NO RELIEF

SURVEYING THE EFFECTS OF GUN VIOLENCE ON HUMANITARIAN AND DEVELOPMENT PERSONNEL

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"hd | Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue

SMALL ARMS SURVEY

ABOUT THE REPORT

What is the impact of weapons availability and misuse on the work of relief and development agencies? Are attacks on workers on the rise, as is commonly assumed? Where do the gravest dangers lie – from political or criminal violence? Are these agencies adequately preparing their international and national staff to meet the security threats arising?

No Relief aims to answer these and many other related questions, drawing on the results of the largest victimisation survey ever undertaken of development and humanitarian personnel, based on over 2,000 questionnaires, involving staff from 17 UN and NGO agencies in 90 countries.

Its key findings include that one in five workers face serious security incidents; that workers are cut off from assisting large numbers people in need because of armed threats and the misuse of guns, that agencies are increasingly turning to private security to protect staff and supplies and that the biggest threat appears to be criminal violence, from civilians armed with handguns.

No Relief makes a number of recommendations that deserve close attention. They are targeted at agencies and governments, for steps that can be taken to address gun violence and to better regulate the arms trade. This is particularly crucial in the lead up to the 2006 UN Review Conference to evaluate progress made on the UN Programme of Action on small arms and next steps for global action.

ABOUT THE PROJECT PARTNERS

The Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD Centre) is an independent, Geneva-based foundation whose purpose is to prevent human suffering in war. Our humanitarian approach starts from the premise that preventing and resolving armed conflict is the surest means of doing so, and to this end we promote and facilitate dialogue between belligerents.

Through our work, we seek to contribute to efforts to improve the global response to armed conflict. Our operational engagements are complemented by policy and analytical work focused on civilian protection, mediation techniques, transitional issues and arms and security matters.

HD Centre's work on small arms control, began in 2001, includes several projects that aim to draw attention to the human cost of small arms availability and misuse, and to identify policy options for action by governments and other actors.

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The Small Arms Survey is an independent research project located at the Graduate Institute of International Studies in Geneva, Switzerland. Established in 1999, the project is supported by the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, and by contributions from the Governments of Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom. It collaborates with the United Nations, international organisations, and with various research institutes and non-governmental organisations in many countries including Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Costa Rica, Georgia, Germany, Israel, Kenya, Norway, the Russian Federation, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the United Kingdom and the United States.

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CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

TERMS AND ACRONYMS

In the Line of Fire – The Security and Risk in Humanitarian and Development Action Study, also known as the *In the Line of Fire* project.

Phase I – A large-scale project co-ordinated by the Small Arms Survey and the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue involving nine partner agencies from November 2001 to August 2003. The primary instrument was a victimisation survey as well as support for the Johns Hopkins study on the mortality and morbidity of humanitarian workers taking place between January 2002 and August 2003. The *In the Line of Fire* report is available at www.smallarmssurvey.org and www.hdcentre.org in French, Spanish and English.

Phase II – Expanded to involve over 17 partner agencies, from September 2003 and July 2005. The largest victimisation survey of relief workers yet undertaken. The *No Relief* report is available at www.smallarmssurvey.org and www.hdcentre.org in multiple languages.

Reporting period – The distribution of questionnaires as part of Phase II took place between February and November 2004 and involved over 2,000 respondents in 90 countries.

Focal points – At least 17 individuals in partner agencies who were responsible for liaising with the project co-ordinators, distributing the questionnaires within their own agencies, ensuring their return and providing agency-related information. Focal points are listed in the acknowledgements.

Focus countries – Afghanistan and Angola were selected because they are countries in different phases of transition from protracted armed conflicts. Both nations have had or are in the process of official disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) processes and gauging the impact(s) was an additional factor in focussing on these countries. In addition, the majority of partner agencies were working in these two countries.

Focus regions – The Great Lakes (particularly Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda, DRC and Congo-Brazzaville) and the Middle East (particularly Iraq, Iran, Jordan, Palestine and Israel) were selected because they are regions with various forms of ongoing violent conflict, as well as different issues and approaches when it comes to tackling small arms control. In addition, the majority of partner agencies have operations and programming in these two regions.

Programme of Action – The 2001 UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. The full text is available at disarmament2.un.org/cab/poa.html.

