

Voluntary Organisations In Cooperation in Emergencies



# **ACTIVITY REPORT** 1998 - 2000



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# VOICE AT A GLANCE

"Voluntary Organisations In Cooperation in Emergencies" (VOICE) is a network of 81 nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) throughout Europe that are active in the field of humanitarian aid, including emergency aid, rehabilitation, disaster preparedness and conflict prevention. It was created in 1992, with a Secretariat established in 1993.

VOICE's essential overriding mission is to foster links among Humanitarian Aid NGOs and to make an effective contribution to the framing and monitoring of humanitarian policy, primarily at the European Union. VOICE's original aims were to facilitate access for members to EU humanitarian funding, particularly from ECHO, and to defend members' interest in EU discussions on humanitarian issues. More recently these aims have been broadened to include more general questions concerning the volume, quality and effectiveness of humanitarian aid. To achieve this goal:

- VOICE aims to ensure that humanitarian aid receives from the international community and from the European Union the appropriate attention and responses in the light of the existing needs and the various, complex crisis situations;
- VOICE aims to improve the quality and effectiveness of the humanitarian strategies set up by the international community and especially the European Union;
- VOICE aims to facilitate access for the member NGOs to the European Union, especially the Commission and ECHO, and to defend the interests of the member NGOs and their access to European Union humanitarian funding.

To accomplish these aims, VOICE acts as a mouthpiece for the values and specific features of humanitarian NGOs and provides four types of services to its members: developing information, devising instruments for consultation, giving political expression to the shared concerns of NGOs and developing the life of its network. In this sense, VOICE is a linking unit for joint activities involving a number of NGOs and/or networks.



#### **VOICE - VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS IN COOPERATION IN EMERGENCIES**

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### VOICE STRUCTURE IN 1998-99-2000

#### The VOICE Forum 1998/1999/2000

The Forum is the General Assembly of the full members of VOICE attended also by a number of observers and distinguished visitors.

#### FORUM DATES

- 7/8 December 1998
- 8/9 December 1999
- 6/7 March 2001

In 1998 the Forum was devoted to an in-depth consideration of the future of European humanitarian aid. This dialogue was carried on in 1999 raising the reform of European humanitarian aid. In 2001 the aim is discuss the new FPA and the future of VOICE.

#### The President

The VOICE grouping is presided over by the Chairperson who may come from a member organisation or from outside VOICE. The president is elected by the Forum for three years. The current president, **David J. Church**, was elected by the December 1997 VOICE Forum.

#### The Sub-Committee on Humanitarian Aid (SCHA)

In a concern for coherence and effectiveness, VOICE has chosen to place its decision-making and executive structures within the structures of the Association of Development NGOs to the European Union (NGDO-EU Liaison Committee), whose overall ultimate authority on matters of cooperation and international solidarity it recognises. The SCHA is made up of a maximum of eight persons elected by the Forum, plus two members appointed by the Liaison Committee.

The current SCHA is composed of:

#### David Church (President)

- Jean-Luc Bodin (Action Contre la Faim)
- Will De Wolf (Cordaid)
- Alexandre Kamarotos (Médecins du Monde)
- Françoise Ledru (Handicap International)
- James Mackie (CLONG)
- Paddy Maguinness (CLONG)
- Paul Meijs (Dutch Relief and Rehabilitation Agency)
- Cécile Muller (EuronAid observer)
- Ann Mary Olsen (Danish Refugee Council)
- Anne Simon (Care International)
- Nino Sergi (InterSOS)

SCHA members whose mandate expired during 1998-99:

- Mark Bowden (Save the Children Fund UK)
- Birte Hald (DanChurchAid)
- Luc Heymans (Caritas Secours International)
- Maire Matthews (Concern Worldwide)
- Gerhard Schmalbruch (Deutsche Welthungerhilfe)
- Herman Van Haken (Dutch Interchurch Aid)
- Henk Zomer (CLONG)
- Guido Barbera (CLONG)



#### SCHA AND BUREAU MEETINGS 1998-2000

- •SCHA 1998: 11/02; 10/06; 16/09; 07/12
- •SCHA 1999: 04/03; 09/06; 09/11
- •SCHA 2000: 16/02; 14/04; 19,20/09; 17/10
- •Bureau 1998: 30/06; 15/09; 03/11
- •Bureau 1999: 04/03; 18/05; 06/07
- •Bureau 2000: 31/01; 16/05; 22/11; 05/12

#### The Secretariat

The Secretariat is responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the strategic plan and the work programme. It carries out administrative tasks and makes the contacts necessary for the smooth running of the SCHA and the ad hoc groups, ensures the financial management of the network and prepares the general policy documents. It is managed by **Kathrin Schick**, VOICE Director.

THE SECRETARIAT'S STAFF					
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#### InternHuman Resources

In its activities VOICE relies on a number of human resources whose relevant contribution represents a major asset for the Secretariat and a space for professional development for many young talents.

Ex Collaborators:
Stéphanie Bouaziz, Nuria Rodriguez and Laetitia Bize, Information Assistants;
Farida Chapman, Project Officer;
Pierre Gallien, Director of HSPN project;
Olivia Lind-Haldorsson, Project Manager;
Zoé Maus, Collaborator;
Pilar Mendez de Vigo, Programme Officer;
Gianni Rufini, VOICE Coordinator;
Geoffrey Weichselbaum, Information officer

<i>Ex Interns:</i> Susanna Balbo Hilda Banka Catherine Plenevaux Edoardo Manfredini Marie-Paul Kimek	Dzenana Mulalic Maria José Ramos P. Santos Paola Simonetti Thomas de Saint Maurice	Maryam Yazdanfar Federica Leone Marisol Ceballos Diego Sanchez
<i>Ex Volunteers:</i> Rosário Campos Costa Gwyn Lewis Fausta Lucentini	Flore Murard Alicia Sangro Angela Valenzas	Sofia Amor

# VOICE PERMANENT WORKING GROUPS

Apart from the informal working groups set up as a follow-up to seminars, this is a list of working groups and projects set up by VOICE to address issues that have to be monitored or managed in a more continuous and consistent way.

