electric kettle, cutlery, crockery and kitchen facilities, library and literature, information sources from HQ

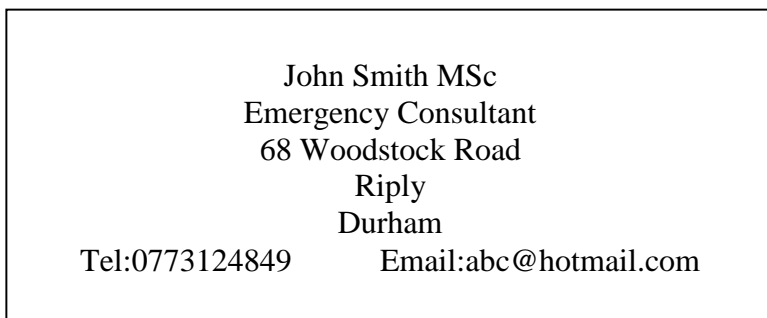
- **colleagues:** administrative assistance, reception and telephone answering facilities, peers to cover for you when sick or on leave, team members you can ask for advice, trusted friends on whom you dump your problems
- **welfare:** housing allowance, travel and food allowance, insurance and health cover, children's education costs

As a consultant you may have to obtain or do everything alone from now on.

Second, you must think about your **credibility** to potential clients. At the moment your business card may look like this:



In future you may be offering this:



You will need to find ways of advertising yourself and selling hard because you have lost some of the credibility that you had gained in

the past from belonging to a recognised establishment. You can make available to potential clients:

- a list of partner organizations that you have worked with in your previous life
- a list of projects, with brief descriptions, that you have directed or been involved in
- a brief CV
- a personal web site in which you publish all of the above

You can also start your own NGO (see www.networklearning.org for a free manual on how to achieve this).

You will need to balance ‘feasts’ (several contracts being offered at once which means you will have to reject some with the risk of losing a client) against ‘fasts’ (long periods without a contract). There are several ways of achieving this. You could strive for one long-term part-time contract (e.g. monitoring a programme: writing a report/review) which might occupy one or two days a week. This will provide a basic income while giving the opportunity for short-term jobs or other activities. Or you could set yourself the task of writing booklets/leaflets/educational materials that can be offered for sponsorship.

For over 100 years, education in the UK has been monitored and evaluated by a system of independent inspectors who, with objectivity, analyse the cost and effectiveness of educational programmes at all levels. Yet many humanitarian programmes are assessed by the organisation responsible; the report needs to be good in order to attract further funding from donors!

There are a few agencies or agents that select teams from freelance consultants who ‘inspect’ major programmes, but this process is not practiced widely. Perhaps, as an extension of the idea of establishing Good Humanitarian Practice Guidelines, there is a need to set up an international register of consultants, or an NGO, which specialises in Monitoring, Evaluation and Impact Assessment.

Now you need to determine your worth in the market and how much you will charge clients for contracts. This is a difficult path to tread with the extremes of overpricing and losing clients, or under charging and not realising your potential.

So think of the annual income that you expect. Recognise that you can only work for about 200 days in the year. Remember also that you now pay your own taxes, insurance premiums and for food. Check carefully with clients about who pays for flights/travel/expenses during the contract. Build in preparation and report-writing time. Now you are well on your way to calculating your daily rate or contract cost.

Finally, be sure to network with other consultants: they can provide a good buffer by recommending you for contracts that they cannot accept, or who can act as a backstop for your excesses.

3.12 Psychometric Testing

3.12.1 What are psychometric tests?

A psychometric test is a way of assessing a person's ability or personality in a measured and structured way. There are three main types of tests: ability, personality and interest. Some tests are used by employers to help them in their recruitment process while other tests can help people with career decision making.

It is common for graduate employers to use psychometric tests as part of their selection process. Organisations believe tests help them recruit the right people with the right mix of abilities and personal qualities. They are also useful for "sifting out" individuals from large numbers of applicants at an early stage and so saving the employers both time and money.