Small arms and light weapons – Though no consensus-based definition for small arms and light weapons exists**,** 'small arms' generally refer to grenades, assault rifles, handguns, revolvers, light machine guns. 'Light weapons' include anti-tank and anti-aircraft guns, heavy machine guns, and recoilless rifles. These two categories do not include heavy artillery, other large conventional weapons, or anti-personnel land mines. See the 1997 Report on the UN Panel of Experts definition (available at www.un.org/sc/committees/sanctions/a52298.pdf). The terms guns, firearms, weapons and small arms are used interchangeably throughout this report.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

FOREWORD

An alarming trend has been noticed in recent years: deliberate attacks against relief and development workers and agencies are on the rise, from Chechnya to Haiti, from Iraq to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. This is making the work of agencies increasingly precarious. But worse than that, every time workers are targeted or cannot operate for fear of attacks, it is civilians who pay the price.

Whether the violence they face is a result of conflict or crime, the proliferation of small arms is a major contributor to their perceptions of insecurity.

No Relief greatly increases our understanding of the multiple ways in which personnel and operations are affected by the ubiquity of weapons. The survey has provided useful insights into how agencies respond to this threat, and what more we can do to increase the safety of all of our staff. In shedding such light on the specific tools of violence, this study also draws our attention to an area where humanitarian and development agencies can collectively make a difference: tackling the arms trade and the negative impacts of gun violence.

This report shows that more attention is urgently needed to ensure that weapons do not flow to areas of violent insecurity. By focusing the lens on affected countries such as Afghanistan and Angola, it also notes that where arms are in ready supply, they must be rapidly and comprehensively removed and destroyed. Relief and development agencies need to add their voice to the international debates on small arms control and make sure the reality their workers face daily is better understood by policy makers and governments. Rather than a new area of work, I believe such involvement is an integral part of efforts to protect civilians.

I commend the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue and the Small Arms Survey for this powerful documentation of a particular human cost of the unregulated arms trade. The onus is now on development and relief agencies – and all governments – to take these findings on board and draw, and act on the appropriate conclusions.

Denis Caillaux
Secretary General
CARE International
June 2005

INTRODUCTION

Humanitarian and development personnel are increasingly facing intentional violence, intimidation and evacuations. Between July 2003 and July 2004 at least 100 civilian UN and NGO personnel were violently killed. The consequences of gun violence on the security of workers and their access to civilian populations has been profound. The recent attacks against humanitarian workers in Iraq and Afghanistan have sent shockwaves through the international community – and the after-shocks will be felt for some time to come. As a measure of its seriousness, the 2004 *UN High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Changes* strongly condemned the increasing dangers facing relief and development workers.[1]

The human toll of gun violence – including both conflict and crime-related violence – is severe. For every relief or development worker who is fatally or even non-fatally wounded, thousands of people can potentially suffer. Armed violence triggers suspensions and evacuations, thereby halting the critical flow of livelihood assistance and essential services. Moreover, if presence can contribute to protection, as many believe, absence can facilitate renewed armed violence. While civilians in crisis situations draw upon a set of coping systems to deal with stress, there is no doubt that the sudden collapse of humanitarian and development interventions can greatly exacerbate their risks and insecurity.[2]

There is a belief that most armed insecurity has been concentrated in a comparatively small group of countries emerging from protracted wars: Afghanistan, Iraq, Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). But other countries have also witnessed an upsurge in intentional armed violence directed against civilians, including humanitarian and development workers. In Uganda, Papua New Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire personnel have been directly targeted, and agencies are withdrawing their staff and closing down their projects and operations. As this report went to press, large numbers of UN and NGO relief workers were being evacuated from Haiti and Western Darfur due to threats from militia there.[3]

No Relief details the findings of an action-oriented research project undertaken from 2003–2004 referred to as the *In the Line of Fire* project. It constitutes the largest victimisation survey of humanitarian and development workers ever undertaken. It drew on an array of partner agencies from the UN and NGO sectors as well as academics, practitioners, public health specialists and media representatives. The project aimed to highlight the scale and distribution of guns in areas where agencies work; review the impacts of arms availability on the quality and quantity of relief and development assistance; and document the human cost of gun violence on personnel *and* civilians.