#### JOINT WORKING GROUP ON SECURITY

The increasing frequency of insecurity situations in the delivery of humanitarian assistance has led to the launching of several initiatives on security at different levels. VOICE members and ECHO encouraged setting up a working group to discuss the issue of security in humanitarian operations. The working group on security started its activities in early spring 1999. Two meetings took place in the first half of 1999.

#### Meeting on 5 March 1999

The aim of this meeting was to clarify the objectives and working method of the group.

The objective of this working group is the discussion and analysis of the current initiatives on security (training, policy papers, guidelines, etc), in order to avoid confusion among NGOs and donors and in order to improve coordination and collaboration at both field and headquarter levels.

From the NGO perspective there is a need to encourage and strengthen the involvement of the concerned community and to provide more appropriate training for field staff. Funds earmarked for this purpose are therefore needed.

Donors have also expressed their interest in the issue of security. Their concerns arise from the need to fill this "vacuum" not sufficiently covered by the NGO community.

#### Participants:

Ludovic Bourbé (BIOFORCE), François Grunewald (GROUPE URD), Jean-Marie Kindermans (MSF), Sean Greenaway (ECHO), Johannes van der Klaauw (UNHCR), Roland L'Allier (UNHCR), Randolph Martin (IRC), Heike Schneider (APRODEV), Paul Meijs (DRA), Irene Wenaas Holte (NPA), Anne Simon (CARE International), Pierre Gallien (HSPN Project Manager), Giovanni Rufini (VOICE), Pilar Méndez de Vigo (VOICE).

#### Meeting on 12 May 1999

It was devoted to the discussion of the welcomed Commission's Working Paper on "security of relief workers and humanitarian space". The working paper encourages NGOs to integrate security measures in their project proposals and opens the door for the funding of horizontal projects related to security issues.

#### Participants:

Jean-Luc Bodin (ACF), Sean Greenaway (ECHO), Stefano Calabretta (INTERSOS), Irene Holte (NPA), Paul Meijs (DRA), Heike Schneider (APRODEV), Anne Simon (CARE INTERNATIONAL), Giovanni Rufini (VOICE), Pilar Méndez de Vigo (VOICE).

#### **FPAWATCH**

#### WORKING GROUP TO MONITOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW FRAMEWORK PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT (FPA)

The FPA Watch Group was created by VOICE in 1999, in response to an announcement by ECHO to renegotiate certain aspects of the Framework Partnership Agreement.

This group is a response to the co-ordination concerns of ECHO partners and to the expressed request by ECHO to have a single interlocutor. The first negotiation of the framework partnership in 1999 demonstrated how important it was to ensure co-ordination and optimal information exchange in ECHO negotiations. VOICE, representing as it does half of ECHO partners decided to take the initiative for creating the FPA Watch Group by offering its good offices to all ECHO partners for co-ordination purposes.

Prior to initialising the group, VOICE sent a letter to all ECHO partners in order to get their agreement on the representativity of the FPA Watch Group. 107 ECHO partners replied to this letter expressly recognising the representivity of the FPA Watch Group. Consequently, ECHO accepted the Group as a result of its high participation levels.

The initial objectives were to renegotiate certain « simple » revisions of the FPA and to prepare the deeper revision which should take place in 2001.

The FPA Watch group has met 9 times (last meeting on 2 March 2001). In order to facilitate the negotiations, the FPAWG nominated a Task Force from its members for ECHO meetings. The Task Force is responsible for all ECHO proposals, for informing the group as a whole and for leading discussions with ECHO.

Furthermore, an email account was created in order to deal with the problems encountered by NGOs in the implementation of the FPA. This address offers NGOs an opportunity to ask questions, put forward their reactions, suggestions etc.

#### **Results to date**

Today, the FPAWG is preparing for the next negotiations with ECHO which should enter into force on 1 January 2002. The consultations will begin in mid-March and should last until 1 September 2001.

However, in order to have credibility with regard to the Commission (and other sceptics) the group has to establish its legitimacy. This is one of the priorities of the FPAWG over the next few months. This may take the form of extending the group to 20 members representing ECHO partners (geographically and sectorally). It will also be petitioning for a written confirmation of its representativity from ECHO partners.

As well as the technical aspects of the FPAWG it is necessary to underline the importance of the group as a place of co-operation, exchange of information and reflection. This dynamic of co-operation solidifies the strength of the group but above all improves the level of professionalism of NGOs allowing them to retain and protect their unique nature.

Permanent members of the working group: ACF, France, ADRA-Brussels Office, CARE INTERNATIONAL-Brussels Office, CHIDREN's AID DIRECT - Brussels Office, CISP Italy, DANCHURCHAID, Denmark, HANDICAP INTERNATIONAL-Brussels, HELPAGE – Brussels Office MDM, France MSF International OXFAM, UK PAZ Y TERCER MUNDO, Spain, Caritas Europe.

#### LC-EURONAID JOINT FOOD SECURITY GROUP

In 1997-98 the Joint Food Security Group finalised its three-year work programme. This working group comprised 7 members appointed by the Liaison Committee (6 members from the national platforms and 1 VOICE representative) and 3 EuronAid representatives.

The aim was to wed political debate to field experience with the purpose of promoting sustainable and fair food security policies and practices at all levels. To this end, the group decided to establish a framework for action based on a shared approach to food security and activity selection criteria.

The European (EU) dimension and the potential impact of the group's activities on policy-making were agreed on as broad guidelines. The group was particularly concerned not to duplicate the work of other specialised networks, but instead to forge vital alliances with them and to take on board and put over their message to policy-makers.

# ACTIVITIES 1998/99/2000

#### **PROJECTS**

#### HSPN: HUMANITARIAN SAFETY AND PROTECTION NETWORK Ongoing since 1998

The idea for a HSPN arose from a Security workshop held in 1998 where several major NGOs agreed to reinforce the security of the humanitarian personnel in the field through a better information collection process and network. These NGOs agreed to share, on a confidential basis, detailed accounts of their security and safety incidents within the framework of a database to enable themselves and others to make timely and informed decisions for operations in a specific area. The database supplied by the NGOs that are partners of the project runs through an inter-NGO exchange site using Internet technology with restricted access.

Many new developments have been made to the website providing access to up-to-date country security reports, an agenda of relevant meetings, conferences etc., and a HSPN news section. The links section on the website has been completely updated and upgraded with references and direct links to many institutions and sources which are involved in areas such as: Humanitarian Activity; Security; Country Situation Analyses; Safety issues for Personnel.

