

Keeping you in touch with MERLIN around the world

## To boldly go...

### DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

**They're pushing through the jungle on motorbikes and bicycles. When the rains come, they will have to use a quadbike as the trails wash away.**

They're flying drugs in an eight-seater plane to towns in the bush without roads.

They're walking through trackless forest for five and a half hours to work in a mud-hut clinic, and then five and a half hours back to base.

For five months now, since early April, MERLIN volunteers have been cutting their way through the vast, dense forests of eastern Congo, determined to reach thousands of people isolated and scattered by civil war. In the first months, these were the only aid workers in a region the size of Switzerland.

"When we arrived in Katshungu town," says medical advisor Richard Allan, "We found a mud-brick hospital with 200 patients and no doctors. There was no clean water and just three pit latrines. The risk of infection was very high.

"A couple of nurses were trying to keep the place running, but they had no more than a handful of drugs. How could they cope?

"In Lulingu town, refugees were being carried into the hospital, exhausted after days scrambling through the forest. Nine out of ten were severely malnourished. Seven out of ten had malaria.

"When we came back 3 days later, every refugee in that hospital had died."

Since April, the team has set up a network of

emergency clinics deep in the bush, supplied by airdrops of medicines. In Katshungu they rebuilt half the hospital. "We put back most of the roof, windows, doors and floors," says Allan. "Before that, all that remained were the four walls."

They are also running a mobile team of doctors and nurses, flying between towns cut off in the bush. This is the only source of medicines for the region's 2 main hospitals and 40 primary healthcare clinics.

The mobile team discovered that in Kalima and Kindu towns a recent epidemic of measles

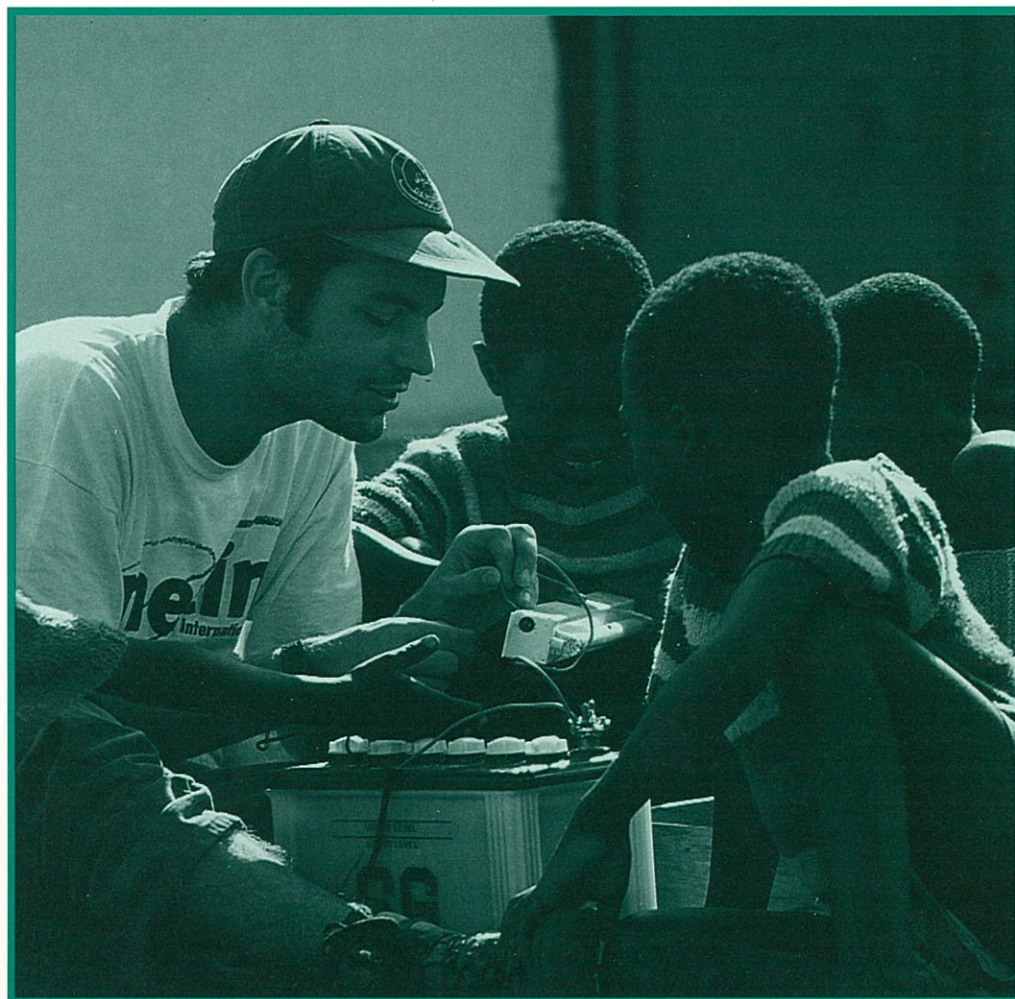
*"When we came back 3 days later, every refugee had died."*

had killed 1,100 children. Children had not been vaccinated for years. The team has started a mass vaccination campaign to protect every child under the age of five against measles and polio.