The project also aimed to generate concrete recommendations and entry-points for agencies to improve the security of their personnel, and to promote greater respect for the rights and well-being of ordinary people caught up in situations of armed violence. In this way, it has advanced a people-centred perspective on the human toll of the arms trade. Such an approach is vital as the UN process on small arms control moves towards an important Review Conference in 2006. While *No Relief* acknowledges the many gains made with respect to improving security management, many of these in response to changes in the contexts where relief and development workers are based, more needs to be done.

No Relief makes for sober reading. It finds that workers are increasingly treated as soft targets, and are exposed to escalating risks to their security. But this is not all. Due to their vulnerability and the resulting efforts to increase their protection, sacrosanct and fundamental humanitarian principles of neutrality and impartiality are being compromised. Operational strategies to strengthen humanitarian access and ensure impartiality through the promotion of *acceptance* are also increasingly threatened.[4] Yet it is *criminal* violence committed with firearms – not attacks by

armed combatants – that remains the most significant threat facing workers. *No Relief* finds that due in many cases to *civilians armed with guns*, agencies are regularly forced to evacuate and suspend their activities.

The Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD Centre) and the Small Arms Survey urge governments, international organisations, and NGOs to consider the findings carefully. We call on donors and agencies to quickly adopt concrete measures to better protect their staff, including a combination of guidelines, security training regimes, early warning and incident monitoring systems, and effective communication mechanisms to strengthen the security of personnel in order to prevent them from being caught in the line of fire.

Notes

1. "The ability of the United Nations to protect civilians and help end conflict is directly related to United Nations staff security, which has been eroding since the mid-1990s. To be able to maintain presence, and operate securely and effectively, the United Nations needs four things: the capacity to perform its mandated tasks fully; freedom from unwarranted intrusion by Member States into operations; full respect by staff of United Nations codes of impartiality; and a professional security service, with access to Member States' intelligence and threat assessments. The Secretary-General has recommended the creation of such a service, headed by a Director who will report directly to him. Member States should support and fully fund the proposed Directorate of Security and accord high priority to assisting the Secretary-General in implementing a new staff security system in 2005." UN Secretary General's Report on Threats, Challenges and Change (2004), para 74
2. For a discussion of "coping strategies" in situations of human or natural emergencies, see Donini et al (2005) and the work of the Tufts Humanitarianism and War Project at www.hwproject.tufts.edu/.
3. See for example, BBC (2005) "Threatened UN staff leave Darfur" 16 March at www.news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/4354933.stm.
4. OCHA defines *acceptance* as being "based on the premise that local communities and power structures will allow and even support humanitarian activities if these activities are well understood. The acceptance approach requires that those in a position to undermine humanitarian work must see it to be consistent and believe it to be independent". See the December 2004 Statement by Under-Secretary General Jan Egeland at the Security Council Open Debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict.

KEY FINDINGS

No Relief has generated a number of findings that pose important challenges for the policies and practices of humanitarian and development agencies. Drawing on a sample of 2,089 respondents from more than 17 international agencies in 96 countries and territories, it finds that humanitarian and development workers are the explicit targets of criminal violence and, to a lesser extent, of intentional violence from state and non-state actors. It also finds that while fatalities among workers have remained comparatively stable since the all-time high in the mid-1990s, perceptions of insecurity and victimisation appear to be on the rise. As a result, access to beneficiaries and a secure humanitarian space are increasingly constrained – particularly where the prevalence of small arms and light weapons is high.

Specifically, *No Relief* finds that:

1. The most significant threat facing workers is civilians armed with guns – often with handguns. Almost one in five respondents reported being involved in a security incident in the previous six months. In addition to threats from armed conflict, civilians with guns, particularly criminals and petty thieves, are a primary cause of insecurity for humanitarian and development personnel. While much is made of the deliberate targeting of humanitarian and development actors by armed groups and warring factions, by far the biggest risk emerges from the threat of criminal violence. Weak or outdated approaches by governments to regulate civilian access and possession of small arms could be regarded as a significant contributing factor in many locations.

2. Armed violence prevents humanitarian and development workers from accessing beneficiaries. There is a direct correlation between the perceived availability of small arms and the presence of armed violence, and access of workers to beneficiaries. In fact, more than one-fifth (21%) of all respondents claimed that 25% or more of their beneficiary target groups was

rendered inaccessible in the previous six months due to the occurrence of routine armed threats.