The HSPN Software has been updated and upgraded. CD-roms have been sent to the members so that they may upload the software and provide their regional offices with the necessary user information in order to input into the database.

The HSPN held a training workshop from 30<sup>th</sup> November to 1<sup>st</sup> December 2000 in Brussels. The training centred the debate firmly on the imperative of incident reporting and analysis in the development of a Security Management Strategy. The HSPN databases and website were presented to the participants and their use as a reporting mechanism and analysis tool were demonstrated.

Seven European NGOs (DRA, MDM, InterSOS, NPA, CARE International and Action Contre la Faim, CESVI) are already partners of the project. Together with VOICE, they form part of a steering committee that manages the project.

The project had financial support from its partner NGOs, ECHO 4 and the Dutch and French Governments. Informal links have been developed with Interaction, USECOORD, ODI and the URD group.

#### HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS REVIEW Ongoing since 1998

The *Humanitarian Affairs Review* (HAR) is a quarterly journal published by Forum Europe in partnership with ECHO and VOICE. The first issue of HAR was published in April 1998 in English and French on a quarterly basis with each issue being distributed to around 7,000 key players and decision-makers in the field of humanitarian aid.

#### HAR: the Leading European Quarterly for Humanitarian Aid Issues

While HAR safeguards its independence as a unique global, neutral and intellectual forum on humanitarian issues, the journal puts both VOICE and ECHO at the heart of the humanitarian debate.

The Quarterly developed a so-called "HAR system" of ongoing contacts and spontaneous reactions to the HAR editorial team all over the world. HAR pursues the goal of providing the world-wide humanitarian community with a global forum to exchange ideas and promote a truly international debate on how emergency aid and development assistance policies should be shaped. HAR sets itself the dual function of updating its specialist readers, as well as enlightening others less familiar with humanitarian issues. Being the only european quartely journal specialised in covering humanitarian issues, HAR is increasingly establishing itself as the leading European intellectual journal in this field.

*In its choice of contributions, HAR is committed to diversity. HAR's content has included:* 

- interviews and contributions by personalities linked to ECHO and international organisations;
- reports by individuals based in recipient countries;
- articles by humanitarian aid workers with solid experience in the field.

Moreover, HAR readers recognise the regular statistics section as a useful tool. Not only does it provide up-to-date figures on issues of current concern, it also presents these data in an approachable, understandable manner.

HAR's Advisory Board provides a neutral platform composed of academics, policy-makers and members of the media specialising in the field of humanitarian affairs. As a body meeting, the Board offers an important forum for the discussion of how best to develop HAR in the future.

#### NGO FOCAL POINT IN TIRANA May/December 1999

The idea of the VOICE NGO Focal Point was launched at a meeting in Tirana, in April 1999, arranged to identify how VOICE could facilitate the work of NGOs responding to the influx of Kosovar refugees into Albania. There was a consensus that VOICE could provide a service aimed at facilitating swift, efficient and coordinated relief efforts by allowing a forum for NGOs to exchange information and to keep up to date with refugee-related developments. To this end, the NGO Focal Point was set up in early May with the objective of collecting, disseminating and distributing information regarding humanitarian activities in Albania, partly through written reports and partly through direct contacts.

With it being clearly understood that the NGO Focal Point had to be integrated into the existing information structure in order to prevent duplication of efforts the initial work consisted of creating links with the humanitarian community. In addition, and more importantly, the wide range of actors have played, and continue to play, an important role in the information gathering of the NGO Focal Point. The NGO Focal Point has also benefited from the field reports produced by the ECHO Monitoring Team.

The first NGO Focal Point report was issued on 2 June, 1999. Since then, the NGO Focal Point has distributed approximately two reports a week, through electronic mail and hard copies. Reports have also been distributed by the VOICE Secretariat in Brussels, by InterAction and via internal distribution networks. The network of humanitarian agencies includes today a wide range of international and national NGOs, the Humanitarian Information Centre, UN agencies such as UNHCR, WFP, UNICEF and UNDP, donors, OSCE, ECMM and others. The contents of the reports have provided important updates and relevant and useful information for the players involved in humanitarian activities in Albania.

#### THE SPHERE PROJECT Ongoing since 1997

The Sphere Project is a joint effort by non-governmental organisations led by InterAction and the Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response and supported by VOICE, ICRC and ICVA.

The Sphere Project employed a cooperative, collaborative process to develop a Humanitarian Charter for persons affected by calamity or armed conflict and an associated set of Minimum Standards in essential areas of humanitarian response. The areas are water & sanitation, nutrition, food aid, shelter, site planning and health care. The aim is to link defined levels of service for these areas to fundamental human rights and humanitarian principles.

In this context, the Humanitarian Charter reflects the determination of agencies to improve both the effectiveness of their assistance and accountability to their stakeholders. The Minimum Standards are designed with this in mind and each standard is accompanied by a series of indicators. These are important not only in the design and implementation of programmes, but also to provide a way for people affected by disasters, agency staff, donors, the wider public and others to review the provision of assistance.

# CHILD SOLDIERS EXHIBITION 2000-2001

The "No More Child Soldiers - A Photographic Exhibition" project was launched in September 1999, with the support of ECHO and under the auspices of the European Parliament. This VOICE - ECHO project consisted in a touring exhibition of 49 pictures describing the use of child soldiers around the world. The aim was to solicit the awareness of the issue of child soldiers among policy makers and politicians, as well, as to sensitise the general public.

The project started with a careful planning phase, which took a period of approximately three months, from September to December 1999. The photo exhibition debuted in Lisbon on the 10<sup>th</sup>

January 2000, then Dublin, The Hague, Paris, European Parliament, Rome, Copenhagen and ended on the 15<sup>th</sup> April 2000 in Brussels.

VOICE received enthusiastic feedback about the project, both in Belgium and abroad. Foreign countries, NGOs and international institutions, such as United Nations, have requested the use of the exhibition for educational/lobbying purposes. As a result of the deep impact and success of the Child Soldiers project a second phase of the exhibition will be "on tour" in the near future. The countries which will be involved this time are: Greece, Germany, Italy, Spain, Swede and Uganda. We look forward to similar positive feedback and results from this second phase of a very profound and timely project.

