Is it possible that in seeking to do good, we can inadvertently worsen a bad situation? Are there ways for the provision of assistance to play a positive role in ending conflict?

This was the starting point for the United Nations Open Day Keynote Address from Dr Mary Anderson. She is the author of *Do No Harm: How Aid Can Support Both Peace and War*, as well as being the President of the Collaborative for Development Action, a consulting firm based in Cambridge, Massachusetts. *Do No Harm* is a result of the Local Capacities for Peace Project, involving several donor agencies, operational NGO’s, and developmental organisations.

Her research has convinced her that humanitarian assistance can interact with conflict in both positive and negative ways. It may exacerbate or prolong an existing conflict, and the patterns of the interaction can be repeated, even in different contexts. It can on the other hand, reduce tensions, by focusing on local capacities for peace. However, this interaction is not inevitable, and there are ways to assist people to

continued on page 10
Editorial

War is ‘sexy’, humanitarian relief less ‘sexy’, but reconstruction and development still fail to set the pulses racing. During the PRDU’s Media Day (see page 3) the issues of reporting these different phases of disaster were again raised. How do we keep the media interested once the ‘sexy’ events are over, and are the viewers and readers bothered anyway?

The war in Kosovo made headline news every day in Britain. Today in Kosovo the most ambitious attempt at post-conflict reconstruction in Europe since World War II is taking place (see pages 4 & 5), but this is rarely reported. Yet a tragic killing in the Province will bring the other side of Kosovo back into the media spotlight for a day.

The recent Turkish earthquakes (see page 9) will quickly disappear from our news coverage once the search for survivors is over, and most events in Afghanistan (see page 8) have long since gone unreported.

These are just some illustrations of the fact that post-disaster reconstruction is not newsworthy. Should we just accept this and get on with the work? Will it make any difference to the rehabilitation of Kosovo whether it is in the news or not? Or should we go out of our way, not just to highlight ’pegs’ that the media can hang stories on, but to create artificial ‘pegs’ which will hold their attention?

Evaluation recommends five become one

During the Summer of 1999, PRDU students Nicola Lander (MA) and Arne Strand (DPhil), together with Dr AW Najimi, undertook an evaluation of NGO coordination in Afghanistan. The various coordinating bodies in the area – on an initiative of the Afghan Programming Board – commissioned the study, and a report was submitted to them in October. The key recommendation is that the existing five coordinating bodies unite to form one organisation. Such a move could only be successful by setting in place a comprehensive trust-building process.

Millennium move for the PRDU

Dr Sultan Barakat, PRDU Director, reports on new developments within the University of York to further strengthen the PRDU’s status and invest in its future expansion.

October 2000 will see the PRDU’s fifth intake of students to its successful MA in Post-war Recovery Studies programme. By that date 52 students from 26 different countries will have completed the MA course and another 11 will have either completed or be undertaking doctoral research in the unit. Over the past five years, numerous research projects, training programmes, and field visits have taken staff and students to over 16 conflict-affected countries.

In order to further expand its activities and realise its potential the PRDU will, during the year 2000, strengthen its position within the University of York with the help of new investment by the University to underpin its activities. The University is creating an additional academic post to share the teaching load of the MA programme. Another aspect of this expansion will be the development of a closer association with the internationally renowned Department of Politics whose main areas of expertise fall into four categories: Development; Political Philosophy; Public Policy; and Comparative Politics. This affiliation will allow the Unit greater access to academic support from colleagues within the Department, and PRDU students will become part of a larger community of overseas and home scholars working on various aspects of Development and Good Governance.

This investment in the Unit is an enormous vote of confidence from the University in recognition of the work we have done so far. We are greatly looking forward to working more closely with like-minded colleagues in a stimulating international environment. The culmination of this association will, in due course, see the PRDU moving to new premises located on the main University campus, based within the Department of Politics. In the meantime, the Unit will remain in the city centre campus at King’s Manor.

Hoffman heads for Carter Center

Ben Hoffman, DPhil (PRDU), has accepted an appointment as Director of the Conflict Resolution Program, The Carter Center, Atlanta, Georgia, USA. The Center, under the leadership of former US President Jimmy Carter, has two major programme activities, one in Health, one in Peace. The Conflict Resolution Program works to establish cease fires and peace accords through its International Negotiation Network, a top-level group of eminent persons.

Dr Hoffman co-founded, and has been the President and CEO of, the Canadian International Institute of Applied Negotiation in Ottawa, Canada. He is a regular lecturer on PRDU’s MA in Post-war Recovery Studies, teaching negotiation and mediation skills in a peacebuilding context. His DPhil, Towards an Architecture for Peacebuilding: Re-Structuring Power in Political Conflict, was based on four case studies in Canada, Bosnia-Hercegovina, Romania and the Crimea.

