HUMANITARIAN TERMS

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Designed by Eglė Jakelaitytė

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HUMANITARIAN TERMS

This set of cards presents the key aspects of Humanitarian Context.

The Humanitariam terms in order to familiarize yourself with Humanitarian Context you can explore cards by specific topics or separately. Humanitarian Context has the goal of saving human lives, relieving human suffering and maintaining human dignity. Before stepping into Humanitarian Context it is important to educate yourself about it and make sure you are on the same page as humanitarian workers as you would educate yourself about any other subject or context.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability is the means by which individuals and organizations report to a recognized authority, or authorities, and are held responsible for their actions (Edwards and Hume, 1995). (ALNAP). For accountability to have real meaning, it must be tied to a specific set of actors, audiences and objectives: one is held accountable to someone for something. As humanitarians are also accountable to those they assist, and those who help make such service possible, humanitarians need operate transparently; keep the humanity at the center of humanitarian action; and confront our greatest challenge "public indifference" by focusing attention on the millions of people who suffer in forgotten crises.

HUMANITARIAN ADVOCACY

Advocacy (evidence-based) refers in a broad sense to efforts to promote, in the domain of humanitarian aid, respect for humanitarian principles and law with a view to influencing the relevant political authorities, whether recognized governments, insurgent groups or other non-state actors. One could add “international, national and local assistance agencies”. The term **“humanitarian advocacy”** encompasses not only advocacy in emergencies, but also advocacy conducted before and after crises and in situations of protracted vulnerability, suffering or conflict. Advocacy can be of various kinds, including media campaigns, public speaking, commissioning and publishing research, and lobbying. It is and should remain a central element of comprehensive protection and solution strategies.

ARMED CONFLICT

A dispute involving the use of armed force between two or more parties. International humanitarian law distinguishes between international or non-international armed conflicts. **International armed conflict:** A war involving two or more States, regardless of whether declaration of war has been made or whether the parties recognize that there is a state of war. **Non-international armed conflict:** A conflict in which government forces are fighting with armed insurgents, or armed groups are fighting amongst themselves.

The rules of humanitarian law concerning the right of access to victims of conflicts (international and non-international) have been included in a number of UN resolutions, adopted during natural disasters or similar emergencies or disasters caused by humankind. Humanitarian law only applies to situations of armed conflict.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment (and Re-Assessment) is the set of activities necessary to understand a given situation, entails the collection, up-dating and analysis of data pertaining to the population of concern (needs, capacities, resources, etc.), as well as the state of infrastructure and general socio-economic conditions in a given location/area. (UNHCR).

Assessment should take place in various phases: following a major change or new crisis in an ongoing operation, or access becomes available to a previously inaccessible area; when the initial rapid assessment has identified a need for more detailed information on specific aspects; n a (post-) conflict situation when conditions allow for recovery (e.g. peace agreement, reduction in violence, return of refugees and IDPs, interest of donors to invest in recovery).

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

Humanitarian assistance is intended to save lives, alleviate suffering and maintain human dignity during and after man-made crises and disasters caused by natural hazards, as well as to prevent and strengthen preparedness for when such situations occur.

Aid provided to address the physical, material and legal needs of persons of concern. This may include food items, medical supplies, clothing, shelter, seeds and tools, as well as the provision of infrastructure, such as schools and roads. “Humanitarian assistance” refers to assistance provided by humanitarian organization for humanitarian purposes (i.e., non-political, non-commercial, and non-military purposes).

In UNHCR practice, assistance supports and complements the achievement of protection objectives. (UNHCR)

ASYLUM

The granting, by a State, of protection on its territory to persons from another State who are fleeing persecution or serious danger. A person who is granted asylum may be a refugee. A person who has left her country of origin and has applied for recognition as a refugee in another country and whose request or application for refugee-status has not been finally decided by a prospective country of refuge is formally known as an asylum-seeker. Asylum-seekers are normally entitled to remain on the territory of the country of asylum until their claims have been decided upon and should be treated in accordance with basic human rights standards. (OCHA)

ASYLUM-SEEKER

An asylum-seeker is an individual who is seeking international protection. In countries with individualized procedures, an asylum-seeker is someone whose claim has not yet been finally decided on by the country in which he or she has submitted it. Not every asylum-seeker will ultimately be recognized as a refugee, but every refugee is initially an asylum-seeker. (UNHCR)

AVALANCHE

A mass of snow sliding, tumbling, or flowing down an inclined surface. Technically, a mass of loosened snow, ice, and/or earth suddenly and swiftly sliding down a mountain. In practice, assumed to be a snow avalanche unless another term such as ice, rock, mud, etc. is used. (Avalanche-center.org).

BIOLOGICAL DISASTER

Disaster caused by the exposure of living organisms to germs and toxic substances. For instance, spread of a disease, a virus, an epidemic, and a locust plague. It belongs to the class of natural disasters.

(a) Epidemic Level: Biological disaster affects large numbers of people within a given community or area. *Ex: Cholera.*

(b) Pandemic Level: Biological disaster effect a much large region, sometime spanning entire continents or the globe *Ex: Swine Flu.*

CAPACITY

A combination of all the strengths and resources available within a community, society or organization that can reduce the level of risk, or the effects of a disaster. Comment: Capacity may include physical means, institutional abilities, societal infrastructure as well as human skills or collective attributes such as leadership and management. Capacity also may be described as capability. (ISDR)

Capacity could focus on various aspects as– whether for preparedness, response or risk reduction.

CAPACITY BUILDING

“As local as possible,
as international as necessary”.

A process by which individuals, institutions and societies develop abilities, individually and collectively, to perform functions, solve problems and set and achieve their goals. (UNHCR).

The crucial aspect is focus on the importance of local capacity and partnerships in emergency response.

Individual capacity could include competencies such as experience, knowledge, technical skills, energy, motivation and influence. Organizational capacities could include internal policies, arrangements and procedures that combine and align individual competencies to fulfil their mandate and achieve their goals. System capacities, which are the broader institutional arrangements that enable or constrain individual and organizational capacities, consisting of social norms, traditions, policies and legislation.

CIVIL WAR

Large-scale armed conflict within one country fought either between the regime in power and challengers or, in failing states with no recognized authority, between warlords or communal groups.

