



*Promoting best practice  
in the management and  
support of aid personnel*

# ***Ahead of the field***

**Pilot agencies and  
the People In Aid Code**

**1997 – 2000**

***Sara Davidson and Peter Raynard***

## People In Aid

People In Aid is an international network of development and humanitarian assistance agencies. People In Aid helps organisations whose goal is the relief of poverty and suffering to enhance the impact they make through better people management, support and safety.

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People In Aid 2001

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## Foreword

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Most of the time, the communities aid agencies assist in the field are invisible. Most of the time, field staff, the people who work with these communities on behalf of aid agencies are invisible too: they are rare visitors at head office, and many of them prefer it that way. Aid workers are seen on our TV screens only when there is war or disaster or if they become the victims of violence or tragedy.

Aid agencies need to support and protect field staff, whether they are local or international recruits, salaried staff or volunteers, whether they deliver water to earthquake survivors in Asia, develop AIDS awareness in Africa or rebuild war-damaged houses in Europe, and when they and the communities they work with are off our screens and out of the news.

Aid is about more than money. It is all about people and the value we place on them, their needs and their rights. This reports tells of how a group of international non-government organisations (NGOs) have gone beyond the rhetoric and "Ahead of the Field" to support and protect the people who work in aid programmes. In doing so, with increasing professionalism, the agencies have reflected a commitment to quality in the aid sector and a determination to meet the needs and protect the rights of the "invisible", intensely vulnerable, communities their assistance serves.

## Executive summary

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This report describes how a group of aid agencies piloted the new People In Aid Code of Best Practice in the Management and Support of Aid Personnel from 1997 to 2000.

The Code was commissioned by an informal, inter-agency project group. It aimed to help improve field personnel management and programme effectiveness.

Twelve agencies began to test the People In Aid Code in a three-year trial that ended in 2000. There were other codes in the sector but a trial of this kind was quite new.

The group of “pilot agencies” agreed to have their work externally audited. Though largely untried in the sector, an external audit was thought essential to ensure the credibility of claims that agencies were following the Code, and the integrity of the Code itself.

The audit process was based on social accountability. It emphasised the need for a demonstrable process of continuous improvement by each agency, rather than a “pass or fail” approach.

Stakeholder participation was a key part of that process. Most pilot agencies involved their field staff through surveys and meetings. People In Aid hired consultants to visit Kenya and Rwanda and seek views on progress to date of field staff in four pilot agencies - British Red Cross, Concern Worldwide, Oxfam and Tearfund.

Seven pilot agencies submitted a report on progress to an external social auditor in 2000. The auditor’s role was different from that of an evaluator. He was asked to ensure that the agencies’ reports gave a true and fair account of their performance.

In the auditor’s opinion, the seven pilot agencies had submitted accurate reports of their work. Individual reports gave evidence of positive change, for example: steps to improve Health & Safety and security; better insurance cover; the spread of good employment practice; heightened awareness of diversity and equal opportunities; increased consultation; the use of performance benchmarks to measure performance.

However, the process had not always been easy. Pilot agencies also provided evidence of the challenges they had faced: in seeking to “embed” the Code in their organisation’s thinking and practice; to extend its use, particularly to host country staff; to use the Code effectively within agency “federations”; to make consistent use of Health & Safety records and other management information systems.

Collective experience showed that testing the new Code, and the audit process, had been a labour-intensive, sometimes difficult process. Some parts of the Code worked better than others. The accountability process was unfamiliar and often time-consuming. Yet, investment in the Code and the accountability process contributed positively to change and innovation and the pilot agencies remained committed to it.

People In Aid laid down a set of four conditions, based on reporting, audit and disclosure of their progress, which pilot agencies had to fulfill before stating that they followed the People In Aid Code. Seven of the original twelve pilot agencies were recognised as fulfilling the conditions:

British Red Cross	MAF Europe
Concern Worldwide	RedR
Health Unlimited	Tearfund
International Health Exchange	

Their commitment would be re-audited at three-yearly intervals. Other agencies that were adopting the Code would undergo a similar, audited process.

The work of People In Aid attracted attention from aid agencies all over the world. In 1999 the short-life, inter-agency project was established as an independent organisation and a registered charity, dedicated to helping aid agencies improve the quality of field programmes through better staff management and support.

## Pilot agencies and the People In Aid Code

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The People In Aid Code was published in 1997. At its launch in London, chief executives were asked to commit their agency to “pilot” the voluntary Code, implementing its seven principles in a three-year trial.

The UK Department for International Development promised all financial support in 1997-98. “Pilot agencies”, as they were known, contributed to costs in Years 2 and 3. In addition, the pilot process would, as pilot agencies wished, include a monitoring process yet to be decided.

Twelve agencies began. Action Health, British Red Cross, International Health Exchange, Oxfam, RedR, Save the Children and Tearfund were already members of People In Aid. CARE, Concern Worldwide, Health Unlimited, MAF Europe and Riders for Health agreed to join them.

The pilot agencies were a diverse group. The test for People In Aid - and one of the reasons pilots were “piloting” the Code - was whether the Code was robust enough to provide a framework, grant a measure of flexibility to different agencies, and yet leave intact the authority of its Principles.

A second test was whether the Code continued to reinforce the vision, purpose and relationship that brought them together. Despite their differences, almost half the group recruited or trained field staff for one another or for other national or international organisations. Neither the needs of their beneficiaries nor those of their field staff differed significantly.

Landmine survivor at a Red Cross Hospital in Sudan



PHOTO : HELDUR NETOCNY/PANOS PICTURES

# Accountability

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When the Code was published in early 1997 People In Aid had left open the question of how commitment to it might be gauged. Earlier use of codes by the aid sector, such as the Red Cross and NGO Code of Conduct or the InterAction Protocol had not been monitored.

Issues of accountability in aid, particularly in humanitarian assistance had raised the stakes. People In Aid had, at pilot agencies' request, to find a way in which they could demonstrate their commitment to the Code. At the same time, this practical commitment to going beyond rhetoric on accountability was almost certainly a key factor in the relatively limited take-up of the Code at the start of 1997.

## **Financial accountability**

For most aid agencies accountability meant - and, for all practical purposes, still means - financial accountability to donors, their most influential stakeholders.

Financial accountability continues to dominate performance measurement. However, its limitations have given rise to other processes of measurement, including attempts to measure the social impact and outcomes of organisational action.

## **Corporate accountability**

Outside the legal profession, the tools of non-financial accountability are fewer and newer. In Europe and North America its language remains close to that of the financial sector, reflecting the power of wealth and money management. In France, legal and social responsibility in employment have been linked in *le bilan social* - the social balance sheet - through which firms are expected to publish other data, primarily on human resource issues.

In the UK, firms such as Body Shop International or the Co-operative Bank, began voluntarily to publish corporate accountability reports in the 1990s, often with encouragement from NGOs. Staff of Oxfam verify social accounts at Body Shop International. Save the Children campaigns for changes to company law to see firms publish information on social and environmental performance alongside financial results.<sup>1</sup> Both Oxfam and Save the Children are members of the Ethical Trading Initiative which audits employment standards in the corporate sector overseas.

## **Aid agency accountability <sup>ii</sup>**

In development programmes, accountability was analogous to the approach of Participatory Rural Appraisal. In humanitarian assistance, calls for greater accountability came from donors, host country governments and powerful NGOs following the critical evaluation of response to the genocide in Rwanda.<sup>iii</sup> ALNAP (the Active Learning Network on Accountability and Performance), the Sphere Charter on humanitarian assistance and the Humanitarian Ombudsman Project engaged prominent NGOs, including pilot agencies

British Red Cross, Oxfam and Save the Children, in debates and projects that sought to identify common standards in service delivery or accountability.

## **Social accountability**

Social accountability or social audit, as it is also known, first appeared in academic literature in the 1940s. It was developed further by the UK's New Economics Foundation and fair trade agency Traidcraft plc.

Originally undertaken by ethical companies, social accountability is seen as equally applicable to non-profit organisations that want to conduct a "reality check" on how well they are performing. Traidcraft's sister organisation Traidcraft Exchange, like the Irish Agency For Personal Service Overseas, have also used it to measure and improve performance against social and ethical objectives.

Social accountability is defined as a way in which individuals and organisations report on and are held responsible for their actions. It consists of five elements:

- Agreement about roles and responsibilities
- Taking action in accordance with agreed roles and responsibilities
- Reporting on action taken
- Responding to the needs and views of stakeholders
- Complying with agreed standards of performance

Social accountability appeared to offer People In Aid pilot agencies a systematic link between their values, as stated in the Code, and the increasingly widespread concern about quality and accountability in aid.

Social accountability encourages organisations to start from where they are, reviewing and building on existing information systems. There is no pass or fail: instead of a finishing line, each organisation can move at its own speed to implement a continuous cycle of improvement.

Social accountability emphasises institutional learning, as well as training for individual staff, and regular assessment of performance through stakeholder dialogue, rather than reaction to systems failure. The work of People In Aid pilot agencies, for example, could be compared over time, or with human resource standards and benchmarks drawn from the experience of others in the sector or from statutory regulations.

Accountability by pilot agencies could be demonstrated through external audit and disclosure of their work. Accountability was a means not an end in this process of



continuous improvement but it would help add authority to agency claims about commitment and performance, particularly in humanitarian assistance where increasingly “the problem was less one of compassion fatigue than of compassion discredited.”<sup>iv</sup>

As important as those surveyed in a process of social accountability, were its stakeholders. It is this interested “audience” - including potential staff, donors and beneficiaries - who hold an organisation to account, whether formally or informally. Staff need to know how good a potential employer is. Donors want to know their money is spent effectively. Beneficiaries and the agencies that represent them expect the aid organisations and individuals they meet to be competent, qualified and consistent.

At People In Aid a working group, comprising People In Aid’s chief executive and representatives from British Red Cross, International Health Exchange, Overseas Development Institute and RedR, drafted a paper that recommended People In Aid use social accountability in monitoring the pilot.<sup>v</sup> Pilot agencies discussed this within their own organisations, emphasising, particularly at Oxfam and Save the Children, the need to involve field staff in deliberations. They weighed up benefits and concerns and, seven months after the Code was launched, agreed the recommendation at a meeting of the People In Aid Steering Group.

Their decision did not end debate within pilot agencies. Social accountability, like the Code, was a relatively new tool. Would it take too much time and money? Did it mean listening to new voices? Was it just a private sector tool? Could an audit threaten image or “brand”? Would it fail to “punish” poor performers? Would it give more power to donors?

Though there were many questions, nobody had a practical alternative to offer. Rather than allow analysis to lead to paralysis, or let “the best be the enemy of the good” most pilot agencies got on with it. Piloting the People In Aid Code did not mean knowing everything, after all.

Social accountability aims to incorporate the views of as many stakeholders as possible in the assessment of an organisation’s performance but, more importantly, recognises their inter-relationship.