3. Suspensions of operations due to war-related or criminal violence involving guns are common. One-third of all respondents (33%) reported having had operations or projects suspended in the previous six months due to armed conflict, as compared to 26% who reported having suspended operations due to armed crime. This represents a higher proportion than was reported in Phase I, in which only 13% of respondents indicated a suspension or delay due to armed crime or conflict in the previous six months. As *No Relief* is based on a more robust sample and distribution of respondents than Phase I, its conclusions can be considered to be more reliable.

4. Agencies are turning to armed guards to protect themselves from violent insecurity. There appears to have been a significant increase in the use of armed guards by participating agencies since Phase I, with up to 32% of all respondents reporting the use of guards in *No Relief.* It appears that the *hardening of targets,* particularly through the contracting of private security, is an increasingly common response to mitigating insecurity. [5]

5. Security training for staff appears to be comparatively widespread, but is still more common among expatriates than nationals. It is still the case, however, that fewer than half (44%) of all respondents indicated that they had received training from their current agency (although this appears to represent an improvement of the 15% who reported receiving such training in Phase I of the study). *No Relief* confirms earlier suspicions that expatriate workers are still more likely to have received security training than national staff. This trend was also reflected in *No Relief's* two focus regions – the Great Lakes and the Middle East. Alarmingly, one's origins (expatriate or national) appear to be a more accurate predictor of receiving security training than the reported levels of violence in a given country.

6. Responses from the study's two focus regions – the Great Lakes and the Middle East – revealed differences in the way workers perceive the insecurity arising from weapons availability. Respondents in the Middle East were more likely to report working in an environment characterised by "high violence" than workers in the Great Lakes region.

7. Victimisation rates in Afghanistan and Angola are especially high, compared to the global baseline. In both Afghanistan and Angola, the proportion of national staff (as opposed to expatriates) who reported having been personally victimised is higher still. ***No Relief*** finds that national respondents from Afghanistan are three times more likely than their expatriate counterparts to report having been personally victimised in the past six months.

*8. **No Relief** finds that respondents reporting the highest levels of armed violence, prevalence and misuse of weapons, and perceived threats are clustered in relatively small number of countries.* The most acute levels of violence were reported by personnel in Guinea, Nepal, the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT), Uganda, Kenya, and Iraq. Moreover, respondents from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Iraq, Côte d'Ivoire, Congo-Brazzaville, and Uganda registered the highest levels of prevalence and misuse of small arms and light weapons. Further, personnel in OPT, Iraq, Afghanistan, Uganda and Nepal appear to record the highest levels of threat perception. According to these criteria, ***No Relief*** finds that the OPT, Uganda and Iraq appear to be the most dangerous places to work.

Notes

5. The concept of hardening the target refers to methods of increasing the physical security of workers. This can include restrictions on movement, the use of perimeter fences and the screening of visitors. It can also include the hiring of private security guards to dissuade would-be aggressors. In this context, however, it bears little relation to the protection of civilians or "humanitarian protection".

SECTION 1 MEASURING THE THREAT OF SMALL ARMS AVAILABILITY AND MISUSE

Despite growing concern over the attendant threats of armed violence, humanitarian and development agencies continue to under-value the importance of collecting and analysing data on the distribution, types and impacts of firearms. *No Relief* finds that the establishment of robust and reliable indicators of risk and insecurity arising from weapons availability and misuse could yield a number of direct and indirect benefits for agencies. At a minimum, raising awareness of the nature of the security environment in which agencies work, the prevalence, location, and types of guns in use, national firearms legislation and insights into the effectiveness of security mechanisms, are first steps to improving the protection of civilians and staff alike.

But senior managers in the humanitarian and development sectors have been slow to respond to the small arms crisis partly because they have lacked compelling evidence of the dimensions of the problem. While some empirical studies have highlighted the human security consequences of gun violence on livelihoods and entitlements,[6] the global documentation of intentional violence directed at staff in these sectors remains uneven and inconsistent. There is little accounting of the total financial and productivity costs of fatal and non-fatal injuries – or their implications on issues ranging from the quality of programming, the provision of insurance, or recruitment policies.