Most civil wars involve more than one element of the following: 1) Secessionist civil war; 2) Revolutionary guerrilla war; 3) Conflicts between military and civilian authorities; 4) Criminal gang wars, among themselves and against the state; 5) Terrorist campaigns; 6) Religious sects and fundamentalist movements; 7) Genocidal campaigns against minorities; 8) Conflict between the state and society; 9) Conflicts between two peoples or nations for control of one territory; 10) Conflicts between factions of parties or armed forces (warlordism); 11) Conflicts between religious groups, ethnic communal groups, linguistic groups, tribes or clans; 12) Clashes between immigrants and natives.

CIVILIAN POPULATION

Groups of unarmed people, including women, children, the sick and elderly, refugees and internally displaced persons, who are not directly engaged in the armed conflict. (OCHA).

Conflicts often involve non state actors, civilian populations are often deliberately targeted, and threats and dangers are ill-defined, and prolonged and exacerbated by external factors such as crop failures associated with climate change.

CLIMATE CHANGE

The Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change defines climate change as “a change in the state of the climate that can be identified by changes in the mean and/or the variability of its properties, and that persists for an extended period, typically decades or longer. Climate change may be due to natural internal processes or external forcing, or to persistent anthropogenic changes in the composition of the atmosphere or in land use”.

In Humanitarian Context Climate change affects live hoods, conditions of living and access to food. This leads to various internal Humanitari-an crisis or such movement as environmental migration.

ENVIRONMENTAL MIGRANTS

Environmental migrants or climate refugees are people who are forced to leave their home region due to sudden or long-term changes to their local environment. Such changes are held to include increased droughts, desertification, sea level rise, and disruption of seasonal weather patterns. Despite problems in formulating a uniform and clear-cut definition of 'environmental migration', such a concept has increased as an issue of concern in the 2000s as policy-makers, environmental and social scientists attempt to conceptualize the potential societal effects of climate change and general environmental degradation.

Environmental Migrants may choose to flee to or migrate to another country, or they may migrate internally within their own country.

CLOSED
CAMP

A camp, which is no longer receiving new refugees. (UNHCR)

CODE OF CONDUCT

A common set of principles or standards that a group of agencies or organizations have agreed to abide by while providing assistance in response to Complex Emergencies or Natural Disasters.

For example, the Principles of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organisations in Disaster Response Programmes, and the IASC Core Principles of a Code of Conduct for Protection from Sexual Abuse and Exploitation. (OCHA)

COMBATANT

A person who takes an active part in hostilities, who can kill, and who, in turn, is a lawful military target. S/he can be a member of the armed forces, other than medical personnel and chaplains, or of an organized group. Under international humanitarian law, armed forces are subject to an internal disciplinary system, which, inter alia, must enforce compliance with the rules of international law applicable to armed conflict. (OCHA)

COMMON HUMANITARIAN ACTION PLAN (CHAP)

The CHAP is a strategic plan for humanitarian response in a given country or region and includes the following elements:

1) A common analysis of the context in which humanitarian action takes place;

2) An assessment of needs;

3)Best, worst, and most likely scenarios;

4) Stakeholder analysis, i.e. who does what and where;

5) A clear statement of longer-term objectives and goals;

6) Prioritized response plans;

7) A framework for monitoring the strategy and revising it if necessary.

COMMUNITY-BASED APPROACH

Community-based approach motivates women, girls, boys and men in the community to participate in a process which allows them to express their needs and to decide their own future with a view to their empowerment. It requires recognition that they are active participants in decision-making. It also seeks to understand the community's concerns and priorities, mobilizing community members and engaging them in protection and programming. The focus is on helping refugees organize themselves to solve their own problems.

For example, humanitarian actor focus to support the building, rebuilding and strengthening of communities' capacities to respond to protection risks and to make decisions over access to and use of resources.

COMPLEX EMERGENCY

A multifaceted humanitarian crisis in a country, region or society where there is a total or considerable breakdown of authority resulting from internal or external conflict and which requires a multi-sectoral, international response that goes beyond the mandate or capacity of any single agency and/or the ongoing UN country programme. Such emergencies have, in particular, a devastating effect on children and women, and call for a complex range of responses. (OCHA)

CONFLICT

"A social factual situation in which at least two parties (individuals, groups, states) are involved, and who: 1) strive for goals which are incompatible to begin with or strive for the same goal, which, can only be reached by one party; and/or 2) want to employ incompatible means to achieve a certain goal." (Wasmuth, 1996:180- 181).

Conflict analysis focus on identification and comparison of positions, values, aims, issues, interests, and needs of conflict parties.

CONFLICT PREVENTION

Measures to avert violent conflict and put in place the means to resolve future disputes non-violently. Strategies for prevention fall into two categories: operational prevention, which refers to measures applicable in the face of immediate crisis, and structural prevention, which consists of longer term measures to ensure that crises do not arise in the first place or, if they do, that they do not recur. These activities are generally conducted under Chapter VI of the UN Charter, and include preventative deployments of forces, fact-finding missions, consultations, warnings, inspections and monitoring. (OCHA)

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

The resolution of conflict usually by conciliation.
Contingency Planning: A management tool used to ensure that adequate arrangements are made in anticipation of a crisis. This is achieved primarily through engagement in a planning process leading to a plan of action, together with follow-up actions. (OCHA)

CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY

The Rome Statute for the International Criminal Court holds that acts including, murder, rape, torture, enslavement, enforced disappearances and other inhumane acts of a similar character intentionally causing great suffering, or serious injury to body or to mental or physical health, when committed as part of a widespread or systemic attack directed against any civilian population. These crimes are reinforced by treaties and customary international law. (OCHA)

War crimes may only be committed during an armed conflict, whereas **crimes against humanity** can be committed both in times of **war** and of peace.

CYCLONE

A large-scale closed circulation system in the atmosphere with low barometric pressure and strong winds that rotate counter clockwise in the northern hemisphere and clockwise in the southern hemisphere. The system is referred to as a cyclone in the Indian Ocean and South Pacific, hurricane in the western Atlantic and eastern Pacific and typhoon in the westem Pacific. (UN DHA).

