



RedR-Engineers for Disaster Relief

“THE ‘ GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR’ AND ITS IMPLICATIONS  
FOR NGO SECURITY MANAGEMENT”

*Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> – Friday 28<sup>th</sup> November 2003*

*Venue: Institution of Civil Engineers, 1-7 Great George Street, Westminster,  
London, SW1P 3AA*

*Time: 09.00 – 16.30  
09.00 – 17.30*

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## 1. Facilitators Summary

RedR's Seminar on: "The "Global war on terror" and its implications for NGO security management" was organised in response to the challenging security issues inherent in complex operating environments such as Afghanistan & Iraq, where resentment against the "occupying powers" is high and, as part of the "international machine", aid-workers are increasingly vulnerable to security threats. The seminar provided an opportunity to discuss the main challenges and constraints their organisations and staff are facing and to discuss the appropriateness of current security management theory and practice in managing risk within these contexts.

Discussions during the seminar appeared to confirm that the "security management framework" approach to security management is still valid and can be applied even within these extremely complex operating environments. However the discussions revealed critical weaknesses that many agencies have in defining their roles in the contexts in which they are operating. Given that it is these factors that drive the selection of appropriate image management and security strategies which are integral to the formulation of appropriate and effective security plans, policies and procedures, agencies need to reflect on these issues and come to some urgent conclusions in order to meet their operational objectives while fulfilling their duty of care to staff in the field.

The key concerns arising from this seminar which need to be urgently addressed are:

- The difficulty agencies appear to have in reconciling their stated mandates with the situations they face in complex insecure environments which can result in confused and high risk programmes.
- The disparity between the operational attitudes of different agencies, the friction within the humanitarian aid community this can create and the consequences for the security of humanitarian aid workers.

These key concerns were highlighted by the following issues raised in the seminar:

The need for individual agencies to reflect on their own identity and on what kind of relationships with donors, colleague agencies and military actors is in keeping with their interpretation of humanitarian principles, their operational competence and their security.

It was questioned whether agencies have adhered to recently evolved operational standards. There appears an urgent need to review agency behaviour in this respect, particularly whether an agency's presence in a context is appropriate. From the evidence of the seminar, it seems many agencies are involved in programmes which are not of an emergency life-saving nature but more concerned with rehabilitation and reconstruction. Therefore, there are major questions over whether the risks that staff run are worth the programme gains. In some instances it seems there has been little that agencies have been able to achieve and yet they have maintained a presence,

for whatever reason. Serious questions arise for those agencies adhering to a policy which puts international and national staff at unnecessary risk for minimal gain.

The recent blurring of humanitarian and military activities has created severe problems for humanitarian relief agencies. A major concern is that the security of aid workers is compromised by soldiers (uniformed or otherwise but usually armed in both cases) carrying out humanitarian work or imposing their presence on humanitarian agencies. The reasons for military involvement in humanitarian activities where aid agencies could equally do the job are often of a political nature but the security consequences for aid agencies seems either not to be fully understood or ignored. There are fora that exist to enable a greater understanding of roles between the humanitarian sector and the military but these tend to focus on operational issues rather than the underlying principles by which each actor takes on different roles and the sensitivity of such relationships. There is clearly a need for existing mechanisms to be more effective but also additional mechanisms at a strategic level to clarify and better understand roles and methods of working.

An answer to the question “what is an acceptable risk ?” clearly varies from agency to agency. What is alarming is that many agencies appear not to employ some mechanism for establishing and then monitoring an acceptable risk. It was pointed out that decisions on whether to withdraw from a situation is often ‘incident based’ rather than based on any kind of systematic risk assessment. Then it appears it comes down to how many incidents an agency is willing to accept or even to how many deaths are acceptable. The responsibility for establishing thresholds of risk ultimately sits with the directors, CEOs and trustees of agencies who establish policy which informs operational guidelines on how far staff members should risk their lives in striving to accomplish agency goals. A lack of guidelines from the top indicates poor duty of care for staff and clear liability issues.

Delegates emphasised the importance of adequate and appropriate security briefings and training for staff. There were calls to increase the availability of security training. However, it was pointed out that currently it is not always possible to fill all the available places on courses and workshops. This seems to indicate that although field staff and frontline managers recognise the need for training, agencies do not necessarily allocate enough resources or give it a sufficient priority for staff to be adequately prepared.

Given the above observations a call was made to raise these critical issues as a matter of urgency with directors, CEOs and trustees of humanitarian agencies. A purpose designed forum would have the objective of reviewing codes of practice, operational and security standards to strive for an improved understanding of how agencies can responsibly manage risk to staff, assets and programmes. This seems essential if agencies and their staff are to respond appropriately to current and future complex environments of the type found in Afghanistan and Iraq today.

## 2. Agenda

	DAY 1		DAY 2
09.00	Registration/Coffee	09.00	Registration/Coffee
09.15	Welcome, Official Opening of seminar	09.15	Review of previous day
09.30	Introductions, Objectives, Aims, & expectations	09.30	Group work on “the risk environment”
10.00	Review of Initiatives in the Humanitarian Security Sector	10.30	Feedback & wrap up of group work - including discussion on acceptable threshold of risk How do we balance operational activity against risk to staff?
10.15	Map for the Seminar		
10.20	Break	11.15	Break
10.45	The global war on terror and humanitarian action –trends & analysis	11.45	Challenges in the new operating environment Clarification of Challenges for group discussion
		12.00	Group-work on challenges
12.15	Lunch	13.00	Lunch
13.15	Overview of the Iraq context	14.00	Feedback from Group-work
14.15	Overview of the Afghan context	14.45	How well are we equipped to manage these challenges? Implications for security management theory and practice.
15.05	Summary of the Overviews		
15.10	Break	16.00	Break
15.30	Overview of the Security Management Framework:	16.30	Further initiatives to take forward
16.00	Wrap up of Day 1/Preparation for Day 2	17.15	Wrap up & close of Seminar.
16.30	End of day	17.30	End of seminar

### **3. Introduction**

Bobby Lambert, Director of RedR, welcomed the delegates to the seminar and gave a brief summary of RedR's mission and mandate. The seminar was organised as part of RedR's Field Security Programme, which is co-funded by OFDA and DFID. The donors were thanked for enabling RedR to run an event of this nature.

#### **3.1 Objectives, Aims and Expectations**

Jan Davis - RedR Associate Trainer, gave an overview of the aims, objectives and delegate expectations of the seminar.

##### **Aim**

To jointly develop action plans and initiatives to enable international NGO's to operate more effectively in complex hostile environments and to equip NGO's with the appropriate security management tools to achieve this.

##### **Objectives**

- To examine the key threats within these contexts & their potential risks for humanitarian workers
- To discuss the appropriateness of current security management theory & practice in these environments
- To discuss mitigation, precautionary & protective measures that can be taken to reduce the risk to staff operating in these contexts
- To consider the limits to NGO operational effectiveness in complex hostile environments.
- To provide information on other resources, debates, forums and trainings with regards to security and operational activities within these complex environments
- To examine how strategic planning, lobbying and advocacy initiatives can be used & developed to enhance operational security in complex environments
- To provide an opportunity for relevant agencies and experts to develop & take forward further initiatives & discussions.

##### **Expectations**

Thirty-eight delegates were from agencies currently operating in Afghanistan and twenty-five from agencies currently operating in Iraq.

One delegate was from an agency that had recently withdrawn from Afghanistan and five from agencies that had recently withdrawn from Iraq.

Delegates' main objectives for the seminar were to:

- Discuss and develop views
- Share experience
- Develop further understanding
- Tackle the 'Acceptance' strategy issue
- Learn appropriate security management approaches
- Use outputs to review security guidelines
- To find out what additional support donors can provide
- Explore methodologies for determining an acceptable threshold of risk
- Strategies to be accepted as impartial and independent
- Explore the limits to civil-military cooperation
- Discuss loss of humanitarian space and implications for security
- Better understand possible future scenarios
- Find out if agencies have lost sight of codes of conduct concerning security

Delegates' main security concerns and constraints were:

- Protection of both international and national staff
- Increased vulnerability
- Random attacks – suicide bombers
- Road travel
- Influence of religious allegiances on communities
- Armed guards – dilemmas
- Recruitment, retention and training of staff
- That HQ understands and supports field staff (incl. Stress)
- Link between local economy and security (e.g. poppy cultivation)
- Inability to properly assess and monitor projects
- Role and relationship of the humanitarian arm of the government of a belligerent party
- Politicisation of humanitarian aid
- Difficulties of funding by belligerent governments
- Suspicion and attitudes towards staff of Pakistani and 'foreign' origin
- Reconciling international identity with local identity
- The need for a menu of options for organisational relationships to enhance security
- Insurance of staff and legal protection
- Code of conduct for civil-military relations

The participative nature of the seminar was emphasised with all delegates requested to share their expertise, experience and knowledge.

The point was made that RedR had not lightly adopted the term "Global war on terror" in the seminar title. RedR recognised that it is an emotive sound bite to label a particular response to 9/11 that was not inevitable and the title does not endorse the response as most appropriate or effective. It was used by RedR simply to recognise a new situation to which the humanitarian community needs to respond and has been used in the context of this seminar to provide a

convenient label for a complex situation, that would be recognisable to the target delegate group

Jan Davis emphasised that the intention was not to debate the “war on terror” response in the seminar. It was instead to take the situation as it is now and look at how best to safeguard the safety and security of agency staff and partners in this new & evolving situation.

#### **4. Review of Initiatives in the Humanitarian Security Sector**

The 1990s saw the inception of a number of initiatives as a result of the deteriorating security situations in which aid workers found themselves. See Annexe One.