Stakeholders are all those individuals and organisations affected by the outcome of the organisation’s activities. In aid agencies, these could include beneficiaries, staff, donors, partner agencies, supporters, UN agencies, host country governments, the press, etc.

The People In Aid Code, however, focused on a specific group of stakeholders: field staff. In the context of emergency response or limited aid budgets, it was easy for staff to be a low priority. Aid sector evaluations have demonstrated that this is a false economy:<sup>vi</sup> high levels of staff preparedness, training and support are essential to

## Principles of Social accountability

**Inclusive:** the social accountability process must reflect the views of all stakeholders, not only those with the most influence.

**Comparative:** the performance of the organisation must be comparable over time, or with external standards drawn from the experience of other organisations, statutory regulations or societal norms.

**Comprehensive:** no area of the organisation’s activities can be deliberately or systematically excluded from the assessment. [In the case of People In Aid, this meant that, while it might be logical to begin in one group, country or region, no groups of field staff should be deliberately excluded.]

**Regular:** An organisation’s performance cannot be assessed in any one-off exercise. Issues vary over time, as do the composition and expectations of key stakeholder groups.

**Embedded:** It is essential for any systematic social accountability process that the organisation develop clear policies covering each area of performance audited. In addition, it needs procedures that allow social accounting to be regularised and the organisation’s awareness and operationalisation of policies and commitments to be assessed and influenced through an audit.

**Communication:** Disclosure of findings is more than a formality. It is an active means of communication with key stakeholders and the wider public. Merely publishing a document - however comprehensive - does not constitute “good practice” if the document is difficult to obtain, costly, or unintelligible to key stakeholders.

**External Verification:** The role of an independent verifier is an important means for strengthening accountability and legitimacy both of the process and of the organisation.

**Continuous Improvement:** An organisation must be committed to improving its performance in relation to the assessment process and to be audited against commitment in subsequent cycles.

Based on Gonella, C., Pilling, A., Zadek, S. Making Values Count. Contemporary Experience in Social and Ethical Accounting, Auditing and Reporting. ACCA Research Report, 57, 1998.

an effective service for programme beneficiaries; a longer view recognises too the contribution good management and support make to staff retention, morale and effectiveness. Nonetheless, no performance or accountability standard should undermine the objective of an organisation to meet its aims towards to its primary stakeholder, its beneficiaries.

Social accountability is not a vanishing trick. The stakeholder approach does not make apparently conflicting interests disappear. On the contrary, it can, as workshops made clear and pilot agencies agreed, “open up a can of worms” highlighting issues that cannot immediately be addressed or which have always been avoided. By helping make them transparent, however, it demonstrates where they may be complementary and that an “either-or” debate is capable of moving to “both-and” analysis.

This was acknowledged in comments in Concern Worldwide’s reports. On the one hand:

***“Ultimately, the consequences of implementing the People In Aid Code must impact positively on the beneficiaries of Concern’s programmes or there is no justification for spending time on such an initiative.”***

And on the other:

***“Overseas staff are the eyes and ears of the organisation; it is they who communicate needs, propose responses, monitor results and ultimately determine the quality of our service.”***

Delivery of medical assistance at a refugee camp in Cambodia, 1998.



# Implementing and auditing the pilot process: the mechanics

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Responsibility for implementing the voluntary Code remained with the agencies themselves. The Code asked them to assign a named manager and People In Aid recommended he or she be supported by a team. The decision about where or which groups of field staff the pilot would cover was up to each agency. Decisions were based on agency capacity and size and/or the number of countries for which field staff were recruited.

People In Aid provided support to individual agencies on request and to all pilots through a baseline survey, joint workshops, a resource centre and research and guidelines on issues of common concern, such as field staff insurance and safety.

“Starting Points,” a workshop on how to begin adopting the People In Aid Code, was held in September 1997. It focused on overcoming the barriers to organisational change that any new project faced. A second workshop, “Health, Safety and Field Staff” in 1998, encouraged agencies to consider a broader, evidence-based approach to occupational safety in the field.

A volunteer from the private sector offered a free “diagnostic” visit to those agencies, almost half the pilot group, with no people management professional on their staff. Consultants from the NGO sector volunteered to help draw up a basic human resource management audit format. Two agencies hired consultants to assist them in the implementation process.

A workshop on social accountability in early 1998 gave pilot agencies an overview of the social accountability cycle and examined where the challenges might lie.<sup>vii</sup>

## The audit cycle

Establish commitment to use social accountability and begin to put in place systems.

Define stakeholders in the People In Aid implementation and audit process.

Define or review agency values and policies towards stakeholders (e.g. field staff).

Identify what stakeholders themselves see as key issues, recognising that issues they identify may go beyond those covered by the People In Aid Code or those expected by the agency.

Identify existing information systems.

Decide indicators, benchmarks and targets.

Collect information.

Analyse the information collected, and set new targets.

Prepare report.

Audit report, internally in Year 2 (1999), and externally in Year 3 (2000).

Communicate and publish results, obtaining feedback from stakeholders.

Begin a new audit cycle.

Adapted from New Economics Foundation Briefing Paper on Social Auditing, 1997.

## Social accountability: the challenges

Agency agreement to audit performance may not equal agency *commitment*.

If seen as originating from personnel departments alone, the accountability initiative is unlikely to succeed.

If left to one person, the accountability initiative is unlikely to succeed.

Most organisations already undertake monitoring activities. These should be investigated, used and adapted before new ones are introduced.

Publication of an audit report is followed by response to issues raised in a new accountability cycle. It is not the end of the process.

If findings are unwelcome, methodology will be challenged.

The agency does the work, not the auditor.

Adapted from "Auditing the People In Aid Code" workshop report

Most pilot agencies focused on the views of some or all field staff, their families and head office staff in monitoring their commitment to the People In Aid Code indicators.

However, the social accountability process, with its emphasis on "inclusivity", encouraged many to begin identifying a wider range of stakeholders in future audit cycles. Pilot agency reports named other stakeholders who might be included, for example:

beneficiaries	job applicants
client organisations	other inter-agency networks
consultants	other People In Aid members
counterparts	partner organisations
donors	supporters
HQ personnel departments	trustees

Pilot agencies were offered the option of working alone or as a group when auditing and reporting their progress on implementing the Code. They decided eventually to work as a group and agreed a timetable.

Emergencies in Sudan, Bangladesh and Central America in 1998 and the Kosovo crisis in 1999, however, made adherence to the joint schedule impossible. So did internal management issues, such as staff changes or restructuring at headquarters. Nevertheless, when the interim audit cycle ended in March 1999, the majority of pilot agencies were able to take stock of their progress.

Most produced an internal report, noting the gaps identified as well as the successes achieved in implementing the Code. Each report set new targets for the future. Interim reports formed the basis of a synthesis study in mid-1999, "Measure For Measure." <sup>viii</sup>

In late 1999, People In Aid hired consultants from New Economics Foundation to visit Rwanda and Kenya and interview a sample of pilot agency staff working in the field for British Red Cross, Concern Worldwide, Oxfam and Tearfund. Interviews and reports were intended to deepen understanding by pilot agencies of the issues staff and agencies confronted in implementing the Code, and see if there were common issues which the Code and the pilot agencies did not adequately address. New Economics Foundation also provided group and individual support to pilot agencies through workshops and agency visits in England and Ireland.

## From Principles to Practice

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Comparing the experience of eight different agencies, which have piloted the Code in different ways in different countries, is difficult. In this report, we have therefore attempted to describe that experience in two ways.

We have chosen first to focus on the Code and each of its Principles in practice. How useable was the Code in the field? What success and difficulties did individual pilot agencies encounter in applying it? Do common themes emerge from their experience? This section draws on individual pilot agency reports and comments from field staff and other stakeholders among the eight agencies that piloted the Code until December 1999.

Secondly, we focus on the external audit, describe the process and reproduce the auditor's comments on the seven agencies that completed the pilot in 2000.

### People In Aid pilot agencies externally audited in 2000

**British Red Cross**

**Concern Worldwide**

**Health Unlimited**

**International Health Exchange**

**MAF Europe**

**RedR**

**Tearfund**

**Oxfam** piloted the Code until December 1999. Oxfam was unable to undergo external audit in 2000 because of staff changes at head office and major restructuring. It plans to complete the pilot process in 2001.

**Action Health** conducted an internal review in 1999 but was unable to continue because of staff change and resource constraints. Action Health merged with Skillshare Africa in 2000.

**Riders For Health** and **Save the Children** were unable to conduct an internal review because of resource constraints and withdrew from the pilot in 1999.

**CARE UK** withdrew from the pilot project in 1997, owing to its limited role as recruiter for a US parent agency and the high levels of staff satisfaction within CARE International.





Health worker makes a home visit in Tercak village, Bosnia.

# People In Aid Code Principle 1

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## ***The people who work for us are integral to our effectiveness and success.***

Key to any process of change, performance and accountability is that the organisation as a whole takes it seriously. This meant integrating processes into strategic plans, management systems, etc. Responsibility for embedding the People In Aid Principles in pilot agencies could rarely lie with individuals, personnel specialists or personnel departments alone. As Principle 1 indicators made clear commitment to the Code should be evident throughout the organisation, from top to bottom.

Principle 1 indicators and People In Aid's first workshop, Starting Points, in 1997, outlined how each agency could begin to address change and embed the Code, beginning with commitment from the Chief Executive and trustees. The value they placed on staff would be evidenced in strategy and documentation, staff and resource allocation and awareness at head office and in the field. In only one pilot agency was such nominal commitment withheld.

The social accountability process also tested awareness of the Code and how deep commitment to it went - effectively how deeply it was embedded. Hence surveys by pilot agencies, discussions with staff and audited reports aimed to take into account not only the documentation of strategic plans or staff development budgets but their impact, as perceived by the staff they affected. Comments from field staff in two agencies reflected the difference in perspective this brought out:

“Interviewees feel performance standards are only given lip-service from the top of the organisation.”

“It's not policies, it's interest in employees.”

But a majority of field staff surveyed in most pilot agencies felt valued by their employing agency. How much they felt valued differed between groups of staff - e.g. between head office and field staff, expatriate and host country staff, generalists and technical specialists - as comments such as this one indicated.

“Staff [in Nairobi and Kigali] felt that the statement ‘the organisation does not care equally about national and international staff’ was generally true.”

For agencies piloting the Code, being prepared to elicit, recognise and act on such perceptions was fundamental.

Success factors identified by Tearfund included:

- Endorsement of the Code pilot project by the agency leadership
- Appointment of a Code “champion”, a programme manager with field experience from the Senior Management Team
- A project team drawn from programmes, personnel and regional teams
- Allocating responsibility for implementing specific areas of the Code to key people
- Giving those people the time they needed to do a proper job

### **People In Aid Code Principle 1**

The people who work for us are integral to our effectiveness and success

Our approach to the people in our organisation is a fundamental part of our work. We recognise that the effectiveness and success of our organisation depend on all the people who work for us. Human resource issues are integral to our strategic plans.

