

## **Career Opportunities in Humanitarian Aid and Relief**

Taken from [www.relief.org](http://www.relief.org): The lesser developed parts of our world are plagued by famine, malnutrition, poor water quality, and poor sanitation, as well as AIDS, TB, malaria, and other deadly diseases. These problems frequently overlap, particularly in the poorest regions of Africa, India, and South America. Extreme weather conditions greatly harm the global poor. A region with drought or flood conditions will be unable to effectively grow crops and oftentimes the starving citizens will even resort to eating their seed stocks – hurting the next year’s planting season, and reinforcing the cycle of poverty and suffering. Weak educational systems also greatly contribute to suffering. The Western world for the most part only reads about or sees these horrific humanitarian situations on TV – but they are an everyday reality for many millions of our fellow humans.

Humanitarian relief is an extraordinarily complex subject. There are organizations that are in the field every day saving current or at-risk hungry people, diseased people, war victims, and/or the uneducated masses. Humanitarian aid and relief is necessary to bring life-saving skills and technologies to Third World countries and to refugees and displaced people due to natural disasters or war both domestically and around the world.

### **Career Paths and Entry Salaries**

There are close to a million non-profit, state and federal government agencies, and organizations locally and internationally, who minister to the needy. Salaries are traditionally lower for positions in humanitarian fields. Search on the following salary web sites for specific information:

- [www.salary.com](http://www.salary.com)
- [www.wageweb.com](http://www.wageweb.com)
- [www.jobstar.org](http://www.jobstar.org)

### **Qualifications Necessary to Enter the Field**

A Masters degree in Public Administration or in International Development, a dedication to making the world a better place to live, and a desire to serve others by doing good works are all necessary qualifications to enter this field. An expertise in one of the key technical areas including food security, public health, nutrition, logistics, or conflict resolution is strongly recommended to effectively and permanently solve issues, which arise when disaster occurs. Candidates must also demonstrate business acumen, personal diplomacy and basic toughness. Other necessary qualifications for some positions include two or three years of experience in the developing world and the requisite foreign language requirement.

### **Sample Group of Employers**

- Adventist Development and Relief Agency International [ADRA] - changing the world one life at a time.
- Africare - dedicated to improving the quality of life in rural Africa.
- Alpha Charitable Foundation - raising funds to help the less fortunate. First project is the building of a 500 bed hospital in Kerala, India.
- American Red Cross –24 hour a day assistance wherever disaster strikes. Helping victims of flood, hurricane, earthquake or home fires; teach health and safety courses; offer emergency communication; as well as collect and distribute blood.

- AmeriCares - non-profit organization responding to disasters and providing long term medical relief.
- Amy Biehl Foundation - primary purpose is to fund South African community projects to help those burdened by the lingering effects of Apartheid.
- Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund Deutschland e.V. - ASB: national and international relief, rescue and charity activities.
- Asociación de Solidaridad y Ayuda al Pueblo Saharaui - SMARA tiene como objetivo procesar y transmitir información nacional e internacional sobre los problemas del pueblo saharauí.
- Association François-Xavier Bagnoud - dedicated to international humanitarian action, especially regarding HIV and children.
- Brotherhood of Blessed Gérard - South African Relief Organization of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta.
- Catholic Relief Services - information on emergency relief services and development programs addressing health, human rights, and poverty in countries throughout Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America. ([www.crs.org](http://www.crs.org))
- Center for Humanitarian Outreach and Intercultural Exchange - C.H.O.I.C.E coordinates volunteer expeditions to initiate self-sustaining humanitarian projects in developing nations.
- Central Index of Appointments Overseas (CIAO) - CIAO provides information those seeking work or volunteer opportunities with development organizations, principally in Latin America.
- Christian Friends of Korea - [www.cfk.org/about.htm](http://www.cfk.org/about.htm)
- Church World Service - Protestant, Anglican, and Orthodox communions in the U.S. cooperating worldwide in programs of long-term development, emergency response, and assistance to refugees.
- Cross-Cultural Solutions Cross-Cultural Solutions is one of the leading international volunteer organizations in the United States and sends over 1,000 volunteers overseas every year.
- Dakshinayan - provides basic education and health care to tribals and other rural communities.
- Direct Relief International - non-sectarian medical relief organization. Information on health programs, disaster services, and "Vitamin Angels".
- Doctors Without Borders - [www.doctorswithoutborders.org](http://www.doctorswithoutborders.org)
- Eugene Bell Centennial Foundation - promotes educational, humanitarian, and religious programs primarily in North Korea. Activities include food programs, medical work, greenhouses, and a special focus on tuberculosis.
- Global Development Center - non-profit organization dedicated to providing development and relief assistance wherever it is needed.
- Global Volunteer Network Global Volunteer Network, a non profit organization. Volunteers can be involved in teaching English, environmental work, health and sanitation, and cultural home stays,
- Goodwill Industries of America- world's largest provider of employment for individuals with special needs
- Healing Hands International, Inc. - humanitarian aid organization specializing in free medical relief to countries in need outside the USA.
- Himalayan HealthCare, Inc. - provides volunteer opportunities in rural Nepal to provide health and medical relief.
- Holy Land Foundation - non-profit, charitable organization operating relief and development projects nationally and internationally.
- Hospital Sans Frontiere - created by Rotary International, it is a humanitarian association for medical and hospital care; (in English, Dutch, and French).
- Humanitarian Village Global site for humanitarian aid charities and information