Agency staff are therefore past the first stage as regards to developing approaches to managing security; however we need to review these approaches in light of the current ‘Global War on Terror.’

Additional initiatives mentioned by delegates included:

- Commercial sector training providers
- Centre of Excellence, Hawaii (World Vision)
- Forthcoming InterAction project – appropriateness of member agency’s security management
- Forthcoming ECHO security review
- Iraq NGO Security coordination office (INSO)
- Police/FCO developing community policing initiative in Afghanistan
- UN investigation into bombing
- Stanley Foundation report – UN on the Ground - Humanitarian professionals recommend ways to help humanitarian agencies in war zones boost their effectiveness, minimize risk, and make aid programs more sustainable
- Dennis King Study (UNICEF)

#### **5. ‘Humanitarian Action and “The Global War on Terror”’: a review of trends and issues’**

**presented by Adele Harmer, Humanitarian Policy Group, Overseas Development Institute**

Adele Harmer from the Humanitarian Policy Group, ODI, gave a presentation focusing on their recent research on the global war on terrorism and its implications for the humanitarian community. She referred in particular to Abby Stoddard’s paper ‘Humanitarian NGOs: Challenges and Trends’, which defined three traditions in non-governmental humanitarian action.

ODI has commissioned a set of papers by four international commentators on key themes including ‘Humanitarianism and Islam,’ ‘Implications for International Humanitarian Law,’ ‘9/11 and implications for NGOs’ and ‘Afghanistan post 9/11.’

Adele's presentation focused on four main themes from these papers, 'defining the global war on terror,' 'international law – a breakdown in consensus?', 'humanitarian implications and the war on terror' and 'peace building and the war on terror.'

Prior to discussing these Adele questioned whether the move from human security to counter terrorism was a small step? During the 1990s there was a growing trend for a closer intervention between aid and security objectives. This led to aid organisations having roles in conflict reduction and advocacy in relation to military and political strategies. This was generally accepted within the humanitarian community.

Since 9/11 assumptions about the human security agenda have been challenged and agencies have realised that crossing the aid-politics divide can be controversial. However the close link between security and aid prior to 9/11 has consequently created a larger challenge for agencies to think how they can re-position themselves.

The research carried out by the HPG focused on the main theatres of the war on terror (e.g. Iraq and Afghanistan) and omitted areas such as Liberia and implications the current positioning on terrorism may have for other contexts. Adele noted that this is a limitation of the papers.

An additional problem encountered by the HPG group whilst carrying out the research is that 'terrorism' is a contested term and does not have an internationally accepted definition. A general definition is 'the deliberate or reckless killing of civilians, or the doing of extensive damage to their property with the intention of spreading fear through a population, and communicating a political message.'

Although terrorism is not unique to state or non-state actors, it is increasingly defined as anti-state behaviour and states that oppose terrorism are labelled counter-terrorists. Some conflicts are also being relabelled as terrorist or counter-terrorist and increasingly we are seeing the threat of terrorism used to justify the action of states.

The term 'Global War on Terror' implies that the geography of terrorism is worldwide, however the current "war" is primarily associated with certain countries and their interests (e.g. the US and the UK). There are no clear boundaries to the Global War on Terror and as there is no identifiable enemy it will be difficult to define when it has ended. The war is being 'fought' on many fronts and in a variety of ways from the battles in Iraq to the intensifying of police actions in the UK. It is difficult to know the extent to which IHL applies in the different situations.

Since the 'Global War on Terror' is being fought using a range of mechanisms it is reliant not only on the mobilisation of a range of resources, including military, but also through domestic and international policy instruments. Examples of this are the Campaign Objectives published by the UK government and the counter-terrorism plan produced by the EU. The US has also created a Department of Homeland Security which links some domestic security concerns to international counter-terrorists operations. Development cooperation has also been elevated to one of the three pillars of their National Security Strategy. Within Europe, immigration policy has also become linked to the security agenda and in both the UK and US there has been a refocusing of attention to policies on failed states.

The Global War on Terror is not anti-Islam, however some of its actions have been in response to threats from extremist Islamic organisations and it is therefore occasionally perceived as a War against a certain sector of society. The values that are being fought for in the Global War on Terror are associated with a secular, modern West. By association this raises the question of whether humanitarian work can still be seen as neutral and appeal to universal values, or will be increasingly perceived as being in the interest of the West, and linked to counter-terrorism objectives.

The Global War on Terror has also had an impact on the international legal framework within which humanitarian actors have to work. In the case of Afghanistan, there was a clearly established legal framework and the legal basis of the war was not contested. This was not the case in Iraq where there was a pre-emptive strike that is still being legally questioned. Many agencies were against the pre-emptive strike and their position created a blurring of lines between humanitarian work and peace activism. In addition to this, cultural, political and financial links between some humanitarian actors and the coalition raises questions about their independence.

During the Global War on Terror there have been several shifts in the interpretation of legal frameworks and the new security agenda has been seen to legitimise reinterpretations of international humanitarian, human rights and refugee law.

Within Afghanistan and Iraq there have been very different constitutional arrangements following the regime change. In Afghanistan the UN were awarded a key role and an interim administration was set up. However, there are concerns surrounding how agencies position themselves in relation to this administration. The situation is compounded by the blurring of lines between the work carried out by agencies and that of the Provincial Reconstruction Teams that are operating in some regions.

In Iraq the US/UK remain as occupying powers with responsibilities defined by the Fourth Geneva Convention. There are again problems associated with how NGOs position themselves in relation to these actors and whether they can be truly independent?

The situation in both Iraq and Afghanistan has had a significant impact on appeals and pledges. Appeals for food aid for Afghanistan rose from a need to support 3 million people to 9 million and \$1.4 billion was spent on humanitarian aid in 2002, which was a considerable amount more than had been spent in the year pre 9/11. In Iraq, WFP appealed for \$1.3 billion and in the UK, DFID earmarked £210 million, nearly double its humanitarian budget for the previous year. There has been an increasing trend for agencies and donors to allocate large amounts of resources without carrying out a full assessment of the humanitarian needs; an indirect effect of this would be in terms of the absorptive capacity needed to spend these large sums of money on the ground.

The fact that the legitimacy of the war in Iraq was being questioned also impacted on agency's preparedness for the situation; as to look as though they were preparing would have shown a political view that they thought that the war inevitable. In both Afghanistan and Iraq the Global War on Terror also had an impact on humanitarian agencies gaining access to those in need.

Both conflicts saw an increasing trend of military roles in the delivery of “humanitarian” assistance. Examples of this included uniformed military personnel distributing food and the PRTs in Afghanistan operating with integrated aid and security agendas. The fact that an increasing number of donor states are supporting these teams may mean that it is a model that is replicated in other countries in the future. In Iraq the military were also used to help provide secure access for the distribution of humanitarian aid.

Abby Stoddard’s paper ‘Humanitarian NGOs: Challenges and Trends’, defined three traditions in non-governmental humanitarian action: religious, Dunantist (outside of state interests) and Wilsonian (practical, operational bent – merging of foreign policy and humanitarian aims). This positioning can be increasingly difficult if the humanitarian funding organisations are financially and culturally involved in a conflict. Those NGOs most directly affected by the “war on terror” are the Wilsonian (mainly US) NGOs, however the “war on terror” has made the different pressures on NGO’s in each of the three groups more complex. For individual agencies the tradition from which they have grown needs to be taken into account when planning operations in complex hostile environments, and may also help agencies to ascertain the stance they should take towards the occupying powers and assist in determining when and how to commence operations and an acceptable threshold of risk.

The failure of international humanitarian law to provide a security umbrella in Iraq and Afghanistan has resulted in organisations including the ICRC having to heavily emphasise their neutrality. A long-standing presence within a community may help an agency’s security; however, it is increasingly hard for NGOs to reach out to communities, as they are perceived as ‘western aid’ and ‘state builders.’ Due to this difficulty of acceptance some humanitarian organisations have been faced with the option to either withdraw or to “harden the target”, by increased protective measures. This had consequently led to NGOs presenting an increasingly militarised presence.

Few agencies have a policy on the Global War on Terror; as this would show their position in relation to their government, the media, general public and foreign politics. This raises the question of whether it is possible to have discussions across different cultures, religions and political views using what are considered to be the humanitarian universal values.

In the case of both Afghanistan and Iraq the regime change has been relatively swift, but the establishing of legal frameworks is a longer process. ODI will be carrying out research next year on the issue of how humanitarian aid links with peace-building and developmental agendas in politically unstable environments. These tensions have been observed in Afghanistan and cutting through these issues in both Afghanistan and Iraq are the difficulties of trying to build peace whilst there is a counter-terrorist operation taking place.

Decisions relating to accountability and coordination of aid are also difficult when there is a transitional government and occupying authorities in place. In the contexts of both Iraq and Afghanistan aid has been portrayed as contributing to soft security.

The research that HPG has carried out has captured trends, however the actual implications of the Global War on Terror are elusive. HPG have raised questions for the future and have not tried to write a definitive analysis. Some of the most important questions they have raised are, 'How do humanitarian organisations position themselves in relation to the Global War on Terror?', 'To what extent is common positioning important/achievable?', 'Is 'humanitarianism' a universal construct or a tool of the secularist West?' 'What can be done to address the current perceived erosion of humanitarian principles?', 'If legality, neutrality, and acceptance are no longer feasible how can humanitarian organisations best guarantee the security of staff & operations?'