DAMAGE CLASSIFICATION

Evaluation and recording of damage to structures, facilities, or objects according to three (or more) categories:

1. "Severe damage” which precludes further use of the structure, facility, or object for its intended purpose.
2. "Moderate damage" or the degree of damage to principal members, which precludes effective use of the structure, facility, or object for its intended purpose, unless major repairs are made short of complete reconstruction.
3. "Light damage" such as broken windows, slight damage to roofing and siding, interior partitions blown down, and cracked walls; the damage is not severe enough to preclude use of the installation for the purpose for which was intended. (UN DHA)

DAYS OF IMMUNIZATION / DAYS OF TRANQUILITY

Days of Immunization is a specified period of ceasefire agreed upon by parties to an armed conflict during which humanitarian agencies are granted access to immunize civilian populations. (OCHA)

Days of Tranquility A specified period of ceasefire agreed upon by parties to an armed conflict during which humanitarian agencies are granted access to assess the needs of and provide life-saving assistance to civilian populations. (OCHA)

DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE FORREFUGEES (DAR)

A programming approach which aims to promote the inclusion of refugees and host communities in development agendas through additional development assistance to improve burden-sharing with countries hosting a large number of refugees and to promote a better quality of life and self-reliance for refugees pending durable solutions and an improved standard of living for refugee-hosting communities. (UNHCR)

DISASTER

A serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society causing widespread human, material, economic or environmental losses which exceed the ability of the affected community or society to cope using its own resources.

Disasters are often described as a result of the combination of a natural hazard, the conditions of vulnerability, and insufficient capacity or measures to reduce or cope with the potential negative consequences.

Types of Disaster:

Geophysical (e.g. Earthquakes, Landslides, Tsunamis and Volcanic Activity)

Hydrological (e.g. Avalanches and Floods)

Climatological (e.g. Extreme Temperatures, Drought and Wildfires)

Meteorological (e.g. Cyclones and Storms/Wave Surges)

Biological (e.g. Disease Epidemics and Insect/Animal Plagues)

DISASTER MANAGEMENT

Disaster Management: Comprehensive approach and activities to reduce the adverse impacts of disasters. (UN DHA). Disaster Management can be defined as the organization and management of resources and responsibilities for dealing with all humanitarian aspects of emergencies, in particular, preparedness, response and recovery in order to lessen the impact of disasters.

Disaster management cycle - prevention, mitigation, preparedness, and response, recovery and rehabilitation. Its emphasis on risk reduction reflects the global trend in disaster management.

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

The organization, education, and training of the population and all relevant institutions to facilitate effective control, early warning, evacuation, rescue, relief and assistance operations in the event of a disaster or emergency. (CRID)

The goal of disaster preparedness is to lessen the impact of disasters on vulnerable populations, to ready an organization for an influx of activity, and to design a coordinated plan that reduces the waste of resources, time, and efforts.

DISASTER PREVENTION

The elimination or reduction of the likelihood that natural events may endanger human beings, their goods, their social assets, or their environment. (CRID) A disaster prevention plan is a written, approved, implemented, and periodically tested program specifically outlining all actions to be taken to reduce the risk of avoidable disaster and minimize the loss should a disaster occur.

A disaster can be prevented by taking necessary precautions and managing it. You cannot prevent the natural disastrous, but can minimize it effects to a great extent.

DISASTER RESPONSE

A sum of decisions and actions taken during and after disaster, including immediate relief, rehabilitation, and reconstruction. (UN DHA)

Response actions carried out immediately before, during, and after a hazard impact are aimed at saving lives, reducing economic losses, and alleviating suffering. The response phase includes the mobilization of the necessary emergency services and first responders in the disaster area.

Disaster Response Plan: the actions taken in the initial minutes of an emergency are critical. A disaster response plan is something that companies use to address many different types of emergency situations.

DISASTER RISK

The magnitude of potential disaster losses, in lives, livelihoods and assets, which could occur to a particular community or group, arising from their exposure to possible future hazard events and their vulnerability to these hazards.

The concept of disaster risk shifts the viewpoint from disasters as events randomly affecting places. Disaster risk encompasses several different types of potential losses – in lives, livelihoods and financial and other assets – and is often difficult to quantify. Nevertheless, with knowledge of the prevailing hazards and the patterns of population and socio-economic development, it can be assessed and mapped, in broad terms at least, and the factors contributing to the risks can be made subject to public and private risk-reducing actions. (ISDR)

DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT

The systematic process of using administrative decisions, organization, operational skills and capacities to implement policies, strategies and coping capacities of the society and communities to lessen the impacts of natural hazards and related environmental and technological disasters.

This comprises all forms of activities, including structural and non-structural measures to avoid (prevention) or to limit (mitigation and preparedness) adverse effects of hazards.

This comprises all forms of activities, including structural and non-structural measures to avoid (prevention) or to limit (mitigation and preparedness) adverse effects of hazards. (ISDR)

DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

Action taken to reduce the risk of disasters and the adverse impacts of natural hazards, through systematic efforts to analyse and manage the causes of disasters, including through avoidance of hazards, reduced social and economic vulnerability to hazards, and improved preparedness for adverse events. Note that while the term “disaster reduction” is often used, the term “disaster risk reduction” provides a better recognition of the ongoing risk of adverse events and the ongoing potential to reduce these risks. (ISDR)

DISPLACEMENT

Forcible or voluntary uprooting of persons from their homes by violent conflicts, gross violations of human rights and other traumatic events, or threats thereof. Persons who remain within the borders of their own country are known as internally displaced persons. Persons who are forced to flee outside the borders of their state of nationality or residence for reasons based on a well-founded fear of persecution on the grounds identified in the 1951 Refugee Convention or to flee conflict in the case of States Parties to the 1969 OAU Convention or 1984 Cartagena Declaration on Refugees are known as refugees. (OCHA)

DROUGHT

Pronounced absence or marked deficiency of precipitation. (GLIDE) Drought is a natural phenomenon in which rainfall is lower than average for an extended period of time. Periods of drought can result in inadequate water supply and can lead to public health problems. Drought can affect areas or communities differently depending on several additional variables. These variables include:

- the structure and capacity of existing water systems,
- local governance of water use,
- economic development,
- the at-risk populations living in the affected area, and
- Other societal factors, such as the presence of local social networks.

DRY SPELL

Period of abnormally dry weather. Use of the term should be confined to conditions less severe than those of a drought. (UN DHA)

For example A dry spell that has persisted for over a month, adversely affecting crops in many parts of the country, could mean a lean year ahead for farmers.