#### **KEY INDICATORS**

- The Chief Executive or Chair makes a written and public commitment to the People in Aid Code of Best Practice.
- The agency's corporate strategy or business plan explicitly values field staff for their contribution to corporate as well as project objectives.
- The agency allocates resources to enable its managers to meet staff support, training and development needs.
- The agency assigns responsibility and appropriate authority for implementing the Code to a named project manager.
- The agency informs field staff and their line managers that it is committed to the Code and supports this initiative.



## People In Aid Code Principle 2

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### ***Our human resource policies aim for best practice.***

The Code urged agencies to look beyond minimum legal provision. They should consult field staff; compare policy in the field with that at head office, with national law and with other aid sector agencies.

By attempting to apply the Code, pilot agencies were already applying policies that could be seen as “best practice.” But In 1995-2000, the UK alone enacted changes in employment law on disability discrimination, working time, trade union recognition, “whistle-blowing” and human rights: new voluntary codes advised against discrimination on grounds of age or religion. Best practice therefore was a moving target.

Most pilot agencies began to review or document policy for international staff following People In Aid’s baseline study “Measuring up to the People In Aid Code,” which had attempted to disaggregate personnel policy for host country and expatriate staff. Many agencies had, or developed, personnel information systems. These would enable them to assess their own performance over time.

However, if piloting the Code gave agencies the opportunity to compare their current people management policies with others’, it also established the dearth of information on policy impact, reflecting lack of systematic attention to personnel issues in the aid sector. One area in

which People In Aid itself had begun to develop quantitative benchmarks was field staff insurance, following questions from member agencies.<sup>ix</sup> As the pilot progressed, several pilot managers noted the need for more quantitative indicators. Field staff concurred. In Kenya and Rwanda, they “felt that the consultation process needed to concentrate more on outcomes and indicators to measure performance and progress against the Code.”

Health Unlimited’s pilot manager had looked at the experience of other international NGOs when reviewing policy on, for example, staff development, appraisal, equal opportunities and security. She collected information about the agency’s own policies in the twelve countries in which the agency worked, and from head office in the UK. One result was the introduction of an equal opportunities policy following the external audit in 2000

Nevertheless, she went further, noting measures of impact – how well policy worked - at Health Unlimited. Though stakeholder consultation was limited, Health Unlimited’s report collated data on staff turnover, number of injuries in the field, length of service, hours of work and whether staff used their leave entitlement. This would allow the agency to compare its performance over time, between regions or groups of staff and with other agencies. The report identified scope for institutional learning and the extension of good practice between Health Unlimited’s different country programmes.

## **People In Aid Code Principle 2**

### **Our human resource policies aim for best practice**

We recognise that our human resource policies should aim constantly for best practice. We do not aim to respond solely to minimum legal, professional or donor requirements.

### **KEY INDICATORS**

- The agency sets out in writing the policies that relate to field staff employment.
- Policies comply with best practice if field staff are, in practical terms, outside the scope of legal provision.
- Policies respond to best practice initiatives in the aid sector and to changes in working and legal environments.
- The agency familiarises field staff with policies that affect them at the start of assignments and when significant changes take place.

## People In Aid Code Principle 3

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### **Our human resource policies aim to be effective, efficient, fair and transparent.**

As mentioned above, many agencies reported tensions and perceived differences in performance in relation to different groups of staff, for example technical specialists and generalists, head office and field staff and expatriate and host country staff. Difference in terms and conditions, performance appraisal and training opportunities offered to expatriate staff and host country staff was a repeated theme. While recognising the different needs, most pilot agencies recognised too the need for greater transparency and equity in this area and are putting in place policies and action plans to address it.

As the humanitarian assistance sector grappled with how to review the performance of agencies in the field, pilot organisations frankly acknowledged how hard it was sometimes to appraise that of individuals. Appraisal was not a “ready to wear” garment. It needed to be tailored to operational and cultural circumstances. One agency noted: “As would be expected, more of those who did not have a performance review worked in emergency and rehabilitation programmes”. Agencies needed to be alive to differences of culture, gender and power in the operating environment. Could a young manager critically appraise an older worker without giving offence? Was it acceptable or realistic to expect a field manager to appraise a member of the opposite sex, another religion, and a different community? Would host country staff accept a wrong assessment unquestioningly rather than lose a job?

Nevertheless, most field staff comments supported appraisal provided, as the Code recommended, managers were trained to use it as a positive tool.

*“The introduction of performance review has helped clarify job responsibilities and has encouraged better feedback to be given.”*

*“I am convinced that [appraisal] could have helped us ... on the safety side.”*

*“If there are no standards, how can people improve themselves and utilise their strengths? “*

*“Assessments are a very basic tool of a program manager to touch base with the employee.”*

Health Unlimited British Red Cross and Concern Worldwide, started developing equal opportunities policies while piloting the Code. Concern Worldwide and Health Unlimited presented data on the employment of women at management level in the field. Health Unlimited looked at the employment of non-OECD nationals in programme and administrative roles. Tearfund was praised by staff for an

imaginative, family-friendly approach. MAF Europe tracked the increase in recruitment, appraisal and equal opportunities training for its managers between its 1997 and 2000 surveys. International Health Exchange commissioned research into host country employment issues across the sector.<sup>8</sup> As Concern Worldwide stated, “the objective of the People In Aid Code must be to help build higher levels of trust between the organisation and its staff and volunteers.”

Being a good global employer went far beyond hiring local staff, however, and pilot agencies did not operate in isolation. With its traditions of voluntarism and inheritance from colonial or missionary institutions, as well as the diverse stakeholder environments within which it operates, the aid sector is not immune from prejudice nor institutional racism. Some of the differences in salaries, benefits and opportunities between different groups of staff were acknowledged to reflect the different employment markets in which they were recruited. But the common issues, fears and prejudices to which field staff and head office managers referred, reflected those that agencies and their other stakeholders also needed to address:

- Members of the public who donate to charities want to see aid delivered by “people from home.”
- Fear of “corruption” if host country staff were promoted or recruited to senior positions.
- Perception that donors want [their] expatriates in charge of money
- Faith-based agencies have a policy to employ only people of specific religions
- Gendered roles within parts of the sector, e.g. in engineering, or among partner agencies in “north” or “south”
- The need to relocate current [expatriate] staff versus the need to employ host country nationals
- Skills gaps among host country staff

Equal opportunities policies were clearly only a beginning. In addition, some pilot agencies were regionalising management, “nationalising” senior posts, educating public and partners and devising recruitment, training and appraisal policies to address these issues. Organisations that worked within wider federations or partnerships had to look for solutions through advocacy, capacity building and communication to ensure that human resource practice in the field met their commitment to best practice.

### **People In Aid Code Principle 3**

Our human resource policies aim to be effective, efficient, fair and transparent

We recognise that our policies must enable us to achieve both effectiveness in our work and good quality of working life for our staff. Our human resource policies therefore aim to be effective, efficient, fair and transparent, and to promote equality of opportunity.

#### **KEY INDICATORS**

- New programme and field managers are recruited in part for their people management skills. New and existing managers receive training in recruitment, staff appraisal and equal opportunities.
- Field staff have clear work objectives and performance standards, know whom they report to and what management support the agency will give them.
- The agency monitors how well recruitment and people management meet:
  - corporate and programme aims
  - field staff expectations of fairness and transparency
  - equal opportunities targets.

## People In Aid Code Principle 4

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### **We consult our field staff when we develop human resource policy.**

For many pilot agencies the process of implementing and auditing the People In Aid Code was a catalyst for increased and wide-ranging consultation. For some it was their first experience of an organisation-wide consultation on human resource issues. As one agency reported, “The greater level of consultation which resulted from engaging in the pilot process would appear to be welcomed by staff.” Response from field staff, positive and negative, provided a basis on which agencies could establish priorities and plan future activities.

Many agencies commented on the importance of feedback and appropriate action following on from consultation. New Economics Foundation consultants in Kenya and Rwanda found most field staff interviewed felt their agencies tried hard. Consultation need not take place on all issues: field staff wanted it clearly defined where they could have a view and where they couldn't and - what happened afterwards. They acknowledged that consultation cost time and money, and nobody wanted that to be wasted.

*“It slows things down but that's participation!”*

Staff on short-term contracts, including humanitarian assistance staff, were particularly hard to involve in areas such as strategy review.

*“They won't bother if they are on a short-term contract. Why should they when [the agency] is not committed to them over the long-term and if they won't be around to see any of the change?”*

Host country too sometimes felt un-represented in consultation as well as by staff associations or unions. In one agency, the People In Aid survey and Code were among the few consultative documents to be translated into French. However, most were produced in English, which marginalized those not fluent. The results of this were compounded.

*“The lower you go down, staff increasingly want tangible outputs for the community rather than being interested in internal processes and outputs.”*

Without consultation from head office, field staff were likely to identify more closely with the local community than with the organisation that employed them - and see their interests as conflicting. MAF Europe tried with some success to increase participation by host country staff in

surveys between 1997 and in 2000 and elicited comments such as:

*“The need to have my personal opinions on some of these questions has not been available to me.” “I feel I matter.”*

The clear message emerging was that consultation is about ongoing communication too. If a consultation process were burdensome and interfered with work and if there was no recognisable feedback, it would fail. The diversity of field staff roles was not always easy to capture in questionnaires and some host country staff felt that questions were not appropriate to them. One pilot team reported “We struggled relating at a distance to national staff on these issues and local line managers had other priorities than to run focus groups.” In future, agencies such as MAF Europe decided, regular consultation processes, as well as questionnaires, should be used to collect data.

Existing staff meetings, exit interviews, debriefings, etc. offered opportunities for consultation and communication. They, like the audit process itself, were valuable in revealing any discrepancies between the assessments of managers and other staff on how well these needs were being met. Most pilot agencies were able to build on a variety of existing mechanisms: regular letters from head office; newsletters; country and regional meetings; field visits by trustees; course feedback; appraisal and debriefing, etc. British Red Cross held homecoming seminars. RedR held a workshop to bring together short-term staff and partner agencies around issues for personnel deployed in Kosovo.

Staff associations and unions also offered a means of regular communication and consultation. Concern Worldwide and Oxfam recognised UK and Ireland-based trade unions. Oxfam had a staff association for host country nationals though, unlike the unions open to expatriates, this did not represent their interests at head office. Two agencies established staff associations or consultative committees in the course of the pilot: these represented all field staff at Tearfund and ensured UK expatriate delegates were represented at the British Red Cross.

Given the limits of time, money and enthusiasm, resources invested in any consultation must be seen to be used wisely in setting up accessible and meaningful processes that result in action. A pilot team member observed ruefully, “If I were to carry out another [pilot] audit starting today, I would spend more time discovering what we know already!”