Following Adele's presentation several key points were raised:

- Language – we have to be more careful and precise in our use of language. Is the definition of terror too restrictive? Need to define terminology and content and be careful of using labels
- Future scenarios – will there be an increasing number of wars based on resources? Will increased urbanisation have an effect on conflict in the future?
- Impact on Islamic people globally – we, as the humanitarian community need to better understand Islam, the different branches of Islam and to be careful in the use of labels.
- Are the wars that we are seeing all GWOTs or are they different wars? – was the war in Iraq about oil?
- Future of IHL and implications for future actions
- Role of commercial sector and its impact
- Psychological impacts – poor decisions that are made can have huge cost/long term implications
- Emphasise role of UN – possible advocacy role?
- The War **on** Terror and the War **of** Terror is a two way threat
- The need to draw on lessons learnt pre 9/11 in terrorist environments; as terrorism itself is not new, it is the "war on terror" that is a new concept.
- Loss of control of identities – has where we come from become more important than who we are? The need to communicate clearly and effectively who we are and what we are about.
- The need to redefine humanitarian space to enable agencies to find their position
- Reconsider the concept of neutrality – how we and others define it and whether we are still perceived as neutral?
- What can we do to prevent being targeted if we are already following security guidelines and understand the context?
- The GWOT is a construct – how do we unpack it?
- Should we leave our principles at the gate? - multi-mandated organisations may have a greater pressure put on their principles. Why and at what point should principles be left behind?
- Revisiting the process by which decisions were made to be there in the first place
- Are agencies purposely being targeted as they are an obstacle to the type of society that is desired by the population?
- All development work is political/aligned with governments

## **6. The Iraq Context**

### **6.1 'Update On Iraq' Presentation**

#### **Cedric Hills (Major), The Salvation Army International Emergency Services Coordinator**

Cedric Hills (Major) from the Salvation Army gave a presentation on the situation in Iraq as experienced during a recent field visit to his team in Southern Iraq.

The Salvation Army had not been present prior to the conflict. They had established an advance base in March 2003 in Kuwait and in April in partnership with the HOC and Government of Kuwait they took 120 tonnes LPG to Umm Qasr. Subsequently when WFP had had to withdraw staff they requested the Salvation Army to send six teams of people out for three months under their 'Food for Oil' programme. Their main role was 'Warehouse Facilitation' in Southern Iraq. Each warehouse served the needs of around 1 million people. The Salvation Army's role was to monitor the safe receipt and dispatch of bulk commodities. Food reached the families via a huge network of local distribution agents. Overall, the programme had many logistical challenges including communication, staff support, transportation and security.

The Salvation Army also started a Community Recovery Programme, on the first of August in Al Amarah in the Maysan province. This programme was essentially reconstruction and development not emergency relief, and focused on school and kindergarten refurbishment, with the Salvation Army assisting with the repair of 20 schools from a total of 460 in need of refurbishment. Other work included repairing drains and sewers and assistance to forty families (Marsh Arabs) that had returned from exile in Iran and required housing, water and non-food items.

The international team of 4/5 people was supported by fifteen local employees including engineers, translators, drivers and guards. The staff live in a house with secure parking and good perimeter walls to enhance their security. International staff are on two month contracts having been redeployed from another area. This high turnover could have had an impact on the security of the project.

The high level of involvement with the local community was perceived as a security strength by the Salvation Army. Projects were supervised by local employees, implemented by local contractors and there was involvement by the ministries. Hundreds of people therefore received employment through the project. The Salvation Army took an active interest in local issues and listened and responded to community needs. The regional history may also have enhanced their security as the area was historically anti Saddam.

The Salvation Army also perceives their relationship with the Coalition to be a security strength. NGOs were supported through CIMIC with regular briefings, mutual support, assistance with policy and evacuation.

Particular challenges that faced the Salvation Army during their time in Iraq were the use of armed guards, travel via Basra/Safwan (on one occasion a rock was thrown through the window of a marked car), the impact on ability for publicity/promotion and the use of flak jackets (the decision was taken to only wear these for evacuation).

Security strategies that were used included pre and post-deployment security briefings; armed guards; travel in un-marked cars; guards and escorts for all cross-border travel; personal protection issued; softly-softly approach to PR and communication.

## **6.2 'Analysis Of The UN Investigation Into The Bombing And Security Failures In Baghdad'**

**Presented by John Cosgrave**

On 19<sup>th</sup> August 2003 the United Nations Headquarter in the Canal Hotel in Baghdad suffered a bomb attack that resulted in 22 people being killed and over 150 injured. A second bomb attack on the UN headquarters on the 22<sup>nd</sup> September killed a UN Security guard and two local police officers.

Following the attack on the 19<sup>th</sup> August an internal investigation was carried out by the UN, in addition to this an Independent Panel were employed to examine the incident further. Mr Martti Ahtisaari, former president of Finland, chaired the Independent Panel on the Safety and Security of UN Personnel in Iraq. He selected Peter Fitzgerald of the Irish National Police (had worked with Ahtisaari previously), Brigadier-General Jaakko Oksanen of the Finnish Army and Claude Bruderlein from Harvard University to join him on the panel.

The investigation aimed to analyse the adequacy of the UN Security Policy. The report that followed was very frank and unusually critical for a UN report. The UN Security Management System was found to have failed to provide adequate security to UN staff in Iraq. For example, the staff ceiling for the UN was two hundred and yet on the 19<sup>th</sup> August there were actually 350-550 staff present and no system in place to be able to identify them. Following the first bomb attack, UN staff were also still being flown into Baghdad.

The panel found that a threat assessment had not taken place and although warnings had been received on the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> August no action had been taken.

It was found that the UN Security Management System was dysfunctional and there was a lack of professional expertise in setting up protective measures. There was also a lack of management attention and accountability and a lack of supervision of UN staff. There was no disciplinary system within the UN for security breaches; at the moment the only impact on employees is that they lose their insurance. Overall, it was felt that a new security system was needed to ensure staff security in a high risk environment.

## **6.3 Discussion On The Iraq Presentations**

Following the two presentations there was discussion between the delegates and the two presenters.

Cedric Hill felt that working with the community was essential for the security of the Salvation Army (idea of partnership/local ownership of projects). However, it was noted that harm could

be done by trying to get close to a community through an inappropriate channel (e.g. approaching women). Examples were given, by other delegates, of national staff who would purposely not tell the local community who they were working for. Cedric felt that in the case of the Salvation Army, the national staff were proud to work for them, although he did recognize that sometimes they could have ulterior motives. An example of the Salvation Army's close relationship with the local community was the presence of a Salvation Army staff member at the funeral of the murdered local police chief which was appreciated by the community and served to strengthen their standing within it.

Cedric acknowledged that the name 'Salvation Army' could potentially cause confusion and increase their vulnerability. Staff do not wear their full Salvation Army uniform in the field to avoid being mistaken for the military. In Arabic the Salvation Army has been translated to mean the 'army of helping people.'

The question was raised of whether we can rely or engage with the UN whilst they do not have security management at the heart of their operational management. Greater thought was needed on the balance between risk and operations and on the accountability of the Senior Managers of the UN. It was also noted that within agencies there should be accountability and security procedures should be followed.

It was generally acknowledged that the British approach to CIMIC is different to that of the US and that cooperation is different to collaboration. At best this should be a two-way relationship that benefits both parties; although the political and practical problems of cooperating with the military were noted. The fact that the military also has a high turnover means that they sometimes rely on NGOs for information about the local context. It was felt that the local community are unable to distinguish between NGOs and the coalition regardless of the level of cooperation with them. This lack of distinction was felt to precede the Global War on Terror and to counter this it was felt that there is a need to educate the public. The threat was felt to have moved to agencies and civilians rather than the military, as this generates a larger amount of interest from the media.

John Cosgrave noted that as a result of the report the General Assembly are considering passing the overall security responsibility to UNSECCORD.

## **7. The Afghanistan Context**

### **7.1 'Overview Of The Afghanistan Context' Presentation**

**Nick Downie, Project Coordinator, Anso**

The Afghanistan NGO Security Office is an ECHO funded project and is a security advisory body. InterAction were involved in the initial consultation for the project; which was fuelled by the need for an advisory body. ANSO now have a head office and several regional offices and have the biggest information source network in country (comprising of NGOs, national staff and beneficiaries etc). They are dedicated to NGO security and do not provide information to ISAF or UNSECCORD. By passing information to the NGO community ANSO hopes to enable them

to make informed decisions. ANSO Staff are generally from military backgrounds and are paid NGO wages. Nick noted that there have been problems in retaining the ANSO staff. A challenge for ANSO is how can security and operations be more effectively integrated.

From the beginning of 2003 there was a shift in strategy with the rearming, regrouping and training of old Taliban forces and influences from Pakistan. The aim was to re-energize sections of the Afghan population that had been routed and to infiltrate areas that humanitarian aid had been unable to penetrate and create obstacles to the provision of aid.

The election and drawing up of government is due to be carried out shortly and it is felt that the Pashtun majority are unlikely to accept the Northern Alliance. In security terms we are therefore potentially facing a situation where we will be going backwards. The Taliban remain the occupying force in Southern Afghanistan and along the border with Pakistan there is a massive threat. Kabul is also under a threat not seen since the routing of the Taliban (increased rocket attacks and the risk of suicide bombers). In general terms the military strategy has failed.

In Southern and South-Eastern Afghanistan since January 2003 there have been thirteen NGO staff killed (two International staff members) and thirty injured.

In Kandahar, national staff have been targeted as they are more accessible than international staff. There has also been an increase in targeted executions. The majority of NGOs' working in Kandahar do not have security plans in place and are in need of advice. They often have security plans in place at Headquarter level, but not at field level and there is a need for dedicated NGO security officers.