But even if the political and institutional will to respond has been slow, the risk of gun violence is nevertheless widely acknowledged. For example, the UN Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Co-ordinator argued that the humanitarian community's capacity to "protect and deliver humanitarian assistance to civilian populations in need is undermined by blatant attacks and threats against our unarmed humanitarian staff . . . Attacks by any armed group will only serve to paralyse the large and effective humanitarian operations."[7]

Agencies are now being forced to respond to the insecurity crisis. Whether a function of armed conflict or crime, the deliberate targeting of relief and development workers has catalysed a surge in evacuations and closures, many of which have featured in media headlines. In Afghanistan, for example, at least 29 workers were shot to death in the first six months of 2004. After almost 24 years of operating in the country, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) evacuated its operations from the country after losing at least five personnel to violence-induced injuries. CARE, World Vision and other agencies suspended Iraq operations indefinitely in late 2004 due to the real and perceived threats against their employees. Following the killing of four Save the Children staff in 2004, the agency also reluctantly evacuated its employees from Darfur at the end of the year.

The humanitarian community's capacity to protect and deliver humanitarian assistance to civilian populations in need is undermined by blatant attacks and threats against our unarmed humanitarian staff.

However, as Figure 1 below indicates, far more violence directed against workers occurred in 2004 than was reported in the news headlines. Victimisation is not restricted to intentional violence leading to death. It is more subtle – ranging from armed assaults and robbery to sexual harassment and intimidation. Many agencies aim to document the security incidents experienced by their staff, if only in an *ad hoc* fashion. Unfortunately, however, most organisations are unable to gather disaggregated statistics because definitions of what constitutes a "security incident" are incompatible, their organisational capacities are limited, or because employees themselves are reluctant to report having been victimised. The table below

(Figure 1) highlights a number of the more common incidents reported by a sample of agencies that do collect reasonably detailed information on the victimisation experienced by their personnel.

The evidence base:
Workers' exposure to gun violence

There is widespread belief that intentional violence against humanitarian and development workers is at an all-time high.[8] *No Relief* finds that while fatal and non-fatal injuries among workers may have stabilised or even declined in comparison with the mid-1990s, there is a *perception* that victimisation is nevertheless on the rise.[9] In the words of one UN security specialist,

"what has increased may not be the figures, but the fear."[10]

No Relief finds that data collection by agencies on the exposure and impacts of gun violence on humanitarian and development workers is not yet routine. Nevertheless, important antecedents to the present study exist. The Small Arms Survey and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), for example, have highlighted some of the negative costs of widespread misuse of small arms and light weapons for humanitarian and development agencies, including the frequent interruption of operations and inaccessibility of beneficiary populations, and the pervasiveness of intentional violence directed at civilians and workers alike.[11] These studies, however, were unable to deter-

Figure 1 Violent incidents reported by a sample of agencies: 2003–2004

	UN		Concern		IOM		IRC		SCF	
	No.	Rate/ 1,000	No.	Rate/ 1,000	No.	Rate/ 1,000	No.	Rate/ 1,000	No.	Rate/ 1,000
Deaths	24	0.34	3	0.81	1	.0.24	2	0.29	7	1.76
Hostage-Taking	12[A]	0.17	…	…	1	0.24	4	0.58	0	0
Assaults	388[B]	5.54	…	…	15	3.64	8[J]	1.17	5[L]	1.26
Harassment	307[C]	4.38	…	…	29	7.05	…	…	…	…
Bomb Threats	34[D]	0.48	…	…	6	1.45	…	…	…	…
Violence directed at Agency(ies)	698[E]	9.97	7	1.89	32	7.77	26[K]	3.80	2	5
Theft	1,806[F]	2.58	…	…	27	6.56	…	…	…	…
Evacuations	…		10	2.70	1	0.24	5	0.73	10[M]	2.52
Attacks on Convoys	7[G]	0.1	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	
Total Staff (denominator)	70,000[H]		3,700[I]		4,115		6,835		3,964	