Tests can be administered by pen and paper or computer. You may be asked to take them in an assessment centre or online. If you take a psychometric test then, as a candidate, you should be provided with feedback. Do not trust an organisation that is not prepared to provide this. In the UK, because of the Data Protection Act, test providers have a legal responsibility to provide feedback if requested.

3.12.2 Types of test

1. Ability tests

- **General intelligence tests**

Some tests assess your general ability (your intelligence). They are not dependent on prior learning or knowledge but more on how good you are at solving problems using logical thinking.

- **Specific ability tests**

There are 2 types of specific ability tests:

- **Attainment tests**

These examine the skills and knowledge you already possess. They are designed to assess what you know at the time of the test such as for a driving test or a word processing test. These can be known as work-related tests.

- **Aptitude tests**

These are more of a measure of your potential for certain activities. They do not rely on any previous knowledge or training, but more on your natural ability or aptitude. The two most common forms of aptitude tests are verbal and numerical reasoning tests. There are also more specialised tests which can be used if you are applying for a particular career in IT, science or engineering.

2. Personality questionnaires

These are designed to allow organisations to measure aspects of your personality. Unlike the tests listed above there are no right or wrong answers. They seek to present a picture of how a person will behave in particular circumstances e.g. whether you are a 'leader' or a 'follower'. However, a personality assessment should always be followed by an interview with a qualified provider to validate the results of the assessment. This discussion with the user can explore relevant strengths and weaknesses for a job role or to assess their understanding of their behaviour.

3. Interest questionnaires

Interest inventories examine a person's interests and are often used in career guidance. These can also be used for selection purposes.

3.12.3 Know yourself

Knowing your true self can come as a shock as we may not have the personality that we think we have. While many psychometric tests are available online there is a risk that we may simply not believe the results and consider a particular test as not applicable to everybody. But psychometric tests are based on the principles of being objective, valid and reliable. So testers may be more interested in your position on a scale than how high your mark is.

Some tests can only be applied by qualified and experienced psychologists. While many tests are available from the British

Psychological Society, others will only be released to those who can establish their credentials (www.psychtesting.org.uk).

Other sites from which tests can be downloaded free include: www.doctorjob.com/testing_zone, and www.shldirect.com which gives practical hints and tips as well as online practice. www.bradleycvs.co.uk offers a free test and a professional CV writing service. The Myers Briggs Personality Typing test has been used for many years and is most informative about yourself (www.personalitypathways.com). Emotions and Behaviours at Work is a newer site which is now being widely used internationally. You can trial it free and obtain an elaborate report through www.ebwonline.com.

Another site worth looking into is TMS (Team Management System). They have a wonderful website www.tms.com.au. TMS focuses on leadership skills, team, personal and organisational development plus values assessment. It has a rating system that demonstrates why and how some teams work whilst others find it difficult, giving rationale for peoples' particular working styles. There is also an e-learning tool that can be used as well.

3.13 Moving On

3.13.1 Why think about a change

Any of several factors might make you think about changing your present employment for another:

- A seemingly less able colleague has moved on or been promoted
- You feel you are stagnating
- Your contract has ended
- Domestic responsibilities are demanding more income
- You have difficult work mates or an overbearing manager
- Raised delivery targets are causing too much stress
- The present work has become boring
- You need easier travelling in order to have more time to care for relatives, or to spend with your family
- You have not been promoted nor had a salary rise for too long
- Nobody seems to appreciate the contributions you have made to the organisation
- You would just like a change

Before changing employment several aspects should be carefully explored:

1. What does my manager or the organisation really think of me? If superiors knew I was looking elsewhere, would I be encouraged to go or to stay? How can I find out?
2. What other opportunities are available within or outside my organisation that I could match? I need to look in newspapers and other places where adverts are placed. E.g. notice boards, magazines and job search engines. First I should look at other possible positions in my company. Importantly, I must also network with my contacts to find potential opportunities
3. I have not been interviewed since the selection for my present post and interview experience would be valuable before applying for the perfect job. Perhaps applying for any possible opening would update my interview experience
4. Can I do anything to enhance my current position or other employment prospects? Should I be taking some further studies, obtain further qualifications or attend more workshops to widen my experience? Should I ask my manager to give me more responsibilities?
5. Importantly, do I want to stay in humanitarian work or should I go back to an earlier life style? The latter is certainly possible because valuable and transferable skills have been acquired. In addition to flexibility there are management techniques, working across cultures, language learning, coping with stress, working alone, and others. Maybe you miss family and friends, have responsibilities back home and long for the culture and entertainment of your home town and country. Some, especially health professionals, manage to balance working in the country of origin with regular missions or consultancies abroad, getting the best of both worlds.