Threats that are present in Afghanistan are crime; poverty and opportunistic crime; factional fighting in the North complementing the Taliban re-emergence in the South; crossfire; direct targets; anti foreign threat; insurgency; lack of discrimination and terrorist threats.

Kabul is under threat as it is a centre and relatively easy to hit with rockets and suicide bombers. Although ISAF have soaked the city, the NGO community can still be targeted.

Further threats come from the poppy trade with its external influences from Pakistan and the former Soviet Union. In Afghanistan fighting is generally stopped to harvest the poppies and then recommences once this is completed. The situation is complicated further by trade in this commodity with neighbouring countries.

The security challenges that NGOs operating in Afghanistan face are compounded by the fact that there is no ownership of individual organisation's security policies. The NGOs also need to recognise that they are a target; as currently they are in denial of this fact. They need to realise that they are being used as a pawn in certain situations for the Coalition and PRTs (Provincial Reconstruction Teams). For example, the Coalition sometimes impose themselves on NGO meetings, therefore compromising the security of those NGOs. There is a lack of understanding by international military forces of NGOs and a lack of willingness to answer questions. There needs to be a change in attitude and a two-way understanding. From executive to ground level, security awareness needs to be institutionalised and greater care taken.

Common problems of the military in Afghanistan is their lack of understanding of position, their inflexibility, the fact that they can compromise NGO security and their high turnover of staff leading to a lack of continuity.

Common problems that NGOs have in Afghanistan are their lack of understanding of the inevitable outcome of the presence of the military, the fact that they are not willing to communicate, their inflexible principles and the way they compromise their own security.

## **7.2 'Security In Afghanistan – Lobbying And Advocacy'** **Jeanne Bryer, Humanitarian Officer – British Agencies Afghanistan Group**

Jeanne Bryer from BAAG presented a brief history of her organisation and the valuable work that it has carried out, for this history please see annexe 3.

BAAG works exclusively on Afghanistan and through its relations with the British government provides a useful inter-agency voice and channel of communications. BAAG has a vital role in facilitating meetings and has committees for both advocacy and security. The FCO Contact Group which BAAG is part of and was instrumental in establishing holds regular meetings between member agencies, the FCO, MOD and DFID. It is hoped that this leads to increased understanding of the issues facing humanitarian aid workers. BAAG presents agencies with an opportunity to share ideas and make suggestions in open meetings and behind the scenes. It also helps increase the respect for NGOs' experience, expertise and knowledge of Afghanistan.

As far as we are aware there is currently no equivalent model to BAAG for Iraq, nor in either context for representations to other donor governments, but the BAAG model is one that should be considered for other complex situations.

Current BAAG initiatives include:

1. Work on the controversial topic of PRTs.

PRTs are military Provincial Reconstruction Teams, in Afghanistan, which aim to integrate and facilitate military and humanitarian aims. Discussions between BAAG and ACBAR were held to produce a coherent response by agencies in the field and the UK. A BAAG staff member also attended a conference in Bonn, held by Bonn University and the London School of Economics on the subject of PRTs. A key advocacy issue with regard to PRTs is that they should focus on security not reconstruction and should be under the UN mandate. Behind the scenes meetings with senior Government and military personnel were held on the UK PRT and a statement was made to the United Nations Security Council. Advocacy had a significant impact on the Mazar PRT, ensuring that it was focused on security matters. This resulted in NGOs in Mazar receiving the PRTs positively and the PRTs responding quickly to any security incidents that occurred. There are discussions at the moment regarding PRTs going into Herat and the effect this would have on the stability of the area. BAAG is currently putting forward alternatives.

2. Communication with ISAF, NATO, the UN and EU

BAAG facilitates the NGO voice at these levels. There have been discussions by ACBAR with Afghan Government Ministers and senior personnel from the UN and ISAF and discussions by BAAG with senior officials from NATO and the EU. BAAG is also a facilitator for dissemination of NGO statements to gain support and signatures. They also make regular presentations at major conferences, which help maintain a high level of interest in the situation in Afghanistan.

### 3. Workshops

In March BAAG held a workshop focusing on the NGO role and image in Afghanistan and a paper was produced on the subject. Early in 2004 this workshop will be taken to Afghanistan and Afghan NGOs will be invited to attend. The aim of the workshop is to increase understanding and provide a forum for exchanges of experience. It is hoped that there will be increased collaboration between Afghan and International NGOs and increased understanding of the security risks faced by Afghans to those by INGOs.

## 7.3 Discussion On The Afghanistan and Iraq Presentations

Following the presentations about the Iraq and Afghanistan contexts the delegates raised several concerns and questions.

The contrast between the ways NGOs are operating in Afghanistan and Iraq was noted. In Iraq, NGOs are requested to go to certain areas by the Coalition and there are questions as to whether the code of conduct is being adhered to in that context; whereas in Afghanistan NGOs are still operating in the 'normal' way.

Nick Downie stated that there had been thirteen aid worker deaths countrywide since January 2003 and asked the question of how high does the body count have to be before NGOs withdraw – what is the threshold of acceptable risk?

The fact that withdrawing from Afghanistan can be perceived to carry with it a political statement of the terrorists winning was also highlighted as a factor that some agencies may take into account when making these important decisions. Field staff may also be challenged by organisational structures and may not have the power to be able to make the decision to withdraw. The overriding thought from the delegates was when did the situation change for us to accept high levels of risk when not doing life saving work?

Nick Downie also raised the point that within Afghanistan there is a general threat to foreigners (although not in some areas of the south and south-east). He would like to try and stop the blurring of lines between the different actors. A challenge that is faced however is that the Taliban are trying to convince the Afghan population that most NGOs are spies for the US government. Advocacy is needed to reduce the level of threat and to increase the understanding within the military that they have the potential to compromise the security of NGOs. It was recognised that we are partially to blame for the blurring of identities.

The idea of double loop learning was raised, where there is one loop which represents day-to-day learning and a second loop that surrounds the first that represents the governing values that drive our actions. It was generally felt that NGOs should revisit the second loop and question whether operations are compatible with their governing values?

This section ended by returning to the question of whether there is a universal understanding of humanitarian principles or whether the interpretation of this differs depending on the culture? It was highlighted that there is a need for greater clarity within agencies on these issues.

## **8. Overview Of The Security Management Framework**

The final session of Day One asked whether the Security Management Framework approach is still valid in these complex environments? Whether the acceptance strategy is still valid? And if it is, whether it is more needed than ever before? Also, acceptance to what degree? It was noted that acceptance, protection and deterrence strategies have all worked together in a variety of situations in the past. Day One was concluded with a question which served as an introduction to Day Two:

“Is there a need to modify security strategies and plans based on this security management framework?”

See Annexe Two for the Security Management Framework.

## ***DAY TWO***

### **9. The Risk Environment**

The second day of the seminar began with a brief run through of the format for the day.

Delegates split into groups to brainstorm key threats for Afghanistan and Iraq. Groups were based on the different regions – Northern and Southern Afghanistan and Southern and Central Iraq. Each group were asked to select two or three threats appropriate to their region and identify acceptable thresholds of risk for different agencies and individuals. They were also asked to clarify mechanisms for adherence to established thresholds of risk for different operational activities and identify workable strategies to minimise risk and what those strategies entail.

#### **9.1 Southern Iraq**

The security situation in Southern Iraq is different to that in Central Iraq; mainly because the Coalition troops in this region tend to be more friendly and this has an impact on other actors. The region is also generally safer and the local population are quite vigilant and have a good relationship with NGOs, although not necessarily with US troops. There is also risk of crossfire, targeted violent crime and vehicle bombings. It was felt that vulnerability is increasing among NGOs. Cash handling was recognised as a threat, as there is no international banking system. It was recognised that international staff are most vulnerable, although national staff and their families are also at risk.

One difficulty experienced was in finding and maintaining secure accommodation for staff and the advantages and disadvantages of hotels and rented houses. One agency uses an acceptance strategy whereby the generators in their rented accommodation also supply their neighbours with power for hand held radios etc. A negative effect of this strategy is that it can create a 'ghetto' environment and make the local population more vulnerable as they are receiving help directly from the international staff.

Alternative security strategies that were mentioned were sandbags on windows and moving people away from high risk areas.

The group also felt that the decision on withdrawal from an area could be influenced by issues of credibility and that there is often pressure and disagreement between headquarters and field offices related to this decision. The reason for being present in an area can vary from donor expectations, to fulfilling a need, our mandates, public support and financial pressure.

The group emphasised the need to question why agencies are present and why we are increasingly defining the risk that agencies face as just inside the acceptable threshold.

## **9.2 Central Iraq**

The Central Iraq group concentrated on the risk of targeted attacks and began by asking the questions: who are the perpetrators and what are their perceptions and our perceptions? Do they distinguish between agencies involved solely in humanitarian work and those linked with reconstruction? Are NGOs now being targeted as they generate a greater level of publicity than soldiers? Is it about service delivery; as the Coalition has been widely criticised for not providing electricity for the general population? Are attacks on parties a method of reducing the competition; survival of the fittest? What is the perpetrator's policy?

The group decided that although there may be an organisational policy on threshold of risk, it is fundamentally dependent on individuals.

Decisions related to acceptable thresholds of risk were also thought to be incident based rather than threat based. It was highlighted that there is a need to analyse threats on a daily basis and the question was raised of how agencies can integrate a risk based approach to security rather than an incident based approach? This would hopefully enable security decisions to be taken prior to security incidents taking place, also resulting in reducing the number of incidents.

The group used a risk matrix to plot the possibility and impact of various threats. They felt that RPG attacks were moderate-high risk, moderate-high impact; ambushes were high risk, high impact and bomb attacks were slightly lower risk, very high impact.