Dr Hoffman expects to join the Carter Center in January 2000.

Training the Trainers in Amman

Dr Sultan Barakat, assisted by Carol Seikaly – a PRDU MA graduate – conducted a six day training course with the aim of preparing Disaster Management Trainers. Held at the Disaster Management Training Centre of the Jordan Hashemite Charity Organisation in Amman, between 6–11 November, the course was attended by 27 participants representing various governmental, military and non-governmental organisations from Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. The course falls within the framework of support the PRDU provides to the Centre, under the umbrella of UNDP, and has the overall aim of strengthening the capacities of Arab and Islamic Agencies in responding to disasters.
Journalists under fire search for understanding

Current MA student Andy McElroy, who has a background in journalism and the media, reports on the PRDU Media Day (17 November) which analysed not only what the media reports in humanitarian crises and wars, but why and how.

The BBC World Service news reporter

“In the depths of despair which these conflicts create you will find stories that will lift you – I find that amazing.”

That was the comment of BBC radio reporter Tom Porteous as he reflected on a career covering possibly the toughest journalistic patch in the world: Africa and its many wars.

Porteous was speaking after replaying a moving report he filed from Sierra Leone featuring Rose, who had been abducted by RUF rebels and forced to join their movement. During the broadcast, Rose gave listeners a rendition of the RUF anthem she had been forced to learn, with the help of several beathings. Her beautiful voice revealed a tremendous dignity and courage that had not been broken by such a harrowing ordeal:

RUF is fighting to save Sierra Leone
RUF is fighting to save our people
RUF is fighting to save our country
Go and tell the president Sierra Leone is my home
Go and tell my parents they’ll see me no more

His excellent report told a human story within a very complex conflict, often ignored by Western media. He believes that it’s the media’s role not just to relate dreadful events but to put them into a framework that helps understanding.

The Sky Television news reporter

Jake Lynch’s gripping presentation illustrated how political news management can influence bulletins. His talk also showed how stories evolve during the era of 24-hour news.

Lynch revealed himself to be a deep thinker on media issues and behaviour as well as a fine television reporter. His work has led him to become a passionate advocate of peace journalism, and he is co-founder of a small independent think-tank called Conflict and Peace Forums. “We have a responsibility to work for non-violent peacebuilding.”

He outlined the importance and influence of journalism. The media has become an influential ‘player’ in all issues, including humanitarian crises. As a result, the portrayal of fact often influences the emergence of fact two. The media’s reporting adds another layer to events.

The humanitarian media specialist

Urs Boegli is a veteran of humanitarian issues for the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) around the world and is now the organisation’s head of media services.

He revealed his fears of a “Pulp Future” whereby wars are waged by warriors in ‘Mad Max’ style. “The coming anarchy – we don’t have to wait,” he mused, “it’s already here.”

To illustrate the point, the discussion shifted back to Sierra Leone. Boegli showed a video, which included footage of a soldier who carries a finger of one of his victims as a talisman in battle.

Boegli agreed with the previous assessments of the danger of superficial journalism. “Conflict is so complex, yet the media simplifies it to an appalling level,” he said. “I always say keep the complexity; don’t stay with the shortcuts and the cliches.”

But he recognised the difficulties in establishing a culture of serious, in-depth reporting. “I don’t know what marketing gimmick is needed to get people interested in foreign news. Look at the Angola war at the moment – who cares? In my view, people get the TV they want. Viewers and readers are keen to have things in black and white; they’re not so keen on the greys.”
Focus on Kosovo and ...

Unusual Training for UN Registration Officers:
A Challenge for the ITPCM

Barbara Carrai, Executive Director of the International Training Programme for Conflict Management (ITPCM) in Pisa, and modular MA student at the PRDU, reports on an unusual training scheme designed for the UN.

Part of the first pillar of UNMIK involves the implementation of civilian aspects of rehabilitating and reforming Kosovo. To this extent it is vested of the legislative and executive powers, as well as the administration of the judiciary. In the first phase of the mission, the civil administration of Kosovo will be set up.

To sustain this effort, the United Nations Volunteers Programme selected 200 volunteers to cover the wide range of duties required. It is generally agreed that one of the key-factors for operating effectively in such a scenario is a deep understanding of the operational context, and the capacity to adapt. The unprecedented complexity of the Kosovo scenario renders acute the need for specific training and detailed, up-to-date information available to all personnel (both national and international) working in the area.

With this in mind, and in order to provide their personnel with specific preparation, the United Nations Volunteers contacted ITPCM (Italy). In late September, two ITPCM experts made an assessment mission to Pristina in order to evaluate the training needs, and in October the first “Training for UN Registration Officers” was organised for 60 UNVs already deployed in the Region. Besides general information on the overall registration process, issues such as country profile, conflict resolution techniques and human rights principles were covered. A second training session will be organised for the remaining 140 UNVs by the end of the year.