#### FOCUS BALKANS 2000 - 2001

Focus: Balkans aims at raising awareness among the decision-makers forming European policies for the Balkans. It's purpose is to provide a thorough analysis of the overall reconstruction strategy in the Balkans to the NGO community, local and governmental authorities, the media and various other actors. It highlights progress, points out problems, monitors the design and implementation of policies and activities, and reports testimonies from the field. On this basis, focus: Balkans is a working tool for those who are involved at various levels in the reconstruction of the region, providing inputs and comments, contributing towards problem-solving and improving the performance of the international operations in the area.

The first issue of the Newsletter was published in April 2000. Focus: Balkans is widely distributed in its paper version in the Balkan region, EU countries, Switzerland, Norway and in the United States of America. In Brussels, members of the European Parliament, functionaries from the interested DGs, personnel of international organisations and delegations receive it. The Newsletter is also available on VOICE's website, each new issue being presented on the home page. An e-mail version is available for a wider distribution, particularly for NGO field workers in the region and for American NGOs.

The magazine has been very much welcomed, to the point that we are currently unable to satisfy all the requests from potential readers. A strong demand for increasing distribution also in non-EU countries and throughout the UN system has had so far to be rejected.

# HUMANITARIAN WEB INITIATIVE 2001

The Humanitarian Web Initiative-HWI is an internet-based system comprising of web sites, databases, PC software and communication facilities. Its goal is to integrate the information resources of Voice and Oneworld, in co-operation with the Humanitarian Practice Network (HPN), EuronAid and Euforic, and other possible partners, in order to make them available to the humanitarian community on the internet.

The project aims at harmonising, integrating and systematising the access to most of the existing web resources of humanitarian interest, avoiding duplications and simplifying the access to information for concerned users. This has the goal of improving response capability, strategic

design and targeting of actions, as well as the transparency and accountability of humanitarian operations. HWI intends to provide an integrated, comprehensive and systematic tool for access to information for humanitarian operators. It also aims at improving the communication among concerned actors and the response capability by offering a single centralised point of reference in the web.

#### HUMANITARIAN SECURITY IN COLOMBIA (SYPHEC) 2001

In a seminar on Colombia (31 March, 2000), arranged by VOICE, the issue of security was brought up as a concern by all participants. Following discussion in working groups, some conclusions were made as regards to security management in Colombia. These were among others:

- more security tools for handling complex situations are needed;
- there is a need to develop and focus on capacity-building;
- networks can do better in setting up security mechanism and present a united NGO front.

The main conclusion was that the elaboration of an inter-agency pilot project for Colombia, to improve security of field staff, protection of beneficiaries and co-operation between agencies where possible, would combine the present needs and challenges in relation to security.

The project "Seguridad y Protección Humanitaria en Colombia" (SYPHEC) is an integrated action consisting of training courses, an information sharing system, data collection and analysis, and participatory assessment on security issues.

SYPHEC aims at improving the security conditions for aid workers and target populations in NGO humanitarian projects in Colombia.

- 1. Increase awareness on security among humanitarian aid workers
- 2. Assess security conditions in European humanitarian projects in Colombia
- 3. Record and analyse security incidents in order to study and implement appropriate preventive measures
- 4. Provide training to aid workers and community leaders
- 5. Set up the Humanitarian Safety and Protection Network (HSPN) system in the country
- 6. Improve co-operation between NGOs on security issues.

#### SEMINARS AND WORKING GROUPS

This is the list of seminars which VOICE has organised in the past three years. More than 100 different NGOs have attended one or more seminars, 60 of them VOICE members. Minutes and discussion papers for each meeting are available on request.

#### EL NIÑO: A CASE STUDY IN DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

Brussels, 25-26 March 1998

El Niño is a recurrent phenomenon which has damaging effects in many different areas from Latin America and Africa to South Asia and the Pacific. The specific characteristics of the problem, with the important component of food aid, led to the conceptualisation of the joint seminar by VOICE and Euronaid with the contribution of ECHO.

The seminar consisted in two plenary sessions for general information, three workshops dedicated to case studies and a co-ordination meeting. The programme provided for the participation of international experts: officials from ECHO and DG VIII/B1, the WFP, plus a number of NGOs already involved in actions.

The **main objectives** of this 2 day-seminar were:

- to provide information about the nature of the phenomenon, its impact on Southern countries, particularly its consequences in terms of both immediate and mid-term effects on agriculture and living conditions;
- to provide information about the responses already implemented by the EC and other donors and the NGO involvement in such initiatives;
- to provide NGO reports based on their experiences in programmes currently being implemented;
- to study how to set up efficient co-ordination between donors and NGOs and among NGOs, particularly within the scope of the continuum "Emergency, Rehabilitation, Development".

#### Participants:

ACF, ACT, CAFOD, Care International - UK, CARITAS-B, Caritas Germany, CCFD, CEFA, CESVI, Cesvitem, Christian Aid, CISP, Concern Worldwide, Concern Universal, COOPI, Danchurch Aid, DIA, Diakonisches Werk, Deutsche Welthungerhilfe, ECHO, EuronAid, GOAL, HELP, Helpage, Intermon, Lutheran World Federation, Medicus Mundi-Navarra, MPDL, NOVIB, OCHA, OIKOS, ORSTOM, Oxfam UK, Save the Children Fund UK, Secours Catholique, Tear Fund, Trócaire, WFP.

# FOLLOW-UP WORKING GROUP ON EL NIÑOThe VOICE Working Group on El Niño met on 30-31 June 1998Members:Members:François GRUNEWALD (Groupe URD)Claire PIROTE (Groupe URD)Carlo TASSARA (CISP)Mark ALLISON (Oxfam GB)Cécile MULLER (EuronAid)Documents:Documents:VOICE/EuronAid: European NGOs' proposal to improve disaster preparedness in cooperationwith the EC - June 1998Hermitian State Sta

#### WORKING GROUP ON ALGERIA

Brussels, 9 June 1998

Although the Algerian crisis is still far from seeing an international intervention in favour of the civilian population, it is generating strong interest among the international community and in public opinion. Many NGOs and other institutions feel the need for monitoring the situation and getting more information on the subject, in order to achieve a certain level of preparedness.