Several strategies were mentioned including withdrawing from an area; lowering profiles; protective measures (e.g. sandbags); improving community relations; information gathering; the use of armed guards and modest vehicles.

Defining acceptable thresholds of risk can be difficult when there is a conflict between individual and organisational risk. It helps if an agency has a detailed contextual knowledge and is aware of the identity of possible perpetrators and how they perceive the NGO's work. This was felt to be a pre-requisite for the acceptance strategy.

The question was also raised whether a programme that shuts down due to security reasons will then have problems of future funding? Anita Menghetti from OFDA stated that to her knowledge they have never stopped funding a programme for this reason. See Annexe Three.

### **9.3 Southern Afghanistan**

Bengt Kristiansson from the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan presented the discussions of the Southern Afghanistan group.

He explained that the Pashtun population live in the east and the south of the country and that there is general discontent among them and along the Pakistan border. He again highlighted the threat of the re-emergence of the Taliban. This threat is from a neo-Taliban movement with many affiliated groups and movements. They have clearly targeted NGOs with threats and letters. There is also a history of assassination and threats against NGOs, which does not distinguish between organisations with a long history in the country and those that have only recently arrived. However, NGOs that have a long history in a region may benefit from protection by the local community.

There is a general perception in Southern Afghanistan that NGOs are linked to the transitional government and are spies. Although this perception will obviously vary among the local population. There have been some aborted attacks in Southern Afghanistan and the general aim appears to be to destabilise the country and disrupt the reconstruction that is taking place.

Bengt's group concentrated on attacks on national and international staff. They felt that attacks on international staff had a low probability, although this is increasing and that threats were definitely increasing. Threats to national staff were felt to have less impact due to the different function that they have within programmes. There is still a high impact when the attacks take place and they generally have higher frequency.

It was felt that organisations have to make their own risk matrix, to evaluate the threats that are relevant to them.

The group felt that under the Taliban there were less attacks than there are presently. They also felt that the majority of agencies would accept one attack on their staff and after a second attack may then withdraw or reduce their presence. The example of agencies in Iraq not withdrawing after the attack on the UN, but then withdrawing after the attack on the ICRC was made. Once again the group felt that the decisions were made after an incident had happened and were not based on threat and risk assessments. The point was made that agencies should learn lessons from the past. The question was also raised whether if beneficiaries are targeted should agencies still remain in the field?

### **9.4 Northern Afghanistan**

Makki Abdelnabi from Islamic Relief summarised the discussions of the Northern Afghanistan group. He highlighted the presence of the Northern Alliance in Northern Afghanistan and also mentioned the conflict between the work carried out by NGOs and that of the perpetrator's of criminal activity.

The group felt that there was a medium level of probability of targeted attacks by criminals and that these had a high impact on programmes. Makki stated that if NGOs do not act, he was concerned for the lives of some national staff.

Other threats that were highlighted included theft/robbery during travel and the risks associated with sending money by cars and travelling in convoy. The fact that there is no presence by ISAF in the region also means that NGOs perceive movement as a bigger threat. The history of crime and banditry was also mentioned and this was said to have a medium probability and a relatively low impact.

Looking to the future, the group mentioned that the neo-Taliban threat and also the increase in poppy cultivation could result in greater targeting of NGOs. It was felt that in Northern Afghanistan the threats are greater from resource based issues that depend on what NGOs can give or take away from communities; whereas in Southern Afghanistan the threats to NGOs are based more on political issues.

The acceptance strategy was mentioned and the point was made that if NGOs do not affect the resource trade too much then they are tolerated. However, it is essential to know your boundaries and not to overstep them and also to monitor risk indicators.

Makki mentioned that in Iraq it was felt that the better known an agency is, the greater your vulnerability. It was also highlighted that a distinction should be made between GWOT threats and local threats and that greater thought should be given to perceptions and profiles based on this. It was felt that in Northern Afghanistan terrorist activity is a moderate threat and that in the North West there is the additional threat of factional fighting.

## **10. Challenges in the New Operating Environment**

The objective of this session was to address the challenges highlighted in the earlier discussions and to identify possible solutions to them.

Specific challenges that had been noted in the earlier sessions included:

- recreating humanitarian space and taking control of our identities;
- checking our actions against our governing values and ethos;
- identifying levels of acceptable risk;
- understanding perceptions.
- choosing particular security strategies;
- collaboration on information management;
- humanitarian-military relationships;
- financial and political pressures on agencies.

Delegates split into smaller groups to address selected challenges to report back in plenary.

### **10.1 Humanitarian Space – Controlling Identities, Governing Values and Ethos**

The group began by defining humanitarian space as ‘an environment where needs can be independently assessed, assistance delivered and impact on beneficiaries determined free of political/military influence.’

The point was raised by delegates that humanitarian space based on that definition does not actually exist in the world today and is a ‘desired’ state. This definition could be used as a benchmark indicator (e.g. 100% humanitarian space) to measure other contexts against (e.g. 50%, 40%).

The challenges that the group felt were being faced were:

- The distortion of ‘need’ by political actors.
- Humanitarian organisations as ‘sub-contractors’ to political/military actors who are legally mandated to and have resources to provide services.
- Perceptions among a variety of actors that humanitarian organisations are not independent of occupation authority, but part of the process.
- The Coalition consciously manipulating perception of ‘blurred’ roles.
- Resistance actors targeting civilians and humanitarian organisations.
- Accepting funds from donors from the occupying countries and the effect this has on our independence. Are there strings attached to accepting the funds? Do the local population know where our funding comes from and what is their perception of this? Also, if your programme only has one donor are you truly independent?

Actions that the group felt could be taken were:

- Reminding ourselves of our principles – knowing what they are and how they apply to the situation. This should be done by individual agencies.

- Derive lessons learned from Afghanistan / Iraq
- Consider sources of funding and its relation to belligerents. Are these consistent with our principles? What are the long-term consequences of choices?
- Directly encouraging the local population and improving the status of local organisations. Increasing their capacity to run programmes and distribute funding. Encouraging donors to fund them directly.
- Agencies develop, agree and abide by operational standards. These should be disseminated to all actors and there should be peer accountability. Bigger agencies should not be allowed to dwarf the smaller agencies during the decision making process. The question was also raised of whether we are looking for one consensus or a variety of different consensuses?
- Outreach to non-western humanitarian organisations to explore values, principles and world views.
- Staff recruitment policies should be reviewed with emphasis on who we hire and the mechanisms for hiring them

It was felt that it should be easier for international NGOs to show that they are impartial than national NGOs. However, it was highlighted that agencies need to question their own perceptions and educate themselves and others.

## **10.2 Acceptable Risk**

The group felt that clear decision-making was central to establishing an acceptable threshold of risk. They felt that NGOs should recognise and have a structure around a duty of care to their staff. There should be clear policies, clearly identified management responsibilities, a formalised risk assessment and clear decisions. This would allow decision makers to understand the risks and then the decision to go in, withdraw or suspend a programme can be taken and not assumed. It was felt that this process to enable an informed decision to be made was vital.

To help improve the decision-making agencies could:

- Make sure risk and security assessment information is quickly available throughout the management line
- Recognise the point when the default is to go rather than to stay
- Think litigation – senior management must know that they face risk and are accountable. A trustee sub-committee for security could also be established.
- Have the ability to withdraw by making the decision either in the field or at headquarter level and not having to have both in agreement before action can be taken

Greater attention should be paid to the balance of risk versus benefit. The management should be asking: “Why are we here? What is the benefit of the programme? What is the benefit to the organisation? NGOs should not take a risk when there are minimal benefits and agencies should analyse trends and not focus solely on events.

Managing the decision making process effectively is essential and this should have clear management responsibility.

Steps that could be taken are:

- Establish default acceptance of third party warning (e.g. ANSO)
- Suspend operations after an incident
- Field staff should not feel obliged to go to an area if managers are not prepared to go themselves
- Expat presence using marked Landcruisers should be avoided (situation specific)
- Deploy experienced, trained staff. Individuals should be fully aware of the levels of risk that they will be facing, so that they can make informed decisions. It was noted that there has been an increasing trend of inexperienced people being sent to the highest risk situations, as they are very keen to get a foot in the door and will accept almost any assignment that is offered to them. This again highlights the need for organisations to have a duty of care. It was acknowledged that sometimes experienced staff also take unnecessary risks if they become too ‘relaxed’ in a context.
- Do not take local staff risk for granted. An example was mentioned of Colombia where national staff generally accept a higher level of risk than international staff. The question was raised therefore whether international organisations should be funding national organisations when they are aware of the high level of risk that they accept?
- Communicate with donors / press on humanitarian role and threat and therefore help educate all parties
- Do not rely on events once they have happened but invest in monitoring trends. The question the is: “who does this and can it be done with current staffing?”
- Have a trained security officer in the reporting chain to assist in assessing the risk
- Recognise who will have the responsibility to inform the families following a security incident (Duty of Care)
- Create a security culture within NGOs so that security guidelines and procedures are followed.
- Recognise that there is the risk of death. Break the taboo by talking about the possibility of staff getting killed. Delegates did raise the question here of when is death an acceptable risk?
- Recognise the commercial/political pressures that are keeping you in a region

### **10.3 Understanding Perceptions**

The group began by stating three questions that they felt were key to this issue:

- How are we perceived?
- Does it matter?
- How do we know how we are perceived?

It was established that perceptions are influenced by relationships and therefore the method of actor mapping is a useful technique that forces people to look at these relationships and the perceptions that they can create. Agencies need to look at their relationships with external actors and with the community. Agencies also need to understand the perceptions of their own staff, in particular national staff.