Other important considerations include:

- Salary. Money is needed for survival. I should think of a 10% increase but I could move sideways if other factors compensated or if a guaranteed rise was imminent
- Other financial inducements could compensate for a move with little salary increase. These could be costs provided for: children's education, health care expenses, travel, food, car allowance, pension contribution, insurance cover, office equipment,

printing business cards, computer/printer availability, photocopying, telephone calls, pens and stationary, loans or advances

- Travel time and therefore costs
- Working hours and number of leave days
- Job satisfaction and stress level: targets and expectations of delivery
- Educational opportunities: courses, workshops, study expenses, study time allowance
- Working environment: space, office furniture, privacy, facilities (food, bank, access to shops during lunch time), colleagues
- Potential for increased responsibilities (staff, facilities, finance management, promotion and/or salary increments)

3.13.2 How to think about change

Before considering possible job opportunities write down what you like in your present job and what you do not like. Writing down clarifies the mind so you can focus on possible assets of a potential new position. For example -

I LIKE	I DO NOT LIKE
My colleagues	Bureaucratic illogical procedures
Having flexible hours	Financial accounting
Always having free weekends	Too many deadlines
Support for short courses	The company ethics
Managing people	The office conditions
Taking leave days whenever I like	A long journey to work
Recognition for my work	External noise and pollution
Etc	Etc

Think carefully about these items because they can tell you something about yourself. Your friendly colleagues are important; you listed those first. Perhaps you work better as a team member than alone. You do not like bureaucracy. You prefer freedom to work in your own way: you may be better as a teacher than as a civil servant. Now you know what to look for in a new opportunity. You may also have highlighted that if you had some training in accounting methods, financial management might not be so distasteful.

If you are considering a more managerial post you should ask yourself the following questions and be truthful in answering:

1. What management style and characteristics do I most value in my line manager?
2. What would my management style characteristics be? Autocratic? Democratic? Creative? Consultative? Decisive? Flexible? Predictable? Bureaucratic? Would I delegate with trust, or try to micromanage?
3. Would I hold regular staff meetings to inform and to be informed?
4. Do I know how to stimulate/motivate staff, get them to set goals and monitor their progress? Do I know how to audit their activities, measure successes and failures, provide appropriate action (encouragement, remedial activities)? How would I build the team?
5. Would I make adequate opportunities for ALL issues in the group to be discussed in a non-judgemental manner?
6. Am I punctual with all my activities (deadlines)?
7. Would my meetings be held on time? Would they be managed well?
8. Would I make agendas available before the meetings?
9. Will I insist that minutes are produced and shared with all parties immediately after meetings?
10. Will I remember to give new staff a warm welcome and explain office systems?
11. Would I ensure that briefings are given to all visitors to the office?
12. Will I develop respect among colleagues by my example?
13. Would my team follow me into 'battle'?
14. Am I aware of my current team spirit and atmosphere? Do I know when some have problems? Do I check if apparent negative views are shared by others? Do I really care?
15. Would I consult with others *in their offices* on a regular and friendly basis? Will my office door be open for them?
16. Would I take up too much of their time by talking too much when they are trying to work?
17. If I talk to colleagues do I check out that they want to hear what I am saying? Do I read their body language if they are trying to get away?
18. Are my written and oral messages clear and unambiguous? Are they confusing?
19. Do I really believe that the programme is the most important aspect of the work, and that staff should be helped, not hindered by bureaucratic procedures? Am I committed to the