The organisation of such training – not so usual for the UN family – should be seen as an important step towards a better prepared, more professional international personnel; preparation which will help to avoid mistakes in the long and difficult task which is the rehabilitation of Kosovo.

Myth and Reality in the rebuilding of Kosovo

Hasing carried out a fact-finding mission in September, Dr Alpaslan Özdem from the PRDU presents his observations on aspects of the second pillar – UNHCR and humanitarian assistance – and the way in which the international community and the Kosovars are handling the challenging process of emergency self-sufficiency.

Five months since the UN’s deployment, Kosovo is now facing the challenge of approaching winter. Although the first efforts by UNHCR and more than 200 NGOs were concentrated on the ‘winterization’ programme, many Kosovars may still have a cold and uncomfortable winter ahead. In addition to the distribution of food and non-food humanitarian aid, the main focus of this programme has been the provision of ‘shelter kits’ – timber, plastic sheeting and nails – so that families have at least one weatherproof room for shelter. However, it seems that provisions for up to 500,000 Kosovars whose houses were damaged or destroyed, has started to test the operational capacities and skills of the international community.

The programme has been facing serious procurement, transportation and delivery problems for which both donor and NGO communities in Kosovo blame each other. The other main challenge has been procurement of the necessary materials locally. The timber resources both in Kosovo and the bordering countries such as the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Bulgaria and Turkey, have proved inadequate for such a sudden demand. Some orders have had to be placed with companies as far away as Scandinavia. This urgent need for timber has also had adverse impacts on the ongoing reconstruction process in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The situation will also have serious deforestation impacts in Kosovo, as the urgent timber needs of NGOs mean substantial profits for local suppliers. Procurement problems have been followed by long transportation delays, resulting in bottlenecks at Macedonian and Albanian customs. In mid-September, the international community seemed to be far from their target of providing a habitable room to every family in Kosovo.

Such problems have not led the Kosovars to a state of ‘helplessness’, awaiting distribution of the shelter kits. On the contrary, they have shown remarkable initiative, and many have already repaired one or two ground-floor rooms in their houses. The Kosovars have also shown their initiative and skill in revitalising the local economy. In the few months since their return from refugee camps, it is...
... the four Pillars of UNMIK

Building the Institutions, Herding the Kangaroos

James Arbuckle, who teaches on the PRDU’s MA course, is employed by the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) as a member of the Kosovo Mission Training Staff. Here he describes some of the work of the third pillar – the OSCE in Kosovo (formally referred to as OMIK). The views expressed are those of the author.

The work of the OSCE in Kosovo is an entirely new approach and structure for inter-agency co-operation in a post-conflict mission. The role of our third pillar is that of building the institutions of a free, pluralistic and democratic society. The OSCE is well placed not just to execute this very difficult mission, but also to help build the partnerships among the international agencies providing the other pillars, and with the nascent indigenous civil society.

First, the OSCE’s comprehensive view of security includes the protection of human rights and freedoms, along with economic and environmental issues, and these are considered just as important for peace and security as the more traditional military and political issues. This is especially important to an understanding of the OSCE. Second, the OSCE is the only security organisation in Europe that has declared itself a regional arrangement or agency in the sense of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations – a status which could, and indeed has, implied subordination under the UNMIK umbrella. Incidentally, one vital agency, KFOR – that “international security presence” as it is referred to in UNSCR 1244 – is not a pillar, but is nevertheless closely integrated with, and very strongly supportive of, all four of the ‘official’ pillars.

We need not look far from Kosovo to realise that this international partnership cannot be taken for granted. Indeed its conspicuous absence elsewhere has been a major limitation on the efficacy and the prospects of other, equally ambitious peace operations.

In Kosovo today, there is the closest possible co-operation between the building of an institution, and the eventual operation of that institution. For example, the initial training of the Kosovo Police Service is the task of the OSCE through the founding of a police school, recruiting for which is done by the UN. Meanwhile public security functions are now beginning to pass from KFOR to UNCIJPOL, and will eventually pass from UNCIJPOL to the very police trained by the OSCE. In just this manner other institutions – the media, the judiciary, corrections services, electoral commissions – will be trained by the OSCE, mentored by the UN and the OSCE, and are intended eventually to stand on their own.

It is neither naive nor premature to be optimistic about inter-agency co-operation in this setting. To be sure, an organisation chart will not immediately resolve the usual internal frictions among major international organisations. Indeed, as these agencies learn to work more intimately and more interdependently than heretofore, that learning curve will assuredly manifest the usual differences resulting from mission overlap, interpretations of mandates and, of course, competition. If, as Thomas Weiss has said, the minimal co-ordination of NGOs is “like trying to herd cats”, then international inter-agency co-ordination may be like herding kangaroos. What is different about this mission is that, this time, the organisation does exist, and the intention is co-operation, instead of the organisational ghettos typical of previous inter-agency relations.