To try and understand these perceptions staff can relate to and communicate with the community. Surveys can also be carried out using a qualitative approach to try and understand these perceptions. Time needs to be taken to listen to the community, learn from them and talk to them.

Methods to try and influence these perceptions are:

- Staff composition – agencies should try to have a balance of international and national staff, from a variety of regions, ethnic and political backgrounds
- Behaviour of staff should be culturally sensitive
- Taking time to get to know the community and understand who to have relationships with
- Use of language
- Indirect approaches – work through people
- Performance – deliver services that people want and enable the community to participate in the programme
- Staff should be fully informed about the programme and should act as ambassadors for the agency. They should also bring back information as well as giving it out.
- Community ownership
- Relationship mapping – distinguish between high/low interest relationships, high/low power relationships between actors. The relationships could be colour coded with red indicating a negative relationship, blue indicating a neutral relationship and green indicating a positive relationship. This enables staff to see how one relationship impacts on another and should be done as a participatory exercise to make it most effective in harnessing the opinions of many.

#### **10.4 Implications Of Strategies**

The group focused on the threat of targeted attacks and looked at how the three security strategies – acceptance, protection and deterrence could be used for this threat.

Protection strategies included:

- Armoured vehicles – although these are expensive, difficult to drive and may only be safer in a specific context
- Flak jackets – these are again expensive, require fitting and training, but are useful in the context of an evacuation
- Establishing security systems and an organisational culture of security – ensuring that people receive security training and security management training
- R & R – ensuring that staff are rested and therefore in a fit mental and physical state to make good decisions. This will also help reduce the staff turnover.
- Day to day route variation
- Concentrate accommodation and consider the location
- Register with embassies

When considering the acceptance strategy there will be different levels of acceptance depending on the different stakeholders. The local population and staff (e.g. drivers/guards) can be very

important in protecting the agency. Relationships with other stakeholders can be analysed and developed; although this can carry with it additional security risks. There will also be some stakeholders that an agency is unable to take an acceptance strategy with.

Deterrence strategies could include:

- Armed guards – are these helpful or not?
- Armed personnel
- Armed friends – to what extent should agencies associate with PRTs? Coalition? The pros and cons of these relationships should be analysed.

Generally the group felt that they had had lots of ideas for protection strategies (e.g. SOPs), had struggled with acceptance strategies and found difficulties with the deterrence strategies and the militarisation of their existence.

It was felt that security strategies should err on the side of protection; although it was recognised that the acceptance strategy might be more appropriate for communicating with beneficiaries. The point was raised however that in Iraq the ICRC had a very effective acceptance strategy in place and yet were still targeted.

The group felt that with the threat of targeted attacks, the acceptance towards the NGOs has gone and there is a need to try and reintroduce this into the community. Protection and deterrence strategies could also be used as long as they were implemented in a culturally appropriate manner. However, these strategies do carry the risk of isolating the NGO and consequently limiting their access to potential sources of security information.

An example of a balance between acceptance and deterrence strategies was recognised as Chechnya, where the Russian military provide armed guards for the ICRC and some NGOs. It is argued that this is “acceptable” within Caucasus society because armed protection is seen as a “normal” and acceptable measure to take against a range of threats.

It was noted that training is required in selecting and implementing appropriate security strategies and the question was asked: “is it possible to train everyone?”

## **10.5 Information Gathering and Exchange**

The group began by stating that the importance of gathering and exchanging information is to enable people to have an awareness of their environment so that they are able to analyse risks.

It was established that this should be a two way process and that individual organisations should have a structured process for the gathering of the information.

This could be from political sources, military sources (both sides), humanitarian agencies, the local population and other sources.

The type of information required is to enable an environmental picture to be built (contextual knowledge). Direct information can be used immediately and any indirect information that is received can be used for future reference.

The information can be used formally and informally through scheduled meetings, specific security meetings, networking and exchange of ideas.

The type of information will vary from that which is open and easily available, to confidential information. It is important to know how to treat the information (should it be kept internal or disseminated to other field offices or to headquarters or made available externally) and who to be open with when discussing it.

On receiving information the credibility of it should be verified prior to it being shared and exchanged. The information should then be analysed; although there are questions at this point about who analyses the information, as this will affect the output. The impact on security (both real and potential) should then be established linked to that analysis. It was felt that agencies have a moral responsibility to share any security information that they may receive. It was also highlighted that one agency's output of information is another agency's input that will then be analysed.

There were questions raised surrounding sexual abuse and whether that type of information should be open or confidential as you have conflicting responsibilities to the individual involved and to other organisations. It was felt that a transparent situation would benefit other organisations.

Agencies should also be aware of the priority use of information, if security is the priority then that should be recognised and the information used for this purpose.

The way in which the headquarters treats information from the field, will also impact what information is then sent from the field. The point was raised that headquarters are aware of exaggeration in information that they receive.

Additional questions raised in discussion:

Do we need to involve a broader range of expertise (such as social anthropologists?) in information gathering to ensure it is relevant and can be utilized?

How can we strengthen inter-agency mechanisms for the sharing of security-related information?

## **10.6 Humanitarian and Military Relationships**

The group began by explaining that the nature of war has changed recently. Post Cold War there was a general divide and conquer approach, however the military now have a tendency towards more of a population focus and 'hearts and minds.'

The distinction has become blurred between humanitarian and military work and NGOs are consequently becoming targets by association. A good example of this is the role of the PRTs in Afghanistan. The blurring of identities has resulted in a lack of security for the NGOs, a greater

problem in accessing the population, confusion within the local population about roles of different actors, funding implications and NGOs becoming tangled in political agendas.

When considering what agencies can do to meet this challenge the group felt that there should be greater dialogue between humanitarian agencies and governments and donors. It was also felt that the military should concentrate on infrastructure rehabilitation (large scale projects – e.g. roads, bridges, police stations, government buildings); disarmament; mine clearance and providing security.

The group felt that they were unable to state clearly where or how to go forward, either as individuals or organisations. There was general agreement that NGOs need to engage more effectively with the military, but the key question is how?

## **11. How Well Equipped Are We To Meet These Challenges?**

The objective of this session was to identify areas for further work on these challenges and to identify areas for revisions/improvement in agency security practice.

- It was felt by the delegates that there is a need to step back, learn lessons and question whether we would have acted differently in the contexts of Afghanistan and Iraq?
- The need for operational standards at field and headquarter level was highlighted.
- Delegates also reiterated that it is important to reach out and understand world views but raised the question as to how this should be done?
- A further question was how we can make sure that CEOs and trustees are aware of and understand their responsibilities to their staff?
- The need for security training was highlighted and that agencies should allocate staff time for this essential training. Tying in with this point was the question of whether agencies are presently equipped to analyse risks?
- There was also felt to be a need for some level of expertise in information gathering and analysis and that there should be inter-agency mechanisms put in place for the exchange of information.

## **12. Further Initiatives to Take Forward**

The objective of this session was to identify initiatives or advocacy issues to take forward either as individual agencies or as a community and how to do this.

### **12.1 Humanitarian and military relations**

### 12.1.1 Individual Agency Action Points

- There is a need for individual agencies to reflect on their own identity (see section on humanitarian space) and on what kind of relationships with military actors is in keeping with their interpretation of humanitarian principles, their area of operational activity and their security.

### 12.1.2 Inter-agency/Community Initiatives & Action points

- The recent blurring of identities between humanitarian and military work means that there is a need for a mechanism to be put in place to enable greater understanding of roles or for existing mechanisms to be made more effective.
- Delegates felt that a military force should have a political purpose to their actions. They questioned the technical appropriateness of the military to carry out humanitarian actions and also asked whether they were culturally suited to it?
- When humanitarian organisations are working side by side with the military different relationships are appropriate at different times. It was felt that a code of practice is needed to clarify these relationships and become comfortable with the ambiguity of it. There is a need for agencies to first work together to clarify their position before approaching the military to develop a code of practice.
- Roger Yates from ActionAid mentioned the NGO Military Contact Group, which is a forum to promote understanding and a mechanism for arranging events, seminars and simulations. The Red Cross hosts the group (contact person: Anne-Marie Louise Weighill) and members include Oxfam, ActionAid, DFID and Save the Children. The minutes of the meetings are not widely disseminated, but the events are open to agencies.
- The delegates felt that there was no doorway (apart from through DFID) for NGOs to talk to the UK Ministry of Defence and it was felt that a Strategic CIMIC needs to be pushed. Jeanne Bryer from BAAG did state that UK Ministry of Defence personnel are present at the UK FCO (Foreign and Commonwealth Office) contact group on Afghanistan.