- idea that administrative staff should work efficiently to support and encourage the work of Programme/Field staff?
20. Have I analysed my inadequacies and would I ensure that they will be compensated by team members or my own remedial activities? Would I try to appoint those who are more able than me?
 21. Do I think that management skill is inborn, or am I committed to the view that I would need to update regularly (by reading/workshop/course) my management skills?
 22. Would I allow staff to feed back to me (after giving adequate notice) how they feel about my management style?
 23. How would colleagues rate me as a manager? How would my boss rate me as a manager? How do I rate myself as a potential manager? What would I do to explain or rectify mismatches between my characteristics and those of a good manager?
 24. How do I deal with conflict between colleagues, or between colleagues and myself?
 25. Would I make available to staff a 'folder' with documentation of all administrative procedures so that staff can find out for themselves how systems work?
 26. Will my office documentation be well organised and easily available to staff? Will staff be encouraged to use literature and improve their knowledge?
 27. What would I do to help staff to reach their potential?
 28. Would I help staff to keep refreshed and updated on use of English in reports and presentations, bureaucratic procedures, transport, security, welfare and emergency procedures?
 29. Would I send staff on courses and conferences and encourage their networking with other agencies and humanitarian workers?
 30. Would I give balanced attention to the office buildings, materials/equipment, staff and processes?

As a potential manager, in addition to managing a team, there are other major aspects that need to be given thought: ability to manage finances and produce budgets, care of buildings, equipment and vehicles, responsibility for emergency situations and security of property and people. In addition to possibly inheriting a team you will have to think about your approach to building one; there are two possible extremes:

- You can analyse your own weaknesses and ensure that they are compensated by new employees. Then you need to ensure collaboration while giving encouragement

- The ‘Gnome Approach’. You only appoint those less able than yourself to be sure that new colleagues will not be able to threaten your own position. This is common in developing countries where a brain drain has allowed promotions that otherwise would not be justified.

The first attracts excellence while the second can only go downhill.

Self Study of Management. www.managementhelp.org. Whether you are thinking of staying in or leaving humanitarian work you will need some knowledge of management. This Library provides easy-to-access resources regarding the leadership and management of yourself, other individuals, groups and organizations whether they are for-profit or nonprofit organizations. There are approximately 650 topics in the Library, spanning 5,000 links. Users can quickly learn a great deal about topics just by looking at each topic’s subtopics and how they are arranged together.

3.13.3 Planning the change

Once you have identified a new possibility you need to make comparisons between it and your present position and there are several ways of doing this. A large salary increase may be the only inducement you need; you will put up with the rest! Or you may wish to evaluate the two posts in a fuller comparative way to avoid jumping out of the frying pan into the fire. So another approach is to tabulate, according to a range of criteria, aspects which you consider important in your work. The following table lists some examples. Some may not be relevant to your interests; there may be others that you would add and which are particularly significant in your own circumstances e.g. your journey to work is long but it takes you past the place where your partner is employed so s/he can be dropped off each morning and collected in the evening. You will think of other criteria.

It is difficult to quantify many of the factors you have listed. While a ‘salary’ can be measured precisely, ‘friendly colleagues’ cannot. So use a star rating system (or a 1 to 5 scale of rating) for each category. While different categories will differ in importance, you will see a pattern emerging that will help you to reach a decision. Importantly, discuss the overall picture with your partner, family, trustworthy colleagues and friends. Comments can be added to clarify the items under consideration. Put a question mark if unsure and this will suggest questions to be asked at an interview. Try completing the table for your current work.

EMPLOYMENT EVALUATION

CONSIDERATIONS	Present Post	Proposed Post	COMMENTS
GENERAL CONDITIONS			
Salary	***	*****	Take-home pay after tax and other stoppages
Working hours	*	**	Include work at home and travel time
Leave days	**	****	How soon can you take leave after starting?
Other financial inducements	***	?	Per diem and lunch allowance
Pension	0	*****	Does the organisation contribute to a pension?
Health care	***	?	Who will pay for health care and sick leave?
Administrative support	**	*****	Etc
Job satisfaction	*	****	Etc
Stress level	*****	*	
Current staff turnover	*	*****	
Stability of the organisation	*	*****	
DOMESTIC IMPACT			
Time with family and friends			
My travel time			
Overall income			
Use of transport (motorcycle, car)			
SOCIAL FACTORS			
Work environment			
Friendly colleagues			
Access to amenities			
Need to relocate accommodation			
Ethically sound (not corrupt)			

