



merlin

Medical Emergency Relief International

Annual Review 1998



Alastair Troup visiting the Democratic Republic of Congo

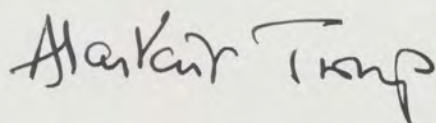
Hurricanes, civil war and changing political situations all contribute to plunging communities, families and individuals into despair. The expertise Merlin has developed over the past six years has enabled us to alleviate the suffering of many. We have shown that a medium sized, medically focused agency capable of working in the most difficult environments can relieve misery and provide hope beyond imagination.

Providing medical expertise is the core of all our activity. In the early days, Merlin conducted short, effective immunisation campaigns in very remote areas. Six years on, we continue to pioneer ways of sharing our medical knowledge in a practical, appropriate and effective manner. Our work against tuberculosis in Russia has become part of an international effort to control the spread of multi-drug resistant TB. In Africa and Geneva we are partners with the World Health Organisation (WHO) in a global 'Roll Back Malaria' campaign. In southern Sudan we worked with local groups to tackle sleeping sickness. In Sierra Leone, against increasing difficulties, we continue to maintain our nutritional programmes.

The collective expertise of Merlin's national, international and core staff enables us to respond to acute and complex emergencies in the most demanding countries. In 1998, catastrophes like the two Afghanistan earthquakes, Hurricane Mitch and the Sudan famine demanded our response. With the combined support of our regional field teams, all departments in London and our generous donors, we were able to react quickly and effectively. In addition, we must not forget the public health crises and outbreaks of disease endemic in countries such as Liberia, Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Merlin is an integral part of the international relief effort and people are an essential part of Merlin. Investment in our staff, whether in the field or in London, is paramount. 1998 saw the launch of our training courses. Our portfolio of Induction, Public Health, Project Support and Management in Relief and Emergencies Courses proved so successful that we have added a course on Nutrition in Relief and Emergencies. These courses facilitate our continued drive for higher standards in the sector.

Merlin's vision has to be supported by a robust organisation, continual commitment and unrelenting hard work both in the field and in London. Not forgetting that our work is a direct result of other people's distress, we can anticipate greater demands - and therefore greater need for core funds - ahead. We are ready for these and will continue to access those in greatest need, even though they may not be at the centre of popular attention nor politically attractive to institutional donors.



Alastair Troup
Chief Executive



Merlin supplies equipment and trains staff in hospital laboratories

The Need - Albania is Europe's poorest country. Decades of isolation left the country's infrastructure under resourced and run down. This particularly affected the health service - hospitals had few staff and very little equipment.

Merlin's Response - Merlin undertook a programme to supply equipment to hospital laboratories and to provide training and expertise. The aim was to give talented and

enthusiastic local staff the support they needed, so they could run their own laboratories. Well equipped, well run laboratories can help detect disease early.

Outcomes - This programme has succeeded in equipping 29 hospitals across Albania and providing the best quality training to the staff in the hospital laboratories.



Merlin team reaches remotest areas

The Need - Irian Jaya is the most remote part of Indonesia. The people here live traditional lives and most are self-sufficient farmers or fishermen. The majority of people are poor and have little access to healthcare. Malaria, diarrhoeal diseases and pneumonia are common killers. When disaster struck, like the extreme weather caused by El Nino in June 1998, the mountain villages became highly vulnerable to disease.



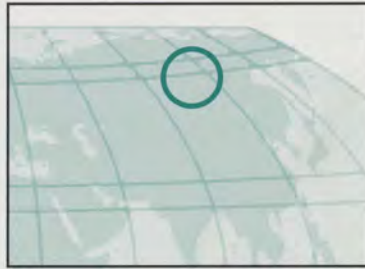
Merlin's Response - Merlin's answer was to send medical teams to work in the remotest areas. These teams worked with local people and provided training, equipment and expertise in disease prevention and control. Merlin's support helped them get back on their feet.

Outcomes - A system of training courses now refreshes local health staff's skills so they can respond quickly to future epidemics. Projects continue into 1999.