Which reminds us all, there are over 300 NGOs operating in Kosovo today. Weiss was describing Rwanda in 1994, when he estimated that there were “at least” 150 NGOs, operating in a country two-and-a-half times the size of Kosovo, with four times Kosovo’s population. It has been said that what we learn from history is that we do not learn from history. For those many of us who have devoted our lives to disproving that baleful verdict, this is the mission we’ve all waited for. The unity of effort that has, despite our fondest hopes and our best intentions, always seemed so elusive, is now taking shape among the pillars of UNMIK.

When I realised that issues of trauma and victimisation – specifically post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), had not been fully explored, and that some gaps in knowledge and methodology existed, I chose this as my area of study. Using my background in psychology, and implementing a personal interest in philosophy and the Eastern healing arts, I felt this would be a good area for me to further my education.

From my time here in York I wish to become acquainted with recent writings on trauma, and to develop and refine my own theories towards easing victim mentalities and trauma.

I hope studying at the PRDU will give me many of the skills I currently lack with regards to development work, and that the course will propel me in this challenging new direction.

Michael McKean
United Kingdom
Background in biological conservation

Since graduating in 1996 from the University of Glasgow with an Honours degree in Zoology I have worked on a variety of voluntary biological conservation projects including Mammal Ecology of the Ural Mountains, Russia, with the Ural Institute of Ecology, Ekaterinburg; a survey of endemic mammals and bird species in the Seychelles with the governmental Division of the Environment; biodiversity study of Ngezi Forest Reserve, Pemba, Tanzania, with the governmental Conservation Commission for Natural Resources focussing on birds, butterflies, moths and flying fox. During the MA course my main area of research will be the effect of war on the environment.

Mohamed Marikkar
Sri Lanka
Civil Engineer with experience in development, rehabilitation and reconstruction

I started my career with FORUT, a Norwegian-based NGO in 1978. I was then seconded to REDD BARNA, the Norwegian Save the Children Organisation. For both organisations I worked on development projects among the low income groups in different parts of Sri Lanka. In 1986 I was recalled to FORUT and worked on establishing the structure to respond to community needs in development, humanitarian assistance and reconstruction areas within 10 districts of Sri Lanka – a country which experiences man-made and natural disasters. I am also Vice Chair of the consortium of the INGOs in Sri Lanka – a Forum which acts as the focal point for planning and coordination, and the dissemination of information among the NGOs and other bodies.
In 1995, I was seconded by the British experience and to obtain other views. HALO mine survey of Kosovo. Nagorno Karabagh and assisting in the recently, follow up appraisal of work in both Chechnya and Abkhazia. More initiating mineclearance programmes in Caucasus. This latter period included UNITA areas; followed by 2 years in the Cambodia; 2 years as programme manager in the central highlands of Angola – covering both government and UNITA areas; followed by 2 years in the Caucasus. This latter period included initiating mineclearance programmes in both Chechnya and Abkhazia. More recently, follow up appraisal of work in Nagorno Karabagh and assisting in the HALO mine survey of Kosovo. Undertaking this MA to build on field experience and to obtain other views.

A Civil Servant in Uganda since 1996, I hold the rank of Senior Settlement Officer at the Ministry of Disaster Preparedness and Refugees in the office of the Prime Minister. My primary responsibility is for Refugee Settlements and Integration, in addition to the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) Desk. My main focus of interest whilst in York will be how refugees, especially those from a rural and peasant background, can become self-reliant in their country of asylum, and how the humanitarian assistance provided by the international community through the UNHCR can be harnessed to contribute to the host region’s socio-economic development.

Following 15 years as a British Army officer in various roles, including UN, for the past 6 years I have worked for The HALO Trust humanitarian mineclearance programmes. These have included mine survey of northern Mozambique – part of national survey; mineclearance location manager in Cambodia; 2 years as programme manager in the central highlands of Angola – covering both government and UNITA areas; followed by 2 years in the Caucasus. This latter period included initiating mineclearance programmes in both Chechnya and Abkhazia. More recently, follow up appraisal of work in Nagorno Karabagh and assisting in the HALO mine survey of Kosovo. Undertaking this MA to build on field experience and to obtain other views.

In 1995, I was seconded by the British Foreign Office to the ‘International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia’ leading a team to ensure that all military supply lines to Bosnia were severed. Following the Dayton Peace Agreement I moved to Sarajevo and established the ‘Office of the High Representative’ for Carl Bildt, where I worked as Chief Administrative Officer, and established regional offices in Banja Luka and Tuzla. In 1997, I joined the European Community Monitor Mission reporting to Brussels on political, democratisation and human rights issues in the Sanski Most and Prijedor areas. Finally, as Operations Officer in Banja Luka, I coordinated the work of the Mission throughout north-west Bosnia.