Insurance cover			
Achievement of my potential			
Contribution to society			
FUTURE WORK POTENTIAL			
Increased responsibilities generally			
Increased management of people			
Increased management of finances			
Increased management of things			
Increased work load overall			
Attendance on courses and workshops			
Paid study leave			
Retirement age			

Remember that a tough job with a supportive work team and family can be totally satisfying. In contrast, the finest job in the world can be made miserable by one horrible colleague.

Finally, you need to produce a leaving report or handover notes for the benefit of your manager and your successor. There are three types of records and discussion with your manager that will determine which one or ones are needed:

1. A pragmatic set of guidelines for the person who will follow in your footsteps
2. An 'open' document of your reflections on issues you have faced that may be helpful to colleagues
3. A private document for your managers eyes only

Such reports need to be brief, or they will not be read! If you need to include lists of items, or logistical procedures etc, these can be presented in appendices. The report is most useful if it contains a punchy summary.

You can find a link to People In Aid's Induction, Briefing, Handovers Guidelines, which is a free download

<http://www.peopleinaid.org/pool/files/publications/learning-training-development-policy-guide-and-template.pdf>

The authors have found, in varied lives, that if a year passes and you have added nothing to your curriculum vitae, it is probably time to move. Once you have made the decision to stay put, or change, stick with it. "Feel the Fear and Do It Anyway" (as one author titled his book), because you may never know whether your decision was right or wrong.

4. Helpful Websites

www.adpc.net. The Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) is a non-profit organization supporting the advancement of safer communities and sustainable development, through implementing courses, programs and projects that reduce the impact of disasters upon countries and communities in Asia and the Pacific.

www.adrc.or.jp. The Asian Disaster Reduction Center has been established to facilitate exchange of disaster reduction experts, accumulate and provide disaster reduction information, and to carry out research into multinational disaster reduction.

www.aidworkers.net. This is a free site with about 16,000 members. It contains news of humanitarian issues, and a valuable forum where questions can be posed eliciting practical answers.

www.alnap.org. ALNAP was established in 1997, following the multi-agency evaluation of the Rwanda genocide. It is a collective response by the humanitarian sector, dedicated to improving humanitarian performance through increased learning and accountability.

www.asksource.info/res_library.htm. Contains information resources in subjects relating to international health and disability. We have details of books, reports, websites, organisations, newsletters and more.

www.ausaid.gov.au. The site is big but time invested is well spent in order to find manuals on proposal writing and other areas.

www.headington-institute.org. CARD Directory (Counsellors Assisting Relief and Development) is a new, interactive, free international online directory of professional counsellors interested in providing services for humanitarian relief and development workers. It allows you to search for registered counsellors by country, language, or name. There are currently already more than 200 counsellors in 46 countries speaking 51 languages listed in CARD and new counsellors are welcome.

www.cnvc.org. The Center for Nonviolent Communication is a global organization that supports the learning and sharing of NVC, and helps people peacefully and effectively resolve conflicts in personal, organisational, and political settings. Resources include training courses in-country and on-line for conflict resolution, consulting services, books, audio tapes, video tapes, CDs, DVDs and other learning aids. NVC trainings around the world are posted on this website. (There is a "country" called "Teleconference Training" that you can select to find a training you can take from any location). NVC work is being done in over 65 countries, touching the lives of hundreds of thousands of people.

www.developmentgateway.com.au. TorqAid (see website below) produces the Australian Aid Resource and Training Guide, advice for those seeking to apply their skills in overseas aid projects, wanting useful Australian and international contacts in the aid field, and the main aid-related training courses on offer in Australia.

www.fme-online.org. Financial management for emergencies is a web-based survival guide for humanitarian programme managers. The aim of the guide is to help you manage the financial resources in the critical first stages of an emergency.