"You don't see too many children under 5, out in the bush," says Richard Allan. "I suppose it's not really surprising. Without help, they are too vulnerable to survive."

MERLIN has now brought in other agencies: OXFAM to establish clean water facilities, and CARE to provide feeding centres. It is training local staff to give emergency care in the bush, and helping the UN High Commission for Refugees to look after refugees returning to Rwanda.

Meanwhile, the volunteers keep searching through the forest.



Programme Co-ordinator Nick Weatherill mends a jeep battery, with a little help from his friends. The team is using every available form of transport to penetrate the deep forest, including jeeps, motorbikes, bicycles, small planes - and foot. (Picture: Howard Davies)

*'A message from eastern Congo' - see back page*

## Stop press: Under the shadow of the volcano



(Picture: PA)

### CARIBBEAN

**As we go to press, two of Britain's top experts in emergency medicine are being flown by MERLIN to the volcanic island of Monserrat. Their mission is to strengthen the island's response capacity for an evacuation or a medical emergency.**

Jeremy Booth and Mandy Grocutt were recruited at 24 hours' notice, when a request came through from the Government's Department for International Development. They were flown from London to the Caribbean island of Antigua, and then by helicopter to Monserrat, to be on 24-hour stand-by for all eventualities.

Surgeon Jeremy Booth is an expert on devising major incident plans for London. He was called in to help the survivors of the sinking of the Marchioness on the Thames, and to prepare contingency plans after the mortar-bombing of Downing Street.

Senior registrar Mandy Grocutt has already worked on an island threatened by a rumbling volcano: Cape Verde off West Africa. She is the only non-military person in Britain to hold a Diploma in Medical Care of Catastrophes.

Before leaving London, Mandy told Response: "I'm not too anxious about going to an island that might blow up. I've been in this situation before and I know what needs to be done out there."

She has also participated in major incident planning exercises in Israel and the UK.

MERLIN Chief Executive Dr Christopher Besse commented: "This is an innovative collaboration between the new Department for International Development and an aid agency. MERLIN is very pleased to be able to bring together the Government and some of Britain's top medical experts for this urgent mission."

## Russia opens its doors for MERLIN medicine

### SIBERIA

**In a ground-breaking move, the Russian government has announced that MERLIN's anti-tuberculosis programme in Tomsk will become a pilot study for ways to fight the disease nationwide. This is Moscow's first step towards introducing a modern control programme for an epidemic which is increasing by 10% a year.**

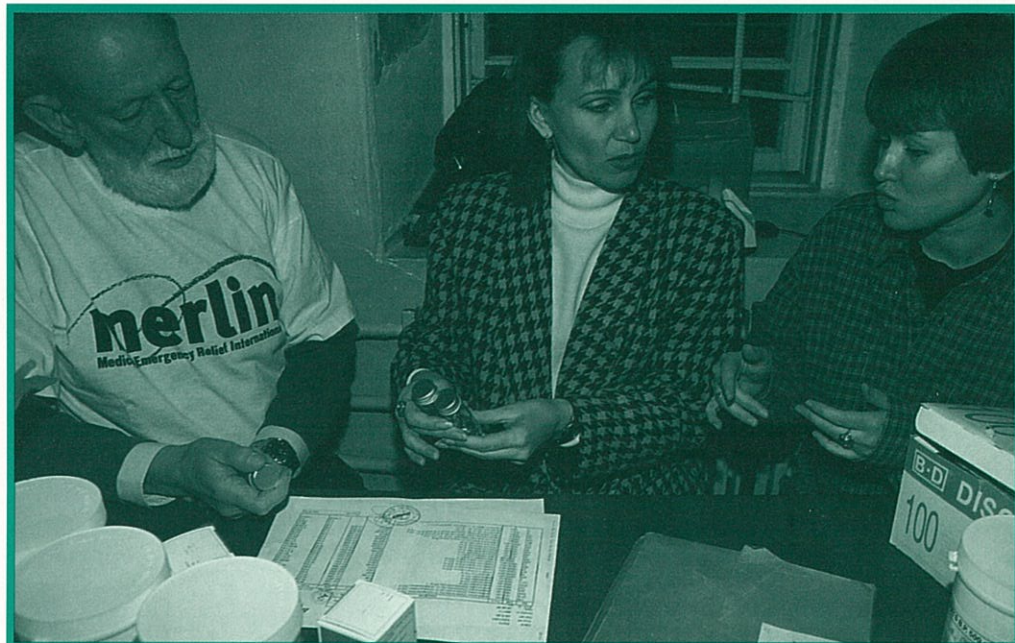
MERLIN has been working for three years to demonstrate that WHO-recommended strategies for controlling TB can work in a Russian context. It has introduced new training and management methods, run clinical trials to compare Russian

and Western procedures, provided laboratory equipment and set up computerised surveillance systems to track the disease.