EARLY ACTION

Often used in conjunction with 'early warning', the term refers to either 'preventive action' or 'early response action'. "Processes of consultation, policy making, planning, and action to reduce or avoid armed conflict. These processes include: 1) diplomatic/political; 2) military/security; 3) humanitarian; and 4) development/ economic activity." (Diller, 1997:7). (FEWER)

EARLY WARNING

The provision of timely and effective information, through identified institutions, that allows individuals exposed to a hazard to take action to avoid or reduce their risk and prepare for effective response. (ISDR)

Early Warning System: The set of capacities needed to provide timely and meaningful information to enable individuals and communities threatened by hazards to act in sufficient time and in an appropriate manner to reduce the possibility of personal injury, loss of life and livelihoods, damage to property and the environment, and to prepare for effective response.

EARTHQUAKE

A shaking or trembling of the earth that is volcanic or tectonic in origin causing any type of damage or negative effect on communities or properties. (GLIDE)

Earthquake Swarm: A series of minor earth tremors (none of which may be identified as the main shock) that occurs within a limited area and time. (UN DHA

EMERGENCY

A sudden and usually unforeseen event that calls for immediate measures to minimize its adverse consequences. (UN DHA) A humanitarian emergency is an event or series of events that represents a critical threat to the health, safety, security or wellbeing of a community or other large group of people, usually over a wide area.

Emergency Management: The organization and management of resources and responsibilities for addressing all aspects of emergencies, in particular preparedness, response and rehabilitation.

EMERGENCY RELIEF

The immediate survival assistance to the victims of crisis and violent conflict. Most relief operations are initiated on short notice and have a short implementation period (project objectives are generally completed within a year). The main purpose of emergency relief is to save lives. (UNHCR) Emergency services are the set of specialized agencies that have specific responsibilities and objectives in serving and protecting people and property in emergency situations. Comment: Emergency services include agencies such as the Police, Fire Service, medical and ambulance units, Red Cross and Red Crescent, and relevant voluntary organizations. (ISDR)

ENCLOSED CAMP

A refugee camp which is physically surrounded by a fence. (UNHCR)

ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION

The reduction of the capacity of the environment to meet social and ecological objectives and needs.

Degradation of the environment can alter the frequency and intensity of natural hazards and increase vulnerability of communities. The sources of degradation are varied, and include land misuse, soil loss, desertification, wildland fires, loss of biodiversity, deforestation, mangrove destruction, land, water and air pollution, climate change, sea level rise and ozone depletion. (ISDR)

FAMILY REUNIFICATION:

The process of bringing together families, particularly children and elderly dependents with previous care-providers for the purpose of establishing or re-establishing long-term care. Separation of families occurs most often during armed conflicts or massive displacements of people. (OCHA)

FAMINE

A catastrophic food shortage affecting large numbers of people due to climatic, environmental and socio-economic reasons. (UN DHA)

A famine is a widespread scarcity of food, caused by several factors including war, inflation, crop failure, population imbalance, or government policies. This phenomenon is usually accompanied or followed by regional malnutrition, starvation, epidemic, and increased mortality.

Modern famines, like most of those throughout history, are manmade.

FIRST AID

The immediate but temporary care given on site to the victims of an accident or sudden illness in order to avert complications, lessen suffering, and sustain life until competent services or a physician can be obtained. (UN DHA)

The aims of first aid are to preserve life, prevent harm, and promote recovery. In first aid, ABC stands for airway, breathing, and circulation. It is not classed as medical treatment and does not replace interventions from a trained medical professional.

FLOOD / FLASH FLOOD

Flash Flood: Flooding that develops very quickly on streams and river tributaries with a relatively high peak discharge; usually as a result of thunderstorms. Sometimes the onset of flash flooding comes before the end of heavy rains. There is little time between the detection of flood conditions and the arrival of the flood crest. (GLIDE)

Flood: The overflowing of water of the normal confines of a stream or other body of water, or the accumulation of water by drainage over areas, which are not normally submerged. (GLIDE)

FOOD INSECURITY

A situation that exists when people lack secure access to sufficient amounts of safe and nutritious food for normal growth and development and an active and healthy life. It may be caused by the unavailability of food, insufficient purchasing power, inappropriate distribution, or inadequate use of food at the household level. Food insecurity, poor conditions of health and sanitation, and inappropriate care and feeding practices are the major causes of poor nutritional status. Food insecurity may be chronic, seasonal or transitory. (FIVIMS)

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (GBV)

Violence that is directed against a person on the basis of gender or sex. It includes acts that inflict physical, mental, or sexual harm or suffering, threats of such acts, coercion, or other deprivations of liberty. While women, men, boys and girls can be victims of gender-based violence, because of their subordinate status, women and girls are the primary victims. (OCHA)

International concern over gender based violence (GBV) has increased considerably in recent years, and the international humanitarian response to GBV in populations affected by armed conflict, disaster and displacement has also grown exponentially over the past decade.

GENOCIDE

As defined by Article II of the 1948 Convention on Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide: “Genocide” means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group, as such: killing members of the group; causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; forcibly transferring children of the group to another group. (OCHA)

HAZARD

Natural processes or phenomena or human activities that can cause the loss of life or injury, property damage, social and economic disruption or environmental degradation.

Hazards have varied origins, and can arise from natural processes (geological, hydro meteorological and biological) and from human activities (environmental degradation and technological hazards). The term is used for both immediate hazard events as well as the latent hazard conditions that may cause future events. Actual hazard events can be characterized by magnitude or intensity, speed of onset, duration, and area of extent. (ISDR)

HEAT WAVE

Marked warming of the air, or the invasion of very warm air, over a large area; it usually lasts from a few days to a few weeks. This is a rise of atmospheric average temperature well above the averages of a region, with effects on human populations, crops, properties and services. (ISDR)

High air temperatures can affect human health and lead to additional deaths even under current climatic conditions. The victims died from dehydration because they were subjected to unusually high temperatures for a prolonged period and were unable to maintain a normal body temperature. And they died of heat stroke, which occurs when the body's temperature rises above 40 degrees.

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX (HDI)

A measure of a country or region's progress in terms of life expectancy, level of education and adjusted real income. (UNHCR) The HDI was created to emphasize that people and their capabilities should be the ultimate criteria for assessing the development of a country, not economic growth alone.

The HDI simplifies and captures only part of what human development entails. It does not reflect on inequalities, poverty, human security, empowerment, etc. The HDRO offers the other composite indices as broader proxy on some of the key issues of human development, inequality, gender disparity and poverty.