www.hesperian.org. Hesperian provides free download of books in several languages. The books have grown out of the interconnected health and empowerment needs and efforts of poor communities. Their collaborative book development process is at the heart of their methodology and connects them with a global network of knowledge

www.irinnews.org. is a unique humanitarian news and analysis service. Part of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

www.networklearning.org. The purpose of this site is to make resources available, free, to NGOs working in the development or humanitarian fields. To help NGOs build skills, suggestions for other websites with good resources are given together with free manuals covering health, disabilities, NGOs, counselling, management, etc.

www.redr.org.uk (click course calendar). RedR runs a comprehensive programme of training courses for aid workers worldwide.

www.reliefweb.int. Provides emergency news, a full address list of organisations providing training activities, and a job vacancy advertising service.

www.righttoplay.com. Right To Play is an international humanitarian organization that uses sport and play programs to improve health, develop life skills, and foster peace for children and communities in some of the most disadvantaged areas of the world. Working in both the humanitarian and development context, Right To Play trains local community leaders as Coaches to deliver its programs in countries affected by war, poverty, and disease in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and South America.

www.sphereproject.org. This is the site of the Sphere Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards. It contains an extensive information and training tools as well as the Sphere Manual.

www.the-ecentre.net. The eCentre is the UNHCR Regional Centre for Emergency Training. It offers training, distance learning and internet programmes for emergency managers and other humanitarian workers.

www.torgaid.com. An Australian overseas aid consultancy specialising in Disaster Management, Training, Project Management, and Human Resource Management. For more information contact Chris Piper, TorqAid's Director/CEO, on pipercm@iprimus.com.au.

www.worldbank.org. The Learning Section contains useful information about distance learning, communities of learning, and course catalogues, global development learning network and e-learning.

Finding Overseas Work

There are various ways for people to seek out appropriate overseas positions.

Seeking employment with one of the main NGOs (e.g. Australian Red Cross, CARE Australia, OXFAM/CAA, MSF Australia, RedR Australia, World Vision Australia {WVA}), whose contact details can be found in the ACFOA website (www.acfoa.asn.au)

Looking at relevant websites such as: ACFOA (www.acfoa.asn.au). This Australian coordinating agency lists weekly vacancies with Australian aid agencies both in Australia and overseas.

Aid Workers Network (www.aidworkers.net).

This practical site gives advice on finding your first job, as well as highlighting openings for experienced practitioners/LEPS, running a project and other topics

Australian Volunteers International (www.australianvolunteers.com). This is Australia's largest and most experienced international volunteer sending agency. Whilst most positions are for 2 years, it does offer shorter, team-based options for younger volunteers (18+)

Australian Youth Ambassadors for Development (AYAD) Program - www.USAID.gov. The AYAD Program places skilled young Australian volunteers, aged 18-30, on shorter assignments (up to 12 months) in developing countries around Asia and the Pacific

Dev-Zone (www.dev-zone.org/jobs) This New Zealand based site includes details of many humanitarian and development positions globally

Expats Network (www.expats-network.com). This French based site both provides job

information and is a forum for international exchange
Indigenous Community Volunteers (ICV) - www.volindigenous.org.au. Assists Australian indigenous communities to improve access to business, trade and professional skills, by linking them with volunteers

PALMS Australia (www.palms.org.au). This Catholic agency places a large number of Global Mission participants in a wide variety of overseas cross-cultural situations

ReliefWeb (www.reliefweb.int/vacancies). This international site advertises many global humanitarian positions and provides further information on aid issues

Travel Alternatives (www.travelalternatives.org). This Australian service supports young people wanting to work, travel, study or volunteer overseas

UN Volunteers Programme (www.unv.org) This supports around 5,000 volunteers from all nationalities who annually work as UN Volunteers overseas

Try the following sites for humanitarian vacancies:

[Action Without Borders](http://www.idealists.org) ([idealists.org](http://www.idealists.org))

This organisation has a fine listing of every nonprofit-oriented job site or directory found on the web. Free daily email service.