#### **People In Aid Code Principle 4**

##### **We consult our field staff when we develop human resource policy**

We recognise that we must implement, monitor and continuously develop our human resource policies in consultation with the people who work for us. We aim to include field personnel in this process, whether they are full-time, part-time, temporary, short-term or long-term members of our staff.

##### **KEY INDICATORS**

- The agency consults field staff when it develops or reviews human resource policies that affect them.
- Field managers and staff understand the scope of consultation and how to participate.
- Field managers and staff may be represented in consultations by recognised trade unions or staff associations.
- Results of policy reviews are recorded in writing and communicated to field managers, field staff and their representatives.

## People In Aid Code Principle 5

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### **Plans and budgets reflect our responsibilities towards our field staff.**

Principle 5 was an “enabling” principle, a “catch-all” that backed up the others: if organisational commitment to training, management and well-being was not reflected in plans and budgets for projects too, particularly short-term projects, they would have an adverse effect on performance and well-being in the field.

Many agencies reported difficulties in recruitment, resulting in delays or failure to fill field posts. Smaller agencies complained of acting as “training schools”, unable to retain experienced staff. Agencies related the Code to immediate challenges: “many of these issues should help with recruitment in the long term and particularly retention and development of all personnel.”

Staff shared the hopes and often shouldered more of the frustration:

*“Areas of the organisation have been left short-staffed for long periods of time without an understanding of the pressures that puts on existing resources”,*

said one, speaking for many. While, as Concern Worldwide had said, “ultimately the consequences of implementing the Code must impact positively on the beneficiaries of Concern’s programmes”, staff in many agencies saw working conditions contribute to stress, long hours, staff shortage and systemic failure. Health Unlimited tabulated working hours in the field among different groups of staff and at head office, noting why they sometimes exceeded maximum limits and when time off in lieu (TOIL) was allowed.

Humanitarian assistance staff work in some of the most difficult, insecure and isolated conditions in the world. In part, this is the nature of emergencies but the picture painted by one recruit, deployed to another agency by RedR, suggested that organisational factors still contributed to stress, overwork and fear, five years after the publication of People In Aid’s first inter-agency staff survey, “Room For Improvement”<sup>xi</sup>

*“The humanitarian sector has some of the worst working conditions, characterised by a lack of co-ordination between*

*field and head office during recruitment process, a lack of preparation and briefing and inaccurate contracts which create an insecure working environment. In the field there is often one person doing the work of three, no accident records, large Health & Safety implications.”*

MAF Europe management underlined the point, “We need to ensure that staff are being debriefed at the end of each assignment and that these debriefings are useful and relevant both to them and us...we could use exit interviews to monitor particular issues such as Health and Safety, training etc.”

As noted elsewhere, complex employment relationships meant that not every pilot agency felt it could control every aspect of employment. Indicators of Principle 5 referred to project briefing, working hours, health checks, debriefing, etc. One agency pointed out that donors, particularly to emergency projects, refused to sanction budget lines for training. Most expatriates in all agencies had received some pre-departure briefing and, to a lesser extent, post-assignment information, counselling and health assessment. Staff surveys and the audit process revealed room for improvement in the scope of briefing and the range of staff to whom it was offered. Respondents highlighted the needs of host country staff working away from home, to be included in, for example, health checks, security, provision for time off and debriefing.

Agencies such as RedR or International Health Exchange provided “generic” preparation, training or debriefing to expatriate field staff in emergency programmes. Only 65% of respondents to International Health Exchange’s member survey had received a health check from employer agencies before their previous assignment and 48% afterwards. 80% of respondents received an operational briefing before their last assignment. 72% received a debriefing. A mere 17% of respondents had received an offer of personal counselling after their last assignment. Valuable as generic briefing and debriefing were, they left open the question of how client agencies “outsourcing” such services would internalise and act on the institutional issues staff raised.

## **People In Aid Code Principle 5**

### Plans and budgets reflect our responsibilities towards our field staff

We recognise that the effectiveness and success of our field operations depend on the contribution of all the salaried, contract or volunteer staff involved in them. Operational plans and budgets aim to reflect fully our responsibilities for staff management, support, development, security and well-being.

### KEY INDICATORS

- All staff and their families moving country or region have a health check and specific health advice before their field assignment starts.
- Briefing before an assignment includes training in any areas essential for the safe, effective accomplishment of key tasks by field staff.
- Field staff and their families moving country or region receive information and advice about the location in which they will live and work.
- Work plans are based on an average maximum 48-hour working week. Time off and leave periods during assignments are mandatory.
- Staff who move country or region have paid leave after or between assignments.
- All staff have a debriefing or exit interview at the end of their assignment. Staff who move country or region receive a standard offer of a health check, personal counselling and career advice. Families are offered a health check and personal counselling.



## People In Aid Code Principle 6

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### **We provide appropriate training and support.**

Principle 6 looked not only at what training there was but how effective it was at meeting corporate and programme aims, expectations of fairness and transparency and equal opportunities targets. Audit reports found that stakeholder involvement in assessment elicited difference in perception between those with management responsibility and staff themselves in how well training need was assessed.

Training and development opportunities were part of the employment “package” and important in attracting and retaining staff. While smaller agencies sometimes felt they were being used as “training schools”, field staff in one focus group saw training as the agency’s way of “repaying” the benefit it received from training given elsewhere.

For agencies such as International Health Exchange and RedR, training was part of their core “business.” International Health Exchange respondents rated such training highly and recorded a largely positive reply (3.9 out of 5) to the statement “Do you feel that you are allowed adequate time and opportunities for learning and development?” RedR recorded it had offered over 2000 training places and noted high levels of trainee satisfaction on, for example, its electricity course. It had commissioned an external evaluation of its training.

The People In Aid Code was explicit in advocating that training be linked to external qualifications. Such qualifications were clearly valued by staff. They were seen as important by host country staff perhaps because of lack of opportunity without employer sponsorship and because training reflected commitment to them by organisations.

Staff development was an important tool if commitment to equal opportunities or “regionalisation” or localisation of management was real. Some agency staff, expatriates as well as host country staff, felt their agencies needed to be more proactive.

*“[The agency] has sent some national staff members overseas to study which is a good approach.”*

*“There needs to be stated bias to employ qualified nationals, rather than leaving it to the field.”*

*“It is becoming recognised that African staff have important language skills and are more willing to work in the regions. [The agency] should identify skills gaps, train national staff and promote them within the organisation.”*

Paper qualifications weren’t everything, however. Health Unlimited’s Well Woman media projects in Africa and Cambodia involved raising practical skills to produce programmes of broadcast quality for transmission by the BBC World Service. Staff said they wanted agencies to recognise their experience and competence as well, even if they did not have certificates.

*“[The agency] generally needs to raise the awareness that technical staff are managers as well and are as much of a resource for senior level management as institutional development specialists as generalists.”*

*“I resent people saying to me ‘if you do this you will improve your management skills’ and I am being forced to go on personnel management courses when I am very experienced in the area.”*

Several pilots were trying to foster a “learning culture”, drawing from experience and sharing insights between projects. Health Unlimited had two technical specialists at head office, part of whose brief was to facilitate learning across the organisation. In Cambodia, its staff needs assessment and development policy arose from a specific aim to develop local capability and “Cambodianisation” of the programme.

Tearfund stipulated that future disaster response budgets would include provision for host country staff training and pledged to review and improve training of all categories of staff by 2001. British Red Cross drafted a training policy and eventually planned to explore ways in which it could monitor staff views and training needs assessment with Geneva. Concern Worldwide was developing a framework on learning and development needs of managers.

## **People In Aid Code Principle 6**

### **We provide appropriate training and support**

We recognise that we must provide relevant training and support to help staff work effectively and professionally. We aim to give them appropriate personal and professional support and development before, during and after their field assignments.

### **KEY INDICATORS**

- Project plans and budgets are explicit about training provision. Field staff and managers understand agency and individual responsibility for meeting training needs.
- Line managers know how to assess the training and development needs of field staff before, during and at the end of assignments.
- The agency monitors the effectiveness of its training and development support in meeting
  - corporate and programme aims
  - field staff expectations of fairness and transparency
  - equal opportunities targets
- Where possible, the agency links training and development to external qualifications.

## People In Aid Code Principle 7

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### ***We take all reasonable steps to ensure staff security and well-being.***

The People In Aid project began in 1995 with questions about stress and safety in the aid sector, particularly for those working in emergencies. In the year 2000, some agencies still found it difficult to address these issues institutionally, suggesting that the sector as a whole still had some way to go. As one aid worker said:

*"[The organisation] does not have a 'safety culture' which starts at Board/Chief Executive level."*

Over one-third of International Health Exchange respondents, primarily health professionals working in non-pilot as well as pilot agencies, said they had received no security briefing before their last assignment: only 17% had been offered counselling afterwards. Occupational Health & Safety measures, including security (action to avoid or respond to the effects of violence and ordnance) are what allow aid agencies to work at all. The Code prompted a review of safety policy and procedure in many pilot agencies.

Indicators of Principle 7 focused on assessment of risk, briefing and training of staff and the need to act on and learn from incidents and accidents. They included training - and re-training - in areas from vehicle maintenance to emergency drill.

Overall, most staff were confident that their employer took issues of health, security and well-being seriously. However, field staff in many pilot agencies reported that they did not feel procedures, policies and information systems were adequate. Less confidence was expressed in security and evacuation procedures than in other health provision.

Why then did staff, while admitting that there were holes in security provision, generally feel safe? International Health Exchange echoed speakers at People In Aid's 1998 workshop on safety when it noted that even in disaster and conflict situations, more aid agency injuries and fatalities were, in fact, due to other risks, e.g. car accidents, than to violence or deadly disease. Emphasis on violence and emergency procedures in relatively stable situations might lead to a deflection of awareness from hazards that are more mundane. People In Aid's first health and safety guidelines focused on accident prevention and prevention of HIV/AIDS.

There was no room for complacency about any aspect of safety, however. Whatever policy said, a number of staff in different pilot agencies did not feel free to raise safety issues: to do so might have an adverse impact on job prospects. New Economics Foundation consultants reported on an expatriate staff member in one humanitarian assistance programme who needed professional debriefing and counselling after being forced to leave the country in which they were working. That this was not standard practice in the employing agency signalled a culture where debriefing was not seen as a learning opportunity and where counselling was only for those individuals regarded as weak. Against this should be set the example of MAF Europe who planned to appoint a full-time pastoral counsellor or British Red Cross who extended counselling to family members of field staff.