HUMAN RIGHTS

All human rights derive from the dignity and worth inherent in the human person. The concept of human rights acknowledges that every single human being is entitled to enjoy his or her human rights without distinction as to race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Human rights are legally guaranteed by human rights law, which is expressed in treaties, customary international law, bodies of principles and other sources of law. It is noteworthy that human rights law applies in peace and in war.

HUMAN SECURITY

A concept concerned with the security of individuals and promoting the protection of individuals' physical safety, economic and social well-being, human dignity, and human rights and fundamental freedoms. It reflects the growing recognition worldwide that concepts of security must include people as well as States. (OCHA)

Major global threats to human security include war, mass atrocities, environmental degradation, and public health crises. Some human security issues are well known, like torture and genocide, and others are hidden, like the millions of missing women in the world.

HUMANITARIAN ACCESS

Humanitarian access refers to a two-pronged concept, comprising Humanitarian actors' ability to reach populations in need and affected populations' access to assistance and services. Where protection is not available from national authorities or controlling non-state actors, vulnerable populations have a right to receive international protection and assistance from an impartial humanitarian relief operation. Humanitarian access is a principled and negotiated business. Multiply constraints impinge on access: bureaucratic restrictions imposed by State and non-State actors on personnel and humanitarian supplies; donor governments' funding restrictions on engaging with domestic legislations criminalizing the provision of "material support" to designated foreign terrorist organizations; intensity of hostility in civilian areas; attacks on humanitarian personnel and theft of assets. (OCHA)

HUMANITARIAN ACTION

The challenges to humanitarian action depend in part on how you define humanitarian action. There is no single definition, and no one owns the concept. It must be action oriented; it must be non-coercive; it must be provided solely for the benefit of those we seek to assist. But in addition, humanitarian action must demonstrate an ethic of restraint. Humanitarian action cannot be subordinated to political interests, military rationales or even socially progressive moves towards peace and democracy.

Assistance, protection and advocacy actions undertaken on an impartial basis in response to human needs resulting from complex political emergencies and natural hazards. (ALNAP)

HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTION

While there is no agreed upon international definition of “humanitarian intervention” yet, it is a doctrine generally understood to mean coercive action by States involving the use of armed force in another State without the consent of its government, with or without authorization from the UN Security Council, for the purpose of preventing or putting to a halt gross and massive violations of human rights or international humanitarian law. The UN’s operations in Northern Iraq and Somalia, and NATO’s operation in Kosovo have all been termed humanitarian intervention. (OCHA)

HUMANITARIAN OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

A key element for humanitarian agencies and organizations when they deploy, consists of establishing and maintaining a conducive humanitarian operating environment, sometimes referred to as "humanitarian space". The perception of adherence to the key operating principles of neutrality and impartiality in humanitarian operations represents the critical means by which the prime objective of ensuring that suffering must be met wherever it is found, can be achieved. Consequently, maintaining a clear distinction between the role and function of humanitarian actors from that of the military is the determining factor in creating an operating environment in which humanitarian organisations can discharge their responsibilities both effectively and safely. (OCHA)

HUMANITARIAN OPERATIONS

Operations conducted to relieve human suffering, especially in circumstances where responsible authorities in the area are unable or unwilling to provide adequate service support to civilian populations. (OCHA)

HUMANITARIAN WORKER

Includes all workers engaged by humanitarian agencies, whether internationally or nationally recruited, or formally or informally retained from the beneficiary community, to conduct the activities of that agency. (OCHA)

An aid worker manages and develops emergency response programmes within designated geographical areas that have been subjected to war, natural disasters or other environmental or developmental problems. Aid workers typically operate in front line conditions, facilitating the effective distribution of humanitarian aid to people who have been hit by human or natural disasters.

IMPARTIALITY

An approach to the provision of humanitarian assistance and services that is non-discriminatory, proportionate to needs and free of subjective distinction. Impartiality is a guiding principle of organisations claiming to be humanitarian (ALNAP).

Humanitarian action should help people solely on the basis of their needs. It must never discriminate according to other criteria such as gender, religion, ethnic background or political orientation. Due to the difficulty of realizing impartiality in practice, it is important to analyse both the political context of humanitarian action and the practical experiences of humanitarian workers in specific contexts and then discuss the consequences.

INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT

Involuntary movement of people inside their own country. This movement may be due to a variety of causes, including natural or human-made disasters, armed conflict, or situations of generalized violence. (UNHCR) They are often referred to as refugees, although they do not fall within the legal definitions of a refugee. It is a form of social change caused by a number of factors, the most common being armed conflict. Natural disasters, famine, development and economic changes may also be a cause of displacement.

INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS (IDPS)

Persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to leave their homes or habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border. A series of 30 non-binding “Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement” based on refugee law, human rights law and international humanitarian law articulate standards for protection, assistance and solutions for internally displaced persons. (OCHA)

INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW (IHL)

A body of rules that seek, for humanitarian reasons, to limit the effects of armed conflict. It protects persons who are not or are no longer participating in the hostilities and restricts the means and methods of warfare by prohibiting weapons that make no distinction between combatants and civilians or weapons and methods of warfare which cause unnecessary injury, suffering and/or damage. The rules are to be observed not only by governments and their armed forces, but also by armed opposition groups and any other parties to a conflict. The four Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their two Additional Protocols of 1977 are the principal instruments of humanitarian law. IHL is also known as the law of war or the law of armed conflict, and is part of international law. It does not regulate resort to the use of force; this is governed by an important, but distinct, part of international law set out in the UN Charter. (OCHA)

INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

The actions by the international community on the basis of international law, aimed at protecting the fundamental rights of a specific category of persons outside their countries of origin, who lack the national protection of their own countries. (UNHCR)

The aim of this section is to promote services and projects throughout the whole national territory for applicants and recipients of international or humanitarian protection. The international protection section of the portal is meant as an informative and guiding tool for those operating in the sector as well as for protection applicants and recipients.

INTERVENTION

"[A] move by a state or an international organisation to involve itself in the domestic affairs of another state, whether the state consents or not." (Hoffman, 1993:88).

Intervention can include: 1) preventive interventions before the outbreak of a conflict; 2) curative intervention that aims at the solution, limitation, control or regulation of an existing conflict; 3) de-escalating intervention that aims at reducing tension and must be based on insight into the factors and mechanisms that led to escalation; and 4) escalating interventions, it can be in the interest of a permanent conflict resolution to escalate a 'cold' conflict (one in which the parties avoid both contact and confrontation). (Glasl, 1997:148-149).