### 12.1.3 Other Resources & Ongoing Initiatives

- The UK Joint Doctrine and Concept Centre (UK Military/Ministry of Defence) was an initiative that was highlighted, particularly as they have a complex environments doctrine. For further information see: <http://www.mod.uk/jdcc/index.htm>
- DFID have sent people on secondment to advise the military in Iraq and Afghanistan.
- The Nordic Centre runs practical exercises twice a year that are attended by UNHCR, the Red Cross, NGOs and the peacekeeping section of the military.
- VIKING 03 is a computer assisted simulation exercise that was carried out from the 2<sup>nd</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> December 2003 in Sweden. The exercise is a follow-up event to VIKING 99 and VIKING 01 and is run by the Swedish Armed Forces. The aim of the exercise is to "to enhance multinational interoperability by providing a training environment that makes it possible for the involved military units and all participating organisations to reach their objectives." For further information please visit <http://www.mil.se/viking03/>

- The ODI Network Paper 37 "A Bridge too Far: Aid Agencies and the Military in Humanitarian Response" <http://www.odihpn.org/pdfbin/networkpaper037.pdf> refers to humanitarian relations with international military forces in peace support operations.
- OCHA runs UN Civil Military courses all over the world. They are generally one-week courses that focus on preparedness, planning, mission execution and the humanitarian environment.
- InterAction were mentioned as a valuable source of information. For further information about InterAction see: <http://www.interaction.org/>
- Another initiative that was highlighted was the Centre of Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance in Hawaii (disaster/peacekeeping situations). Part of its mission is to improve coordination between civilian and military actors. Further information can be found at their website <http://coe-dmha.org>.
- The US military field manual 100-23-1 was mentioned as a useful resource. To download this manual see: <http://www.adtdl.army.mil/cgi-bin/atdl.dll/query/download/FM+100-23-1>

## **12.2 Humanitarian Space**

### **12.2.1 Individual Agency Action Points**

- The general feeling was that individual agencies need to review their humanitarian principles, question their actions and learn lessons from their behaviour in the contexts of Iraq and Afghanistan.
- Once an agency has reviewed, revised and agreed on the interpretation of its principles they need to review whether their presence in particular contexts is appropriate.
- In terms of operational standards, it was questioned whether agencies have adhered to them and whether there is a need to review codes at headquarter and field level? It was felt that a location specific code of conduct should be established at an early stage of an operation to increase the chance of it being implemented.

### **12.2.2 Inter-agency/community initiatives & action points**

- Once individual agencies have reflected on the above issues and made appropriate decisions, there is a need to work on establishing some form of common understanding across the humanitarian community.
- The delegates agreed that a coordinating body was useful, although they stressed that a coordinating body can make recommendations but it is again the NGOs that have to implement them.

## **12.3 Acceptable Risk**

### **12.3.1 Individual Agency Action Points**

- The important point raised here was the need to reach up to senior management level – managers need to recognise the importance and value of security managers

- Senior management need to realise that organisational identity, and the value placed on humanitarian principles and how these are interpreted, impact on agency identity and image in the field. It is thus necessary to be clear on these decisions and ensure they are disseminated to field staff, to facilitate in the selection of a security strategy mix that is appropriate both to the agency and to the operational context in question.

### **12.3.2 Inter-agency/community initiatives & Action points**

- Delegates felt that a seminar on security issues directed at senior management and trustees would help to create a culture of good security management. Delegates wanted managers to understand the importance and value of security management.
- There were questions raised about the difficulty in ensuring that CEOs attend events and become serious about security. A useful ploy in this situation is to market the event as exclusive and make the invitations non-transferable.

### **12.3.3 Other Resources & Ongoing Initiatives**

- There is an InterAction paper / initiative that is taking place on this subject.
- Anita Menghetti from OFDA highlighted InterAction's Security Advisory Group (SAG) as a useful initiative.

## **12.4 Protection and Training**

### **12.4.1 Individual Agency Action Points**

- The need for pre-deployment briefings and training was stressed.
- Staff should be given a copy of the agency's security plan prior to deployment and therefore have the opportunity to agree/disagree with the security mechanisms in place and make an informed decision before accepting the assignment. This highlighted the need to look at recruitment procedures from the angle of security.
- It was felt that senior managers should allocate funding for security and training in a range of contexts.
- Each field office should have a designated security officer.
- There should be complimentary resources available to respond to a crisis and complimentary resources in addition to security training.
- It was felt that all staff should have compulsory security training prior to deployment to an insecure environment.

### **12.4.2 Action points for RedR**

- There was a request for the RedR website to have a downloadable example of a good risk assessment and other security documents. Although the risk was highlighted that people may just take these documents and adapt them to fit their agency rather than go through the assessment procedures. It was mentioned that the process is just as important as the product and good security planning is essential.

- A request was made to build the RedR security capacity. This was felt to be particularly important as commercial security companies are increasingly training NGOs and there is a need for security training specifically designed for NGOs.

## **12.5 Understanding Perceptions**

### **12.5.1 Inter-agency/community initiatives & Action points**

- An idea was raised to invite Muslim scholars to attend a seminar on understanding how NGOs are perceived in a certain environment.
- It was highlighted that there is a need to look at future scenarios and ask external actors what they perceive the future to hold.

### **12.5.2 Other Resources & Ongoing Initiatives**

- BAAG are running a workshop in Kabul in early 2004 focusing on NGO role and image in Afghanistan. The aim of the workshop is to increase understanding and provide a forum for exchanges of experience. It is hoped that there will be increased collaboration between Afghan and International NGOs and increased understanding of the security risks faced by Afghans to those by INGOs.
- On the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> December UNHCR are holding a seminar in Kabul on Islam Values and Virtues.
- UNSECCORD have produced a CD ROM of 'Basic Security in the Field' to be used by groups of staff to raise their awareness of security. It is mandatory for all UN staff, but has only been produced in English and French and there is therefore a need for it to be produced in Arabic. It has 6 modules and 2 review points. At the end of the CD are 30 questions and staff have to answer 24 correctly to 'pass'. Limitations to this project is that it requires access to a computer and computer literacy; however it is cheaper than providing training courses and is a good refresher for those who have already attended the course. UNSECCORD are also looking at developing advanced security training CD ROMs.

## **Annexe One**

### **Security initiatives in the humanitarian relief sector**

InterAction Project to develop a security training curriculum and training modules, 1997-98.

InterAction/OFDA Seminar for NGO Chief Executive Officers, Virginia, September 2000

Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health survey and report published in the BMJ on “Deaths among humanitarian workers” *BMJ* 2000;321:166–8

International Alert study conducted in collaboration with the Feinstein International Famine Centre at Tufts University, USA. Workshop on *The Politicisation of Humanitarian Action and Staff Security: The Use of Private Security Companies by Humanitarian Agencies*, April 2001

Consultation on UN/non-UN field collaboration on security for humanitarian actors under the auspices of WFP in Geneva, December 2000, and Washington, January 2001. Report submitted to the UN Inter Agency Standing Committee Working Group Task Force on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2001.

*Study of Security Management Arrangements for International Humanitarian Activities* prepared for the UK Department for International Development, June 2001.

InterAction workshop on “Security for National Staff” in Washington, 6<sup>th</sup> June 2001. Final report submitted on 27<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

The Humanitarian Safety and Protection Network (HSPN) was launched in 1998 to promote exchanges and distribution of information and to record, store and process information relating to the security of humanitarian aid workers (see [www.hspn.org](http://www.hspn.org)). The project ended in October 2001.

Enhanced security collaboration through joint funding and support of agency field security advisors’ in Angola, Guinea and Afghanistan.

Donor requirements (OFDA, DFID, ECHO) for demonstrating security awareness and responsible security management.

Adoption of Minimum Operating Security Standards (MOSS) by a number of agencies notably the UN and also some NGOs e.g. the German NGO co-ordinating body, VENRO: “*Minimum Standards regarding Staff Security in Humanitarian Aid*”

## **Security Training**

Individual agencies provide security “training” to their staff, which varies from briefings to awareness raising, and knowledge acquisition to skill development. Individual UN agencies run training for their own staff (e.g. WFP, UNHCR, UNICEF). UNSECOORD provide in-field training for staff of all UN agencies.

UN training CD produced for UN staff: “*Basic security in the field: staff safety, health and welfare*”

The following courses are open to aid agency staff and individuals:

### **Bioforce** (Based in France)

- Initiation to Security – 4 days
- Behaviour in Insecure Environments – 4 days
- Managing a Crisis – 2 days

### **CINFO** (Based in Switzerland)

- Sécurité et stress en mission – 2 days

### **CWS** (Based in the USA)

- Security Training for Missionaries – 2 day
- International Security Training for Missionaries/UMCOR – 2 days
- International Security Training for NGOs in Insecure Environments – 4 days