This one-day seminar aimed at providing NGOs with analytical information on the country and its current crisis. It presented a broad view of the causes, the events and the players in the Algerian crisis, identifying the problems and needs it produced among the population. It also clarified the positions of the EU bodies (Commission and Parliament) as well as those of NGOs.

#### Participants:

ACF, ACT, ADRA, Children's Aid Direct, CISP, COPI, COPRI, Demain le Monde, ECHO, Handicap International, InterSOS, Médecins du Monde, Oxfam Solidarité, UNA, UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, European Parliament, WorldVision.

#### MEETING OF EUROPEAN NGOS ON SOMALIA

Brussels, 11 June 1998

The aims of the meeting were: (i) to share information and evaluations of the current situation in Somalia; (ii) to define some guidelines to be incorporated into a common document representing the NGOs' views on the priorities of the international co-operation in Somalia; (iii) to agree on some recommendations to be delivered to the European Community, which is the main financial partner in Somalia.

The second half of the meeting was also attended by representatives of the European Commission, specifically by Mrs Renée Iltis from DGVIII and Mr Tom Dodd from ECHO. Together with a number of strategic and methodological issues a general concern was expressed regarding future co-operation in Somalia after the next "Lomé Convention".

#### Participants:

ACF France, ADRA Germany, Africa 70, CARE Germany, CARE Internat., CISP, CLONG, COOPI, COSV, DGVIII, Diakonishes Werk, DRC Dk, ECHO, Euronaid, Intersos, Memisa Medicus Mundi, MSF Belgium, MSF Spain, OXFAM, SCF UK, TROCAIRE, UN - DHA, UNA, UNA-COOPI, UNHCR, VOICE, World Vision Germany, World Vision- Liaison Office, World Vision UK.

#### Documents:

Memorandum on the Main Challenges Facing International Cooperation in Somalia, July 1998

#### **TRIPARTITE MEETING ON SOMALIA**

Brussels, 14 October 1998

On 14 October 1998, a tripartite workshop on Somalia between the European Parliament, the European Commission and the NGOs was organised by VOICE at the European Parliament in Brussels.

The workshop was decided to be expedient after several initiatives undertaken by the NGOs working in Somalia, including the meeting held in Brussels on 11 June 1998. The aim of the meeting, which was also attended by representatives from ECHO and DGVIII, was to exchange information and evaluations on the situation in different corners of the country and the constraints and successes experienced by the NGOs.

After the June meeting, a Memorandum on Somalia was drafted by NGOs and forwarded by VOICE to the European Commission. The Memorandum tries to identify a set of methodological and technical criteria and guidelines that should be incorporated in the new strategy, and calls for closer co-ordination in the field among the various players involved in Somalia. The preparatory work done by the NGOs has committed both their HQs and their experts working on the ground to such actions.

#### <u>Participants:</u>

Action Contre la Faim, ADRA Germany, CARE International, CISP, COCIS, COOPI, COSV, DGVIII, Diakonie Emergency Aid, DRC, ECHO, EP - Green Party Group, EP-PPE Group, EP-PSE Group, InterSOS, Médecins Sans Frontières Belgique, Médecins Sans Frontières Espagne, MEMISA MEDICUS MUNDI, NGO Somalia Consortium, OXFAM, Save the Children Fund UK, UNA, World Vision.

#### Documents:

Report on the Tripartite Meeting on Somalia, October 1998

#### Other activities:

- NGO Consortium EC Delegation Meeting, Nairobi, 27/05/99
- Letter to the EC, Member States and Lomé Secretariat on the role of Somalia in ACP talks, 29/06/99.

#### **IRAQ CONSULTATION MEETING**

Brussels, 29/30 September 1998

The Iraqi crisis has assumed an increasingly paradoxical feature. The lack of reasonable and coherent policies from the UN, the EU and governments is forcing many NGOs to leave the country. An impressive number of constraints and difficulties, imposed by the international community as well as the Iraqi Government, directly affects the living conditions of the civilian population as well as the work of relief agencies.

This meeting was intended not only as an opportunity to share information and exchange views on the humanitarian situation, but also to raise a debate with the UN and the EU on major political issues. The meeting was divided into one day and one half day. The first day was reserved for the NGOs, and presented a series of reports on specific issues such as: an analysis of the situation in both North and South; an evaluation of the effects of the embargo and the Oil for Food programme; the conditions of IDPs; the problems of rehabilitation and mine clearance; health; childhood.

On the second day the session was open to guests and observers and devoted to the discussion with the donors. A few weeks after the meeting, a position paper was produced and submitted to participants for their approval, before its presentation to donors.

#### Participants:

ACT, Action Contre la Faim, ADRA, AIBI, Aide Medicale Internationale, Amar Appeal, Care International, Caritas Germany, Caritas Europa, Christian Aid-UK, DFID, EC-DG 1, ECHO 3, Enfant du Monde, German Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Handicap International Belgium, Helpage International, Kurdistan Regional Government, MSF, MPDL, MEMISA, Mines Advisory Group, Norwegian People's Aid, Premiere Urgence, Qantil Project, 4Rs, SCF-UK, Secours Catholique, Triangle, World Vision.

#### FOLLOW-UP WORKING GROUP ON IRAQ

The VOICE Working Group on Iraq met on 29 November 1998 and 2 February 1999

<u>Members:</u> Hans JONG KIND (ADRA) Sarah GRAHAM (Christian Aid - UK) Stanislas BRABANT (Handicap International Belgium) Javier MENENDEZ (Helpage International) Marinka BAUMANN (Qandil Project) Chris SAUNDERS (SCF - UK)

Documents: VOICE Position Paper on Iraq, October 1998

#### AFTER MITCH. THE TRANSITION PERIOD FROM EMERGENCY TO DEVELOPMENT

Brussels, 17 and 18 March 1999

#### The MITCH Exercise

Immediately after Hurricane Mitch struck Central America in October 1998, VOICE carried out an initiative of information gathering and discussion with NGOs. There was a clear consensus that more c-ordination was needed between the different units of the European Union dealing with programmes for Central America (ECHO, DG VIII and DG I) in order to achieve a more effective use of the resources available.

Another major concern was the necessity to improve disaster preparedness and prevention in a region that is prone to natural disasters, be it hurricanes, landslides and flooding caused by heavy rains, earthquakes or volcanic eruptions. Therefore disaster preparedness/prevention should be taken into consideration in the design of any programme for this region.

