

# Exploration 5B: Planning a camp for people displaced by war

## 5B

In Exploration 5B, students plan a camp for people who have been displaced by war. This activity enables them to grasp the scale of the effort required to restore ordinary supports of life in such circumstances.

Students take on the role of humanitarian workers, estimating needs, allotting tasks and making plans for getting supplies.

### OBJECTIVES

- to think about the circumstances in which people forced to leave their homes might find themselves
- to learn about some of the aspects of assistance and protection that people need when armed conflict forces them to flee their homes
- to be aware of the scale of the effort required to meet human needs arising from displacement caused by armed conflict

### STUDENT RESOURCES

- 5B.1 Photo collage 5B (see separate sheet)
- 5B.2 Planning a camp – a report
- 5B.3 Information and instructions for camp planners
- 5B.4 Worksheet: Planning report

### PREPARATION

Plan how to use “Information and instructions for camp planners” and the “Planning report” worksheet with small groups.

In the *Methodology Guide*, review teaching methods 1 (Discussion), 2 (Brainstorming), 6 (Using stories, photos and videos), 9 (Small groups) and 10 (Gathering stories and news).

### TIME

Two 45-minute sessions

## The exploration

### 1. NEEDS OF PEOPLE FORCED TO FLEE AS A RESULT OF ARMED CONFLICT

(15 minutes)

Ask students to suggest different options for where refugees and other displaced persons might go.

*[For example: establishing a spontaneous settlement, moving in with a host family, seeking refuge in a camp for displaced persons]*

Focus the discussion on people who have sought refuge in a camp for displaced persons.

#### Possible questions:

- > Why do you think people would choose to seek refuge in a camp over other possibilities?
- > Does everyone who flees want to go to a camp?

Have students brainstorm about the particular needs of people who have sought refuge in a camp.

The following categories may be used to organize students' responses:

- water collection and drainage;
- food;
- shelter;
- medical care;
- energy (including cooking, heating, lighting);
- hygiene and sanitary facilities;
- family reunification;
- security;
- psycho-social support;
- communication.

*'Refugees' are people who have fled their country for fear of being persecuted because of their race, ethnicity, religion, political opinion or membership in a particular social group. This includes people fleeing an armed conflict, generalized violence or massive violations of human rights.*

*People who are forced to leave their homes for similar reasons but who remain in their own countries are known as 'internally displaced persons.'*  
– UNHCR

#### NOTE

Responses may also be organized using the categories of biological, social, psychological or spiritual needs.

Present "Photo collage 5B," and discuss the needs of the people in the photos.

#### STUDENT 5B.1 RESOURCES

#### Possible questions:

- > What do you think are the needs of the people in these photos?
- > Who do you think is/ should be responsible for helping these people?
- > What should humanitarian workers take into consideration in meeting the needs in a camp for displaced persons?

*At the end of 2006, there were an estimated 9.9 million refugees and 24.5 million war-affected internally displaced persons in the world. Many others had fled their homes, becoming migrants, for a range of reasons including poverty and lack of local opportunities.*  
– UNHCR, 2006  
Global Trends

## The exploration

### 2. PLANNING A CAMP (15 minutes)

Distribute “Planning a camp - a report” to students, and ask them to describe how planners responded to some of the needs that they identified in step 1 as well as those described in the handout.



Divide the class into small groups. Instruct half of the groups to list specific ideas about what is involved in setting up a camp for displaced persons.

*[For example: site selection and layout, ensuring access and warehousing, acquiring building materials and equipment, organizing the main services or responding to environmental concerns]*

Instruct the other half of the groups to list specific ideas about the main services that should be provided to meet the basic needs of displaced persons in a camp.

*[For example: water supply and drainage, shelter, food supply, collection and disposal of refuse and human waste, medical facilities, lighting and energy, internal security and communication]*

### 3. CALCULATE RESOURCES FOR A CAMP (40 minutes)

Distribute “Information and instructions for camp planners” to the groups, and ask them to read the information in the box.



Ask each group to develop a plan for meeting a specific category of need of in this camp (e.g. food, water, shelter). Each group should calculate the quantities of supplies needed and think about how to obtain and distribute them to people in the camp, taking into account the stipulations of six months and 10,000 people. Distribute the worksheet “Planning report” for students to record their ideas.



After about ten minutes, have each group present its plan for class discussion.