The complexity of employment relationships called for clarity, precision and regular auditing of safety arrangements, particularly where responsibility in the employment process, as with British Red Cross, Tearfund and "register agency" recruits, was shared. Tearfund's internal review in 1999 found, for example, that 80% of partner organisations, responsible for staff safety, were unaware of evacuation procedures. The agency acted immediately to improve risk assessment and emergency drill with staff, line managers and partner agencies. It established a security forum and had fulfilled all six 1999 recommendations by the time of the external audit one year later

RedR offered training on security and held a security management seminar in London. In some cases, generic training was all field staff got:

*"I had no real briefing or knowledge of the situation I was getting into (all contact with the agency was on the phone),"* said one RedR member in Macedonia. *"I felt I was dumped in a refugee camp with no communications within a deteriorating security environment."*

The audit process found that though some agencies maintained some kind of records of accidents and injuries, locating and using such information strategically was rare. Few staff - or pilot managers - felt records were used centrally to learn from and prevent future occurrences on an organisational basis. Concern Worldwide, Health Unlimited and Tearfund looked again at the issue. After the external audit, People In Aid held a workshop on how to set up a simple recording system, using action by MAF Europe and Tearfund as examples of good practice.

## **People In Aid Code Principle 7**

### We take all reasonable steps to ensure staff security and well-being

We recognise that the work of relief and development agencies often places great demands on staff in conditions of complexity and risk. We take all reasonable steps to ensure the security and well-being of staff and their families.

#### KEY INDICATORS

- Programme plans include written assessment of security and health risks specific to country or region.
- Before the assignment begins, field staff and families accompanying them receive oral and written briefing on country or regional security, emergency evacuation procedures and insurance arrangements.
- Briefing before an assignment includes training in the use and maintenance of any vehicle, equipment or procedure essential to personal, family and team safety and security. Briefings are updated in the field when new vehicles or equipment are purchased or procedures amended.
- The agency maintains records of work-related injuries, accidents and fatalities, and uses these records to help assess and reduce future risk to field staff.
- Security, health, insurance provision and emergency evacuation procedures are regularly reviewed. Briefings and information to staff are updated when procedures are amended.
- Field staff and families accompanying them know how to identify health risks in the country or region, how to protect against illness, injury and stress, and how to obtain support or medical treatment, including support following incidents that cause distress.

## From Principles to Practice

### The Audit

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External auditing is one of the key principles of social accountability.

In a sector more familiar with the concept of evaluation, it is important to emphasise the difference between an evaluation and an audit. In auditing, the role of the external party is to ensure that the accounting process and resulting report is a true and fair reflection of an organisation's performance. It is not, as with the role of an external evaluator, to pass judgement on the actual performance of the organisation, which in social auditing terms is the role of the stakeholders, nor to carry out the accounting process, which is the responsibility of the organisation.

Ethics etc. were contracted to carry out the external audit for People In Aid. Its director, Richard Evans, is an Executive Director of the Institute of Social and Ethical

AccountAbility, a professional body that is developing international standards in social accountability, and has extensive experience of working in and with NGOs.

The auditor visited each of the pilot agencies on receipt of their individual reports. At each agency, he interviewed the people responsible for implementation of the People In Aid Code. This was to check the scope and validity of the accounting process in each agency. The auditor reviewed relevant documents (policies, questionnaire data, etc.) and compared these with the results the agency reported. He then wrote an auditor's opinion on the extent to which the organisation's accounts reflected commitment to the People In Aid code.

The process undertaken in each agency and the auditor's comments are described in an edited, shortened report below. The auditor's opinion is reproduced verbatim.

# British Red Cross Society

The British Red Cross (BRCS) was a founder member of People In Aid. Unusually, it had two members on the Steering Group, which oversaw production of the People In Aid Code and was part of the working group, which examined how commitment to the Code should be monitored.

## Audit method

The auditor interviewed the head of human resources and the international personnel manager and looked at evidence to support claims made in the BRCS's March 2000 report.<sup>xii</sup> He also had conversations with the head of international aid and the research and policy adviser. In addition, he reviewed key documents, including the BRCS's 1999 report to People In Aid and the New Economics Foundation's report on a visit to the Red Cross office in Kenya in December 1999.<sup>xiii</sup>

## Scope and limitations of the British Red Cross's March 2000 Report

BRCS field staff or delegates work in 47 countries in programmes managed by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). BRCS piloted the Code among UK delegates in these agencies and among the smaller group in UK-managed development programmes. Its pilot team came from the human resource management and programme departments, led by the new head of human resources from 1997.

As the external auditor noted, selection and placement of BRCS recruits were a shared responsibility with IFRC and ICRC. So, while British delegates were the responsibility of the BRCS as far as salaries, insurance, health and security went, they were also managed by heads of delegation and programme managers appointed by the IFRC or ICRC. This meant the society had limited control over working conditions, training or management in the field.

Recruit	Select	Place	Brief	Manage	Debrief
British Red Cross	British Red Cross	IFRC/ ICRC Geneva	British Red Cross	IFRC / ICRC field office	IFRC / ICRC Geneva
	IFRC / ICRC Geneva		IFRC / ICRC Geneva	British Red Cross	British Red Cross

Division of responsibilities meant the link between BRCS and its delegates might be weak. It also prevented the society from offering structured training and career development to UK delegates.

However, the BRCS is a major contributor to both IFRC and ICRC in terms of funding and personnel. This gave it considerable influence over personnel policy and practice across the movement. It was also a member of the UK Disasters & Emergencies Committee, the Sphere and

Ombudsman projects on quality and accountability in humanitarian assistance and the Active Learning Network on Accountability and Performance (ALNAP). It saw People In Aid as the equivalent of Sphere and Ombudsman in relation to people management.

The BRCS report was compiled in the face of considerable resource constraints. These resulted from the higher than usual number of disaster and refugee crises during 1999. Demand for delegates in other regions remained above budgeted levels.

The appointment of new chief executives in London and at the IFRC in Geneva resulted in restructuring that drew attention away from some aspects of human resource policy development and work on the Code implementation. This was critical for BRCS since its ability to report on its commitment to the Code Principles depended on maintaining strong links with the Federation's Human Resource Contact Group, the means by which BRCS influenced policy. Consultation used a variety of informal methods though did not repeat the systematic survey of delegates included in the interim report (1999) process.

## Head office interviewees' comments on the Code and the accountability process

Participative evaluation and accountability to delegates were seen as valuable but social accounting an unnecessary complication.

The People In Aid Principles were too general for BRCS to benchmark its performance against others'. On the other hand, the People In Aid indicators were too prescriptive and not always relevant.

There was an overlap of indicators under different Principles, which was confusing.

The international structure, operational management, and human resource data collection systems of the International Red Cross Movement limit its scope for positive action and control in critical areas covered by the Code.



### Auditor's opinion

*"The report submitted to me consists of a review of follow-up action points identified in the first phase (interim report 1999) and a report on progress made against each of the Code Principles, again in the form of action taken or action planned. It did not include measurements against performance indicators.*

*As far as I was able to establish, the report gives an accurate and balanced account of progress so far in general terms, rather than specific performance benchmarks.*

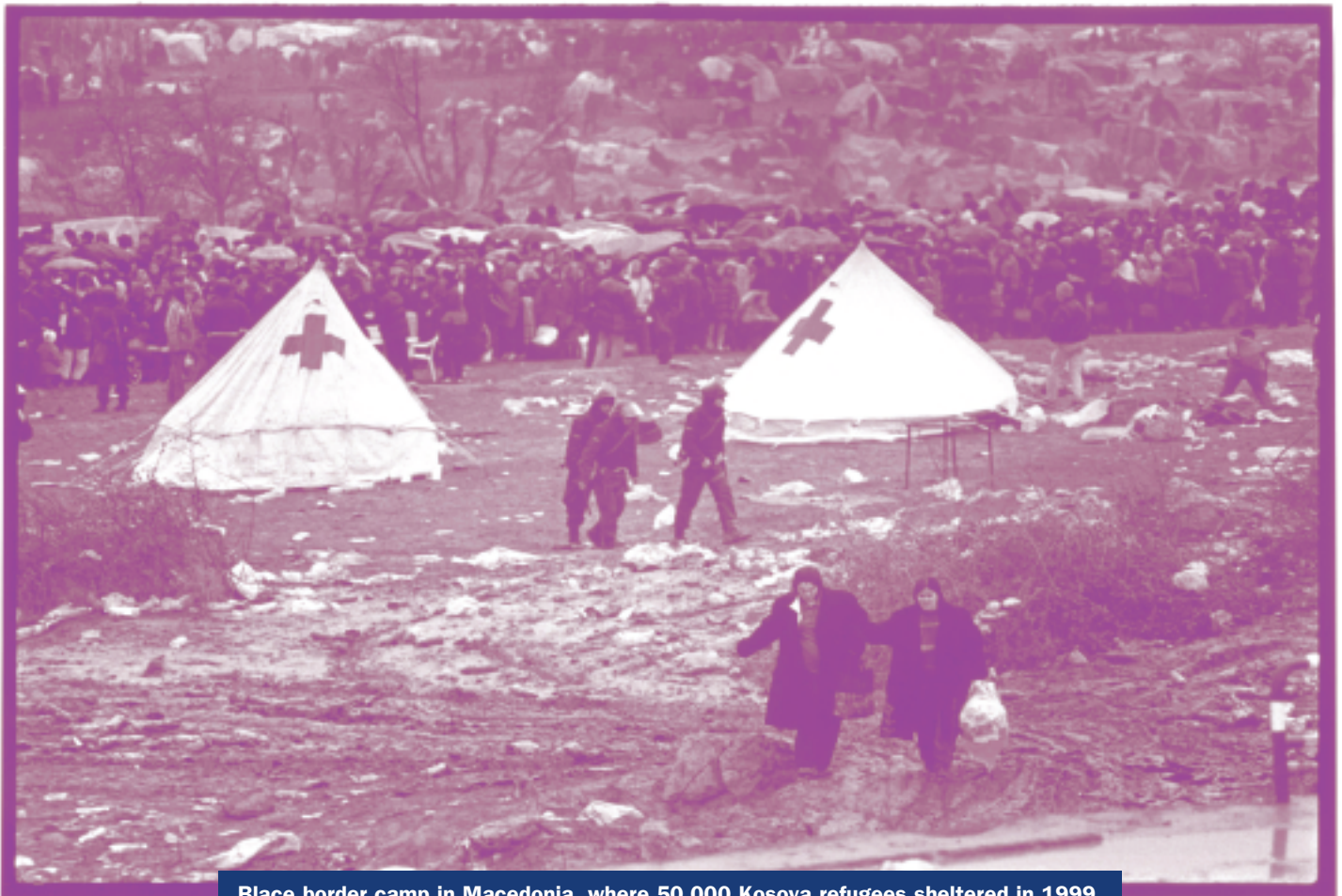
*While BRCS is committed to best practice in the treatment and management of its delegates, the views indicated that BRCS has not "embedded" the Code in the organisation as the best method of achieving this aim. BRCS regards the People In Aid pilot as a test of the Code and its Principles as much as it is a test of BRCS practice,*

*and would appear to have given more consideration to the former aspect than other pilot agencies.*

*The peculiar structure of Red Cross excludes the forming of an opinion about the extent to which delegates are "managed" in ways that are consistent with the Code, since delegates recruited by the BRCS are selected, deployed and managed by other directorates in the Red Cross movement.*

*In spite of these difficulties, BRCS is very thorough and well organised in the way it handles HR issues and its delegates probably enjoy some of the best support and working conditions available to development and relief workers anywhere. The organisation is strong operationally. The difficulties described to me have more to do with systematic reporting and the application of a Code in the process of development."*

*Richard Evans, Ethics etc.*



Blace border camp in Macedonia, where 50,000 Kosova refugees sheltered in 1999.