Following the mission, VOICE organised a strategic seminar on 17/18 March (for the list of participants, see above). During this seminar, the players concerned (NGOs and donors) discussed together the main strategic priorities of the forthcoming projects in the area, defining a set of fields that should have special attention from the donors in the post-emergency phase.

During this gathering, the Central American representatives of the affected countries presented the reconstruction plans drafted by their respective civil societies. They also briefed the participants on the points of agreement and disagreement with their respective governments, in those sectors where discussions had taken place. The coordinator of VOICE, speaking also on behalf of the Liaison Committee, presented the contribution of the European NGOs to the framing of a common strategy for the reconstruction of Central America. In this sense, the basic elements of the document worked out by VOICE were also included in the final recommendations of the NGO Gathering, which were presented to the donors.

The next step concerns the realisation of the pledges made by donors. In our view, the approved plans for reconstruction have to aim at reducing vulnerability to future disasters and enabling sustainable development for the benefit of the poor majority of the population.

#### Participants:

Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), World Bank, European Commission (DGIB, DGVIII, ECHO), Dutch Ministry for Foreign Affairs, United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Action Aid-UK, ACF-F, AMI-F, APS-I, Arbeiter Samariter Bund-D, ASONOG (Association of Honduran NGOs), AVSI-I, Care-F, Care International, Caritas-NL, Caritas Secours International-B, CESVI-I, Christian Aid-UK, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), CISP-I, CISV-I, COCIS-I, COOPI-I, Coordinadora Civil Nicaragüense para la Emergencia y la Reconstrucción, CRIC-I, Danish Refugee Council, DRA-NL, Dutch Interchurch Aid, Euronaid, France Libertés, Groupe URD-F, GVC-I, Handicap International-B, Hilfswerk Austria, Intersos-I, ISCOS-I, Johanniter International-D, Malteser Hilfsdienst-D, MdM-I, Medico International-D, MLAL-I, Movimondo/MOLISV-I, Movimondo Nicaragua, MPDL-E, MSF-NL, Oikos-P, Oxfam Solidarité-B, Oxfam-UK & I, Progetto Continenti-I, PTM-E, Reform of the World Bank Campaign, Solidar, Solidaridad Internacional-E, Trócaire-IR, UNA-I, World Vision.

#### FOLLOW UP WORKING GROUP ON MITCH

The VOICE Working Group on Mitch met on 21 April 1999 and 6 May 1999 in Brussels

Members ECHO 3 - Sabato Della Monica, Johanna Griem DG VIII/A4 - Orlando Paleo, Ginevra Letizia DG 1B - Antonio Crespo LC/VOICE - James Mackie, Karine Sohet, Alicia Sangro, Giovanni Rufini, Pilar Mendez de Vigo Channah Bentein, OXFAM Solidarité André Bogaert, CIFCA David del Campo, SOLIDAR INTERNATIONAL Olivier De Visscher, OXFAM Solidarité Josita Profeta, MOVIMONDO Nozipho Mkhatshwa WORLDVISION Patricia Muñoz, EURODAD Vincenzo Pira, MOLISV/MOVIMONDO Sylvie Robert, Groupe URD Giorgiana Rosa, COOPI-UNA Anne Simon, CARE INTERNATIONAL Carlo Tassara, CISP Dominic Wyatt, PAZ Y TERCER MUNDO

Documents:

- Conclusiones de los Grupos de Trabajo, April 1999
- Documento de Bruselas, May 1999
- Contributions to: Declaración de Rio (June 1999) and Declaración de Estocolmo (June 1999)

#### NGO CONSULTATION MEETING ON SUDAN

Brussels, 14 June 1999

Sudan represents a classic case of a chronic crisis, on which the international community lacks a strategic perspective. It is the intention of the VOICE NGOs to raise the awareness of policy makers and review the framework of the humanitarian intervention in the country. Therefore, a group of NGOs met in Brussels to prepare the framework of a broader seminar to be held in the autumn.

The meeting provided a useful basis for sharing opinions and a forum for discussing common concerns with ECHO, which is one of the major donors to OLS. A steering group was agreed, to take forward the planning of the September meeting. The group comprised: Mark Bowden - SCF (chair), Henrike Trautmann - ECHO, Jane Cocking - Oxfam, Claudio Feo - Norwegian People's Aid.

#### Participants:

ACF, Care International, CCM, COSV, Goal, Malteser, Norwegian People's Aid, Oxfam Uk, Save The Children Fund Uk, World Vision, ECHO

#### **DEVELOPING A RATIONALE FOR HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE IN SUDAN** Brussels, 29-30 September 1999

At June's seminar on Sudan it was agreed that the meeting should be followed with a broader two day meeting in September to include a wider NGO group, the major donors and the UN. The purpose of the meeting was to examine recent experience and responses, identify and agree major issues and needs, and develop a rationale for relief operations in Sudan in 1999-2000.

The meeting was funded by ECHO and attended by senior representatives of European and US NGOs, Bilateral and Multilateral Donors active in Sudan.

#### Participants:

ACF France, CAFOD, CARE UK, CARITAS Spain, CEAS (Church Ecumenical Action Sudan), Christian Aid, CLONG, Comité Internacional de Rescate, Concern Worldwide, John Ryle (Consultant Facilitator) - Rift Valley Institute, COOPI, COSV, Danchurchaid, Deutsche Welthungerhilfe/German Agro Action, DFID, European Commission (ECHO, DG VIII), EURONAID, European Parliament, German Ministry of Foreign Affairs, GOAL, Helpage International, ICRC, Malteser-Hilfsdienst, Médecins du Monde, Médecins du Monde International, MPDL, MSF Belgium, MSF Switzerland, MSF International, MSF Netherlands, Dutch Government, NOHA, Norwegian Government-Humanitarian Division, Norwegian People Aid, Oxfam, Save the Children Fund UK, Sudan Focal Point for Europe, UNICEF, UN OCHA, USAID/OFDA, WFP, World Council of Churches, World Vision UK, ZOA Refugee Care.

NGO CONSULTATION MEETING ON SUDAN

Brussels, 29 September 2000

A new consultation meeting was held in September 2000, in preparation to ECHO's meeting with its partners working in Sudan. The meeting presented a general review of the current political and humanitarian situation in Sudan; views on possible future developments; humanitarian access; and the state of play regarding OLS and the consequences of the MOU seven months after his introduction.