Notes:
A. Includes 7 hostage-taking incidents with 14 staff in 2003 and 5 in the first six months of 2004.
B. Includes 258 assaults in 2003, 130 in the first six months of 2004.
C. There were 168 incidents of harassment reported in 2003, 139 in the first six months of 2004.
D. Approximately 30 bomb threats were reported in 2003, 4 in the first six months of 2004.
E. Some 270 incidents of violence against the UN were reported in 2003, 428 in the first six months of 2004.
F. At least 550 incidents of theft were reported in 2003, and 1,256 in the first six months of 2004.
G. There were 7 attacks on convoys in 2004 – Iraq, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Pakistan, DRC and Afghanistan.
H. It is currently impossible to determine the precise denominator of UN personnel – though current estimates are approximately 70,000.
I. This number does not include 300 staff based in UK offices.
J. This rises to approximately 18 if all injuries are included.
K. Includes both "direct" and "indirect" violence.
L. Includes assaults leading to intentional injury.
M. All temporary relocations.

mine absolute numbers or rates of death and injury because of uneven data collection capabilities and the absence of denominator data.

In addition to these early investigations, a retrospective survey administered by researchers at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health reports that intentional violence was the leading cause of death for workers of 32 agencies between 1985 and 1998.[13] It observed that age, gender and experience alone did not significantly influence risk of intentional violence. Dennis King has also found that most workers were killed in the past few years during ambushes on aid convoys – usually in remote and rebel-controlled areas when delivering supplies or conducting assessments.[14] King's non-exhaustive review of multiple

Figure 2 Countries with highest reported number of relief workers killed: 1997–2003

Country or Territory	Fatalities
Angola	58
Afghanistan	36
Iraq	32
Sudan	29
Democratic Republic of the Congo	18
Rwanda	17
Somalia	16
Burundi	11
Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT)	7
Uganda	7
Serbia and Montenegro (Kosovo)	5
Liberia	5

Source: King (2004a)

Figure 3 Reported humanitarian and development workers killed in acts of violence: 1997–2003[15]

	National staff	Expatriate staff
1997	12	10
1998	24	23
1999	22	13
2000	36	11
2001	18	10
2002	27	9
2003	49	27

Source: King (2004b)

sources shows that the majority of these reported deaths were concentrated in Africa, Central Asia, and the Middle East (see Figure 2).

This recent accumulation of evidence also suggests that it is local or national staff members who are the primary victims of intentional violence, and not expatriates.[16] According to one analyst, "[N]ational staff security should not be seen as just another headache we have to deal with. Instead, they are the prime resource in developing appropriate and effective security strategies for all staff".[17] Drawing on a review of archival media reports since 1997, King has observed that overall rates of violence against workers – particularly national staff – has increased.[18] *No Relief* finds that this picture is largely accurate, though trends vary from region to region.

A number of recent initiatives promise to deepen our understanding of the present mortality and injury trends among relief and development workers. For example, an ongoing US-based project examining the mortality and morbidity of humanitarian workers seeks to systematically document security incidents prospectively reported by more than twenty-one NGOs, as well as the ICRC, IFRC, UNHCR, UNICEF, and

WFP, from 2003 to 2008.[20] Though the project is still in its early days, a number of trends are already emerging from the data, such as the presence of guns in more than half of all reported incidents involving intentional violence, and the overwhelming presence of weapons in fatal injuries.[21]

Building on these and other *quantitative* studies, the first phase of *In the Line of Fire* sought to focus on the "subjective" dimensions of insecurity. Specifically, drawing on a set of qualitative tools, the project aimed to explore the perceptions and behavioural responses of humanitarian and development workers to their own security situation. A self-administered victimisation survey, designed in consultation with a wide bandwidth of actors, aimed to privilege the voice of workers, and probe untapped issues. The findings from Phase I are summarised in Box 1 below.

Parameters of In the Line of Fire: Phase II

The core instrument of the *In the Line of Fire* project is a victimisation survey. From the very beginning, agencies were selected to participate in the survey according to their global reach, the diversity of their activities and contexts in which they worked.[22] Phase II advanced a similar process as in Phase I, and elaborated a robust survey distribution system to ensure widespread dissemination of the questionnaire (see Annex 1).

As in Phase I, two regions were identified to generate a more focused understanding of the dynamics of arms availability and misuse and their impacts on relief and development workers.[23] The Great Lakes (particularly Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda, DRC and Congo-Brazzaville) and the Middle East (particularly Iraq, Iran,

Box 1 Summary of findings from Phase I

Phase I of the "In the Line of Fire" project, conducted in 2002–2003, was the first systematic survey of perceptions of humanitarian and development worker insecurity due to small arms availability and misuse. Based on more than 600 responses from workers in 39 countries and two territories, the key findings included:

Respondents report working in a variety of security environments: from "little" or "no" violence to "widespread armed conflict". A strong factor related to individuals' assessments of their security environment is the estimated level of gun violence.