# Concern Worldwide

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Concern Worldwide is based in Dublin. It was established in 1969 and currently supports or manages emergency, rehabilitation and development programmes in 22 countries. Concern Worldwide employs approximately 90 people on permanent contracts in Ireland and the UK with a further 20 on temporary or fixed term contracts. It employs approximately 110 salaried expatriate staff and volunteers at any one time and approximately 2,500 host country staff in the countries where it works.

Concern Worldwide was one of the agencies whose staff were consulted during the research of "Room For Improvement" and, though not a member of the People In Aid Steering Group in 1996-97, contributed a case study to the People In Aid Code. During 1997, the agency had a new chief executive with a background in the trade union movement. This gave added impetus to its closer involvement in People In Aid from 1998. The Code was included in Concern Worldwide's 1998 strategic plan. After this, it joined the pilot, appointing its human resources manager as pilot manager.

## **Audit method**

The auditor interviewed the People In Aid pilot manager about the content of "Piloting the People In Aid Code Of Best Practice - Concern - February 2000"<sup>xiv</sup> to ascertain the completeness and balance of reporting and inspected the evidence supporting the statements and data it contained. He also reviewed with her the nature and robustness of the systems for recording and reporting data.

In addition, he reviewed the New Economics Foundation report of a visit to Concern Worldwide's field offices in Kenya and Rwanda.<sup>xv</sup>

Supporting documentation was well organised and was checked, as were the returned questionnaires for the expatriate staff survey.

## **Scope and limitations of Concern's March 2000 Report**

Concern carried out a survey among expatriate personnel only in July-August 1999. The pilot manager stated: "The reason for limiting the scope of the pilot was to be realistic about what could be achieved with a specific timeframe, as well as recognising that the Code was developed out of a review of human resource practices experienced by mainly international [expatriate] personnel. We also had to recognise the fact that it was going to be easier to access the data and information required from this group than the broader employee base. Locally recruited employees are more diverse and for the most part do not speak English. The need for translation not only in relation to language but also different cultures is going to be a significant challenge for us, which could not be realised during the timeframe of the People In Aid piloting process."

Concern corresponded with Tearfund and British Red Cross in developing its survey questionnaire. As well as the Code Principles and indicators, it also used the quantitative and qualitative audit indicators, developed by People In Aid with New Economics Foundation in 1999, to begin benchmarking performance.

Concern was considering extending the survey to host country staff and Irish-based staff over the 18 months following the external audit, but remained unsure about the challenge of finding reliable and cost-effective methods for surveying the views of host country staff, particularly non-programme staff, because of language and cultural differences.

Involvement in the People In Aid pilot encouraged Concern to address the issue of terms and conditions. Improved terms and conditions, including insurance, were introduced in January 2000.

The auditor identified areas where more systematic recording and documentation of data would be useful:

- Candidates' qualifications and experience in people management
- Training records
- Performance appraisals
- Records and analysis of early returns
- Accidents and security-related incidents
- Exit interviews

## **Head office interviewees' comments on the Code and the accountability process**

Concern welcomes on-going verification of its compliance with the People In Aid Code and of its management systems and documentation. It is planning a two-year audit cycle.

There is no detailed guidance in the Code on recruitment.

The Code should provide guidelines on interview content and process as well as best practice standards for handling enquiries and declines.

## **Auditor's opinion**

*"The report submitted to People In Aid by Concern gives an accurate, balanced and complete view of the organisation's implementation of the People In Aid Code in general and in relation to Concern's international [i.e. expatriate] staff."*

Richard Evans, Ethics etc.



# Health Unlimited

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Health Unlimited joined the pilot programme in 1997 following the launch of the People In Aid Code. The agency aims to build knowledge and skills that will enable communities to improve their health and gain lasting access to effective health services and information. Founded in 1984 by a group of health professionals working in Afghanistan, who saw the need for long term development work following emergency intervention in conflict areas, Health Unlimited now has long term projects in 12 countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. It has approximately 170 field staff, of whom 23 are expatriates and 147 local. There are approximately ten staff at head office in London.

## **Audit method**

The auditor interviewed Health Unlimited's personnel and administration manager, who led the pilot, and looked at evidence to support the claims made in the agency's report<sup>vi</sup> regarding its action in relation to the People In Aid Code Principles. He also had conversations with Health Unlimited's director and a former trustee and adviser. Explanations were sought where evidence was incomplete or reporting systems lacking, and he discussed Health Unlimited's plans to develop its People In Aid audit process.

Scope and limitations of Health Unlimited's March 2000 Report - not released

## **Head office interviewees' comments on the Code and the accountability process**

People In Aid should develop differentiated applications of the Code's Principles for expatriates, host country managers and workers, and UK staff.

## **Auditor's opinion**

*"I am satisfied, on the basis of my interviews, that the report submitted to People In Aid gives an accurate account of the limited existing data and of the views of the relatively small number of regional staff consulted in the last year.*

*The qualification that the scope of the audit, as stated by Health Unlimited, has been limited in its geographic coverage and the number and levels of staff involved, means that the results cannot be relied upon as representing the performance of the organisation as a whole. However, many of the necessary systems are in place and of a high quality and Health Unlimited are committed to developing coverage as part of the new strategic plan. The autonomous nature of the China programme, linked to government community health service provision and the independent Saude Sem Limites organisation in Brazil may require separate treatment in future audits and other arrangements for verification.*

*I found ample evidence of Health Unlimited's commitment to the People In Aid Code and commend the organisation for the audit work it has done in the face of severe resource constraints and trying circumstances."*

*Richard Evans, Ethics etc.*

# International Health Exchange

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International Health Exchange was set up in 1981 to help health professionals who wished to contribute to “health for all” by working in developing countries. International Health Exchange is not itself an operational agency and has no field staff. With the help of five staff at head office in London, it supports the work of other aid agencies, including People In Aid pilots, by helping to recruit, train and support health personnel working in relief and development programmes.

International Health Exchange was a founder member of People In Aid, a member of its Steering Group from the commissioning of “Room For Improvement” through production of the People In Aid Code. It was also a member of the working group on how to monitor its implementation. A new chief executive led the People In Aid pilot process from 1997.

## **Audit method**

The auditor interviewed the chief executive about the content of the report,<sup>xvii</sup> International Health Exchange’s application of the People In Aid Code to its work and the evidence it had collected and organised to support the claims made in the report.

## **Scope and limitations of International Health Exchange’s March 2000 Report**

International Health Exchange provides the following services to other agencies: advertising for field staff; maintaining and searching a register of health personnel; recruiting for agencies such as Oxfam and the Department For International Development; training new recruits and current staff; publishing the Health Exchange magazine and job supplements.

Its role also brought it into contact with health sector providers in the UK through advocacy: on development and relief issues in the National Health Service and health workers’ professional bodies; on the People In Aid Code and good practice in human resource management; on expansion of the pool of staff available to work overseas; on the benefits to individuals and employers in the health sector of employing ex-aid workers.

As an agency without field staff of its own, International Health Exchange saw its role as one of influencing the role and performance of health workers in development and relief through its work in advocacy and policy. It also used the People In Aid Code at its London office.

This raised problems, principally because advocacy and policy development rarely produce short-term results and because the Code was specifically written for field staff. The Code itself is interested in impact but International Health Exchange measured its advocacy in terms of activities. On the other hand, the auditor thought International Health Exchange was well placed to collect systematic data from health workers in different agencies and from agencies themselves in order to contribute to the work of People In Aid. International Health Exchange decided ultimately to undertake a wider social accounting process. This should reflect its performance more effectively and address current ambiguities.

During the People In Aid pilot, International Health Exchange restricted consultation to two stakeholder groups: staff and volunteers in the UK, and field staff who make use of International Health Exchange’s services.

A survey was carried out early in 2000 through a questionnaire circulated in the Health Exchange magazine. Response was low and the auditor did not think it safe to rely on the quantitative analysis of responses as an accurate guide to how all field staff contacts perceived International Health Exchange’s performance. However, the survey produced useful qualitative data and the results were reported and viewed alongside feedback from a variety of other consultation and evaluation processes.

## **Auditor’s opinion**

*“Given the particular application of the People In Aid Code to International Health Exchange and the limitations of its survey work, the International Health Exchange ‘People In Aid Pilot Implementation Project’ report gives an accurate and balanced view of the organisation’s recruitment and training activities in relation to the People In Aid Code and of its active commitment to the Code Principles in its advocacy and policy development work.*

*Given the size of the International Health Exchange staff [5] and the nature of its funding (45% earned income) the organisation is to be commended for the work it has done in this report and for moving towards a broader social accounting process.”*

*Richard Evans, Ethics etc.*

# Mission Aviation Fellowship (Europe)

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MAF Europe is a Christian organisation that provides aviation, information technology and logistics services in the field. It works in Chad, Kenya, Madagascar, Tanzania and Uganda, moving people, materials and information in support of emergency and development organisations, national churches and individuals in need. It is part of a network of national groups in ten European countries, each of which provides MAF Europe with both financial and human resources.

MAF Europe joined People In Aid in 1997. It has approximately 275 staff. It piloted the People In Aid Code among all field staff and their families and UK head office staff. It had a pilot team of UK and international personnel and flight safety specialists, headed by an international personnel officer.

Expatriate field staff are technically employed by the national organisations that recruited them. They are covered by a secondment agreement between the national group and MAF Europe

Despite these structural peculiarities, MAF Europe treats all expatriate staff and their families as if they were its own employees. This is strongly reflected in the management systems relating to staff, the commitment to the People In Aid Code and the extent and organisation of related documentation.

## **Audit method**

The auditor interviewed the pilot project manager and a human resources officer who had been part of the pilot team about MAF Europe's commitment to each of the People In Aid Code Principles and looked at staff survey results and supporting documentation for statements made in the March 2000 report.<sup>xviii</sup> A revised version of the report was made and submitted following the visit and was checked against the audit visit notes.

## **Scope and limitations of MAF Europe's March 2000 Report**

MAF Europe conducted staff questionnaires in 1999 and early 2000.

The People In Aid surveys covered expatriate and host country staff of MAF Europe including those at head office in England and in the field.