[AlertNet](http://www.alertnet.org)

Has a good jobs section with vacancies in the humanitarian field, news, maps and even satellite images delivered to your email address. Also have a look at 'Alerting Services' (link on the home page).

[BOND](#) (British Overseas NGOs for Development)

BOND's jobs section lists current vacancies with British-based international development NGOs.

[Canadian International Development Agency](#) (CIDA)

Their job section focuses on opportunities for Canadian citizens but includes links to international NGOs based in Canada and general advice of wider interest.

[cinfoPoste](#)

Swiss-based organisation has a register of vacancies for information, counselling and training professionals. The site is in German, French, Italian and English.

[DevNet Jobs](#)

Voluntary initiative run through a team of remote volunteers based in both developing and developed countries. Lists jobs and consultancies in the international development, NGO and environment sectors. Free weekly email newsletter.

[Development Executive Group's job list](#)

A "membership organization serving firms, non-profit organizations, and individual professionals". You may become a member "by posting your profile in the largest directory of international development professionals in the world".

[DevJobs](#)

Internet service that provides international job announcements on various development fields.

[ELDIS](#)

Lists jobs in the development sector

[Experience Development](#)

Has a jobs section.

[Guardian jobs](#)

The British Guardian newspaper frequently lists humanitarian vacancies in its jobs section.

[Hacesfalta](#)

Spanish site with international jobs and volunteering opportunities.

[Human Rights Job Board](#)

Job announcements with human rights organisations around the world.

[InterAction](#)

An alliance of US-based international development and humanitarian NGOs. You will find a jobs link on their home page.

[Mango](#)

Provides a specialist register of accountants, to work with NGOs in the field and at HQ, full-time or on a consultancy basis.

[Microfinance jobs](#)

For latest job offerings, search the Job Board. You can also subscribe to the free jobs bulletin. Contains links to organisations with internship openings within microfinance.

[Oneworld](#)

Lists jobs in human rights, environment and sustainable development worldwide. The job openings database can be searched according to subject and country. You can subscribe to weekly job listings (free of charge).

[Overseas Recruitment Services](#)

A Nairobi-based specialist recruitment service for qualified personnel in the relief and development sector in Africa.

[RedR](#) and [Bioforce](#)

Both these organisations maintain registers of qualified candidates whom aid agencies can recruit at short notice during an emergency.

[ReliefWeb](#)

The UN humanitarian hub is perhaps the best-used site for jobs in emergency humanitarian relief with international agencies and NGOs. Search through the vacancies database and subscribe to the

mailing list to receive automatic weekly notifications of new postings.

[The Communication Initiative Vacancy service](#)

Development jobs are listed in 23 categories.

[The Economist](#)

The Economist newspaper advertises senior jobs in relief and development organisations (not only for economists). Check The Economist's classifieds.

[The University of Sussex](#)

Has an extensive list of websites relevant to jobs in international development.

[The US Foreign Policy Association](#)

Their jobs section lists jobs, internships and volunteer opportunities in relief and development organisations. Offers free e-mail notification for new postings.

[Topica mailing list: expat_list](#)

Mailing list for expatriate jobs in all sectors.

[UNjobs](#)

Gives an excellently laid-out list of jobs in UN agencies and other international organisations.

[World Service Enquiry](#)

Provides information and advice about working or volunteering for development.

[Worldwide Volunteering Online](#)

UK-based. Lists full-time volunteering opportunities from one week to two years, both in the UK and overseas.

[Yellow Monday](#)

A weekly newsletter from the Institute of Development Studies (IDS)

in Sussex, including a listing of internal and external job vacancies in the development sector. It is available online or by email.