From mid 1998, I worked as an Emergency Planning Officer in the UK dealing with Civil Protection and Disaster Recovery issues and also briefly as a reserve officer dealing with Civil-Military Affairs between KFOR and UNMIK in Pristina, Kosovo.

I am an architect specialising in both health care and urban regeneration. Most recently I worked on the Walsh Bay Redevelopment, Sydney Harbour, for a consortium which included local government and a group of housing developers. Before then, I was involved in a number of urban renewal projects in the inner western suburbs of Sydney, some of which required the adaptive reuse of landmark or monumental industrial complexes, usually in dense urban environments. These projects complement my interest in connections between the physical environment and the control of social issues.

Despite graduating in Tourism, I have always been interested in international politics and conflicts. After travelling around the Middle East and South America this interest grew. In November 1998 I had the opportunity to work for Caritas/UNHCR in Rio de Janeiro in the Local Integration Center where refugees – mostly from Angola – are directed to job opportunities, school, university and professional development courses, to help them settle into Brazilian society. It was a very rich and rewarding experience. I came to York to develop my skills, gain more experience in this field of work, and acquire the necessary tools to enable me to continue working in the humanitarian area.

I have recently spent 6 months working for the Christian International Peace Service in North-East Uganda. This entailed capacity building, evaluating the provision of micro-finance, and assisting the introduction of village banking in a situation of post-insurgency. Additional responsibilities included facilitating the development of participatory techniques for generating information on conflicts and other interactions between pastoralist clans and neighbouring returnees. Prior experience includes a three-month investigation into urban farming practices and political economy in Uganda.

I got involved in humanitarian aid in 1988 and since then have worked with several international organisations in Afghanistan. Having directly suffered from the atrocities of the protracted war there, I felt obligated to find ways and means of addressing the root causes of the problems facing our oppressed nation. After joining the Norwegian Church Aid Afghanistan programme in 1994, I was involved in several initiatives aimed at helping aid agencies to integrate peacebuilding into their relief, rehabilitation and development activities. I came to York to reflect on my practical experience and develop theoretical knowledge, so that I can effectively follow up my work.
May this year, PRDU student Arne Strand (who reports below) has gained first-hand experience of the subject of his doctoral work “NGO coordination, to the benefit of forced migrants?”. While I was in Herat, the Iranian Government started a massive expulsion of Afghans, both registered refugees and unregistered labour migrants. Close to 300 Afghans returned each day; many had been separated from their families and kept in transit camps for up to 20 days. The influx of this large number of forced migrants had a major impact in the villages located close to the Iranian border, from which many originated. While in Iran they had provided valuable incomes for their families back in the village, now they had to compete for the scarce resources and job opportunities existing in the region.

This situation provided a good opportunity to find out about the processes the returnees went through during resettlement into their homeland, and to see how the humanitarian actors and Afghan authorities coped. Obtaining accurate information about the number of daily returnees and the total number expected to be expelled from Iran proved a major obstacle. The Herat office of UNHCR had closed their observation post at the border and withdrawn all international staff from the country. As their national staff were not authorised to provide information about refugee movements, questions had to be posted to the UNHCR Afghanistan office in Pakistan, and the office in Iran. In this state of confusion the humanitarian agencies had to base their planning on information obtained from the returnees and from their own observations in the villages. Three main observations were made during this period:

- Everyone expected someone else to establish a mechanism to cope with the problem. Both local authorities and the NGOs were waiting for information and an initiative from the UN, while within the UN agencies there was uncertainty about who should initiate such a response.

- Many returnees said they would try to return to Iran even if this was illegal. The reasons given were concern for their families left unattended in Iran, and the lack of job opportunities in the Herat region. Most of those expelled did not really want to return, especially as they had to obtain a loan for their travel which it would take them at least 3 months of work to repay, if they got a job; but they regarded it as the only viable solution.

- The NGOs, after trying in vain to obtain information from the UN, continued with their regular mode of operation and, with a few exceptions, were neither prepared to assist the returnees nor modify their operations in order to assist in a resettlement process in the villages. For example, when a village’s situation was mapped with the use of participatory methods, the NGOs did not include information on the number of villagers being refugees, or their financial contribution to their relatives in the village. However, concern was raised within the NGOs about the lack of donor interest in responding to funding applications.

All in all, and despite a mechanism developed to improve coordination between NGOs, UN agencies and Donors, it appears that there is still a long way to go before it is actually in a position to cater for the needs of the forced migrants.

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After visiting the area devastated by the Marmara earthquake, PRDU’s research fellow, Dr Alpaslan Özerdem, a civil engineer from Turkey, reflects on the causes and consequences of this disaster.