The first survey included all staff (275) and was based on the full range of People In Aid Principles and indicators. It sought qualitative and quantitative evaluations. Overall, response was low (35%) with only 25% from host country staff. This was partly attributed to language factors.

The second survey focused on issues of recruitment and retention. Three variants of the questionnaire were sent: to expatriates who had joined MAF Europe before the 1997 survey; expatriates who joined MAF Europe after the 1997 survey; and to host country staff. Response to the second survey was also 35% but with an improved response from host country staff (39%).

All survey results, including all verbatim comments from staff were presented to MAF Europe's board of directors.

The auditor noted that systematic monitoring of key performance indicators by field offices was inconsistent and not necessarily fed back to MAF Europe. He also felt that the report focused very effectively on staff perceptions, while performance measurements were relatively few. Issues raised by stakeholders and clearly documented as such in the report needed to be developed into a systematic action plan and resourced. This would enable performance data to be reported too and made available to managers.

Substantial management data and documentation was also collated on:

- Staff turnover
- Annual performance appraisal
- Training course content and attendance
- Recruitment
- Exit interviews
- Policy documents
- Staff handbooks

The auditor noted that MAF Europe had also conducted baseline surveys of all staff in 1996 and 1999 in a separate exercise to measure its corporate values, in line with its introduction of the Relationship Model.

## **Auditor's opinion**

*"MAF Europe's March 2000 People In Aid Audit Report provides a complete, accurate and balanced view of the results of the two staff surveys it has undertaken in relation to the People In Aid Code. This, together with data from the management information systems and background information gives a fair view of MAF Europe's performance in relation to the People In Aid Code.*

*In future, it would be useful to include results derived from the analysis of exit interviews, individual annual reviews [staff performance appraisals] and feedback on training but I do not believe that the absence of such data in this report would materially affect my opinion."*

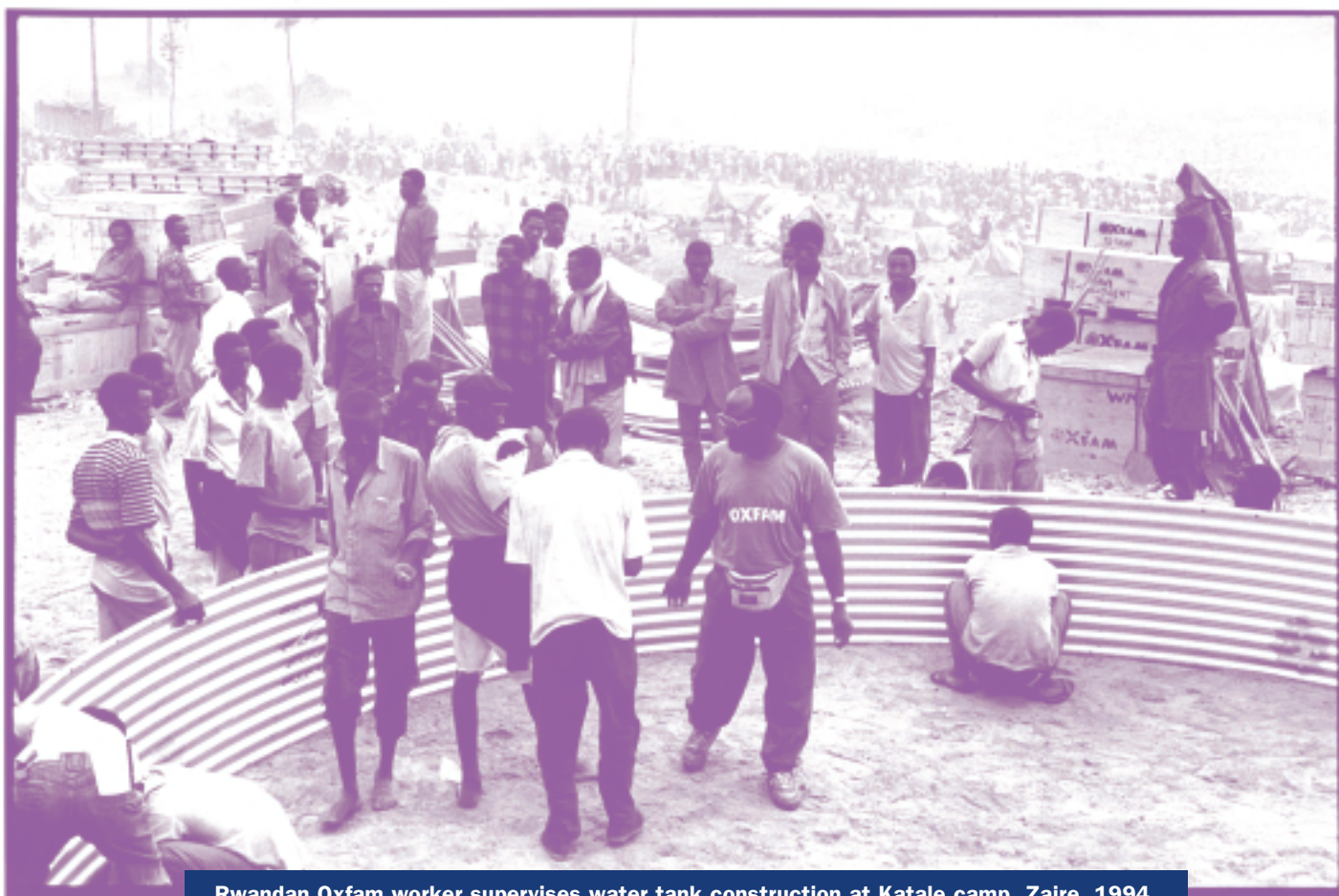
**Richard Evans, Ethics etc.**

Oxfam joined the People In Aid Steering Group in 1996 as part of the group that commissioned and oversaw production of the People In Aid Code. Oxfam was founded during WWII. It works today in seventy countries, managing and supporting emergency assistance and development programmes and has 20,000 staff in the UK and abroad. Like British Red Cross and Save the Children, it was a founding member of the UK Disasters & Emergencies Committee, the Sphere and Ombudsman projects on quality and accountability in humanitarian assistance and a member the Active Learning Network on Accountability and Performance (ALNAP).

An international personnel manager in Oxford with a counterpart officer in Nairobi were assigned responsibility for piloting the People In Aid Code in Oxfam's Eastern &

Central Africa region. Oxfam was the only agency to attempt to localise the pilot process in this way. The Kenya-based manager conducted an extensive staff survey<sup>xix</sup> in both French and English, making Oxfam again the only pilot agency to do so, among expatriate and host country field staff in the region in 1999. Staff of New Economics Foundation visited Oxfam field offices in Nairobi and Rwanda to speak to field staff about the pilot later that year and provided a report for head and field offices.<sup>xx</sup>

Unfortunately, because of staff changes at head office and in the field following major restructuring at the end of 1999, Oxfam was unable to undergo external audit and complete the pilot in 2000. At the time of writing, however, it has resumed work on adopting the Code and expects to complete the pilot process in 2001.



Rwandan Oxfam worker supervises water tank construction at Katale camp, Zaire, 1994.



RedR - Engineers for Disaster Relief - supports the work of other humanitarian assistance agencies by selecting, training and recruiting personnel to work in emergency programmes world-wide, including those run by other People In Aid pilot agencies. In addition, it seeks to initiate debate on humanitarian sectoral issues. Established in 1980, it is funded by grants, by corporate and individual donations, and income from training fees. RedR has approximately 20 paid staff in London and 1500 registered members of whom some 100 are in the field at any time. It is a founder member of People In Aid and provides information and advice to engineers, many on secondment from the private sector. A single RedR manager piloted the Code among its register members and head office staff in London. When she spent six months in the field on a RedR assignment, a member of the recruitment staff covered her role as pilot manager.

### **Audit method**

The auditor interviewed the manager chiefly responsible for piloting the People in Aid Code about the content of the report produced for RedR<sup>xxi</sup> to ascertain the completeness and balance of reporting and the evidence supporting the statements and data it contained. He also reviewed with her the nature and robustness of the systems for recording and reporting data. He had discussions with the administrative assistant, a recruitment and placement officer and the agency's director. He checked supporting documentation and found it well organised.

### **Scope and limitations of RedR's March 2000 Report**

The auditor's initial view was that the reports in 1999 and 2000 provided too limited information about the implications of the People In Aid Code in relation to the essence of RedR's work in "providing competent and effective personnel to humanitarian relief agencies and training services." In discussions therefore, he advised the agency to include additional data on the services it provides and the influence they have on the approximately 50 agencies that use them.

These services include: selection; competency development; advocacy; debriefing analysis and feedback to agencies of debriefing data; post-assignment counselling; participation in training Information and advice to field staff, e.g. via the RedR website; collection of security and sickness data; support to members' families during assignment.

### **Auditor's opinion**

*"The report submitted to People in Aid by RedR gives an accurate, balanced and complete view of the organisation's implementation of the People in Aid Code in relation to RedR register members and to its own London based staff.*

*RedR has not undertaken a survey of members' perceptions of how effectively the organisation implements the People in Aid Code. This would be a useful addition to its assessment of performance. The organisation has commissioned an independent consultant to review its operations, who has indicated that he will use participative appraisal. This review may provide an appropriate opportunity to establish a regular survey of members and UK based staff, which will enable RedR to measure changes and trends in "stakeholder" perceptions over time.*

*However, I do not believe the absence of a questionnaire to all members, and to staff, undermines the validity of the report I have reviewed. There is extensive and well documented evidence, based on the activities, involvement and feedback of a significant proportion of active members that they value RedR, and in particular its policies and practice relating to issues of people management. This view is also well supported by the value humanitarian aid agencies place on RedR's expertise and active development of people management and training initiatives and standards."*

**Richard Evans, Ethics etc.**

# Tearfund

Tearfund joined the Steering Group that oversaw production of the People In Aid Code in 1996. Tearfund's overseas programmes had grown out of a relief fund established within the Evangelical Alliance in 1960, International Year of the Refugee. Tearfund became an independent NGO in 1968. Its People In Aid pilot team was led by the director of international services and represented personnel, regional and disaster response teams. Tearfund works in 89 countries in emergency and development programmes, managed directly or with partner organisations from the Christian community.

## Scope and limitations of Tearfund's March 2000 Report

Expatriate and UK staff had been well informed about People In Aid from early 1997. The Code has been an integral part of Tearfund's human resource development strategy. In March 1999 Tearfund completed a comprehensive "Pilot Internal Audit Report", which included two staff surveys carried out in July 1998:

- An internal baseline survey for managers and leaders of the International Personnel, Regional and Disaster Response team. Its aim was to evaluate Tearfund's human resource policies against the seven People In Aid Principles.