<u>Participants:</u> CARE International, Christian Aid, Intern. Federation of Red Cross, Malteser Germany, Movimondo, OXFAM GB, SFC-UK, German Red Cross, VSF-DZG Belgium, World Vision-DE, CINS

#### VOICE STRATEGIC SEMINAR

#### "Prevention: A priority for development and humanitarian aid"

Brussels, 17 and 18 May 2000

The main purpose of this seminar was the elaboration of recommendations and proposals that could lead to a more integrated approach in terms of prevention, justified by the increase of natural disasters on the development and on the environment in general. Another objective was the promotion of a "culture of prevention" at all levels, so that it could become an essential element of development policies.

The first day of the seminar was dedicated to a great number of presentations in the morning and three working groups in the afternoon. Two basic conclusions were derived from the morning discussion:

- lack of co-ordination and information exchange on disaster preparedness and prevention;
- the need for better interaction between NGOs and organisations specialised in this field and international (donor) organisations.

The working groups dealt with: hurricanes/flooding, technological disasters and droughts.

The second day was marked by the final discussion debate panel, due to very interesting contributions from the participants and the panel.

The seminar ended with the proposal to elaborate a policy paper on the basis of this seminar. VOICE was charged with the follow-up.

#### Participants:

European Union (Cabinet Nielson, ECHO, DG Development, DG Environment, DG Relex), Europen Commission (Directorate General joint research centre), European Parliament, ACSUR, ACH, ACTION by Churches Together, ACTIONAID, ACTION D'urgence internationale, ADRA, ALOP, Associazione Universitaria Cooperazione Allo Sviluppo, AVSI, Bomberos sin Fronteras, BRITISH Red Cross, CAFOD, CARE (Germany, International), Caritas (Espana, secours international), CEPREDENAC, CESVI, Christian-AID, CINS, CISP, CODEV, COOPI, CRIC, CORDAID, DANCHURCHAID, DEUTSCHE WELTHUNGERHILFE, DRA, GTZ, GOAL, GROUPE URD, HANDICAP International France, HELPAGE International, INTERSOS, ISLAMIC relief, MALTESER Aulandsdienst, MOVIMONDO, MEDECINS du monde, MEDICO International, MEDICOS sin Fronteras, MERCY CORPS Europe, MPDL, OPERATION a day's work Finland, OXFAM (GB, International, Solidarite), PTM, SAHEL Defis, SOLIDARIDAD International, TEARFUND UK, TERRE des hommes Italy, WORLD Vision, ZOA Refuge Care, IFRC, ISDR, OCHA, UNDP, UNHCR, UNICEF, WORLD Bank Brussels, WORLD Food Programme, VOICE.

#### EXERCISE ON THE FUTURE OF EUROPEAN HUMANITARIAN AID

October 1998 to June 1999

From October 1998 to June 1999, VOICE carried out an exercise to identify the feelings and concerns of the European humanitarian community, six years after the creation of ECHO. This was done through a series of "group conversations", formal meetings and working group activities. People involved had different levels of involvement in humanitarian aid and represented a wide range of national, cultural and political backgrounds. They all agreed to speak as committed individuals, not representing any group or specific interest, in the spirit of an honest contribution to a political process that is relevant to both the affected populations and European civil society.

The centre of our attention was not ECHO itself, but rather the way we see our work, reflect on our role, re-think our identity and performance, and imagine an ideal framework for our action and a positive relationship with the European Commission.

The three main focuses of our exercise were:

- defining humanitarian aid and its boundaries;
- the institutional location and practices of EU humanitarian policy;
- the humanitarian partnership.

At the end of the consultation process, a paper was produced which was then approved by the SCHA and the Liaison Committee and now represents the European NGOs' point of view on the matter. Its purpose is to draw the attention of decision-makers to the concerns of those who will be implementing their actions in the field in order to help European humanitarian aid reach its full potential as an instrument for relieving hardship and suffering throughout the world.

#### <u>Meetings:</u>

- 1<sup>st</sup> meeting: London, 26 October
- 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting: Brussels, 3 November
- 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting: Paris, 17 November
- 4<sup>th</sup> meeting: London, 1 December
- VOICE Forum: Brussels, 7-8 December
- WG meeting: 12 March
- SCHA meeting: 9 June

Participants: the consultation has involved more than 150 individuals and/or NGOs.

#### **POLICY PAPERS**

- <u>THE FUTURE OF EUROPEAN HUMANITARIAN AID</u>: the NGOs Point of View (Brussels, July 1999)
- <u>**POST-MITCH**</u>: <u>Brussels Document</u>: proposals from European NGOs to the Stockholm Summit on Reconstruction and Development in Central America (Brussels, 11 May 1999) – Also exist in Spanish.
- <u>POST MITCH</u>: de la emergencia al desarollo. Seminario estratégico de VOICE (Bruselas, 17-18 Marzo de 1999). Conclusiones de los grupos de trabajo (Bruselas, 22 de abril de 1999) [in Spanish only].
- **IRAQ** : VOICE Position Paper on Iraq (Brussels, 19 November 1998).
- <u>SOMALIA</u>: Memorandum on the main challenges facing international cooperation in Somalia. Summary of the proposals made by the international NGOs (Brussels, 10 July 1998).
- <u>ICC</u>: The European humanitarian and development NGOs for the International Criminal Court (Brussels, 10 June 1998).
- **EL NIÑO**: VOICE/Euronaid : European NGOs' proposals to improve Disaster Preparedness in cooperation with the EC (Brussels, April 1998).
- <u>GUINEA-BISSAU</u>: Appeal for Guinea-Bissau (6 June 1998)
- <u>THE ESSENTIAL ROLE OF NGOS IN THE RECONSTRUCTION OF WAR-TORN</u> <u>COUNTRIES</u> (Brussels Septembe 2000).
- <u>THE GREY ZONE</u>: Linking Relief-Rehabilitation and Development in EU (Draft Brussels, March 2001).
- DISASTER PREPAREDNESS, PREVENTION AND VULNERABILITY REDUCTION IN NATURAL CATASTROPHES: a discussion paper (Brussels, May 2001).

