

**NGO IASC Monthly Meeting  
2 March 2005  
Notes**



**1: Darfur, Sudan and Chad**  
(by Manisha Thomas, ICVA and Kemlin Furley, UNHCR)

Manisha Thomas briefed on her recent visit to Chad, West Darfur and Khartoum, where she travelled with representatives from UNHCR and talked to a number of NGO's working in the region.

The general concern of the NGO's working in the region is the lack of a consolidated approach to protection and security as well as a lack of involvement in discussions of the integrated mission.

In Chad no working group on security and protection exists even though UNHCR in a letter from NGOs has been requested to establish such a forum. Furthermore there is a general concern among NGOs that the UN is not sharing all relevant security information. Ms Thomas underlined that the local NGOs needs more support in their work.

A steering committee on security and protection has been set up in West Darfur, working as the regional extension of the Protection Working Group in Khartoum. Ms Thomas pointed out that some disconnect in communication seems to exist between Khartoum and the field, and that there seems to be no concerted effort to deal with security. Among NGOs there need to be some reflection on activities and actual capacity to deal with protection, since many are inexperienced in this area.

NGO's in Sudan were complaining of not being involved in the process of setting up the integrated mission. The effect on the humanitarian situation from the further integration of the mission is unclear, and in general it is felt that the UN lacks strategic thinking. Furthermore the NGO's feel that they do not have a clear picture of what the Humanitarian Coordinator is doing.

The relation between human rights and protection was mentioned. It is unclear who will monitor the human rights situation.

Kemlin Furley concentrated her briefing on West Darfur, where she had just been on mission.

UNHCR has been present in the West Darfur for 7 months and conducted over a 100 missions in the area, which have led to a rather detailed mapping of, where the IDPs and refugees are situated.

A large pull is happening towards camps and there is at present no basis for at large scale return. Even so, Ms. Kemlin pointed out that focus should not just be on camps. Efforts should be made towards the pockets of stability that exists in West Darfur, in terms of supplying them with water and sanitation, schools etc. Furthermore Ms. Furley recommended a real time evaluation of Darfur.

The Government of Sudan (GoS) has put forward a Rehabilitation Plan for Darfur, which designates 76 villages for return. UNHCR wants to cooperate and assist in the

implementation of the rehabilitation plan, but is concerned that it will be used by the GoS to alter or adjust the previous population pattern. UNHCR policy is that people should not be forced to go to one of these 76 villages and believes that the return/rehabilitation should be based on the principles of: i) Voluntary movement; ii) That people should be able to go anywhere they want (also apart from the 76 villages); iii) Enhanced security; and iv) Restoration of rights to land. In any case, UNHCR will move with the people.

In the camps, NGOs will have to take over some of the responsibility of protection. UNHCR will back them up in these efforts and protection training for aid workers will be conducted. UNHCR is working with WFP on protection and is coordinating with the African Union, whose soldiers have increased patrolling. UNHCR are planning to increase the presence in Darfur with 7 field units.

Where inter agency coordination on the ground seems to be working pretty well, some disconnects exist between Khartoum and the field, as well as between Geneva and Khartoum. Ms Furley pointed out, that UNHCR has not been communicating adequately and generally called for a more collaborative approach.

In the discussion following the briefings the focus was on the issue of protection – the gaps and requirements. Agencies confirmed that protection and security is lacking in Darfur. Regarding return and resettlement, there was a general feeling that the basis for such processes does not yet exist. Furthermore the political/military implications of the crisis were mentioned – that it is not only a crisis that can be dealt with by the humanitarian community. Finally the lack of local staff was pointed out as a problem.

## **2: The Future of Monthly NGO Meetings**

After ICVA had sent a message to NGOs at the end of last year asking for their opinions on the monthly NGO-IASC meetings, this matter was discussed in the meeting to decide on what to do with these meetings in the future (i.e. should they continue; what should the format be; how should they be organized and where (e.g. in other European capitals); how to better link the meetings to IASC processes, etc.).

In any case, some decisions as to the future of these meetings must be taken, as the situation is not working satisfactorily now, given the low turnout of NGOs to these NGO-IASC meetings.

## **3: AOB**

No comments or interventions.

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List of Participants**



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