The presentations should include:

- the category of need addressed;
- the quantity of supplies and services needed;
- a plan for acquiring supplies/services;
- a plan for distributing the supplies/services fairly and efficiently;
- specific plans for meeting the needs of the most vulnerable groups (e.g. unaccompanied children, women and girls, pregnant and nursing mothers, disabled persons, the elderly, etc.) and for identifying the skills, strengths and resources of the displaced community that might be of help in meeting their needs.

Broaden the discussion to cover the scale of the effort and the resources needed to establish camps of a much larger size. Have students give examples of such camps from around the world.

*We ran away with babies on our shoulders and children on our arms and the elderly stumbling behind us. Over the fields, through the bush, on into the swamp. We all feared for our lives. The soldiers had already been to the neighbouring villages and simply abducted women who never reappeared.*  
– a 60-year-old displaced woman, Nigeria

#### Possible question:

- > How would your plan need to be changed if the camp had to meet the needs of 300,000 people?

## The exploration

### 4. HOW TO PROTECT HUMAN DIGNITY AND ENSURE IDENTITY (10 minutes)

Discuss the needs other than biological that humanitarian workers must consider while helping displaced persons to recover, to assume responsibility for themselves and to preserve their human dignity.

#### Possible questions:

- > What social, psychological and spiritual needs must be addressed?  
[For example: education, information, recreation, religious and cultural practices]
- > If you found yourself living in a camp, what could you do to continue feeling like the same person you were before?
- > Why do you think nearly 80% of all displaced persons are women and children?
- > What risks might women, children and the elderly face in a camp for displaced persons?
- > How can these risks be avoided?
- > In what ways might living in a camp undermine people's human dignity, confidence and ability to look after themselves? How can these elements be overcome?

*For refugee and displaced children, boredom and absence of education (...) is a dangerous combination. It produces unstructured days where traumatizing memories linger, fears thrive, and violence is always possible. (...) Girls may be threatened with rape and boys with recruitment into gangs. Adolescents may get pregnant at a very early age. The lives of children, in short, start to fall apart very quickly...*  
– Marc Sommers, Emergency Education for Children

### 5. CLOSE – NEEDS AFTER LEAVING THE CAMP (10 minutes)

Give students a few minutes to write down what they think people will need after they leave the camp.

Divide them into four groups, and have each group focus on one of the following categories of people in the camp:

- children under five;
- young people;
- adults;
- the elderly.

Then discuss the needs they mention and the reasons they give.

#### Possible questions:

- > What differences are there in the needs of children and the needs of adults?
- > Who might need particular attention? Why?  
[For example: those who have experienced physical or psychological trauma may need long-term counselling and medical services, those separated from family members will need help to find them]
- > What do you think ordinary individuals can do for refugees and other displaced persons?  
[For example: help refugees and other displaced people who come into their community to feel welcome, help them to find jobs, contribute to the funding of humanitarian organizations, let their politicians know that they want their country to help refugees and other displaced persons]

*It was hot at the border. I could feel the burning rocks through the soles of my sandals. But the children that I watched leave were barefooted. They'd been walking for three days, climbing our Afghan mountains. They were just small kids. They reminded me of chicks. They looked dazed.*  
– a resistance fighter

*The disintegration of families in times of war leaves women and girls especially vulnerable to violence. Nearly 80% of the (...) people uprooted by wars today are women and children. When fathers, husbands, brothers and sons are drawn away to fight, they leave women, the very young and the elderly to fend for themselves. (...) Refugee families cite rape or the fear of rape as a key factor in their decisions to seek refuge.*  
– UNICEF, The State of the World's Children 1996

## The exploration

### **!** KEY IDEAS

- Responding to the needs of people uprooted as a result of armed conflict requires a great deal of planning and effort and ample resources.
- In addition to their immediate biological needs, the social, psychological and spiritual needs of displaced persons must also be addressed to enable them to regain their human dignity and independence as quickly as possible.
- Assistance should be provided in a manner that aims to minimise any unintended harm it may cause.

*In 2006, 734,000 refugees voluntarily returned to their homes, some 30,000 were resettled in another country and a small number integrated into the local community to which they had originally fled.*  
– UNHCR, 2006 Global Trends

## Extension activities

### HELPING CLOSE TO HOME

If you have located a community of refugees or other displaced persons, find out what some of their needs are (e.g. food, clothing, trauma counselling, language tutoring, reading). Organize an effort by your class to meet some of those needs. What are the beneficial aspects of your assistance? What might be some of the negative implications?

### COOPERATION AMONG HUMANITARIAN ORGANIZATIONS

Over the years there has been increasing acceptance of the interrelation between emergency and development activities, leading to a broader approach towards humanitarian assistance. Do research on the work of humanitarian organizations – where they are working, what they are doing, how they coordinate their work with other organizations. Possible avenues of research include:

- writing to humanitarian organizations for information;
- using the Internet;
- making use of library resources;
- examining news media reports and magazine articles.