#### PUBLICATIONS

#### **VOICE NEWSLETTERS**

(20 issues a year)

- VOICE Newsletters 2000
- VOICE Newsletters 1999
- VOICE Newsletters 1998

Also available on the VOICE website : <u>http://www.oneworld.org/voice/voipub.htm</u>

#### FOCUS:BALKANS

(8 Issues published in 2000) Also available on the VOICE website : <u>http://www.oneworld.org/voice/voipub.htm</u>

#### **HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS REVIEW**

- Quarterly magazine published jointly with ECHO since 1998.
- Website : <u>http://www.humanitarian-review.org</u>

#### **VOICE HUMANITARIAN AID DIRECTORIES**

- 2000
- 1997

- 1995
- 1994

• 1996

#### **VOICE REPORTS**

- Annual Report (1998-2000)
- Annual Report (1998-99)
- Annual Report (1996)
- HSPN project (Humanitarian Safety and Protection Network)
- HSPN Activity report/ Rapport d'activité (June 1999)

#### **SUPPORT TO :**

- <u>The NGO Handbook 99</u>, practical information for development and emergency aid NGOs in the European Union/ <u>Guide ONG 1999</u>, informations pratiques pour les ONG de développement et d'urgence dans l'Union Européenne(Part 1 & 2).
- <u>HelpAge</u>: Context paper re: older people in emergencies/ Rapport de situation sur les personnes agées en situation d'urgence (London, March 1999)

#### **VOICE MEMBER NGOs**

#### Austria

- CARE Österreich
- CARITAS Österreich
- Österreichisches Hilfswerk International
- SOS Kinderdorf International
- UMCOR Europe
- World Vision GEV

#### Belgium

- CARITAS Secours International Belgium
- Handicap International Bureau de Liaison
- OXFAM Solidarité/Solidariteit Belgium

#### Denmark

- ASF Dansk Folkenhjaelp
- CARITAS Dansk
- DanChurchAid / Folkerkirkens Nodhjaelp
- Danish Refugee Council / Dansk Flygtningehjaelp
- Mission Øst / Mission East

#### Finland

- Nada Hope r.f.
- World Vision Finland

#### France

- ACF Action Contre la Faim
- ACTED Agence d'Aide à la Coopération Technique et au Développement
- *AMI Aide Médicale Internationale*
- Atlas Logistique
- CARE France
- CARITAS France (Secours Catholique)
- Première Urgence
- *MDM Médecins du Monde International*
- PSF Pharmaciens Sans Frontières France
- Triangle "Génération Humanitaire"
- TULIPE Transfert d'Urgence de l'Industrie Pharmaceutique

#### Germany

- *ADRA Adventist Development and Relief Agency Germany*
- ASB Arbeiter Samariter Bund Deutschland E.V.
- CARE Germany
- CARITAS Germany
- DWHH Deutsche WelthungerHilfe E.V. / German AgroAction
- Diakonisches Werk der EKD / Diakonie Emergency Aid
- Johanniter Unfall Hilfe E.V.

- Malteser Hilfsdienst E.V. ABT. Auslansdienst
- Medico International E.V.
- World Vision Germany

#### Greece

• IISA - Institute of International Social Affairs

#### Ireland

- CONCERN Worldwide
- GOAL
- TROCAIRE The Catholic Agency for World Development
- World Vision Ireland

#### Italy

- ALISEI
- *AIBI Associazione Amici dei Bambini*
- AFMAL FBF
- ARCS Arci Cultura e Sviluppo
- CCM Comitato Collaborazione Medica / Doctors for Developing Countries
- CARE Italy
- CESVI COOPERAZIONE E SVILUPPO
- CINS COOPERAZIONE ITALIANA NORD SUD
- CIPSI COORDINAMENTO DI INIZIATIVE POPOLARI DI SOLIDARIETA
- CISP COMITATO INTERNAZIONALE PER LO SVILUPPO DEI POPOLI
- COCIS- COORDINAMENTO DELLE ONG PER LA COOP. INTERNAZIONALE ALLO SVILUPPO
- COOPI COOPERAZIONE INTERNAZIONALE
- COSV COMITATO DI COORDINAMENTO ORGANIZZAZIONI PER IL SERVIZIO VOLONTARIO
- CRIC CENTRO REGIONALE D'INTERVENTO PER LA COOPERAZIONE
- GVC GRUPPO VOLONTARIATO CIVILE
- ICS CONSORZIO ITALIANO DI SOLIDARIETA Associate
- INTERSOS
- MLAL MOVIMENTO LAICI AMERICA LATINA
- MOVIMONDO

#### Luxembourg

• CARITAS Luxembourg

#### The Netherlands

- CORDAID
- CARE Nederland
- *ICCO*
- WORLD VISION Nederland
- ZOA REFUGEE CARE

#### Norway

• NORWEGIAN PEOPLE'S AID

#### Portugal

• AMI - ASSISTENCIA MEDICA INTERNACIONAL

#### Spain

- AYUDA EN ACCIÒN
- CARITAS Spain
- COMITE INTERNACIONAL DE RESCATE
- MPDL MOVIMIENTO POR LA PAZ, EL DESARME Y LA LIBERTAD
- PTM PAZ Y TERCER MUNDO

#### Sweden

- CARITAS Sverige
- LUTHERHJALPEN CHURCH OF SWEDEN AID
- PMU INTERLIFE Sverige
- STAR OF HOPE INTERNATIONAL

#### Switzerland

- ACT ACTION BY CHURCHES TOGETHER Associate
- CARITAS Suisse
- LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION
- MEDAIR

#### United Kingdom

- ACTIONAID
- CAD CHILDREN'S AID DIRECT
- CAFOD CATHOLIC FUND FOR OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT
- CARE UK
- CHRISTIAN AID UK
- HEALTH UNLIMITED
- HELPAGE INTERNATIONAL UK
- HMD INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE
- MERCY CORPS Scotland
- MERLIN Associate
- OXFAM UK
- SCF SAVE THE CHILDREN FUND UK
- TEAR FUND UK
- WORLD VISION UK

#### Associate NGOs

#### France Secours Populaire Français Germany Action United States INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE MEDEOR

International Bureau CARE INTERNATIONAL

#### HANDICAP INTERNATIONAL