...Merlin's achievements in 1998

Russia

Merlin leads pilot programme to battle tuberculosis



The Need - Tuberculosis (TB) is one of the world's biggest infectious killers of adults. Russia was suffering a TB epidemic, with incidence growing by 10% per year. Following the break up of the Soviet Union, health infrastructures broke down. Lack of money and resources led to poor drug supply and inadequate treatments.

Merlin's Response - In Tomsk, Siberia, Merlin set up a pilot scheme with the World Health Organisation (WHO), to provide drugs and laboratory equipment to local hospitals. More critically, they supplied expertise and information. Using the WHO approved scheme DOTS (Directly Observed Treatment Short course), they were able to help

local staff develop a cost effective way of treating TB. The essence of the programme was to treat people at home.



Outcomes - Tomsk now has a fully functioning TB programme and TB mortality rates are decreasing. The programme has been declared a success and has been taken on as an official pilot programme by Moscow. People now complete the treatment and return to work after weeks, rather than spending months in hospital as under the old system.



Merlin reopens war damaged health centres

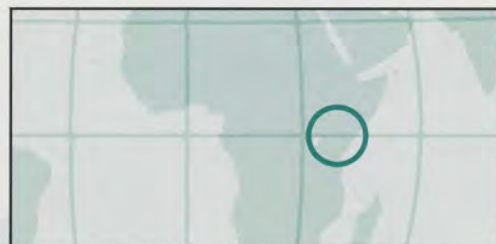
Democratic Republic of Congo

The Need - The Democratic Republic of Congo has suffered two major wars over the last few years. These conflicts have devastated health structures and left tens of thousands of Congolese people and refugee populations without access to healthcare.

Merlin's Response - Merlin reopened war damaged health facilities in the two worst affected areas in eastern DRC - south Kivu and Maniema. Merlin provided drugs, trained health staff in hospitals and restarted 41 health centres

throughout both regions, which are home to over 600,000 people.

Outcomes - There have been no vaccine-preventable disease epidemics in any of the Merlin supported health zones since the programme started. Hospitals, clinics and health staff now have greatly increased capacity to respond quickly and appropriately to any future outbreaks of deadly diseases like measles and polio.



Merlin tackles unprecedented malaria crisis

epidemic in February 1998. The area was declared a health disaster zone. Mortality rates reached an alarming level.

Merlin's Response - Merlin was invited to set up an emergency programme with Oxfam in the Wajir district. Merlin provided three mobile clinics which covered both nomad and settled populations. Mosquito nets were

The Need - Kenya faced a massive malaria

handed out and health education sessions were held. Merlin supported a Ministry of Health polio campaign and provided vital medicines to local hospitals.

Outcomes - Mosquito nets were distributed to 20,000 people and families. Merlin held over 66,000 consultations including vaccinations and vitamin A distribution. More than 80% of children in the region were vaccinated against measles, with only very sporadic cases occurring. The mortality rate from malaria dramatically decreased.



Controlling sleeping sickness epidemic

The Need - Sleeping sickness occurs in two stages. The symptoms of stage one are headaches, fever, dizziness and swollen glands. In stage two, it can invade the spinal cord. Patients become mentally ill and fall into a coma. Life expectancy is six months and if untreated the disease is 100% fatal. In 1998, south Sudan experienced the worst epidemic for 40 years.

Merlin's Response - Merlin adapted 'appropriate-tech' traps that catch and kill the tsetse fly which carries the disease. The traps could be built and maintained by trained local people. As well as running this project to prevent



sleeping sickness, Merlin helped treat people in south Sudan who already had the illness, by providing medical expertise to support local health facilities.

Outcomes - In Tambura province, Merlin helped set 1000 traps to control the tsetse fly. This project, which Merlin set up with CARE International and International Medical Corps, protected tens of thousands of lives. It was highly innovative, has become a model for disease control during wartime and will be mirrored throughout sub-Saharan Africa.

...Merlin's achievements in 1998



Vaccination response to outbreak of yellow fever

Liberia

The Need - As well as suffering a long civil war, Liberia received an influx of refugees fleeing the war in Sierra Leone.

Merlin's Response - When yellow fever broke out in Nimba County, Merlin responded quickly with a mass vaccination programme.

