

Minutes

of the International Council meeting held in Paris on 7 April 1994.

1. Guidelines for Lobbying

This is intended to provide a more coherent approach to the media and to take better advantage of the existing international network (6 sections, 12 delegate offices and the International Office - IO) in order to improve international communications. The objective is to increase the impact of any communications activity organized by a section aimed at the international rather than national level. For example, MSF-Holland's 'témoignage' (witnessing) on Sarajevo could have been better diffused in other countries.

Witnessing policy has already been defined. Now the methods and the means must be defined and how they can be developed by all sections together. Guidelines must be drawn up for political and media actions. Alain proposed a text, "Guidelines for Witnessing on the International Level", based on the following principles:

- reference to witnessing policy;
- reference to the international network;
- reminder of the non-binding nature of the text,
- situations likely to be met with in practice.

MSF-H is also working on a witnessing policy.

It was decided that everyone working on witnessing in the sections should come together on this (François, Stéphane, Ed, etc.).

2. The MSF-McKinsey Project

The last IC meeting was in favour of this survey on condition that it is supported by the operations directors who should rework the questionnaire. Since then, they have had another look at it and a test survey was carried out on Mozambique and Central America (18 projects) in order to check out whether it is properly adapted to MSF projects.

Yesterday, there was a two-hour presentation of the test results at the meeting of the operational sectors. McKinsey demonstrated the results that could be obtained from the survey and there was almost total agreement on the definitive text. The missions' questionnaire has been (slightly) reduced in length. However, the operations' directors proposed that it should be completed for all projects.

If it is decided to go ahead with this survey, we will have to calculate two months to gather the data on the 300 projects, followed by two months of computer processing. McKinsey will have to help set up the data base. The results would be available in September-October.

McKinsey is offering their services free-of-charge for this project, but the creation of the data base, encoding the results and the main analysis would have to be carried out by MSF.

Decision: It was agreed that the project as agreed by the operations' directors should go ahead.
Epicentre to be asked to look over the questionnaire and help with the data processing.
Someone will have to be found to take charge of the analysis (Epicentre?).

3. MSF Logo

A reminder of the procedure to be followed is contained in annex 1.

The new logo was adopted unanimously.

There was a discussion on the translation of the logo and how it is to be used. It was decided to take advantage of a new logo to promote the name of the organization, "MEDECINS SANS FRONTIERES", to the maximum.

Regulations regarding use of the logo :

The name shall be an integral part of the logo.
Use of the logo on its own (without the name) not to be permitted.

For the field :

1. Logo accompanied by the name "Médecins Sans Frontières" (in French).
2. Logo accompanied by the name "Medicos Sin Fronteras."
3. Exceptions to 1 and 2 :
Logo + "Médecins Sans Frontières" and a translation of that name into the language of the country (in the same size, or smaller characters) for reasons of security or recognition and understanding.

For the sections :

It is recommended to promote the logo with "Médecins Sans Frontières" in French.

For the delegate offices :

- generally speaking: the logo with the name in French and a translation into the language of the country in same size characters underneath.
- for largescale mailings: either as above, or with the name only in the language of the country.

Jacques de Milliano will consult with ^{MSF-H/S} ~~the~~ delegate offices before the next IC when a final decision will be taken.

The new logo must be approved as quickly as possible by the boards of the sections so as to respect the following deadlines :

May-June : The boards of the sections will vote on the logo.

June-July : A common "graphic charter" will be drawn up for all the sections.

Autumn 1994 : official presentation of the new logo.

The IO will inform the Red Cross.

The communications' directors must agree on a date for the employment of the new logo (discussion as to whether there should be a simultaneous launching by all sections or the choice of date left to the sections).

4. The Internationalization of the Expatriate Staff Statutes

The first steps have been taken by the human resources departments of the sections towards harmonizing the statutes for expatriate staff. It was realized that this is a complicated matter to deal with (could be seen as an imposition). However, it should be possible to arrive at some sort of consensus among the sections. Consideration was given to the possibility of setting up an "offshore employment organization", falling under the laws of one single country. This could allow harmonization of salaries, social welfare cover, etc.

It was agreed to give the go-ahead to the human resources departments to continue to look into this with a view to harmonizing MSF statutes as far as possible, particularly in regard to experienced staff.

5. IO Budget (annex 2)

A - The financial statements for 1993 (465,710 ECUs were actually disbursed as against the 480,000 ECUs provided for in the 1993 budget) were unanimously adopted as well as the scale of contributions by the sections.

B - The 1994 budget was discussed in a meeting held prior to the IC with Jacques, Jean-Pierre and Bernard.