Regardless of the security context, humanitarian and development workers reported a large number of groups to be in possession of weapons. In addition to the military, police, and private security forces, a majority of respondents report many other groups to be armed, including organised criminal groups, insurgent groups, and civilians.

Operations are also adversely affected by the availability and use of guns. Frequent obstacles – such as evacuations, suspensions or delays, and inaccessible beneficiaries – are associated with violent security environments and with higher estimates of small arms prevalence and misuse. Nearly three-quarters of personnel working in areas with "very high" levels of weapons availability reported recent suspensions or delays in operations.

Civilians are also frequently the victims of small arms use. Targeting of civilians, unintentional death and injury, and frequent use of guns for criminal or coercive purposes were all noted. Overall, the highest proportion of firearms-related death and injury among civilians were attributed to handguns. In areas characterised by widespread conflict or war, assault rifles surpassed handguns as the leading cause of weapons-related death and injury among civilians. Respondents also appear to routinely encounter a variety of small arms – mostly handguns and assault rifles – in and around "programme" areas.

Many staff feel personally threatened by guns. Perceptions of personal threat are heightened not only in areas characterised by higher levels of violence or conflict, but also in areas where civilian possession of guns is seen to be more prevalent. In addition to perceptions of personal threat, a large number of respondents report that they or their colleagues have experienced serious security incidents, including armed intimidation, armed robbery, armed assault, detention and kidnapping. Many respondents report colleagues having suffered either non-fatal or fatal firearms-related injuries.

Despite working in dangerous environments, personnel indicated that they have not received any security training within the organisation for which they currently work. The frequency of reported security training does not always correspond to the level of violence in a given environment, to the estimated prevalence and misuse of small arms, or to the level of personal threat expressed by respondents. Potentially more disconcerting, national staff are half as likely as expatriate staff to receive security training in many organisations.

Those that have received security training, however, typically view the training or awareness as being "helpful" in dealing with the availability and misuse of small arms. Security training or awareness is also associated with an increased tendency for individuals to take security precautions, such as walking with others or limiting local travel. The vast majority of respondents were unfamiliar with basic safety procedures associated with guns and ammunition, such as applying safety locks or the safe storage of guns. Those who received security training, however, were no more knowledgeable about gun safety than those who had not undertaken security training.

Source: Beasley et al (2003)

Jordan, Palestine and Israel) were selected because they are regions suffering from protracted violent conflict. In addition, the majority of partner agencies have operations and programming in these two regions.

The number of partners increased dramatically between Phase I and Phase II. A total of ten international NGOs and seven UN agencies participated in 2004 – a 35% increase. Participating agencies included: CARE, Concern, GTZ, the International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC), International Rescue Committee (IRC), Médecins du Monde (MdM), Oxfam-GB, Registered Engineers for Disaster Relief (RedR), Save the Children, World Vision, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), the Organisation for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Security Co-ordinator (UNSECOORD) and the World Food Programme (WFP). Agency participation rates are provided in Figure 4 below.

Based on consultations with participating agencies throughout 2003 and 2004, a number of amendments and improvements were introduced to the questionnaire.[24] It was agreed that the criteria and conditions for inclusion be kept deliberately broad and flexible so as to ensure the widest participation possible. As a result, the number of countries represented almost tripled from 39 in 2002 to at least 96 in 2004 (see Annex 2i).[25] The number of respondents also tripled from just over 600 respondents in 2002 to 2,089 in 2004.

Figure 4 Answering the call: Agency participation rates in 2004

	Frequency	Percent of total responses
CARE	433	21.0
Concern Worldwide	171	8.3
GTZ	56	2.7
IFRC	113	5.4
IOM	42	2.0
IRC	89	4.3
MDM	5	0.2
OCHA	31	1.5
Oxfam	91	4.4
Red-R	10	0.4
SCF	95	4.6
UNDP	151	7.3
UNHCR	117	5.6
UNICEF	112	5.4
UNSECOORD	18	0.8
WFP	154	7.4
World Vision International	173	8.4
Other local NGO/agency	198	9.6
Total	2,059	100
System (unidentified)	30	
	2,089	

Notes

6. See, for example, Beasley et al (2003), SAS (2002), Muggah with Griffiths (2002), and ICRC (1999).

7. See, for example, OCHA (2004)

8. See, for example, the work by King (2004b; 2002a), which is based on a review of IRIN and other reports documenting isolated security-related incidents.