LIVELIHOODS

Livelihoods comprise the capabilities, assets (including both material and social resources) and activities required for a means of living linked to survival and future well-being. Livelihood strategies are the practical means or activities through which people access food or income to buy food, while coping strategies are temporary responses to food insecurity. (Sphere)

A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks and maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets both now and in the future, while not undermining natural resource bases.

MALNUTRITION

Malnutrition encompasses a range of conditions, including acute malnutrition, chronic malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies. Acute malnutrition refers to wasting (thinness) and/or nutritional edema, while chronic malnutrition refers to stunting (shortness).Stunting and wasting are two forms of growth failure. (Sphere). Malnutrition (undernutrition) is caused by a lack of nutrients in your diet, either due to a poor diet or problems absorbing nutrients from food. Certain things can increase a person's risk of becoming malnourished. The most extreme form of malnutrition is starvation.

MONITORING

System that permits the continuous observation, measurement and a valuation of the progress of a process or phenomenon with a view to taking corrective measures. (UN DHA)

The monitoring function itself is ‘continuing’ as it encompasses the collection, analysis and use of information. In humanitarian operations, it is particularly important to track changes in the implementation environment that may have a direct effect on the project. Monitoring is undertaken for different purposes, relating to how the data or information will be used within operations. The policy and guidance documents reviewed offered a considerable list of purposes for monitoring information.

MUDSLIDE

A type of landslide, which occurs when the slope is saturated with water. This more destructive flow can pick up rocks, trees, houses and cars. As the debris moves into river and stream beds, bridges can become blocked or even collapse, making a temporary dam that can flood neighboring areas. (GLIDE) Mudslides are fast-moving torrents of mud and rock, which are no longer capable of defying gravity. Prolonged heavy rain or volcanic activity normally cause mudslides and such torrents are among the most destructive forces in nature.

NATURAL DISASTER

Natural disasters are events brought about by natural hazards that seriously affect the society, economy and/or infrastructure of a region. Depending on population vulnerability and local response capacity, natural disasters will pose challenges and problems of a humanitarian nature. The term “natural disaster” is used for ease. It is important to understand, however, that the magnitude of the consequences of sudden natural hazards is a direct result of the way individuals and societies relate to threats originating from natural hazards. The magnitude of the consequences is, thus, determined by human action, or the lack thereof. (Protecting Persons Affected by Natural Disasters, IASC Operational Guidelines, 2006)

NON-DISCRIMINATION

The principle that a measure of general protection for civilian populations against certain consequences of war without any adverse distinction based, in particular, on race, nationality, religion or political opinion (e.g. the establishment of hospitals and safety zones and of neutralized zones, the free passage of relief supplies, etc.). Also, the principle under human rights law that States must undertake measures to respect and to ensure to all individuals within their territories and subject to their jurisdiction the rights recognized in the 1966 International Covenants on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), and Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

PEACEBUILDING

The Statement by the President of the Security Council on Peacebuilding in 2001 (S/PRST/2001/5) holds that peacebuilding activities are aimed at preventing the outbreak, recurrence or continuation of armed conflict and therefore encompass a wide range of political, developmental, humanitarian and human rights programs and mechanisms. They require tailored short and long-term actions that focus on fostering sustainable institutions and processes in areas such as sustainable development, the eradication of poverty and inequalities, transparent and accountable governance, the promotion of democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law and the promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence. (OCHA)

HUMANITARIAN ACTION

The challenges to humanitarian action depend in part on how you define humanitarian action. There is no single definition, and no one owns the concept. It must be action oriented; it must be non-coercive; it must be provided solely for the benefit of those we seek to assist. But in addition, humanitarian action must demonstrate an ethic of restraint. Humanitarian action cannot be subordinated to political interests, military rationales or even socially progressive moves towards peace and democracy.

Assistance, protection and advocacy actions undertaken on an impartial basis in response to human needs resulting from complex political emergencies and natural hazards. (ALNAP)

HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTION

While there is no agreed upon international definition of “humanitarian intervention” yet, it is a doctrine generally understood to mean coercive action by States involving the use of armed force in another State without the consent of its government, with or without authorization from the UN Security Council, for the purpose of preventing or putting to a halt gross and massive violations of human rights or international humanitarian law. The UN’s operations in Northern Iraq and Somalia, and NATO’s operation in Kosovo have all been termed humanitarian intervention. (OCHA)

PEACE-ENFORCEMENT

It can take place without the agreement and support of one or all the warring parties. It can refer to both an interstate and an intra-state conflict, the mitigation of a humanitarian emergency or in situations where the organs of state have ceased to function. Peace enforcement actions include: 1) carrying out international sanctions against the opposing sides, or against the side that represents the driving force in the armed conflict; 2) isolating the conflict and preventing arms deliveries to the area, as well as preventing its penetration by armed formations;3) delivering air or missile strikes on positions of the side that refuses to halt its military actions; 4) rapid deployment of peace forces to the combat zones.

PEACEKEEPING FORCES

"Civilian and military personnel designated by the national governments of the countries participating in the peace operation. These personnel are placed at the disposal of the international organization under whose mandate the given operation is being conducted. Generally, peacekeeping forces are made up of national contingents under international command. Each national contingent is assigned either a zone of responsibility or specific functional duties." (Demurenko & Nikitin, 1997;123 124).(FEWER)

PEACEKEEPING OPERATION (PKO)

UN field operations that often consist of several components, including a military component, which may or may not be armed, and various civilian components encompassing a broad range of disciplines. Depending on their mandate, peacekeeping missions may be required to: deploy to prevent the outbreak of conflict or the spill-over of conflict across borders; stabilize conflict situations after a ceasefire to create an environment for the parties to reach a lasting peace agreement; assist in implementing comprehensive peace agreements; lead states or territories through a transition to stable government based on democratic principles, good governance and economic development. (OCHA)

PEACEMAKING

The use of diplomatic means to persuade parties in conflict to cease hostilities and to negotiate a peaceful settlement of their dispute. The UN can usually play a role only if the parties to the dispute agree to it. Peacemaking thus excludes the use of force against one of the parties to enforce an end to hostilities, an activity that in United Nations parlance is referred to as “peace enforcement”.

Peacemaking is necessary and important in cases of protracted violence that do not seem to burn themselves out and in cases where war crimes and other human devastation demand the attention of outside forces.