### **PBI** (Peace Brigades International)

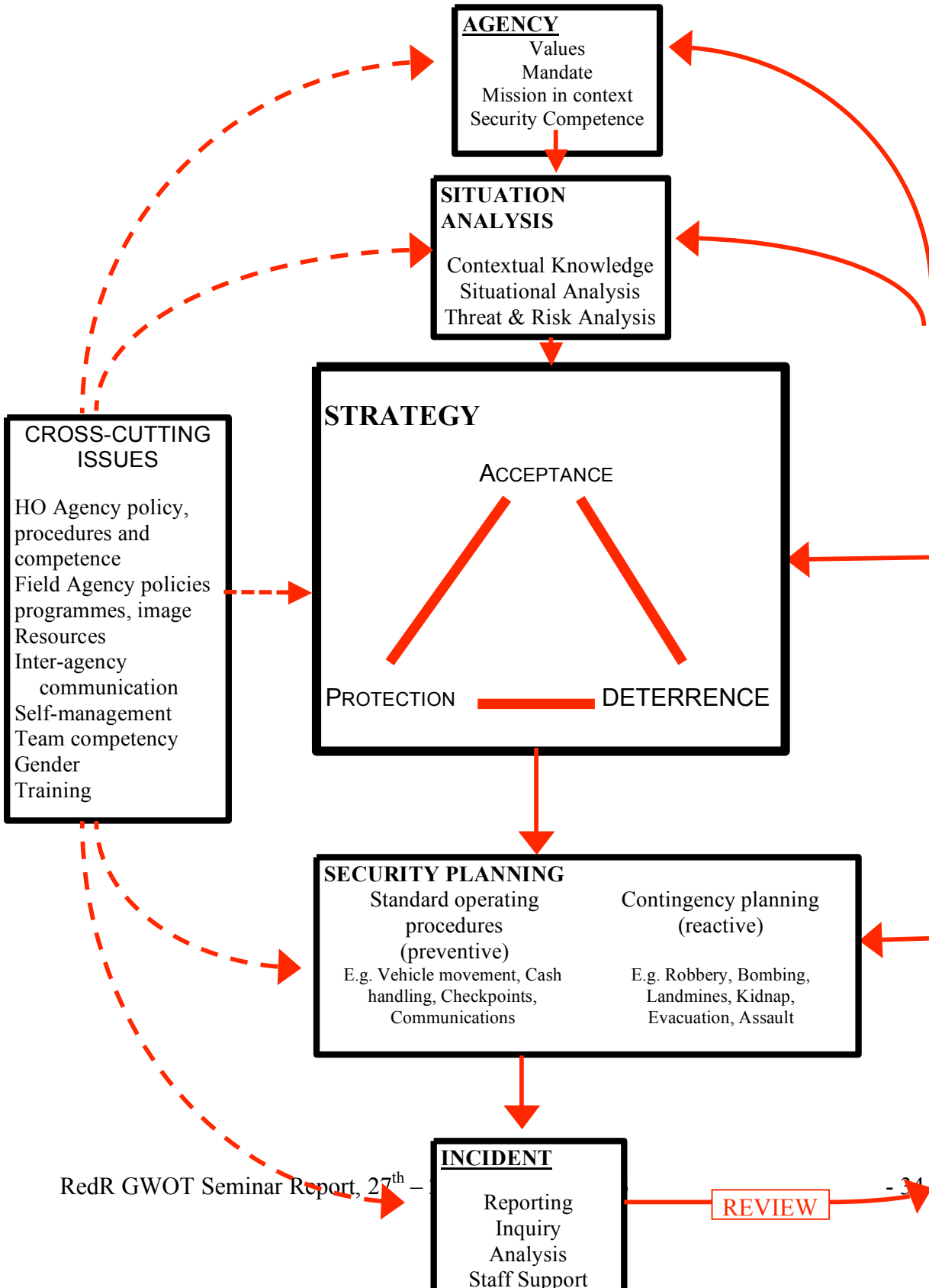
- Training on International Observation: Theory, Strategies, Operation Procedures and Security – 4 days

### **RedR**

- Programme of inter-agency security management workshops in insecure environments
- Security management & staff security training for individual agencies at both headquarters and field levels
- Programme of courses on “Security and Communications” for personal security
- Security Training Development Workshops to develop materials and a pool of security trainers for the sector.
- Security Specialist Workshop to develop a pool of security specialists to work with humanitarian agencies.
- Production of security training materials including *Security Training Modules* and *Security Training videos* on video tape and DVD.

**Annexe Two**

**SECURITY MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK**



RedR GWOT Seminar Report, 27<sup>th</sup> -

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## Annexe Three

### USAID Approach to Enhancing NGO Security:

USAID/OFDA's mandate is to save lives and reduce suffering. In order to facilitate the achievement of this goal, NGO personnel providing humanitarian assistance must be able to effectively manage their own security needs. The lessons learned from the past nine years in which USAID/OFDA has been funding security initiatives have informed OFDA's thinking on security and is summarized below:

**Symbiosis.** NGO personnel cannot be safe without the entire humanitarian relief community observing and practicing good security management. A misjudgment or carelessness by one organization can easily compromise the security of another. To this end, OFDA has endeavored to reach the widest possible audience when supporting security training and operational security coordination, and in funding equipment and personnel that support individual NGO programs.

**Management.** In order for security to exist, the leadership of each and every NGO, UN agency, and donor office must see security as a top priority. Recognizing, addressing, and training for the difficulties associated with living and working in a high-risk environment must become an intrinsic aspect of program design and personnel deployment.

**Awareness.** OFDA has supported research that has demonstrated that risk can be minimized without forgoing presence. OFDA's approach to increasing awareness has included research on appropriate models of security management. This research has, in turn, informed the curriculum of various security courses and has been published as stand-alone documents to help individual field administrators and agency managers.

**Accountability.** Accountability must be comprehensive. NGOs that engage in good security practices, when conducted sensitively and responsibly, will promote not only their own security but also the security of their intended beneficiaries. In the USAID/OFDA Guidelines for Proposals and Reporting (2002), information on security is specifically requested in the listing of critical assumptions and the implementation plan for the individual projects/programs under review and also with respect to the requesting agency's management of security as a matter of policy and practice.

**Context.** NGOs' and other relief personnel are not representatives of corporate entities, diplomats, or military personnel. The security practices and thinking that are suitable to these professions are often inappropriate to relief personnel. Many of the skills and abilities of these other communities, however, can be useful to NGO workers if their application accounts for the "context" of NGO work, i.e., to work in solidarity with people in need. It is impossible and inadvisable to mandate or train for a specific response to all security threats. Context is also useful in determining which security concept, or combination thereof, is appropriate.

**Capacity.** OFDA provides capacity-building opportunities for NGOs that are committed to improving the security of their international and national staff and protecting their intended

beneficiaries. OFDA has decided that its security-specific initiatives, as distinct from operational requirements, are most useful when they are targeted to the community rather than to individual NGOs. This practice promotes community standards and a common language for discussing security. The practice also requires NGOs to demonstrate their own commitment to improved security management.

## **Annexe 4**

### **The History of BAAG (British Agencies Afghanistan Group)**

BAAG was founded fifteen years ago in response to need. It began with Peter Marsden writing a monthly review that was circulated to the UK government, academics, NGOs and the media. BAAG was also used as a forum for discussion and coordination. There are currently three full time staff members Peter Marsden, Jeanne Bryer and Laura Jenks who collectively have forty-five years of experience in Afghanistan.

BAAG works exclusively on Afghanistan and consequently was extremely busy answering questions and requests from the government post 9/11. It has a good relationship with DFID and in the period after 9/11 was holding weekly meetings with them. Peter was also called upon to take part in interviews for CNN, various newspapers and radio stations. He was able to draw attention to the plight of the Afghan people with the impending winter. BAAG convened a workshop for the media to highlight these issues. This extensive media coverage influenced the creation of the International Development Select Committee on Afghanistan.

With the impending winter there were concerns surrounding access to isolated areas in Afghanistan; however fortunately the winter arrived late that year.

The IDSC found in favour of maintaining an interest in Afghanistan and employed Elizabeth Winter as their Special Advisor. This was an important posting as Elizabeth is also Special Advisor to BAAG and can therefore inform BAAG members of the Government position.

Barbara Stapleton was working as Advocacy Officer for BAAG at the time that PRTs was being mooted and concerns about the blurring of military and NGO identities were being raised. Barbara undertook a field trip and produced a paper on this important topic. She is now based in Afghanistan and is working for ACBAR in Kabul. This means that BAAG is still able to benefit from Barbara's expertise as they have regular communication with her and are able to exchange information and ideas back and forth.

## ANNEXE 5

FIRST NAME	SURNAME	ORGANISATION	POSITION
Roger	Yates	ActionAid	Head of Emergencies
Helen	Tyrrell	Amnesty International	Coordinator Mission Insurance and security
Nick	Downie	ANSO	Project Coordinator
Jeanne	Bryer	BAAG	Humanitarian Officer
Paul	Anticoni	British Red Cross	Head, International Aid Department
Kevin	Ulmer	CARE	Program Officer
Graham	Eastmond	Catholic Relief Services	Technical Advisor for Security and Telecommunications - Global Response Team
Ellie (Selina)	Salkeld	CHAD OT	Project Officer (Security)
Brian	Martin	Christian Aid	Security Manager
Ros	O'Sullivan	Concern	Emergency Response Coordinator
Jason	Garrett	CORD	Programme Officer
Steve	McCann	Freelance	
Tony	Taylor	Freelance	
Shaun	Bickley	Freelance	
Richard	Hakes	Global Risk Strategy	Operations Coordinator
Ian	Joseph	HOPE Worldwide	Managing Director
Michael	Greenwood	ICRC	Deputy Delegate Security
Kurt	Eyre	International Faculty Bramshill	International Training Coordinator
John	Cosgrave	InterWorks Europe	Director

Makki	Abdelnabi	Islamic Relief	Regional Programme Manager
Pete	Sweetnam	Mercy Corps	EPO
Jean-Francois	Briere	Merlin	Operations Manager Assistant
Jerome	Oberreit	MSF - Belgium	Operations Coordinator Kenya/Somalia/Sudan/Ethiopia -
Marc	Joolen	MSF - Belgium	Operations Coordinator Iraq/Afghanisatn/Chechnia/Russia -
Ton	Koene	MSF - Holland	Emergency Manager
Martyn	Broughton	MSF - UK	Head of Communications
Sophie Gabbe	Nygaard	Norwegian Church Aid	Head of Emergency Division
Bjarte	Vandvik	Norwegian Refugee Council	Director, International Department
Lisbeth	Pilegaard	Norwegian Refugee Council	Resident Representative, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran
Adele	Harmer	ODI	
Jonathan	Potter	People In Aid	Executive Director
Randel	Bareham	RedR Canada	Trainer
Cedric	Hills	Salvation Army	International Emergency Services Coordinator
Michael	O'Neill	Save the Children US	Security Director
Gareth	Owen	SCFUK	Asia Emergencies Advisor and Security Focal Point
Aidan	McQuade	Strathclyde University Graduate School of Business	Doctoral Researcher
Bengt	Kristiansson	Swedish Committee for Afghanistan	General
Nigel	Timmins	Tearfund UK	Operations Manager
Guy	Hovey	United Methodist Committee on Relief	Europe/Asia Director
Anita L.	Menghetti	USAID/DCHA/OFDA	NGO/IO/Donor Coordinator
Beverley	Gadsdon	War Child	Desk Officer - Iraq and DRC