Liberia had a struggling economy and was barely able to cope with the huge numbers of refugees and internally displaced people. The result was a series of huge camps where refugees were crowded together with little or no sanitation, clean water or food supply.

Outcomes - Merlin vaccinated 33,000 against the disease. This led to Merlin's involvement in a World Health Organisation (WHO) programme to vaccinate against yellow fever across the whole country. In Tappeta district, Merlin vaccinated almost 27,000 people - 94% of the population.

Merlin's training helps local staff control disease

Tajikistan



The Need - The former Soviet Republic of Tajikistan suffered from a civil war in the early 1990s. As a result, many hospitals and laboratories were damaged. Diseases such as typhoid and malaria emerged, which had not been seen in many years.

Kulyab town, in Khatlon district, by distributing drugs and training technicians and doctors in controlling the disease. Merlin also trained people to treat a malaria epidemic.

Merlin's Response - Merlin dealt with a typhoid outbreak in

Outcomes - Merlin completed rehabilitation programmes in eight laboratories and 17 infectious disease hospitals. Work started rehab projects in a further 8 hospitals and 2 laboratories.

Merlin is leading partner as WHO launches Roll Back Malaria

The need -

- There are about half a billion malaria cases worldwide, which result in about one million deaths. Malaria accounts for one in four of all childhood deaths in Africa.
- The World Health Organisation estimate that 50% of malaria deaths could be prevented if health systems worldwide were adequately supported.

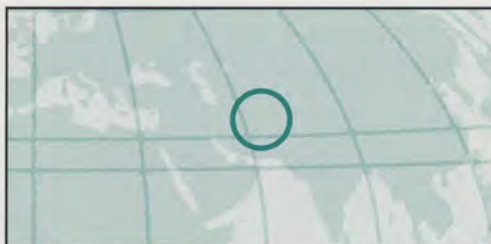
The WHO's Response -

- "Roll Back Malaria" was launched to start a concerted attack on malaria in a six stage plan.

Merlin's Response -

- Merlin was a participating agency when the WHO launched its Roll Back Malaria campaign in December 1998. With its experience of tackling Malaria in sub-Saharan Africa, Merlin continues to be at the forefront of the campaign.
- As well as tackling malaria directly, Merlin provides advice and experience to other partners involved in the campaign.





Merlin acts fast in wake of double earthquake

February - 1st earthquake

The Need - An earthquake measuring 6.1 on the Richter scale hit northern Afghanistan. Homes across the region were levelled. It is estimated that up to 4,600 people were killed and 50,000 were left homeless, trying to live rough on snow covered mountain slopes.

Merlin's Response - Merlin moved quickly. The team from neighbouring Tajikistan flew helicopters in with emergency medicines, high energy biscuits and blankets. This was followed by a road convoy organised by staff already in Afghanistan. They took two days to travel over 150 miles on tortuous mountain roads.

Outcomes - Merlin's convoy delivered 20 tonnes of medicines, food, tents and mini-stoves. After the initial emergency response, Merlin began a programme to immunise 25,000 people against measles. 500 children were immunised on the very first day.

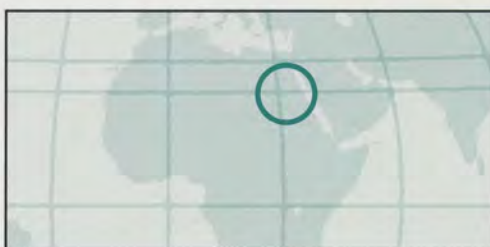
May - 2nd earthquake

The Need - Unbelievably, a second quake hit Afghanistan in May 1998. This one was even more powerful - 7 on the Richter Scale. The Merlin team in Faizabad reported that up to 4,000 people had died.

Merlin's Response - Again, Merlin acted fast. 36 hours after the quake, the first helicopter arrived carrying an emergency medical team and supplies. Merlin rushed in a planeload of medicines. A tent hospital was set up and thousands of survivors were given shelter, food and treatment.

Outcomes - After six weeks, the emergency operation was almost over. Agencies and local people began the long task of rebuilding homes and lives.

Feeding and medical response to famine



The Need - During the Sudan famine in 1998, 5% of children were malnourished. Many families had lost everything and were living in the open under trees, without shelter, clothing or food. Some were living on leaves, roots and berries. Famine leads to secondary problems such as malaria, diarrhoea and respiratory infections.