9. But despite this widespread perception of increased insecurity, the few statistics that are available are unable to confirm the trend. As noted in a study by ECHO, "[c]onclusions cannot easily be drawn from available statistics, because of inconsistencies in definitions and lack of information about the overall number of humanitarian workers" (ECHO 2004) pp. 1–2.

10. See, for example, OCHA (2004).

11. See, for example, ICRC (1999); Muggah with Griffiths (2002); Muggah and Berman (2001); and Small Arms Survey (2002). Other studies, such as Sheik et al (2000) and Seet and Burnham (2000), have appraised longitudinal trends in mortality and morbidity among humanitarian workers and peace-keeping personnel. These studies draw on existing agency-level reporting systems and lack denominator data.

12. 'Sudan: Two aid workers killed in Darfur,' IRIN News, 12 May 2005

13. See Sheik et al (2001). Vehicle accidents and illnesses came second and third respectively. The study included any death between 1985 and 1998 occurring among workers in the field or as a result of them having worked in the field during emergency or transitional periods.

14. See King (2004a). Investments in vehicle protection and defensive driving could arguably contribute to reducing these fatal injuries.

15. The King (2004a) study did not discriminate by discrete "cause" of intentional death – whether gunshot, stabbing or otherwise. It did observe, however, that the types of attacks leading to death included ambushes, murder (not in vehicle), car/truck bombing, landmines, anti-aircraft attack and aerial bombings.

16. The term "national staff" covers a number of situations, varying from nationality, relationship to the local population or the beneficiary group, level of responsibility and so on. It is used

here to connote any humanitarian or development worker who was born in the country in which he or she currently works. See, for example, ECHO (2004).

17. See, for example, InterAction (2001), p. 2.

18. See King (2004a; 2004b).

19. See OCHA (2004).

20. Rowley, Elizabeth and Gilbert Burnham (2005). The project is based at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and was supported by the HD Centre and the Small Arms Survey over 2002–2003.

21. Between January 2003 and February 2005, some 114 cases were reported to the project – of which 26 were deaths, 68 medical evacuations, and 20 hospitalisations. Overall, more than 57% of the 26 deaths (15) were due to intentional violence, while an additional 27% were due to unintentional violence and 4% to coincidental illness. While the majority of cases were in Africa (over 70%), intentional violence was well distributed. Deaths resulting from intentional violence were concentrated in Angola, Afghanistan, Eritrea, Haiti, Kenya, Sudan and Uganda. Intentional violence resulting in medical evacuations (medivacs) took place in Afghanistan, Iraq and Zimbabwe. Small arms were present in over half of all 28 cases involving intentional violence (53.5%), and more than 70% of cases leading to a fatal outcome. Though the information is still preliminary, two trends appear to be emerging. First, intentional violence, while accounting for a quarter of all reported incidents, tends to be lethal. Second, lethal and non-lethal intentional violence appears to register a higher frequency among national staff as compared to expatriates. Further research will determine whether the rates are different or whether this is a reflection of the demographic profile of participating agencies.

22. The perceived security environment in which respondents lived and worked varied. About 31% perceived there to be "little or no violence", about 46% "moderate" levels of violence and the remainder, 23%, said they were operating in environments of "high" violence levels.

23. In Phase I the focus regions included a selection of countries and territories in Southeast Asia and the Balkans.

24. Some of the refinements identified through consultations led to changes to specific questions. When changes to questions are relevant for comparisons between Phase I and Phase II findings, it is noted (see Annex 1).

25. In addition to the 96 countries identified in returned questionnaires, a small number came back without a country of origin specified. Attempts were made to clean the data, fill in gaps and follow-up inconsistencies. Despite these attempts to clean the data, and as with all self-reported data, errors of reporting or recall, under/over-reporting and validity/reliability are possible.