

UNHCR will be carrying out a number of appraisals of their Rwandan operation including one on the service packages.

In Rwanda, the humanitarian agencies found themselves working more closely with the military than anticipated. The very size and urgency of the humanitarian efforts made it necessary to harness the massive lift capacity of the military. This was doubly so as commercial carriers were not prepared to operate in the region without extremely costly insurance coverage. UNHCR for one found that it benefitted immeasurably from the presence of 4 seconded military staff with their air operations staff in Geneva. There is now some discussion about the potential of having military in the communications and in the strategic planning parts of UNHCR. As discussed elsewhere in the report, there are tangible benefits from bridging the military-civilian gap, and having seconded military officers in organizations such as UNHCR has real benefits for both.

Canada already seconds military officers but would benefit from a much larger presence in international organizations. A willingness to pay all or part of their salaries and related costs for such secondments will facilitate such placements. Canadian military will not only benefit from such experiences, but their level of professionalism will be welcomed and will hasten the acceptance by both military and civilians of the benefits and possibilities of cooperation. It goes without saying that increased presence of Canadians internationally increases our ability to affect policy making and program delivery.

RECOMMENDATION

Canada should expand the number of military officers seconded to international organizations, for example the strategic planning units of UNHCR.

There are minor questions about a concentration on short term humanitarian actions, but these are more than understandable in light of the immediacy and size of the catastrophe. The larger issues of returning refugees and economic reconstruction appear not to have been forgotten and now with time to pause and develop strategies, humanitarian agencies such as CIDA are focussing on the longer term.

There is a growing and quite substantive imbalance between the massive amount of funding for relief efforts and the extremely small amount of technical and financial support for the new government. This gap and obvious lack of coordination between relief and development highlights a similar problem elsewhere. If UN agencies or others deal solely with relief, then they have an undeniable bias in raising and expending resources on their task. The hard decisions about when to start scaling back relief programs and put scarce international resources into medium and long term development are not taken.

The identical debate is occurring over the efforts of UNHCR as their mandate covers refugees but not the internally displaced. Therefore they are focussing their relatively massive resources on refugees in Tanzania, Burundi, and Zaire. However it is scandalous that particularly in the