Merlin's Response - Merlin set up supplementary and therapeutic feeding centres to keep people alive. Merlin

also responded to the secondary needs - providing medical supplies, training and information to help people avoid killer diseases.

Outcomes - Merlin's swift response saved thousands of people from starvation and reduced the long term effects of famine by limiting outbreaks of disease.



...Merlin's achievements in 1998



Sierra
Leone

Continued fighting leads to massive nutritional need

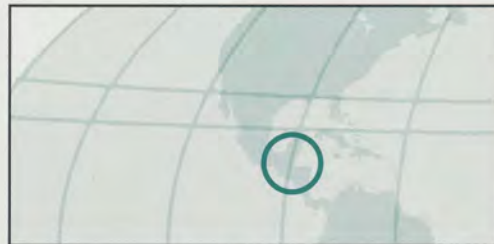
The Need - Sierra Leone has suffered one of the most vicious wars in world history. In 1998, renewed fighting led to huge numbers of people becoming refugees or being displaced within the country. This instability caused a massive nutritional need and put many children in danger of starvation.

Merlin's Response - Merlin's project involved providing vital nutrition for refugee and displaced children. Therapeutic feeding was provided for those in immediate danger and supplementary feeding helped others on the road to recovery.

Despite two outbreaks of fighting which forced Merlin's ex-patriate teams to evacuate, Merlin's local staff in Sierra Leone always continued the work.

Outcomes - The project is ongoing into 1999 and provides therapeutic feeding for 600 children a day and supplementary feeding for a further 3,000. After both evacuations, Merlin's ex-patriate teams returned to Sierra Leone and were able to re-join local staff to continue the projects.

Honduras



Hurricane Mitch devastates Central America

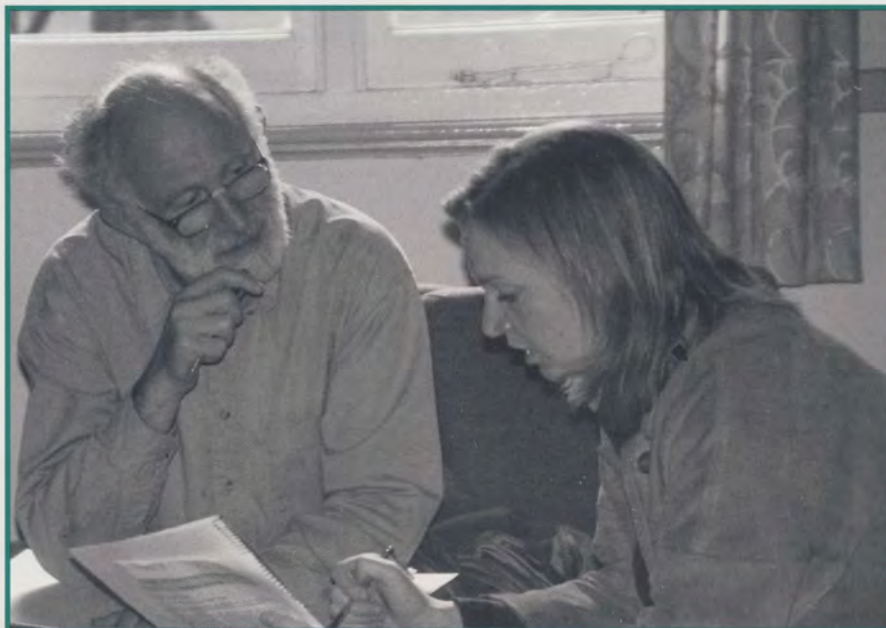
The Need - When Hurricane Mitch hit Honduras, many people were made homeless. Stagnant and infected water caused diarrhoea and skin infections. Breeding mosquitoes led to outbreaks of malaria. In the capital, 5,000 people camped in a sports stadium.

Merlin's Response - The Merlin operation was launched at the height of the emergency. British airline Flying Colours joined Merlin's emergency response by raising money and providing an aeroplane. Merlin targeted isolated groups on



the Caribbean coast. The medical teams sometimes had to travel through flooded areas by motorised canoe.

