



DECEMBER 2003

INFO BRIEFS

- ▶ **LAOS:** The Silk Promotion and Integrated Community Empowerment (SPICE) project has introduced an improved type of weaving loom introduced to target communities. Local carpenters have been hired to construct more. The weaving instructor has begun mobilizing the local village women and will begin training soon.
- ▶ **NICARAGUA:** ADRA and NGO's in the country recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding to improve coordination and response to natural disasters. In cooperation, the organizations formed a network to share experiences, lessons learned, and provide inter-institutional training to improve disaster response capacity.
- ▶ **INDIA:** A \$250,000, one-month project is providing relief assistance to 4000 families (approximately 18,000 people) affected by summer monsoons and subsequent flooding of the Brahmaputra River in Assam, Northeastern India. ADRA is providing treated mosquito nets, tarpaulins, water containers, cooking pots, personal eating utensils and water purification applications to the most vulnerable population.

PROGRAM BEST PRACTICES

New Security Realities for 2004

BY RUDI MAIER—*Professor Andrews University...and currently assisting ADRA in developing the ADRA APLI Security Curriculum*

In recent months NGO security is facing new challenges and new significance. Security approaches that have been workable have lost their value. This leaves NGO staff in a setting where what was “best practice” might now be far less than acceptable. As humanitarian workers, at this point there are often more questions than answers. In fact we might even be struggling with the questions to be asking. Here are some core issues and concerns to guide NGOs in improving their security situation in the face of recent shifts in security reality.

- ▶ How do NGOs avoid being too closely identified with military or unpopular political interventions? What is the “right” distance? How do NGOs balance the needs for a secure environment without being seen as cover for political issues?
- ▶ What are the conditions for NGOs to work in high conflict areas? When do we say “NO”? When and how do NGOs engage or disengage? What is the balance to meeting the Mission of saving lives and risking lives of NGO staff?
- ▶ How do NGOs operate effectively and safely with visibility? Is visibility desirable or needed? What are reasonable results in terms of what can be effectively and fairly done in highly

Photo Library/ADRA International



political or militarized contexts?

Why are NGO staff facing more, intense and sustained hostility? Are NGOs naive to believe that our logos, flags and reputations are enough to “protect” us? Have we failed to communicate our mission/purpose? How do we negotiate with groups we have often hardly met?

These are only some of the questions NGOs must grapple with when we work in violent and unpredictable settings. We have to collectively brainstorm for new strategies and solutions. Business as usual is not sufficient.

It has been the norm that a key strategy to NGO security is local understanding and backing. NGOs must advocate and insist on the space to carry on humanitarian action without being “part of the framework.” NGO security cannot afford to be entangled by a recent world leader stating, “this war (Iraq) has 3 dimensions: the military, the political and the humanitarian one.”

MY TURN

Information Is Power

BY KENNETH FLEMMER—*Bureau Chief for Program Management*

“Information is Power,” this is a phrase I am sure you have heard. If you have thought about this you will soon realize this power can take on two forms. This “power” can come from hoarding information. You

collect information and knowledge and you gain security by being the only person who knows or can do a key task. You become the fountain every one must come to in hopes of getting a few drops. This power can also come from freely dispensing information. People will come to you knowing you have key information and knowledge and are willing to share and inform. I believe the second approach has far better results as it will empower those around us to

do more with less supervision, decisions will be more informed, and we, as leaders, will be viewed as a source, not a spigot.

This is the third issue of First Monday. You informed ADRA International that the Network needed a publication, which shared lessons learned, presented best practices, and provided information on cutting edge leadership. The content is what you, the leaders in ADRA, informed us was desired and needed for you and your staff. ADRA circulation is largely electronic and sent to one address in the ADRA country office. I trust you are taking the minute to forward this to your ADRA staff, board members, colleagues and contacts. First Monday needs you to be a source, not a spigot. First Monday also needs your input. This is “our” collective journal. First Monday is “our” journal and it needs your support in distribution. First Monday also seeks to share your experiences and learning and we welcome those submissions.



Photo: Todd Reese/ADRA International

TRENDS AND ISSUES AFFECTING ADRA GLOBALLY

Donor Trends

Summarized from Development in Practice

- ▶ Increasingly donors (DIFID, EU, USAID, CIDA, AUSAID etc.) shape what NGOs do and how they do it.
- ▶ Increasingly there is less funding to support NGO developed agendas.
- ▶ Some funding is shifting to being available in implementing countries.
- ▶ Increasingly funding is available for large contracts to implement donor

strategies; this often eliminates smaller and medium sized NGOs.

- ▶ Increasingly there is a focus away from NGOs as a conduit for resources back to government.
- ▶ Increasingly the focus is moving from basic service delivery to civil society development.
- ▶ Increasingly donors want to see partnerships/consortiums with fellow NGOs, and the corporate/foundation world.
- ▶ Donor minimum requirements/

demands are shifting upward, requiring increased staff and leadership skills as well as resources, often unrecoverable from the donor.

- ▶ Decreasing donor support in conjunction with increased donor demands, pressures NGOs to be less critical of activities implemented, commit to doing more with less and become dependent on donor good will and transparency.