On 17th August 1999, at 03:02 local time, a large area (approximately 41,000 square kilometres) between Bolu and Istanbul in the economic and industrial heartland of Turkey (34.7 per cent of GNP) with a high population density (23 per cent of the country’s population), was struck by an earthquake measuring 7.4 on the Richter Scale, for about 45 seconds. The epicentre was located in Gölçük – the most important naval base in the country – in the province of Kocaeli, 90km east of Istanbul. According to the Government Crisis Centre, on 19th October the official death toll was 17,127, while the number of hospitalised injuries was 43,953. Meanwhile, the State Department for Planning in Turkey (DPT) estimated the monetary losses inflicted by the earthquake at between US$ 9–13 billion. In other words, the disaster will mean a decrease of 1 per cent in the GNP growth of the country.

Against this background, the most important task in the earthquake-affected area is now the provision of shelter to approximately 500,000 people who will soon face a long, cold winter. According to the public appeal made by the government, everybody in the earthquake-affected area will be provided with weatherproof accommodation by the end of November. However, this is only the initial phase of the daunting reconstruction task ahead. As a result of the damage to infrastructure, public facilities and industry in the area, the reconstruction process will have to be comprehensive and integrated in order to respond to a long list of such varied needs as housing, infrastructure, schools, hospitals and employment opportunities. Perhaps the most crucial issue is to ensure that the harsh lessons learned from the Marmara earthquake will be incorporated in the reconstruction of the area. This is a particularly significant point, considering that the consequences of this earthquake are quite similar to those of the earthquakes at Erzincan (6.8 on the Richter scale) in 1992, Dinar (6.0) in 1995 and Adana-Ceyhan (6.3) in 1998.

After each of these earthquakes the politicians went to the public, asking for solidarity, patience and compassion. Each time, the Turkish public was prepared to offer as much as they could in order to alleviate the suffering caused. However, this time the establishment in Ankara may get a slightly different reaction. The public is now demanding to know why the ‘act of God’ became a disaster for them. After the earthquake in Adana, some people went to court to sue their building contractors, but these demands for justice were probably not strong and visible enough to affect the practice of ‘business as usual’ with building safety in Turkey. However, the coming days can bring some initiatives by the public and by the Turkish media, which will be focussing on the causes and consequences of the Marmara earthquake, at least in its immediate aftermath. The close proximity of the earthquake area to the media headquarters in Istanbul also plays a major role. But why is justice more likely to happen after the Marmara earthquake if it did not happen after many other recent Turkish earthquakes?

There are two main reasons for this. First, the size and scope of the Marmara earthquake was much larger. Second, a high number of urban areas were affected by this earthquake, including such cities and towns as Istanbul, Izmit, Gölçük, Yalova and Adapazari. The urban-rural dichotomy may, this time, have some positive consequences in Turkey, as the politicians, local municipality authorities, building contractors and civil engineers will not be able to get away with their role in the creation of this disaster. In the aftermath of the Marmara earthquake, the immediate blame was put on construction contractors for the cause of structural failures. However, it is evident that all of those who have a role in the building process – from contractors and civil engineers, to council inspectors and clients – had their own share in making a disaster out of a natural hazard.

In other words, it is the overall nature of the economic, political and social structures in the country that has made the population in Turkey particularly vulnerable to earthquakes. Therefore it is almost impossible (and unethical) to identify any one group of professionals as the guilty party. However, as a consequence of public pressure, the establishment must start to take the matter of earthquake safety and disaster management seriously – and, as a result, to incorporate the many lessons learned from the long list of Turkish earthquakes, into preparedness and mitigation. If this is achieved, then there will be a positive outcome to the Marmara earthquake, especially considering that in Turkey it’s not a question of if another earthquake will hit, but one of when it will hit, and where.
Researching in Conflict Areas

continued from page 1

disengage from violence. Dr Anderson began her presentation by iterating what is a very simple point, reassuring in its optimism: more people choose not to fight than choose to fight; more countries don’t go to war than do; and when war arrives, more people don’t fight in them than do.

This reinforces ‘functional harmony’ as the norm, a concept that concentrates on connectors – points in society where people meet and share. Trade in essential goods, for instance, may continue during a localised conflict, because the warring parties remain connected through long-established social institutions. Dr Anderson believes that, unfortunately, warriors are often better than aid workers at identifying what connects people. She gave the example of power lines in Tajikistan that had remained in place during heavy shelling from both sides, because both sides understood their value.

This led Dr Anderson to the concept of ‘Local Capacities for Peace’, which refers to the individuals or institutions which can be identified as the connectors keeping people from conflict and violence. These connectors can exist even during warfare, and it is the responsibility of aid workers to use their assistance to bring people closer together, as opposed to reinforcing the tensions and divisions within a society.