Outcomes - In the month following the hurricane, Merlin provided mobile clinics to five communities in San Pedro Sula and completed 1,074 consultations. In Gracias a Dios region, Merlin provided 13 health centres and one hospital with drugs, water containers, chlorine tablets, soap and malaria nets. Merlin also built eight water tanks.



Merlin launches training programmes

Merlin's greatest asset is its people. By providing training for field workers and their local counterparts, Merlin is ensuring that they continue to have the best knowledge and skills possible. In the long term this can only improve the quality of the aid we provide.

With generous help from both Glaxo Wellcome plc and the British Government's Department for International Development, Merlin launched a series of four training courses in 1998. These reflect Merlin's ongoing commitment to professionalism and quality in the provision of healthcare and relief work overseas. The need for such courses is felt throughout the sector - this was identified in the People in Aid "Code of Best Practice" which highlights the need for training and support "before, during and after field assignments".

Merlin actively encourages our own national and international staff, as well as those from other agencies, to attend our courses. By working in partnership with experts from a variety of relevant fields, our courses ensure that best practice is shared and implemented. In addition, Merlin encourages new people to get involved in overseas work, by providing effective training programmes which allow them to develop and transfer their professional skills.

...Providing training and development

The objectives of Merlin's training programme are to -

- Continue the professional development of experienced aid workers
- Ensure effective and appropriate responses are made by our staff and others working in the humanitarian sector
- Give participants the opportunity to share knowledge, expertise and lessons learnt across organisations, so all are better placed to respond
- Pass on acquired skills to our local partners to enable them to better withstand future emergencies.

During 1998 Merlin developed and delivered four courses:

Public Health in Relief and Emergencies (9 day residential course)

This course enables healthcare professionals to transfer their skills to the relief environment. It ran twice during the year with 34 participants in total. 45% subsequently worked with Merlin.

"This course has proved essential for me - I can't believe I would have thought of going overseas without it."

- MM, Midwife

Management in Relief and Emergencies (5 day residential course)

A course developed and run in conjunction with The Management Centre. Designed for managers in the field and at headquarters, aiming to develop a full range of skills in disaster and relief management. The course attracted 34 participants many of whom were currently or had previously worked with Merlin.

"It was one of the best courses I have ever been on."

- RB, Senior Medical Co-ordinator

Project Support in Relief and Emergencies (9 day residential course)

A practical course developed and run in conjunction with RedR for all support staff, covering areas of security, logistics and administration relevant to the relief sector. Several international staff returned from the field to participate and share their experience.

"Without this course I would have been absolutely lost and it would have taken me several months in the field to acquire this knowledge"

- MHS, Logistician

Induction to Merlin and its Relief Programmes

A two day induction programme that familiarises members of our field staff register with Merlin's programmes, ethos and systems. This course was run seven times during the year and was attended by over 80 participants awaiting placement.

"A great all round introduction to Merlin and its programmes - I can't wait to get off the register and into the field"

- AL, Nurse

Merlin constantly evaluates the effectiveness of its training programmes and strives to incorporate the best practice. All our courses have consistently received very positive feedback.

Total Income

£'000	1998	1997
Donations and Gifts	1,203	518
Field Operations	6,237	5,043
Fundraising Events	59	103
Interest Receivable	17	3
	7,516	5,667

Total Expenditure

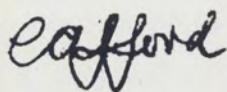
£'000	1998	1997
Direct Charitable Expenditure	6,331	5,033
Fundraising & Publicity	278	203
Management & Administration	459	349
	7,068	5,585

The above information is extracted from the financial statements for 1998, copies of which are available from the Company Secretary, Merlin, 14 David Mews, Porter Street, London W1M 1HW.

The financial statements were audited by Littlejohn Fraser, Chartered Accountants and Registered Auditors, whose report was unqualified.

Merlin (Medical Emergency Relief International) is a registered charity no. 1016607. Merlin Board Limited is a company limited by guarantee. Company no. 2823935. Registered company address: 95 Aldwych, London WC2B 4JF.

Financial statements for 1999 will be available in mid-2000.