- InterAction- a coalition of 150 U.S. based nonprofit organizations working to promote human dignity and development in 165 countries around the world. In the United States these groups are called POVs, private and voluntary organizations.
- International Medical Corps (IMC) - humanitarian emergency relief organization established to save lives and relieve suffering while providing the critical knowledge and skills to help people help themselves.
- Light of the World Missions - medical missions in Belize for the Southern part Mayan villages working with the Ministry of Health in training and supplying these villages with much needed resources..
- Lucien Englemajer Association - international humanitarian organization focusing on drug treatment, youth programs, agricultural projects, disaster/famine relief and housing construction.
- Medical Project OSVITA - medical education program whose goal is to improve the health of mothers and children in Ukraine.
- Nishkam Sikh Welfare Council - organization serving the human race irrespective of color, religion, sex, caste or creed. Primarily based in India, with members and clients worldwide.
- Ophthalmic Aid Group - friends charity dedicated to fight against blindness in the Third World.
- PATH - the Program for Appropriate Technology in Health focuses on reproductive health, immunization, AIDS, STDs, contraception, safe birth, and men's, women's and children's health.
- Peace Corps-volunteers share their skills with people in developing countries
- Project Contact - provide health care and disease prevention to poverty-stricken East Africa by supplying medical care to its people.
- Project HOPE - information on the organization's health education, policy research and humanitarian assistance programs around the world.
- Satelife a non-profit organization based in Watertown, MA, USA whose mission is to build healthier communities in the developing world through the power of information technology.
- Save the Children - [www.savethechildren.org](http://www.savethechildren.org)
- Stop Global Aids - [takeaction.stopglobalaids.org](http://takeaction.stopglobalaids.org)
- The Program for Appropriate Technology in Health (PATH) - [www.path.org](http://www.path.org)
- Section for Tropical Medicine - organization of medical students from Slovenia which organizes a humanitarian action in developing countries.
- UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees)-meets refugee needs for food, housing, medical care, education as well as local integration, resettlement or repatriation
- United Way - community-based national movement that activates community resources to make the greatest possible human impact. The United Way system includes approximately 1,400 community-based United Way organizations. Each is independent, separately incorporated and governed by local volunteers.
- U.S.-Latin American Medical Aid Foundation - non-profit organization which provides medical supplies and humanitarian aid to the people of Cuba and Latin America.
- USAID-strive to reduce poverty, ignorance and malnutrition in developing countries.
- Vida - providing assistance to health institutions and development projects which support people in need in Latin America; operations concentrated in Peru and Central America.
- Volunteers of America-large on-profit, Christian social service organization that implements humanitarian objectives with action programs.

## **Demand and Future Challenges of Profession**

Where there is poverty, hunger, disease, AIDS, drug and alcohol abuse, epidemics, war and natural disasters, the world needs people who care, want to make a difference, and want to help the sick, handicapped, poor, battered and needy. There are positions for administrators, fundraisers, grant writers, program organizers, teachers, researchers, policy analysts and others. There are always new issues in public health, such as the recent SARS epidemic, and challenges to overcoming poverty and disease.