The recently issued government decree indicates commitment at the highest levels in Russia for this initiative. MERLIN doctors hope that the favourable reaction from Moscow could herald a nationwide conversion.

As the next step, MERLIN is holding an international symposium in London where experts from both countries will be brought together to discuss the projects' implications.

*Skills share: pharmacist Alex Fiskin (left) discusses drug distribution with Siberian health staff. (Picture: Jon Spaul)*





# Kiwi in a pickle

## SIERRA LEONE

**New Zealander Megan Thomas was on her first mission overseas when she was caught up in a military coup. 28-year-old Megan, previously a business consultant, had just flown out to MERLIN's Sierra Leone programme as a financial administrator when the coup started. This is her diary.**

*Thursday 22 May*

I flew into Sierra Leone's capital city, Freetown, this evening. It's a ramshackle city of shanty houses and potholed roads beside the Atlantic. You know the chocolate bar Bounty? The adverts for it are filmed on the lovely white sand beaches here. The night is calm. I find my way around the city which will be my home for the next 12 months.

*Friday 23*

My first day on the job. The house and office are the same place, so straight downstairs to my desk to work out what my job is all about. Running financial accounts in a West African city is a bit different from working at NatWest in London.

Another expat arrived today from London. Vince Diamond's job is to look after essential supplies of medicines, vehicles, radios – everything we need to run a medical project deep in the bush. We go for dinner at Paddy's bar, a lovely restaurant with a calm sea lapping near the terrace where we sit.

*Saturday 24*

I have to work six days a week, so today is spent slaving over the accounts. Then out to Paddy's again to soak up the local nightlife.

*Sunday 25*

3am, I hear gunshots. Not too close, but loud enough to wake me. 6am, things change again. I hear rapid machine gun fire, shouting in the streets and dogs going crazy. Beth Dunn, the project co-ordinator, runs into my room and tells me to get dressed and prepare an emergency bag. It is time to experience our security plans at first hand.

Step number one is to get dressed. Top item is a MERLIN t-shirt, because our main line of defence is to display the fact that we are neutral aid workers. So on goes the t-shirt. I prepare my emergency bag in case of evacuation. What do you put in an

emergency bag? Very little. Undies, camera, diary, mosquito repellent, toilet bag, towel, change of clothes, chewing gum – and a pack of playing cards to keep our minds off the situation, which is deteriorating rapidly.

The firing becomes very heavy. We can hear mortar shells falling thud thud in the background. Machine guns going off everywhere. We move into the basement. We move slowly, during the quiet periods, taking food and water supplies with us. We are able to keep up excellent communications with the outside world by phone and on our VHF radios. We scan the different radio channels for news from other aid agencies and the United Nations.

My boyfriend Ged phones from London, having heard about the coup on the news. I am sure he hears the fear in my voice, but I try to be very blasé and make things sound OK. Beth and Vince go upstairs to call home.

That's when things get a bit hairy. A truckload of heavily armed soldiers – men and women – stop outside our gates, climb over the fence and start firing at random. I am in the basement and can only hear the close firing of machine guns. Then I hear Vince walk outside, shouting: "No firing! What do you want?" I turn off the radio, creep into the main room, sit on my mattress – and wait. I hear some dialogue but can't tell what they are saying. I pray to God knows who that they will pass us by. I'm not sure how I will react if a soldier appears at the door and points a gun at me. I guess the hands would go up.



The work goes on: despite the coup, local staff continue MERLIN's health programme. (Picture: Jon Spaul)

Luckily, they are only interested in our 4-wheel-drive pickup truck. We're more than happy to give them the keys and watch them go.

We spend the day glued to BBC World Service News. It feels very strange to hear the story we are living reported on the news. Soon we aren't even making the headlines – we've been moved to second spot!

Another amazing thing. Our guards turn up for work. The city is in chaos, the military have taken over, but our local staff still turn up. These guys stand outside, unarmed, guarding the house.

*Monday 26*

We spend the night in the basement of the house. The hours of darkness pass with few interruptions, apart from a battle in the street outside, as someone robs the Lebanese merchants next door. After heavy artillery fire surrounding you all day, the odd bit of rifle fire seems quite normal.