POST-CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION

A generic term referring to the rebuilding of society in the aftermath of conflict. Physical infrastructures have to be repaired or re-built, governmental institutions have to be reformed, psychic traumas of civilians and combatants have to be treated, the economy has to be restarted, refugees to be repatriated, reconciliation between the belligerents has to be initiated, justice has to be delivered. Such efforts require sustained support from the international community. (FEWER)

Reconstruction is a massive organizational challenge. Physical damage may be catastrophic, communities confused and disoriented. Refugees may demand resettlement despite the lack of housing, food, water and employment. The threat of infectious diseases is constant.

PREPAREDNESS

The capacities and knowledge developed by governments, professional response organizations, communities and individuals to anticipate and respond effectively to the impact of likely, imminent or current hazard events or conditions. Preparedness action is carried out within the context of disaster risk management and should be based on a sound analysis of disaster risks and be well linked to early warning systems. It includes contingency planning, stockpiling of equipment and supplies, emergency services and stand-by arrangements, communications, information management and coordination arrangements, personnel training, community drills and exercises, and public education. It must be supported by formal institutional, legal and budgetary capacities. (ISDR)

PREVENTION

Activities to provide outright avoidance of the adverse impacts of hazards and means to minimize related environmental, technological and biological disasters. Comment: Depending on social and technical feasibility and cost/benefit considerations, investing in preventive measures may be justified in areas frequently affected by disasters. These measures may include structural or non-structural measures. Public awareness and education can be used to promote a “culture of prevention” and to encourage local prevention activities. (ISDR) Encompasses activities designed to provide permanent protection from disasters. It includes engineering and other physical protective measures, and also legislative measures controlling land use and urban planning. (UN DHA)

PROTECTED AREAS

Areas designated by the UN to be demilitarized to protect civilians and facilitate circumstances for a peaceful, negotiated resolution to the conflict. (OCHA) Protected Persons: Persons accorded protection under International Humanitarian Law, who take no active part in the hostilities, including members of armed forces who have laid down their arms and those placed hors de combat by sickness, wounds, detention, or any other cause, shall in all circumstances be treated humanely, without any adverse distinction founded on race, colour, religion or faith, sex, birth or wealth, or any other similar criteria. (OCHA)

PROTECTION

A concept that encompasses all activities aimed at obtaining full respect for the rights of the individual in accordance with the letter and spirit of human rights, refugee and international humanitarian law. Protection involves creating an environment conducive to respect for human beings, preventing and/or alleviating the immediate effects of a specific pattern of abuse, and restoring dignified conditions of life through reparation, restitution and rehabilitation. (OCHA)

Protection refers not only to what we do but the way we do it. It involves actively applying core protection principles and. responsibilities to our humanitarian work across all sectors.

PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS IN ARMED CONFLICT

Structures and policies developed by the UN, States and other humanitarian actors, and based in international humanitarian law, human rights and refugee law, to protect vulnerable populations from the effects of armed conflict, ranging from the most immediate priorities of minimizing civilian casualties to more long-term priorities of promoting the rule of law and security, law and order within a State. (OCHA)

Sadly in conflict zones all over the world, civilians are routinely killed or maimed, towns and cities are damaged and destroyed, in targeted or indiscriminate attacks. People are cut off from food, water and life-saving assistance, in some cases, starved as a deliberate tactic of war.

RECONCILIATION

An element of conflict resolution and peacebuilding involving the promotion of confidence building and co-existence. The process of achieving reconciliation generally involves five interwoven and related strands: 1) developing a shared vision of an interdependent and fair society; 2) acknowledging and dealing with the past; 3) building positive relationships; 4) significant cultural and attitudinal change; and 5) substantial social, economic and political change. It can be a challenging and long-term process for communities deeply divided along political or ethnic lines. While reconciliation must grow between and within communities, it can benefit from international support, especially when people and/or political leaders are unable or unwilling to initiate it. (UNHCR)

RECRUITMENT

Encompasses compulsory, forced and voluntary recruitment into any kind of regular or irregular armed force or armed group. The conscripting or enlisting of children under the age of fifteen years into the national armed forces or using them to participate actively in hostilities constitutes a war crime under the Rome Statute. The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict prohibits direct participation in armed conflict of persons below 18 years and establishes a ban on their compulsory recruitment. (OCHA)

REFUGEE

A person, who owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, or for reasons owing to external aggression, occupation, foreign domination or events seriously disturbing public order in either part or the whole of his country of origin or nationality, is compelled to leave his place of habitual residence in order to seek refuge outside his country of origin or nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of his country of origin or nationality. (OCHA)

REFUGEE CAMP

A plot of land temporarily made available to host refugees fleeing from an armed conflict in temporary homes. UN Agencies, particularly UNHCR, and other humanitarian organizations provide essential services in refugee camps including food, sanitation, health, medicine and education. These camps are ideally located at least 50 km away from the nearest international border to deter camp raids and other attacks on its civilian occupants. (OCHA)

REHABILITATION

A set of measures aimed at restoring normal living conditions through the repair and reestablishment of vital services interrupted or degraded by a disaster or emergency. (CRID)
Reintegration: A process which enables returnees to regain the physical, social, legal and material security needed to maintain life, livelihood and dignity and which eventually leads to the disappearance of any observable distinctions vis-à-vis their compatriots. (UNHCR)

RESILIENCE

The capacity of a system, community or society potentially exposed to hazards to resist, adapt, and recover from hazard events, and to restore an acceptable level of functioning and structure. Comment: Resilience means to “resile from” or “spring back” after a shock. The resilience of a social system is determined by the degree to which the system has the necessary resources and is capable of organizing itself to develop its capacities, to implement disaster risk reduction and to institute means to transfer or manage residual risks. (ISDR)

RESTITUTION

The concept that victims, their families or dependents, who have suffered harm, including physical or mental injury, emotional suffering, economic loss or substantial impairment of fundamental rights, through acts or omissions that are in violation of criminal laws operative within Member States, should receive fair recompense . Such recompense should include the return of property or payment for the harm or loss suffered, reimbursement of expenses incurred as a result of the victimization, the provision of services and the restoration of rights. (OCHA)

RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT

A concept that imposes a responsibility on the international community to protect a population that is suffering serious harm, as a result of internal war, insurgency, repression or state failure, and the state in question is unwilling or unable to halt or avert it.