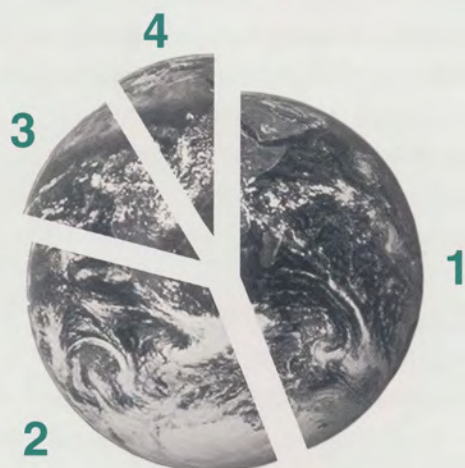
Cate Ford
Finance Director

**In 1998 we spent
 £6.3 million....**

Who we helped:

	£'000s
Afghanistan	732
Albania	265
Bangladesh	3
Chechnya	145
Congo Brazzaville	151
Democratic Republic of Congo	624
Honduras	92
Indonesia	174
Kenya	570
Liberia	1,218
Montserrat	2
Nagorno Karabakh	2
Russian Federation	12
Siberia	107
Sierra Leone	868
Sudan	921
Tajikistan	438
Yugoslavia	7

Sources of funds expended in 1998



- 1 - European Union 44%
- 2 - British Government 35%
- 3 - US Government 13%
- 4 - Private 7%

