

(Taken from the INTRODUCTION)

Methodology

The material for this study was collected from three types of sources: a review of the recent literature on the countries and of UN documentation pertaining to the three co-ordination entities; interviews at headquarters and in the field with UN agency, donor, NGO, and government representatives; and field trips by the author to each of the countries. It should be

(End p 2)

noted that while much has been written on the three countries from historical, economical, and anthropological perspectives, the literature on the effectiveness of humanitarian aid, and specifically on coordination, is very limited, particularly if one excludes internal UN and agency documents, which tend to be more descriptive than analytical.

Documentation is particularly weak in the case of Afghanistan. Journalistic accounts of travels with the mujahidin and analyses of the implications of the Soviet invasion and withdrawal abound, and scholarly publications also have concentrated on military and political issues. By and large, however, both have ignored the role of humanitarian assistance, despite the fact that this assistance was provided by western donors, first to NGOs and later through the UN, totalling several hundred million U.S. dollars a year for over a decade.' This gap is perhaps a reflection of the extremely politicized context in which humanitarian assistance was provided.' A special effort therefore was made to document the UN's coordination role in Afghanistan. This, and the author's familiarity with UN coordination in that country, where he worked in a humanitarian capacity, explains why this case study is more detailed than the other two.

The available literature on Mozambique is more balanced, perhaps because, unlike Kabul, access to Maputo always remained possible to Western researchers and journalists during the war years. The economic predicament of the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO) regime, which was forced to abandon its socialist ideals to secure the support of the West, the impact of donor-driven aid strategies, and the role of NGOs have been well-documented. Whether commissioned by donors or undertaken by independent researchers, studies on the peace process, the reintegration of demobilized soldiers, and the effectiveness of humanitarian assistance also have started to appear.

The tragedy of Rwanda has resulted in a veritable cottage industry of books and studies on genocide, its causes, and implications, but also in down-to-earth attempts to document

and evaluate the effectiveness of the military and humanitarian interventions of the international community. The most ambitious of these is a multidonor evaluation study of emergency

(End p 3)

assistance to Rwanda that is to be published in 1996.' The Humanitarianism and War

Project also has a review forthcoming.⁴ Comparing notes with the researchers involved in this and other studies was particularly helpful.

While the review of the literature provided important background information, the substance of this study stems from interviews and field trips to those countries. The author was fortunate to participate in a mission tasked to assess the effectiveness of UN coordination mechanisms in Rwanda and fielded by the Department of Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations in September 1994. The mission travelled to Kigali, where it met with key UN humanitarian and political staff, government officials, UN system and donor representatives, ICRC, and several NGOs. It travelled to Beira and visited demining activities and projects for the reintegration of returnees in the southern provinces of the country. This mission resulted in an internal report for DHA.

Thanks to support from the Humanitarianism and War Project, the author was able to travel to Pakistan and Afghanistan in April-May 1995. In addition to conducting interviews with representatives of UN organizations, the European Union, donors, and NGOs in Islamabad and Peshawar, he visited Jalalabad, Kandahar, Kabul, and Herat, where he met with local authorities, UN organizations, and a cross-section of NGOs that were implementing UN- or EU-funded projects.

Unless otherwise indicated, the information in this monograph is current as of the date when it was collected, although an effort has been made to monitor developments since the visits. It should be clear, however, that the purpose of this study was to draw lessons of wider relevance to other coordination situations, rather than to provide a precise or up-to-date chronology of events in the three case studies.

(End p 4)

(See original text for endnotes)