*To carry out its operations in 2006, the ICRC operated 3,500 trucks and other vehicles, two vessels, 300 warehouses and over 15 aircraft.*  
– ICRC, Annual Report 2006

### MAIN ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED

#### United Nations:

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees  
(<http://www.unhcr.org>)

United Nations World Food Programme  
(<http://www.wfp.org>)

United Nations Development Programme  
(<http://www.undp.org>)

United Nations Children's Fund  
(<http://www.unicef.org>)

United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs  
(<http://ochaonline.un.org>)

International Organization for Migration  
(<http://www.iom.int>)

#### International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement:

International Committee of the Red Cross  
(<http://www.icrc.org>)

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies  
(<http://www.ifrc.org>)

International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement  
(<http://www.redcross.int>)

## Extension activities

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**International non-governmental organizations:**

Care

(<http://www.care.org>)

Danish Refugee Council

(<http://www.drc.dk>)

Doctors Without Borders/*Médecins Sans Frontières*

(<http://www.doctorswithoutborders.org>)

Handicap International

(<http://www.handicap-international.org>)

International Rescue Committee

(<http://www.theirc.org>)

Norwegian Refugee Council

(<http://www.nrc.no>)

Oxfam

(<http://www.oxfam.org>)

Save the Children

(<http://www.savethechildren.com>)

World Concern

(<http://www.worldconcern.org>)

World Vision

(<http://www.worldvision.org>)

**Human rights and advocacy organizations:**

Amnesty International

(<http://www.amnesty.org>)

Human Rights Watch

(<http://www.hrw.org>)

Refugees International

(<http://www.refugeesinternational.org>)

Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights

(<http://www.yucom.org.yu/EnglishVersion/LawyersCommittee.asp>)

# Planning a camp – a report

When the Gulf Crisis broke out at the beginning of August 1990, hundreds of thousands of foreign workers from Egypt, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, the Philippines and Thailand fled Kuwait and Iraq. The arrival of large numbers of cars, buses and trucks created a huge traffic jam on the Jordanian border. Entire families sat waiting, not knowing what the next day would bring. Tens of thousands of people suddenly found themselves stranded in the desert on the border between Iraq and Jordan without food or water.

## An immediate response

The authorities had to organize temporary shelters for them in the no-man's-land between Iraq and

Jordan. The Jordanian Red Crescent and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) immediately launched an emergency assistance operation to provide drinking water, shelter and medical care. Several non-governmental organizations (NGOs) also joined in the effort to meet the vast needs arising from the situation.

An emergency first-aid post was set up. Serious cases were evacuated to the hospital in Ruweisah. The area was soon overcrowded. During the day, temperatures rose as high as 50 degrees centigrade. There was no shade from the scorching sun and water was becoming scarce.

Water is the most urgent need in such circumstances. People waited



Roland Sidler/ICRC

in line for hours to try and get just a few litres of drinking water for their families, and fights would break out when distributions of bottled water were not properly organized. Food was also running out.

Only 30% of the displaced people had proper shelter. Others found makeshift means of protecting themselves from the sun. But many more had nothing. Strong winds and swirling dust only made conditions worse.

The area was clearly not suitable for setting up a proper camp. Water tankers had to make 40 trips a day to the camp from a borehole 35 kilometres away. Each time, the water was pumped into collapsible tanks and then piped to taps, where



Michel Schroeder/ICRC

people queued up to draw the water they needed. Several rows of pipes had to be set up to avoid long waits in the hot sun.

## An alternative solution had to be found

The engineers realized that a more suitable site had to be found. The Jordanian authorities agreed to allow a camp for 30,000 displaced persons to be built near Azraq.

Most of the equipment needed to build the new camp was airlifted to Amman. The supplies were sorted out at Amman airport and then loaded on trucks. Preparations were made for setting up the tents and special teams were trained for this purpose.



Roland Sidler/ICRC



## Planning a camp – a report

A camp planner described their work.

Our main difficulty in setting up this camp was the very short time we had to complete the job.

First we had to choose the site. We had to find the right slope and make sure that the wind would blow the smell from the latrines away from the camp.

Then we had to install a water supply system. We ran a two-kilometre pipe off the major road. The water, which comes from the Jordanian mains, is then stored in large tanks we set up. The water flows downhill from the tanks (which can hold 390,000 litres) to 30 distribution points. We are also laying drains – hence the importance

of building the camp on a slight slope so that waste water can flow into the large soak-away pits that we will dig downhill from the site.

