

# **Quick Impact Projects of UNPKO and Emergency Humanitarian Relief: @PKO Now! No.38**

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## **Quick Impact Projects ( QIPs ) of United Nations Peacekeeping Operations ( UNPKO )**

"QIPs" stands for "Quick Impact Projects" and the projects are operated as a part of United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (UNPKO). The budget for QIPs must be less than \$25,000, and the time length of a project must be less than three months.<sup>1</sup> The purpose of QIPs is "relationship building"<sup>2</sup> between the local people and UNPKO officers. QIPs are not aimed at emergency humanitarian relief nor long term support for development even though these activities benefit directly the local people. Activities for QIPs and humanitarian aids are similar in some cases and difficult to identify the differences. Therefore, this article will explain how the activities for humanitarian aid and QIPs are different from one another other.

## **Emergency Humanitarian Relief<sup>3</sup>**

The emergency humanitarian relief activities are operated right after conflict and/or natural disaster, at the same time as QIPs of UNPKO, to secure the lives, dignity, and safety of the afflicted people by providing food and non-food items or necessary services. Emergency humanitarian relief includes not only responses after emergency but also disaster prevention, rescue, reconstruction, and re-establishment, and other activities. The contents of programs are planned to fulfill various needs in afflicted areas, such as providing food and non-food items, securement and distribution of water, environmental hygiene, health

care, repatriation of refugee, and others. On the field in emergencies, various UN agencies, international organization, and NGO s have been cooperating together by utilizing the strength and resource of each.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, there are four principles of humanitarian relief activities: "Humanity", "Impartiality", "Neutrality",<sup>5</sup> and "Independence".<sup>6</sup>

### **The Reason Why Emergency Humanitarian Relief Activities Aren't Included in QIPs**

The main reason why emergency humanitarian relief activities should not be included in QIPs is due to the principles of keeping the "neutrality" and "independence" of humanitarian organizations and actors. The military, including UNPKO, belongs to the UN, and the nations that support the UN, and the image of "neutrality" and "independence" may be damaged if the military engages in humanitarian activities. It may even become a barrier for humanitarian activities, and make the security of humanitarian personnel more difficult. Even though military operating humanitarian activities may tighten the security of people temporally, it may well increase the level of danger by identifying military with humanitarian personnel later. Another reason is the different nature of activities between military and humanitarian relief. Military relief depends heavily on the immediate efficacy of QIPs and humanitarian relief works, albeit with a longer-term standpoint. Since the military values immediate results, it may be difficult to consider local culture, gender, the vulnerable, and to apply the Hippocratic principle of "first, do no harm".

For the reasons above, the activities of UNPKO must be considered differently from emergency humanitarian relief,<sup>7</sup> and the mandates of UNPKO may include the support of emergency humanitarian relief activities but not humanitarian relief activity itself. Some of the project activities may seem very similar to some of the humanitarian relief tasks such as transportation of humanitarian relief items and construction of IDP camps, but these tasks are only to support humanitarian relief. Thus, it is important for UNPKO and emergency humanitarian relief to work in the field effectively and efficiently by considering the situation and local needs to prevent overlapping and disturbing one another. For this purpose, coordination and cooperation with local people and other organization are essential.<sup>8</sup>

## End Notes

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations/Department of Field Support. (2011). DPKO / DFS Guideline: Quick Impact Project (QIPs).

<sup>2</sup> Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations: cross-cutting issues, UN Doc. A/RES/61/276.

<sup>3</sup> Please refer to "No.12 / Japan's International Peace Cooperation and Emergency/ Humanitarian Aid".

<sup>4</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. "Handbook for Emergency" Second Edition p.4.

<sup>5</sup> UN Peacekeeping PDT Standards, Core Pre-Deployment Training Materials, 1st ed. (2009). p. 100.

<sup>6</sup> Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations (A/RES/ 58/114) (Feb. 5, 2004).

<sup>7</sup> Cornelio Sommaruga. (1997). International Committee of the Red Cross Humanitarian action and peace-keeping operations. 20-04-1997 Article, International Review of the Red Cross, No. 317.

<sup>8</sup> United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support. (2012). Civil Affairs Handbook. And 78th Plenary Meeting (A/RES/46/182) (Dec. 19, 1991).