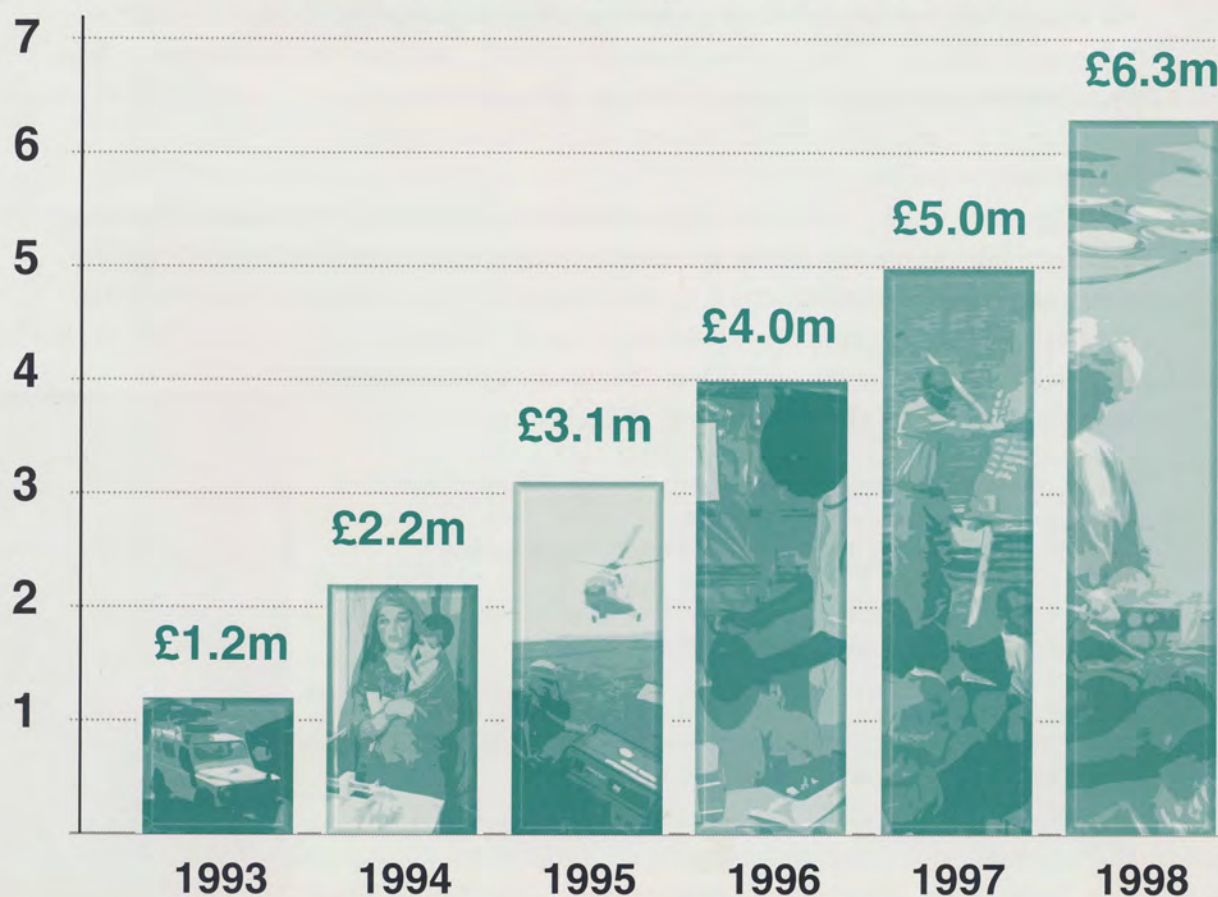
Expenditure in 1998



- 1 - Direct Charitable Expenditure 90%
- 2 - Management & Administration 6%
- 3 - Fundraising & Publicity 4%

£m

Direct Charitable Expenditure 1993-1998





Merlin is the UK's emergency medical relief expert. Merlin's expertise is drawn from the great pool of medical knowledge and experience in the UK and other participating countries. We aim to share this - particularly in countries where the health system is impoverished or has broken down. There are four key strands to Merlin's work:

1. Supporting public health services

Much of Merlin's work is geared to supporting and supplying public health services. Bringing support through our knowledge and training for local staff and supplying equipment and drugs, we help health services move towards self sufficiency.

2. Preventing and controlling disease

When a disaster strikes, such as civil war or an earthquake, or a country suffers economic collapse, local health services often find they cannot cope. The consequence is inevitably outbreaks of disease - this is particularly true in refugee centres or populations displaced due to war. In other areas, disease can break out due to environmental or economic conditions.

3. Responding to emergencies

We respond to emergencies where we feel our expertise can be put to best use and have the greatest impact. Once our assessment team has reported on an emergency, we respond in the most appropriate way.

4. Committing to people

Merlin provides training courses in various areas of medical relief in emergency situations. The aims of these courses are to ensure Merlin has the best qualified field staff possible and to help other aid organisations to be able to cope with medical emergencies where they operate.

Merlin's objectives

Merlin relieves emergency health needs through the rapid provision of medical care delivered, wherever possible, through existing services in collaboration with local and international partners.

Merlin strives to strengthen the capacity of local health services so that they can provide adequate care in the future.

Merlin believes that it is better to avoid disease than to cure it. This can mean involvement in the provision of food, clean water and sanitation in the context of our medical programmes.



An appeal for assistance

Merlin's work is in more demand than ever.

Every year, since we were founded in 1993, we have required an extra £1million to fulfil the need for our services. Much of our work is funded by governments and institutions around the world.

However, over £1.2 million is received through private charitable donations.

Without this money, Merlin could not operate effectively.

Why?

Emergencies - private donations allow us to respond to an emergency immediately - launching within hours of a disaster and saving many lives. Without this, we would have to wait for institutional funding and lose valuable time.

New Projects - assessments and project start up costs are funded by private donations. Once a programme is up and running, we can attract funding from institutions, meaning the value of a private donation is multiplied many times.

Small Projects - institutional funders give money in large blocks, for large projects. For small, localised projects, funding comes from private donors.

How you can help

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| A donation of £1,000 can | - buy an emergency health kit to treat 300 wounded civilians in a war zone
- train 1 new aid worker to be an expert in the field |
| A donation of £10,000 can | - fund a disaster assessment mission
- equip a cholera isolation camp to treat 625 patients |
| A donation of £50,000 can | - fund the first stage of an emergency response operation
- send an emergency airlift into a disaster zone |

For further ideas, or information on how you or your employer can help Merlin please telephone

The Fundraising Team

020 7487 2505

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merlin

Medical Emergency Relief International

Merlin believes that access to health care is a fundamental human right. To uphold this right, we provide medical relief to people suffering as a result of conflict, natural disaster or epidemic disease anywhere in the world, regardless of race, religion or political affiliation.

14 David Mews, Porter Street, London, W1M 1HW
Tel: 020 7487 2505 Fax: 020 7487 4042 e-mail: hq@merlin.org.uk
www.merlin.org.uk

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