Yet more possibilities...

www.acted.org/english/jobs/offers

www.ap.urscorp.com/_careers

www.btcctb.org

www.careaustralia.org.au

www.careerswithoutborders.com

www.careinternational.org.uk

www.charityjob.co.uk

www.chemonics.com

www.concern.net/site-links/jobs

www.dai.com

www.developmentex.com

www.developmentgateway.com.au

www.dfid.gov.uk/recruitment

www.drc.dk

www.ebrd.com

www.economist.com/classifieds/ad_list.cfm?ad_type_cd=R

www.grminternational.com

www.gtz.de/en/karriere/stellenmarkt

www.hostedjobs.openhire.com/epostings/jobs

www.i-grasp.com

www.i-grasp.com/fe/tpl_oxfam.asp

www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/pers

www.jica.go.jp/english/contact/america.html

www.jobs.undp.org

www.jobsearch.usajobs.opm.gov

www.lux-development.lu

www.ngomanager.org/dcd/1_General_Resources/Job_links/

www.odi.org.uk/jobs

www.oxfam.org/eng/getinvolved_jobs.htm

www.pactworld.org/cs/job_openings_list

www.plan-international.org/about/workwithus

www.prosperityinitiative.org

www.sdc.admin.ch/en/Home/About_SDC/Working_with_SDC

www.smec.com.au/employment

www.snvworld.org

www.tbe.taleo.net/NA5/ats/careers

Please contact the authors (walkerun@hotmail.com) with your views and comments. We are particularly interested to hear of changes or additions to web site addresses.

About the Authors

Bryan Walker BSc MSc PhD CBiol FIBiol has followed careers in industry, hospitals, academia, the civil service and humanitarian work. After being Head of a University Department of Pharmacology for fifteen years he was appointed as one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Higher Education. Led by his late wife, he engaged part-time in voluntary work for Oxfam.

At the age of 50 Bryan Walker moved into full-time humanitarian employment working with the Voluntary Service Overseas, Oxfam, UNHCR, UNICEF, RedR, as a freelance consultant in Asia and Europe, and in Africa where he has recently been working for people with disabilities. Through his research work, academic appointments and humanitarian activities he has given more than a hundred invited lectures, workshops, seminars, film, TV and radio presentations. He has run courses in research, teaching methods, interviewing and aspects of humanitarian and emergency management. In addition to his publications he has made many contributions to humanitarian web sites. These experiences have come together in this book.



Bryan Walker VSO, John and Family, Uganda 2008

Adi Walker has eight years of experience in the humanitarian and development world, working as a consultant to the largest NGO in Sri Lanka, with the German Technical Cooperation (GTZ) in the war-torn North and East of the country, with the International Rescue Committee (IRC) in DR Congo, and most recently as Country Director with the Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED) in India.

Before this, Adi had a varied background. He started as an Electronics Engineer in the UK, moved to Australia where he did a variety of jobs to keep financing his travels, made several trips to Israel where he worked on both kibbutzim and moshavim, and then worked at all stages of the milk industry, from the farmyard to the doorstep! Back in the UK, he worked for several years in human resource development - particularly in outdoor sports centres (in between climbing mountains in Europe, Asia and South America) that focused on developing the management skills of leadership and team-building. He 'fell' out of this line of work into the music industry, touring with a variety of bands throughout Europe and the US.

Whilst these latter jobs have no direct link to the employment to which he is now committed, all have provided tangible transferable skills: an understanding of the importance of teamwork and strong leadership for productivity, an insight to the practicalities of logistics and coordination, and a focus on quality. Adi has been supported patiently by his family, who have tolerated a nomadic lifestyle of changing homes, schools, friends, and living environments, without whom he would not have managed.

Richard Walker has over spent over 15 years in social and humanitarian work. After two years of voluntary work in a psychiatric hospital and further activities for MENCAP he spent 8 years as a consultant to many NGOs in South East Asia for the development of their programs. For the past 6 years he has worked for MSF and is currently the Country Director in the Czech Republic. One of his areas of responsibility is the recruitment and career management of humanitarian medical and non medical staff for MSF's missions. He lives with his wife and children in Prague.

His work outside the humanitarian sector has been as a business management and human resources consultant. This has kept him travelling extensively internationally and has given a broad insight into the global issues affecting people trying to enter the job market.

His main work in the humanitarian field has focused on the capacity development of NGOs and their management structures and teams. Several years of managing projects in the implementation of development and emergency programs in Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Eastern Turkey have provided a grass roots view of the issues and gaps faced by personnel at the field level.