Alan was asked to check with the human resources department of MSF-B to ensure that the salaries of MSF-International personnel are in line with those of MSF-B.

It was agreed to provide a fixed-length contract post, mainly to cover work connected with the McKinsey survey.

The ^{budget} amount for postage and telecommunications is considered to be too high, even though lower than ^{the} in 1993. The IO was asked to reduce these ^{expenses.} costs further.

The communications post was also discussed. In regard to the International Newsletter it was decided that publication would either have to be reduced to three issues per year or a cheaper way of producing it found.

The reserve funds are to be held over for the organization of a Melun-type event.

Following discussion, a budget of 499,400 ECUs was adopted unanimously.

C. The scale of contributions by the sections for financing the IO was established on the basis of the total income of last year.

Jean-Pierre asked that this scale of contributions be revised as, in his opinion, it does not represent a fair distribution of the cost involved in international projects. MSF-B pays too much. He proposed a new scale: MSF-B, MSF-F and MSF-H should each be responsible for 25% of the budget, the remaining 25% to be shared by the remaining sections. He also requested that the IO should be financed by that part of the funds contributed by the sections themselves, without taking institutional funds into account.

Rony remarked that it would have been better to debate this earlier on. A request to change how the scale is calculated should not be made at the moment that the budget is being voted on. He preferred that the scale should continue to be based on the overall total of income and not just on the incomes of each section. MSF-F has been the main contributor for a long time and has never objected. Jacques said he was surprised that MSF-B is only now requesting a change in the scale when its income has become greater than that of MSF-F. Doris expressed surprise that the rules of the game should change because of individual interests when MSF-International represented the interests of MSF in general. Bernard pointed out that a difference should be made between funds put into the IO and funds put into specific projects (Medical News, Guidelines, etc.).

International

It was proposed to set up a committee to look into the question of the scale of contributions for international projects for the 1995 budget.

The scale will remain unchanged for 1994 (in line with the total income of the sections for the financial year 1993).

6. International Day 1994

Several ideas were combined as regards the production of the book to back up the third international day :

- five populations in danger will be covered, following the same formula as that already used up till now but more 'journalistic', closer to the human experience of the people concerned;
- a mini humanitarian atlas reduced to 50 or so pages, covering 10-12 themes;
- a long introduction,
- a conclusion in the form of a reflection on this issues.

Réginald proposed that the last part should be more constructive than in

the past, in preference to bringing up the same old criticisms. He suggested some reflection on the new context in which the besieged towns and enclaves find themselves caught, the policy of starving them into submission and taking civilian populations hostage.

Dick called for a book that would be more medically oriented.

Jean-François Alessandrini and François Jean will coordinate the book, together with an international editing committee composed of :

Iseult O'Brien - MSF-International

a journalist - MSF-Spain

Pierrot and Stéphane - MSF-B

Ed and Anna - MSF-H

nobody for MSF-L and MSF-CH

The project was adopted unanimously.

The International Day will take place on 17 November, 1994.

7. Delegate Offices

A meeting with the delegate offices is planned for September. Policy in regard to delegate offices will be decided on at the next IC meeting (see Alain's preparatory document). A working group will meet before the next IC meeting.

Josep asked that those sections that have no responsibility for a delegate office should also participate in this working group.

8. Statements/Objectives/AGMs of Each Section

Jacques proposed that there should be an exchange between sections of each section's annual report and financial statement, budget and objectives and that this should be discussed at the next IC meeting.

Josep insisted on the importance of the visits made by MSF-International to the sections, such as that made recently by Jacques and Alain to MSF-Sp.

9. Former Yugoslavia

There was an example of 'inter-section tension' last weekend in regard to Gorazde. It seems that there was again a problem in communications between desks that resulted in blocking any witnessing on Gorazde although, apart from the UNHCR and the ICRC, we were the only presence.

Rony believes that there are fundamental differences in regard to the philosophy of witnessing that go beyond personal problems between individuals. Jean-Pierre cannot understand this as MSF-B had already witnessed on Srebrenica and Gorazde.

This example illustrates the difficulties in regard to international-level witnessing.

10. Relations with the EEC, UNHCR, ICRC, etc.

There have been many meetings with ECHO, UNHCR, ICRC and other NGOs, as well as between MSF (operations and finance) and ECHO both in regard to putting the framework contract into effect and to coordination between different agencies on emergencies. There is a five month delay on the framework contract and we are facing a lot of problems.