The camp should accommodate 30,000 people and has been divided into sectors. Every sector is made up of a number of squares, each providing shelter for 500 people. We have dirt roads around each of the squares so that vehicles can drive in to remove rubbish, deal with any technical problems and bring food to the distribution points. Latrines have been dug for the camp population, and we are installing electric lighting so they can be used at night.

**Source:** ICRC, *Setting up a refugee camp*, Geneva, 1991.



Roland Sidler/ICRC

### SETTING UP A CAMP INVOLVES:

- Site selection and layout
- Ensuring access and warehousing
- Acquiring building material and equipment
- Organizing the main services

### MAIN SERVICES ARE:

- Water supply and drainage
- Shelter
- Food supply
- Refuse and human waste disposal
- Medical facilities
- Lighting and energy
- Internal security
- Communication



Michel Schroeder/ICRC

# Information and instructions for camp planners

**Refugee population to come to this camp:** 10,000 (3,000 women, 1,000 men, 5,000 young people, and 1,000 children under five)

- Unaccompanied children: 2,000
- Pregnant and nursing women: 800
- Sick and wounded: 1,000
- Widows or women whose husbands are missing: 2,000
- Disabled: 500
- Elderly: 2,000

**Camp location:** a hilly, open field, 200 kilometres from the nearest city

**Time of year:** autumn

**Length of time to assist this population:** six months

## WATER

Count on average 20 litres of water/day for an adult. (3 litres/day = only drinking water for survival)

- > How much water will be needed?
- > Does the drinking water have to be treated?
- > How will water be obtained for the population?
- > How will water be provided?

## MEDICAL SUPPLIES AND TREATMENT

Expect 100 patient consultations per day.

- > How many sick, wounded or elderly people and pregnant women are in the camp?
- > What kinds of medical supplies will be needed?
- > Calculate the quantity of medical supplies needed.
- > What medical personnel are needed?
- > What procedures need to be set up?

## FOOD

Consider that every adult needs the equivalent of 2,250 calories and a standard ration of almost 0.6 kg per day. This can be broken down into:

- 500 grams of wheat
- 30 grams of edible oil
- 30 grams of powdered milk
- 20 grams of sugar
- 3 grams of tea

- > How much food is needed?
- > How will you acquire it?
- > How will you distribute it?
- > Will it be necessary to cook? If so, how will it be done? What kinds of equipment will be required?
- > List the various types of food you will provide.
- > What will you do if you have people with special dietary restrictions (due to disease, malnutrition, religious or cultural practices, etc.)?

Recall the food distribution you saw in the video *Forced from home* and in some of the photos. Think about all of the planning that was necessary.

## SANITATION

Since poor sanitation can lead to medical/health problems, your plans should consider how to prevent disease.

- > How many latrines need to be constructed?
- > Where will they be located?
- > What tools and materials will be needed to construct them (e.g. wood, branches, zinc)?
- > What are your plans for cleaning and maintaining them?
- > How will solid waste be disposed of?
- > Where will people wash?

# Information and instructions for camp planners

CLOTHING

Clothing should be appropriate for weather conditions and take into account cultural and religious practices.

- > What types of clothing are required?
- > If there are infants in the camp, how many diapers or substitutes are needed?
- > Is bedding needed? What can be used?
- > How will people wash their clothes?

SHELTER

Ideally, each person should have 30 square metres of space. When circumstances do not allow this, the amount of space allotted to each person can be reduced to 10 square metres. In very difficult situations, such as in mountainous or urban areas, it can be reduced to three square metres per person.

- > Calculate the total space that you will require.
- > If a tent measures 150 square metres, how many tents will be needed?
- > What effect will the weather have on your plans for shelter?

FUEL

Fuel is necessary for such things as cooking, heating, lighting and running a generator.

- > What fuel needs do you estimate your camp will have?
- > What fuel will be used? How will it be supplied?
- > What are some dangers that need to be avoided? What precautions do you plan?

There are currently 10 million refugees and some 24 million people who are displaced within their own countries as a result of armed conflict, generalized violence or massive violations of human rights.  
– UNHCR, July 2007

## Worksheet

### Planning report

Category of need:		
Supplies/services needed:	Quantity:	Plan for acquiring them:
		Plan for distributing them:
Special plans for certain vulnerable groups:		
Pregnant women:		
Children:		
Disabled persons:		
Elderly:		
Other:		

Module 5: Responding to the consequences of armed conflict