## Resources For More Information

### Internet Resources

- The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) - [www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/](http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/) - supports sustainable development in developing countries, and this site includes information on employment at CIDA and its related organizations.
- DevNetJobs.org - [www.devnetjobs.org/](http://www.devnetjobs.org/) - is a gateway to job listings in international development, environment, information technology for development, relief and reconstruction, and consultancy assignments.
- GlobalCorps - [www.globalcorps.com/index.html](http://www.globalcorps.com/index.html) - matches development, humanitarian and disaster relief professionals with organizations looking for these individuals. The organization helps recruit for The Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA), the office within USAID that is responsible for providing non-food humanitarian assistance in response to international crises and disasters.
- Idealist.org [www.idealist.org](http://www.idealist.org) - is a project of Action Without Borders and contains job listings in economic development, social services, human rights, environment and more. Users can search for jobs and internships by country, state and city.
- Interaction - [www.interaction.org/](http://www.interaction.org/) - is the largest alliance of U.S.-based international development and humanitarian nongovernmental organizations, with more than 160 members operating in every developing country.
- International Career Employment Weekly - [www.internationaljobs.org](http://www.internationaljobs.org) - identifies international development jobs and internships in all sectors of the market around the world.
- UNDP - [www.undp.org](http://www.undp.org) - UN Development Programme employment website
- Public Health Jobs Worldwide - [www.jobspublichealth.com/](http://www.jobspublichealth.com/) - lists most of its jobs and internships in the organization's newspaper, although some jobs are listed on their website.
- OneWorld International Foundation - [www.oneworld.net/](http://www.oneworld.net/) - offers job and internship listings at non-profit and international organizations dedicated to harnessing the democratic potential of the Internet to promote human rights and sustainable development.
- Relief.org - [www.relief.org](http://www.relief.org) - provides information on and links to humanitarian aid websites; it allows users to access the Idealist.org site to search for humanitarian jobs worldwide.
- ReliefWeb - [www.reliefweb.int](http://www.reliefweb.int) - run by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, provides international job listings at nonprofits dedicated to humanitarian relief, conflict resolution, health and more
- US Department of State [www.state.gov](http://www.state.gov) - lists the categories of State department employees and how to apply for these positions.

- USAID - [www.usaid.gov](http://www.usaid.gov) - site features a list of vacancies and internships

## **Directories**

- Guide to IGOs, NGOs, and the Military in Peace and Relief Operations, Washington, D.C. : United States Institute of Peace Press (2000) Africa: Human Rights Directory & Bibliography, Cambridge, MA, USA : Human Rights Internet (1989)
- Directorio de Organizaciones de Derechos Humanos: America Latina y el Caribe. Cambridge, MA : Human Rights Internet (1990)
- Directory of Human Rights Institutes in Member States of the Council of Europe, Strasbourg : Council of Europe (1994)
- Human Rights Organizations and Periodicals Directory, Berkeley, Calif., Meiklejohn Civil Liberties Institute (1973)
- Human Rights, Refugees, Migrants & Development: Directory of NGO's in OECD Countries.
- North American Human Rights Directory, Washington, D.C. : Human Rights Internet (1984)

## **Publications**

*Alternatives to the Peace Corps: A Guide of Global Volunteer Opportunities, 11<sup>th</sup> Ed.* Paul Backhurst, Food First, 2005.

*Careers for Good Samaritans and Other Humanitarian Types.* Marjorie Eberts & Margaret Gisler, VGM Careers for You Series, 1998.

*Global Work: Interaction's Guide to Volunteer, Internship and Fellowship Opportunities – 3rd Ed.* Bryant, Shanta M. and Tienne McKenzie with Jane-Laure Charles, 2004

*Intercristo*, 19303 Fremont Avenue North, Seattle, WA 98133-3800

*InterAction Member Profiles 2004-2005*, S. Bryant & T. McKenzie, Eds., 2004

*Monday Developments*, InterAction, weekly publication.

*World Volunteers: The World Guide to Humanitarian and Development Volunteering.* Fabio Ausenda. Universe, 2003.

## **In Career Library**

Career Opportunities in Politics, Government and Activism, Joan Axelrod-Contrada, Facts on File (2003).

\*Also look in the Non-profit and International sections of the career library.