However, there have been some improvements: the administrative costs are now partially financed, with retroactive agreements for a large number of projects, delays in making payments have been reduced and the EEC is making advance payments (50-80% of the total amounts). There are still problems in regard to delays between requests for finance and EEC responses to these (50 days!) and the administrative procedures are lengthy and ill-adapted to emergencies. We have made numerous interventions. Gomez-Reino replied that there is no choice but to submit to the Commission's financial regulations; they are obsessed by financial controls, especially by the Court of Auditors (there was a recent scandal in the Division over food aid).

Some NGOs (UNHCR, ICRC, MSF, CRS, Caritas, etc.) have tried to present a common front, simultaneously addressing a letter to Vice-President Marin to let him know the difficulties that have been met with in the framework contract. All the agencies are on the same wave length in this matter.

Attention was drawn to the problems with the relationship between the UNHCR and ECHO. ECHO treats the UNHCR as if it were any other NGO with a technical role, without consideration for its mandate in regard to the protection of refugees. MSF's position is to insist on the specific UNHCR role. However, MSF will refuse to accept any coordination imposed by ECHO. If the UNHCR were to become the only financial organization in refugees situations, we would lose our operational independence. It is appropriate for us to support the UNHCR but we could make an official representation to Marin and increase our contacts and exchanges with the UNHCR.

11. Introduction of Catherine Harper, our 'liaison officer' to the United Nations in New York.

12. Mines

MSF has to decide what position to take in regard to calling for an end to the production of anti-personnel mines. It was decided to sign the appeal drawn up by Handicap International, but not to invest too much effort in

this. However, specific actions could be undertaken, such as putting pressure on the UN for the mine clearance programme to be stepped up. There will be a conference on mines in Geneva from April 9-11 and we will try to take part.

13. Medical Policy

It was decided to carry this over to the next IC meeting.

- preparation of a guideline on refugees, agreed on nine months ago, is underway but it was too late to start discussion on it;
- in regard to Medical News, it was decided that the evaluation was inadequate,
- in regard to coordinating the guidelines, MSF-F is coordinating but reckons it will require a further three months. There is no budget as yet and the medical directors have not made specific propositions.

14. Date for the Next IC Meeting

The next IC meeting will be held in Amsterdam on June 21. The following meeting will be held in Brussels on September 8 and 9, combined with a meeting with the delegate offices.

Note to the IC on the Procedure for the Choice of the Logo

A new procedure has been instigated following the rejection of the logo by the IC.

1. Conditions

Elements to be excluded:

- a cross in any form
- the abbreviation MSF

We would like to leave room for the designers to create an abstract or figurative logo, inasmuch as the agencies have already looked into using universal symbols such as the cross, globe, eye, hand, tree and bird without arriving at a satisfactory result. We do not wish to put too strong a brake on the agencies' creativity.

Elements that must be included:

- the colours black and red (red: Pantone 032 = Magenta 100% and yellow 100%)
- ensure adaptability for use on t-shirts, badges, cars, stickers, etc., either reduced in size or magnified.

Preferred elements:

- a design that has a universality about it (without having any precise religious or cultural connotation), which is easily understood on every continent, and
- a design that is easily identifiable in the field, understood as an indication of neutrality as well as an assurance of protection in crisis situations (much more important than the questions of style and aesthetics).

2. Agencies

Four international agencies have been retained for this new competition and, for the first time, payment will be made (around 2,500 ECUs per agency).

3. MSF Selection Committee

A working group has been constituted composed of the three communications directors: Pierrot (MSF-B), Jean-François (MSF-F) and Marianne and Marcel, since Ciska's departure (MSF-H), as well as two members of the IC: Benoit (MSF-S) and Bernard (MSF-E).

4. Timetable

December 1993: First meeting of the working group in Geneva to establish procedure, agree a general content outline, set the timetable and decide on the design agencies.

Beginning January 1994: Briefing for the four agencies in Brussels.

End January 1994: Presentations by the four agencies and initial selection of their proposals.

End February 1994: Working group to select two logos and present them to a meeting of communications directors.

March 1994: Finalization of logo following on final remarks by the working group and communications directors.

April 1994: IC to make its decision.

June/July 1994: A common graphic charter to be drawn up by all the sections and voted on by the Boards of Directors.

November or December 1994: Official presentation of the new logo (press conferences, etc.)

Remarks

1) Following the last rejection by the IC and a mailing to all the IC members by the communications directors, the new procedure aims at involving the members of the IC in the choice of logo. Everyone agrees that this collaboration has been very profitable.

2) If the new procedure seems to offer the agencies more room for creative manoeuvre, it has also been noticed that the only viable proposals were along graphic lines that have already been made use of. However, everybody has noticed a real improvement in the proposals received in regard to graphic research, quality, etc.