Summarized from the research journal, Development in Practice, Volume 13 #5 November 2003 (www.developmentinpractice.org)

HUMAN INTEREST STORY

A Job for Chanthoum

By Esther Irvine—Communications Officer, ADRA Laos

It was a crisp cool morning with a very thin layer of mist covering the mountains as we traveled to Sop Sim village. Sop Sim is in a northern province of Laos, bordering China and Myanmar. We met four year old Boundee in one of the many bamboo huts that dot the steep mountainside.

“When my little boy was sick with malaria, we got help from the ADRA health volunteer,” says Boundee’s father. “It was much more affordable for my family to buy the medicine here in the village.” In Sop Sim village, there are no medical facilities or trained health care workers. Visiting the provincial hospital is expensive for hill farmers who have very little cash income.

Chanthoum is one of the young mothers in the village, and works as a village health volunteer for ADRA. She received basic health training to run a revolving drug fund. Keeping

the medicine cabinet in her house, Chanthoum treats ten to twenty patients a month. She follows up on the patients’ progress by visiting them a few days after selling them medicine, and refers them to the provincial hospital if there are still problems.

When Boundee had malaria, his father brought him to Chanthoum to buy chloroquin for treatment. “Since ADRA’s project came and created the revolving drug fund, the villagers don’t need to go to the district hospital for every illness,” says Chanthoum.

ADRA Laos is working to improve the health of people in Sop Sim village with funding from ADRA Canada. The project provides health education, con-

ducts visits with a mobile clinic, establishes a revolving drug fund, and trains village health volunteers like Chanthoum.

Thanks to ADRA, little Boundee and many other people can receive basic medical care right in Sop Sim village.

Photo: Esther Irvine, Communications Officer/ADRA Laos



Boundee, of Sop Sim village in Laos, survived malaria thanks to ADRA’s work there.



Boundee and his Sisters

Photo: Esther Irvine, Communications Officer/ADRA Laos

THINK ABOUT IT

▶ “In one way or another, governance is always an act of resistance by which a community asserts its ability to orient its own destiny and...resist an evolution that isn’t chosen.”

—Charles Leopold Mayer Foundation from “Principles of Governance in the 21st Century”

▶ Tobacco is a known or probable cause of some 25 different diseases. For some, like lung cancer, bronchitis and emphysema, it is the major cause.

—World Health Organization Fact Sheet, 2003

▶ Each day in the developing world, 30,100 children die from mostly preventable and treatable causes such as diarrhea, acute respiratory infections or malaria. Malnutrition is associated with over half of those deaths.

—UNICEF

▶ Each year 130 million children are born, 91 million of them in developing countries. Almost 30 million children have no access to immunization. —WHO, 2001

▶ 40,000 children under the age of five die each day from malnutrition and vaccine preventable disease.

—Rehydration Project, 2003

▶ An estimated 100 million children a year are affected by vitamin-A deficiency. —WFP

▶ More than 100 million children in the developing world are without access to basic education. 60 million of them are girls. —UNICEF



LEADERSHIP TIPS

Ethics in Management Adapted from Quality Progress

BY VINCENT PEALE

Most unethical or unprincipled behavior found in companies happens for one of five reasons. Individual managers need to be ever vigilant to make sure they aren't committing one or more of these five reasons.

1. Favoring the company's interest over the interests of its stakeholders: customer, employees, the community and the public. Examples: underpaying employees because the job market is tough and "they have nowhere else to go". Community members are poorly educated and poor, so what do they know.

2. Rewarding behavior that violates ethical standards. Rewarding managers who are "under budget," even though it meant they cut corners where they shouldn't have and pushed employees too hard.

3. Creating a corporate environment that encourages separate standards of behavior for work and of work. Example: Punishing people for being honest about mistakes – thereby encouraging secrecy and deceit; and rewarding individuals who grandstand while ignoring solid, but quiet, team players.

4. Allowing individuals to abuse power to further their own interests. Examples: managers who take

excessive benefits for themselves "off the top," before other stakeholders get their share; executives who promote friends over more-qualified employees in order to surround themselves with friendly faces.

5. Creating managerial values that undermine integrity. Examples: the "Advertising Mentality" that believes anything is right if the public can be convinced it is right; being more concerned with appearing ethical than being ethical; exploiting workers and communities and cutting corner on quality to benefit the image and reputation with donors and government officials.

Adapted from Quality Progress (American Society for Quality Control)

Whenever you're faced with a tough decision, ask yourself these three questions:

1. Is it legal? Will you be violating either company policy or the law?

2. Is it fair and balanced? Are all people involved in the decision being treated fairly – in both the short and long term? Will certain individuals get hurt?

3. How will I feel when it's done? How will the decision make you feel about yourself? Will you be proud of what you did? If it were published in the newspaper, would you feel good about your friends and family reading it?

Adapted from The Power of Ethical Management, by Kenneth Blanchard and Norman Vincent Peale

RESOURCES

Transparency International
www.transparency.org

FEWER (Forum for Early Warning and Early Response)
www.fewer.org

Community Development – CD-ROM Library
www.tilz.info or roots@tearfund.org

FirstMONDAY

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ON THE MOVE

Robyn Mordeno: Newly appointed Finance Director for the Asia Regional Office