There are a number of ways aid can worsen conflict: it can reinforce a conflict by appearing to favour one social group over another; it can represent wealth and power through the influx of resources into a resource-scarce environment; it can affect local markets, with long-term impacts, reducing local production capacities, and making it more difficult to return to a peace economy.

There is no question that greater harm is done by withholding aid and assistance than in providing it, but the research has shown the compelling case for minimising the harm in cases of conflict. Dr Anderson, in her keynote address as well as her book, sets an articulate example of how ideas can be used to do better work.

Research experience from four different backgrounds

In the day’s final session, four speakers shared their experiences. Jonathan Goodhand, PhD student at the University of Manchester, explained the lessons that have emerged from his present research – which involves case studies from Sri Lanka, Liberia and Afghanistan. He stressed the need to address all the appropriate levels of authority, from community level upwards, until an overview is reached. Gaining access to places can require contacting the people in power – a highly politicised act. NGO’s are also an important component, as they can help access certain areas and assist in follow-up to research. However, researchers should always be aware of the NGO’s background. One of Mr Goodhand’s final comments was the need to let the community voice be heard.

Professor Ragnhild Lund from NTNU, Trondheim, presented her experiences in Sri Lanka. She discussed the value of the live-history interview in old villages, and flagged-up the findings of a Norwegian survey on research behaviour, showing that dishonest and questionable research are just as relevant to conflict areas. Narrative methodology and clarification of research conduct are possible ways to complement the research.

According to William Lume, from the Centre for Inter-African Relations, the key word is ‘respect’, a crucial attitude for successful research. Furthermore, personal safety is paramount for research – never send someone to do things you wouldn’t do yourself. Lume discussed the importance of preparation before going into the field. First, the need for proper knowledge of the subject – being specific about the research aim narrows down the sources. Second, the fact that no plan, however ingenious, survives the reality. Once in the field a researcher should clarify their objectives and adjust their plan by choosing the most accessible field with the most representative community.

PRDU doctoral student, Arne Strand, discussed his experience in Afghanistan. He addressed the possibilities of using modern technology, like e-mail, to contact NGO’s in the field for news on the prevailing situation. Gender has a bearing on the outcome of research. In his recent experience in Afghanistan, women talked for the first time about their experiences, with a female researcher. A male researcher would not have gained access to the female population. Informal discussions bring out the point of view of the interviewee, rather than the interviewer. To get as complete a picture as possible, look outside the centre of the conflict; there may be other strategic areas where people might have relevant information.

Report by Gary Power (MA student) and Carol Westrik (DPhil student)

Research on issues related to forced migration, refugee studies, reconstruction and development, in situations of conflict and war is rapidly increasing, raising questions about the methods employed to gain knowledge. More and more academic disciplines are getting involved, with little cross-fertilisation taking place among them. To tackle these issues an international conference, Researching on Humanitarian Assistance in Conflict Areas, will be held in York, 8–10 May 2000.

Jointly organised by the PRDU and the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, the conference will bring together a wide range of knowledge and experience from around the world, with the aim of putting forward recommendations promoted by academic scholars, researchers and practitioners.

Proposed conference topics are:

- Ethics of conducting research in conflict-affected areas
- Reflexivity to local circumstances: security, physical environment and cultural sensitivity
- Epistemological concerns for researching in conflict areas
- Appropriate research methods and data-gathering techniques

Abstracts (500 words) for papers on the above issues should be sent as an e-mail (ao102@york.ac.uk) or diskette copy in Word 6.0 or Word Perfect 6.1 to Dr Alp Ozerdem (coordinator) at the PRDU by 15th February 2000.

Authors of selected abstracts will be notified by 15th March 2000, and will be sent Format Guidelines for their final paper and presentations. Final papers of 3000 words (maximum) must be submitted by 10th April 2000.

Steering Committee

Dr Mary Anderson (Collaborative for Development Action); Dr Sultan Barkat (PRDU); Jonathan Goodhand (Institute for Development Policy & Management, Manchester University); William Lume (Centre for Inter-African Relations); Professor Ragnhild Lund (Department of Geography, NTNU); Dr Jim Whitman (Peace Studies, Bradford University).
Since its launch in April 1998, as an independent quarterly journal to promote new thinking and debate on humanitarian issue, *Humanitarian Affairs Review* (HAR) has established itself as a valued newcomer. Already with some 7,000 readers worldwide, the Review aims to expand its readership three-fold; to broaden the coverage of issues within the publication; and to publish German, Italian and Spanish language editions as well as the present English and French versions.