Field staff category	Description	Recruitment	Management
International	Expatriate staff	Tearfund UK	Partner agency abroad
Regional advisor	Host or third country staff who provide support to Tearfund partner agencies	Tearfund abroad	UK: Regional team
On-line	Trainees from UK supported by a Tearfund grant.	Tearfund UK	Partner agency abroad
Short-term	Young people from UK on 6-8 weeks work experience.	Tearfund UK	UK: Youth Team
Disaster Response Expatriate	Register of trained expatriates.	Tearfund UK	UK: Disaster Response Team
Disaster Response National	Host country staff recruited on a project-by-project basis.	Team Leader abroad	Team Leader abroad

## Audit method

The auditor interviewed the director of international services, other pilot team members and the chief executive. He sought clarification of content, action plan and process described in "Moving Forward" (2000)<sup>xxii</sup> and the "Pilot Internal Audit Report" (1999). He identified supporting evidence and reviewed the report of the New Economics Foundation 1999 visit to Tearfund's Nairobi office.<sup>xxiii</sup>

He also reviewed the nature and robustness of the systems for recording and reporting data. Tearfund had much documentation relating to its audit and on-going monitoring of its performance against the People In Aid Code. It was very well organised and accessible. Quality, volume and detail of documentation and evidence made detailed "verification" impossible within the time available for the audit. He was satisfied that interviews and selective reading of evidence enabled him to form an opinion.

- An attitude survey among field staff using a questionnaire and focus groups.

The Pilot Internal Audit Report in 1999 formed the basis of an action plan. This was reviewed in a new document, "Moving Forward" in 2000. The Action Plan showed each Code Principle and made explicit:

- Recommendations from the 1999 internal audit report (Half the recommendations had been implemented at the time of the external audit.)
- Action to be taken (all actions are written into Tearfund's management plans)
- Responsibility for action
- Due date

Following its involvement in the People In Aid pilot, Tearfund began working with an adviser to develop a Travel Health and Safety Policy. Development of the policy would involve a risk assessment questionnaire to staff. It had also prepared a radical and open questionnaire for expatriate staff about salaries, pensions and benefits policy and practice. Both initiatives indicated the extent to which

the People In Aid Code had catalysed innovative thinking about personnel policy.

The New Economics Foundation report focused largely on issues raised about differences in the treatment of expatriate and locally recruited staff. The agency has a complicated structure and Tearfund recognises that there are issues it needs to address, some of which are picked up in the action plan and “Moving Forward” report. However, the focus of work has been consistently on expatriate personnel employed by Tearfund, their health, safety, support and effectiveness of their work with Tearfund’s independent national partners in developing countries.

**Head office interviewees’ comments on the Code and the accountability process**

*“The value of the People In Aid audit report has been recognized by Tearfund and significant changes are underway as a result of the issues raised by the audit.”*

*“We have benefited greatly from carrying out the audit and believe that staff who work for us have also benefited. We fully intend to undertake further reviews of Tearfund’s performance against the Code of Best Practice to ensure that we maintain the improvements brought about through this audit....”*

They believed the Code could be improved in the following areas:

The Code does not cover recruitment principles and best practice.

Some of the Code Principles overlap in terms of the issues they cover.

The Code should give greater weight to what is good for employers, as well as staff.

Health, safety and security remain highest priority and may need greater emphasis.

The Code could be more explicit about a change in culture which requires commitment, including substantial financial and personnel resource, and is only effective when embedded in the organisation’s strategy and management systems.

**Auditor’s opinion**

*“It is my opinion that both reports submitted by Tearfund to People In Aid, the “Pilot Internal Audit Report” and the implementation update “Moving Forward” give an accurate, balanced and complete view of the organisation’s implementation of the People In Aid Code in general and in relation to its international [expatriate] staff.”*

*Richard Evans, Ethics etc.*

## Conclusion: “We follow the People In Aid Code”

The People In Aid project was due to end on completion of the pilot in 2000. However, its work had attracted interest from agencies all over the world. By 1999, the People In Aid Steering Group felt the project had shown it could make a lasting contribution to the aid sector.

That year, the inter-agency People In Aid project became People In Aid Ltd, an independent organisation and a registered charity with its own board of trustees. This enabled it to offer membership to an increasing number of agencies. Some wished to begin adopting the Code, others to gain access to People In Aid’s workshops, publications and resource centre.

Some new members and other agencies had already started to adopt the Code. In welcoming them, the new board of trustees wanted to ensure that the externally audited work of pilot agencies received due recognition, likewise that of new members who would go through a similar process in the future. It was important that claims that agencies were following the Code remained credible and its authority intact.

### **“We follow the People In Aid Code”**

Pilot agencies that wish to state that they follow the People In Aid Code should have:

1. Produced an internal progress report in 1999.
2. Produced a report that was externally audited by the appointed auditor in 2000.
3. Disclosed the auditor’s opinion verbatim in People In Aid’s joint, publicly disclosed report in 2001.
4. Become a member of People In Aid.

By the end of 2000, agencies that had completed these steps were:

<b>British Red Cross</b>	<b>International Health Exchange</b>
<b>Concern Worldwide</b>	<b>RedR</b>
<b>Health Unlimited</b>	<b>Tearfund</b>
<b>MAF(Europe)</b>	

Other agencies would also be recognised as “following the People In Aid Code” if they followed a similar, agreed process after 2000.

For a pilot agency to retain recognition after March 2003, its commitment to the Code must continue to be externally audited at three-year intervals.

Mistakes had been made. Some agencies found they had tried to do too much too soon - and People In Aid that it had underestimated the problems of organisational change, particularly for the larger organisations.

Some parts of the Code undoubtedly worked better than others: pilot agencies complained, for example, that briefing, training, security and Health & Safety appeared confusingly more than once, in different sections of the Code. Different agencies found the same Principles at once too prescriptive or not prescriptive enough. A new Members’ Forum would review this in 2001.

However, where there was agreement on the need for more information to supplement the Code, People In Aid had turned this to advantage. Pilot agencies contributed to the development by People In Aid of surveys and guidelines or joined in workshops in which experience was shared. Interest in these activities went far beyond People In Aid, underlining the need it was meeting in the aid sector as whole.

Accountability in practice had been as new for most pilot agencies as the Code itself. The additional novelty was not always welcome in programme and personnel departments struggling to recruit for disaster response projects or in agencies busy restructuring or facing immediate funding crises. Yet, the process allowed agencies to set their own priorities: security in one agency, training in another, staff retention in a third. It also brought home, both to People In Aid and the pilot agencies, how using performance benchmarks, for example on accidents in the field, staff turnover or insurance, might help address different priorities and save time and money in the longer term.

Their investment, in both the new Code and the complementary accountability process, contributed positively to understanding and innovation among pilot agencies. Much remains to be done: yet many questions, for example on staff consultation or safety, are more readily answered by pilot agencies today than they were three years ago. At the time of writing, most remain committed to the Code and to again auditing their commitment by 2003.

The People In Aid project showed how different aid agencies can work together: to pool concerns and knowledge; to make measurable improvements in the management, support and safety of their staff; to make accountability an achievable ambition; and, ultimately, to improve the lives of programme beneficiaries. The new People In Aid organisation will continue that work.



## Appendix 1

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### *Developing the People In Aid Code 1996-97*

March 1996	“Jigsaw Project” starts
Mar-May 1996	First draft Statement of Principles is circulated to re-named People In Aid project Steering Group
June-July 1996	People In Aid consults 60 organisations on Statement of Principles at a workshop attended by NGOs/networks, including the European-based VOICE and ICVA networks and the USA’s InterAction network.
Sept-Oct 1996	Code indicator framework and text drafted
Dec-96-Jan-97	Text is edited, reflecting comments from Steering Group, other NGOs, ACAS, British Quality Foundation, ICRC, Manchester University, DFID “The Human Face of Aid” survey is published by People In Aid and International Health Exchange
Jan-Feb 1997	People In Aid Code is published with a preface by Minister for Overseas Development

## Appendix 2

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### *Beginning the pilot 1997-98*

Mar-April 1997	People In Aid Code is published in French by the Overseas Development Institute. People In Aid presents its work to managers at British Red Cross
April-May 1997	Guidelines: “Implementing Principle 1” circulated Guidelines: “Recruitment, selection and briefing’ circulated People In Aid presents its work to field staff of CARE
May-June 1997	“List of international human resource management consultants” circulated
June-July 1997	Baseline study of pilot agencies designed and tested
July-Sept 1997	Volunteer human resource consultant assists pilots with “diagnostic” visit Workshop: “Starting Points”
Sept-Oct 1997	Meeting with managers at Tearfund Strategy paper: “Monitoring pilot implementation of the People In Aid Code” agreed by Steering Group
Oct-Nov 1997	Guidelines: “How to carry out a HR Audit” circulated Meeting with managers at RedR Presentation to field staff of Concern Worldwide CARE withdraws from pilot. Meeting with managers at Riders For Health Meeting with managers at Save the Children

## Appendix 3

### Monitoring progress 1998-99

January-March 1998	Workshop: "Health, Safety and Field Personnel" Workshop: "Auditing the People In Aid Code" Meeting with managers at Oxfam Concern Worldwide joins pilot
March-May 1998	Report: "Auditing the People In Aid Code" Second staff member appointed People In Aid Code is published in Spanish by People In Aid
May-July 1998	Project audit calendar circulated Survey: "Under cover? Insurance for field staff"
July-Sept 1998	Baseline survey: "Measuring Up to the People In Aid Code" People In Aid Code is reprinted in new covers Workshop: "Audit Scope, Audit Review"
Sept 98-Jan 1999	Meeting with managers at Save the Children

## Appendix 4

### Auditing progress 1999-200

Jan-May 1999	Guidelines: "Prevent Accidents!" (with InterHealth) Two informal workshops help agencies prepare two-year report on progress Save the Children and Riders for Health withdraw from pilot. Nine remaining agencies prepare internal progress reports. One day informal workshop provides feedback
May-Sept 1999	Report: "Measure for Measure" synthesises internal reports Action Health suspends work on pilot People In Aid Code is translated into Italian by FOCSIV network People In Aid becomes a company limited by guarantee
Sept-Nov 1999	Audit advisors from New Economics Foundation visit all pilot agencies in England and Ireland
Nov 1999-Feb 2000	Audit advisors from New Economics Foundation visit field staff of British Red Cross, Concern Worldwide, Oxfam and Tearfund in Nairobi and Rwanda. External auditor from Ethics Etc begins visits to headquarters of seven remaining pilot agencies. Workshop: "Recruitment and child protection". Oxfam suspends work on pilot People In Aid becomes a registered charity
February-April 2000	Seven agencies complete reports on progress for external audit. Workshop: "Start Here" for new agencies adopting the Code. External auditor visits seven agencies and finalises audit by July 2000.

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*Promoting best practice  
in the management and  
support of aid personnel*

Meeting of residents and NGO members at a hostel near Cape Town.







