



Case Study 2: Darfur, Sudan

As the world's attention was drawn to the growing Darfur crisis in April-May 2004, World Vision's Global Rapid Response Team was monitoring the situation closely, aware that a large deployment was possible. As it became clear that the GRRT would be called upon to mount WV's initial response the team manager, Dan Kelly, requested all team members to be on standby for possible deployment to Sudan.

The first GRRT member to be deployed was Ashraf Yacoub, who accompanied Philippe Guiton and Tom Getman to Khartoum in early June in order to get World Vision registered with the authorities. Ashraf's Arabic language and networking skills were invaluable.

By mid-July all but a few of the GRRT team of 22 were in Sudan (in addition, two team members were deployed to Chad). World Vision's ability to mobilize a large team of experts so rapidly soon paid dividends. By mid-August the programme measured over \$20M with 250,000 target beneficiaries around Nyala, South Darfur. The programme was funded by a wide range of donors such as WFP, ECHO, AusAID, OFDA, USAID and DEC.

Throughout August and September the number of GRRT in Sudan gradually reduced as full-time hires and secondees took their places. By early October all the GRRT had left Sudan, leaving behind a strong program that will benefit thousands of displaced families for months to come. The GRRT is now preparing for another possible rapid onset disaster.

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About World Vision

Founded in 1950, World Vision International is a Christian humanitarian organisation serving children, their families and communities in conditions of poverty in nearly 100 countries, primarily through programmes of transformational development, emergency relief and promotion of justice.

Our work is based on three principles of the Christian faith: human dignity (all people are created in the image and likeness of God); equality (all people are equal in God's sight); and commitment to justice (all people have equal rights); which compel us to work for the well-being of all people, especially children.

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Global Rapid
Response Team

grrt



What is the Global Rapid Response Team?

The Global Rapid Response Team (GRRT) is a group of highly skilled professional relief practitioners from within the World Vision Partnership who can be mobilised in teams at short notice to initiate disaster responses anywhere in the world. They are dedicated to helping National Offices respond with rapid deployment of critical expertise and supplies.

The GRRT has been vital to the success of a number of large-scale emergency responses. Without the team, several responses like Iran and Darfur could not have been attempted. Others would have been greatly delayed or much smaller (e.g., Southern Africa and Gujarat).

When fully staffed, the GRRT has 22 members. Team members are composed of ten different nationalities and live in twelve different countries.

What skill sets does the GRRT possess?

The principal mandate of the GRRT is to provide professional and sustainable emergency responses. Team members have therefore been selected with generalist and technical skill sets that maximise the effectiveness of those responses. The GRRT includes relief managers, programme officers, and specialists in health & nutrition, human resources, finance, logistics, security, food aid, protection, information technology and communications.



How does the GRRT work?

When a large-scale emergency strikes, the GRRT is committed to being functional at the disaster site within 24 to 72 hours of the onset of the disaster, and usually will remain there for up to 3 to 4 months. At any one time, the GRRT has capacity to respond simultaneously to two large-scale humanitarian emergencies anywhere in the world.

During non-deployment periods, GRRT members are available to World Vision Regional Relief Offices for various disaster preparedness and capacity building initiatives.

Requests for deployment of GRRT members to an emergency site, or for other approved non-deployment activities, are usually made by a Regional Relief Director, Regional Vice President, or National Director through his/her Regional Relief -Director.



Where has the GRRT been deployed?

- Southern Africa Food Emergency Response (SAFER)
- Iraq/Jordan
- Central Asia Response (Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Pakistan)
- China
- Mauritania
- Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo
- Sri Lanka
- Chad
- Indonesia
- The Balkans
- Russia
- Senegal
- Tanzania
- Georgia
- Ethiopia
- Colombia
- Iran
- Sudan

Case Study 1: Bam, Iran

On December 28th, 2003 GRRT members were notified that they had to deploy as soon as possible to Bam, Iran, the site of a devastating earthquake on the morning of 26th December. At least 30,000 people were killed outright in this disaster; another 80,000 were left homeless. WV considered this disaster a Category II emergency, and the GRRT was needed to help the MEERO office provide a quick and sure response.

GRRT members were in Bam as of 2 January. Within the first ten days or so, there were six GRRT staff on site working on the Bam Earthquake Relief Program: Debs Harris Program Officer; Mia Marina, Logistics Officer; John O'Dea, Program Coordinator; Ashraf Yacoub, Finance Manager; Greg Campbell, IT Specialist; and Paul Sitnam, Senior Relief Coordinator and Program Manager. In tandem with staff from MEERO, WV Japan, WV Afghanistan; WV Communications, and later on, from WV US, and with local Iranian staff, work began on the awesome task of providing emergency relief to victims of one of the most devastating earthquakes to ever hit the region.

Two WV organized airlifts (from Italy and then Dubai) brought over 80 metric tonnes of much needed relief supplies on the 29th of December and in very early January. The relief supplies included family tents; plastic sheeting; soap; blankets; and collapsible water containers. WV brought the supplies to the crisis site in Bam and distributions started immediately to the needy families, in collaboration with the Iranian Red Cross Society and the local government's disaster coordination body. This emergency relief distribution went on for about three weeks.

The GRRT staff members formed the core management, programming and implementing entities of the program in the emergency stages. WV bought hand tools on the local market (sledge hammers, rakes, shovels, picks and work gloves) to dovetail into the emergency distribution of relief supplies. The tools were to help victims locate family belongings in the rubble.

From the start, along with the distribution of the relief supplies and construction tools, WV started building up good working relationships with the local authorities at all levels. MEERO's already established rapport with them was of immense value. Locally, in Bam, WV got to know (and got to be known by) the local authorities, the Iranian Red Crescent, and the beneficiaries. They appreciated WV's low key, down to business approach, and the respectful treatment of their Iranian hosts and the beneficiaries. Also, the GRRT staff members established a lean and streamlined management structure, which worked on a trust and cooperation basis. This motivated and enabled all staff to work hard and perform well under very adverse conditions (cold weather and very rudimentary living and sanitary conditions).

As the emergency program went on, other, concurrent activities were added on: child protection, school rehabilitation (and provision of portable classrooms), latrine construction, reconstruction and rehabilitation of clinics and health centers, and rehabilitation of the underwater canal systems (ganats) which brought much needed water to the date plantations, the backbone of the Bam economy. The program was serving about 12,000 people by February.

By the time the last GRRT staff member had left Iran in mid- March, GRRT had helped set up a sustainable and well-



liked program (which is ongoing). This was mainly through its professional and timely approach to emergency relief activities, its preparing the ground for more sustainable rehabilitation programmes, its building up of a flexible and hard working team of both local

and ex-pat staff, and its establishment of strong and productive links with the local government and religious authorities, other NGOs (international and local) and the beneficiaries themselves.