Edited by Giles Merritt, HAR has recently expanded its Advisory Board, of which PRDU Director Sultan Barakat has been a member since the publication’s conception. These experts in humanitarian affairs meet annually to define guiding principles and underlying themes. Both the Advisory and Editorial Boards participate actively in ensuring that the journal remains a neutral platform for debate.

It is this neutrality which makes HAR such an important contribution to the field. It has avoided the danger of being seen as a mouthpiece of the European Union (HAR is published with support of the European Community Humanitarian Office, ECHO). Its articles, featuring many contributions from influential figures in the field, are topical and searching; and through its ‘Open Forum’ section (which occupies pole position at the front of the publication) readers are invited (encouraged even) to challenge and debate points made in earlier issues, and to contribute their own points of view.

The ‘booklet’ size of the publication, together with the design and layout, make it inviting both to browse and read. Whilst the content is ‘meaty’, the reader doesn’t usually have the feeling of being immersed in some lengthy, technical essay. The ‘World Aid At-a-Glance’ section at the back of each issue presents facts and figures as interesting and easy-to-view graphics – snapshots of differing topics showing year-by-year and country-by-country comparisons.

**For more details contact HAR’s editor at:**

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**PRDU Publications**

**Institutional Development of Southern NGOs: What Role for Northern NGOs?**

MA Dissertation – Mohammed Haneef Atmar

(1999; PRDU, The University of York/Norwegian Church Aid, 64pp; £20.00; ISBN 0 904761 67 3)

The author studies the philosophy and practice of NGO institutional development, making practical recommendations for policy makers and practitioners. A theoretical understanding of the concept of NGO institutional and organisational development is developed, and current practice scrutinised.

**From Rhetoric to Reality The role of aid in local peacebuilding in Afghanistan**

Edited by Haneef Atmar, Sultan Barakat & Arne Strand

(1998; 106pp illustrated; £20.00; ISBN 0 904761 66 5)

In January 1998 a group of practitioners, policy makers and donors were invited to York to: debate lessons learned; discuss the challenges of the current operating environment in Afghanistan; develop future initiatives/guidelines which could enhance local capacities for peace. This report of presentations, case-studies and group discussions sets out specific challenges, recommendations and commitments.

**Urban Triumph or Urban Disaster? dilemmas of contemporary post-war reconstruction** *Workshop Report*

Sultan Barakat, Jon Calame & Esther Charlesworth

(1998; MIT/PRDU, University of York; 152pp illustrated; £20.00; ISBN 0 904761 64 9)

With particular reference to Warsaw, Beirut, Hanoi, Dubrovnik and Mostar, it looks into: who benefits from rebuilding programmes; why foreign aid so often gets lost in the bureaucratic labyrinth; and whether the comparison of different cities' experiences can be useful, drawing on the considerable experience of the Workshop participants.

**Water under Fire** *Workshop Report*

Alp Ozerdem and Sultan Barakat

(1997; 56pp illustrated; £15.00; ISBN 0 904761 63 0)

Explores and identifies the main components of post-war reconstruction of water supplies, and thereby reaches conclusions that could form a basis for guidelines regarding future interventions. Six keynote papers from professionals and academics in the field, together with an introduction by the authors and a list of recommendations.

**The Revitalisation of the Historic Settlement Počitelj**

Sultan Barakat & Craig Wilson

A PRDU publication in accordance with the World Monument Fund and the Kress Foundation.

(1997; 104pp illustrated; £20.00, ISBN 0 904761 66 5)

Presents the complete research and survey of the war-damaged settlement, with findings and proposals for future action. The research method provides insight into the process of information resourcing and viable intervention assessment, invaluable to NGOs and academics working in the field of cultural heritage restoration/reconstruction.

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*To order, contact Hazel Parker at the PRDU*
FORUT hosts
PRDU field visit to Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka has been chosen for the annual field visit of the Masters Course in Post-war Recovery Studies. This follows several years of collaboration between local agencies in Sri Lanka, the PRDU, and the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU), including training courses run by PRDU and NTNU for FORUT staff on the subject of Monitoring and Humanitarian Work.

FORUT is a Scandinavian NGO, operating in the field of Humanitarian Assistance, Rehabilitation, Reconstruction and Development, working in close consultation with the governmental organisations (GOs), non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and UN agencies in the north and south of the island.

FORUT will assist in visits to different project areas to learn about Rehabilitation and Reconstruction work carried out by GOs and NGOs in Puttalam, Anuradhapura and the Vavuniya districts where the displaced populations are being resettled. Workshops, activity analysis, discussions with stake holders, and site visits will be included in the Agenda.

The Chairman and Secretary General of FORUT-Norway recently visited the PRDU to discuss areas of potential collaboration between the two organisations, including Capacity Building projects and the setting up of FORUT’s Sierra Leone programme. This field visit will provide a great opportunity for the PRDU group and the various Sri Lankan organisations to exchange knowledge and experience.

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