The ICISS notes that the responsibility to protect encompasses three components: -The responsibility to prevent a human catastrophe by addressing root causes and direct causes of internal conflict and other man-made crises; -The responsibility to react to an actual or apprehended situation of compelling human need, should one occur, with appropriate measures, which may include coercive measures such as sanctions, international prosecution and military intervention in extreme

RETURNEES

Refugees who have returned to their country or community of origin. (UNHCR)

RISK ASSESSMENT

Calculation and/or simulation of degree of danger attached to a course of action for the purpose of uncertainty reduction. "[R]isk assessment and early warning are distinct but complementary activities. Risk assessments are based on the systematic analysis of remote and intermediate conditions. Early warning requires near real- time assessment of events that, in a high risk environment, are likely to accelerate or trigger the rapid escalation of conflict."
(Gurr, 1996b: 137). (FEWER)

RISK MANAGEMENT

A structured approach to manage uncertainty and potential losses through a process of risk assessment and the development of strategies and specific actions to control and reduce risks. In the field of disasters, risk management strategies include avoiding the risk (prevention), reducing the negative effect of the risk (mitigation), transferring the risk to another party (insurance), and accepting some or all of the consequences of a particular risk (retained risk). In some key sectors affected by natural hazards, such as water supply, energy, agriculture and transportation, risk management may a core element of business activity owing to the potential for both gains and losses. (ISDR)

SAFE AREAS/ SAFETY ZONES

Areas, zones, or locations established to protect civilians during a time of conflict. The terms and conditions of establishing safety zones are governed by the law of armed conflict. (UNHCR)

“Safe zones” or “safe areas” are areas designated by agreement of parties to an armed conflict in which military forces will not deploy or carry out attacks. Such areas have also been created by UN Security Council resolutions. They can include “no-fly” zones, in which some or all parties to the conflict are barred from conducting air operations. Such areas are intended to protect civilians fleeing from the hostilities and make it easier for them to access humanitarian aid. They may be defended by UN peacekeepers or other forces.

SANITATION

The application of measures and techniques aimed at ensuring and improving general hygiene in the community, including the collection, evacuation and disposal of liquid and solid wastes, as well as measures for creating favourable environmental conditions for health and disease prevention. (UN DHA) Adequate Sanitation is a basic Human Right. Sanitation differs from hygiene in that it provides the means for people to be hygienic. Hygiene is the ability to participate in conditions and practices that help to maintain health and prevent the spread of disease. Sanitation is important for all, helping to maintain health and increase life-spans.

SHELTER

Physical protection requirements of disaster victims who no longer have access to normal habitation facilities. Immediate post-disaster needs are met by the use of tents. Alternatives may include polypropylene houses, plastic sheeting, geodesic domes and other similar types of temporary housing. (UN DHA) From conflict and disasters to situations of mass displacement, safe and adequate shelter is a critical component of crisis response. Shelter will often be necessary to survival, and is an essential component in protecting the privacy and dignity of affected people. Shelter assistance can take various forms, from large communal emergency welcome centers to the construction of individual housing.

RECOVERY AND RECONSTRUCTION

Recovery and Reconstruction includes replacement/restoration of assets, infrastructure and livelihoods lost, damaged or interrupted in natural disasters or conflict. The theme also covers Early Recovery which encompass specific interventions to help people move from dependence on humanitarian relief towards sustainable development.

STARVATION

The state resulting from extreme privation of food or of drastic reduction in nutrient intake over a period of time leading to severe physiological, functional, behavioural and morphological differences. (UN DHA)

TECHNOLOGICAL DISASTER

Air accident, multiple collisions, building fire, etc. Under this category operators will classify the following: Automobile, rail, aircraft or navigation accidents, including transportation accidents; Damages or collapse of any type of structure for reasons such as excess weight in public places, bridges, etc.; Damages in structures caused by natural phenomena should be reported as an effect of these phenomena; Urban fires caused by technological failures and explosions of any type, Pollution events: Concentration of polluting substances in the air, water or soils, at levels harmful to human health, crops or animal species, including leaks of harmful liquid, solid or gas substances, whether radioactive or not. (GLIDE)

TERRORISM

While there is no agreed upon international definition of “terrorism” yet, it is a concept generally understood to mean a criminal act or acts intended to inflict dramatic and deadly injury on civilians and to create an atmosphere of fear, generally in furtherance of a political or ideological (whether secular or religious) purpose. Terrorism is most often carried out by sub-national or transnational groups, but it has also been known to be practiced by rulers as an instrument of control. (OCHA)

TSUNAMI

Seismic sea waves (mistakenly called “tidal waves”), which are a series of enormous waves created by an underwater disturbance such as an earthquake, landslide, volcanic eruption, or meteorite. A tsunami can move hundreds of miles per hour in the open ocean and smash into land with waves as high as 100 feet or more. (ITIC)

VIOLENCE

The concept of violence is contested, and definitions generally reflect moral and political motivations. A relatively neutral definition is "psychological or physical force exerted for the purpose of injuring, damaging, or abusing people or property" (US Department of Justice, 1996:D-3). (+) (FEWER)

CULTURAL VIOLENCE

New term introduced by J. Galtung,; "those aspects of culture, the symbolic sphere of our existence - exemplified by religion and ideology, language and art, empirical science and formal science (logic, mathematics) - that can be used to justify, legitimise, or direct structural violence" (Galtung, 1996:196). (FEWER)

PSYCHOLOGICAL VIOLENCE

Indirect acts of negative influence that aim to affect or arouse fear or break mental resistance of a target audience by indoctrination (brain-washing), misinformation, propaganda, blackmail or terror. (FEWER)

STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE

Introduced by J. Galtung this is a broad concept referring to concealed violence in unjust, unequal and unrepresentative social structures, and to situations in which the "actual somatic and mental realisations of human beings are below their potential realisations." (cit. International Alert, II:5). (FEWER)

VULNERABILITY

The conditions determined by physical, social, economic and environmental factors or processes, which increase the susceptibility of a community to the impact of hazards. For positive factors, which increase the ability of people to cope with hazards, see definition of 'capacity'. (ISDR)

There are many aspects of vulnerability, arising from various physical, social, economic, and environmental factors. Examples may include: poor design and construction of buildings, inadequate protection of assets, lack of public information and awareness, limited official recognition of risks and preparedness measures, and disregard for wise environmental management.