*Tuesday 27*

I am sitting at a four star hotel near the shore. We drove here last night just before curfew time, hoping to make it to the safety of the hotel where we knew there were neutral Nigerian troops. It's a bit unnerving seeing soldiers walk through the hotel reception with automatic weapons.

From here I can finally see the famous Freetown beaches, but I definitely can't visit them. The hotel has been turned into a haven for Westerners, with a massive communications centre to pass on news of who is safe. MERLIN's team of expats upcountry in Kenema need evacuating fast. Meanwhile, we hear that the US Marines are on their way. All this action is real movie stuff. Unbelievable.

*Wednesday 28*

Expats are flooding to the hotel for an emergency airlift organised by the European Union. As a New Zealand citizen, I am not guaranteed a seat. I don't mind much. I feel safe and I'm learning a lot awfully fast.

Some evacuees' stories are heartbreaking. One British woman wants to register her sister and her sister's young children. The sister had British documents, but her children are registered as Sierra Leonean. The 3-year old child has a valve in her heart, but it is not working well. She keeps turning blue. We don't know if she'll get a seat on the plane.

*Thursday 29*

I manage to get a place on the airlift, even though I am a 'low priority' evacuee. A UN helicopter flies us to the airport, where the scene is unbelievable. At each end of the runway opposing troops lie on the tarmac pointing guns and missiles at each other. Our plane is caught in the middle and we have to walk between the guns. One shot goes off, and soldiers dive for firing positions. Luckily, it all goes quiet again.

As I sit on the plane waiting for take-off, an armoured personnel carrier cruises the runway. It stops 30 yards from my window and points its gun directly at us. How relieved am I when its driver decides to patrol somewhere else!

*Friday 30*

We arrive back at Gatwick at half past midnight. The London streets are so calm, it is hard to believe I've just left a city at war. So that was my mission to Sierra Leone. Short and very memorable. I've run through a whole mixture of emotions – anxiety, stress, frustration, sometimes even boredom. Most of all, I want to finish the job I was sent out to do. What's next for me? I won't know until I step into the MERLIN office first thing Monday morning. After the week I've had, though, I think I'll have a quiet weekend.

Megan Thomas is now MERLIN's regional representative in Moscow.

## A year in view

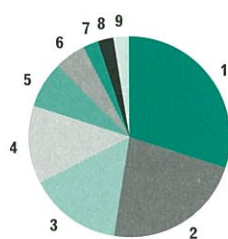
In 1996 MERLIN spent £4m on providing medical relief for the victims of disasters worldwide

MERLIN's annual report and accounts have just been published. They show that the amount of aid we provide has increased dramatically, while our overheads remain very low. 90 pence out of every £1 donated to MERLIN is spent on providing emergency medical relief overseas.

Copies of the report are available on request.

We are delighted to work with the European Community Humanitarian Office and the UK Department for International Development, to provide humanitarian aid through these programmes.

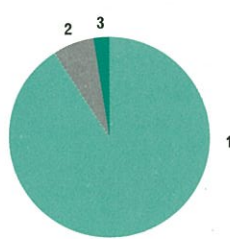
### Who we helped



1. Chechnya £1.2m
2. Rwanda £0.9m
3. Sierra Leone £0.6m
4. Afghanistan £0.5m
5. Siberia £0.3m
6. Sri Lanka £0.2m
7. Tajikistan £0.1m
8. Yemen £0.1m
9. Iran £0.1m

We are working in more and more countries every year.

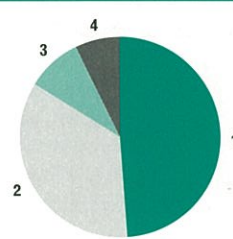
### Expenditure in 1996



1. Direct charitable expenditure 90%
2. Management and administration 7%
3. Fundraising and publicity 3%

Our overheads are low, only 10% of expenditure.

### Sources of funds expended in 1996



1. European Community 49%
2. British Government 35%
3. Private 9%
4. United Nations 7%

Major international institutions support our work.

### Direct charitable expenditure 1993-96



The amount of aid we provide has increased year after year.





## A checkpoint too far

**CENTRAL ASIA** Volunteer David Newall has a reputation for getting aid to places where others can't. In May he drove 2,300 miles on the Great Silk Route to deliver three Land Rovers to Central Asia...

My instructions were simple, really. Take three Land Rovers from MERLIN's project in Chechnya, get them across the Caucasus Mountains, the Caspian Sea, and the Karakum Desert. Deliver two of them to the Afghan border and the third to Tashkent, where other MERLIN people would collect them. This is called 'redeploying assets'. The London office thought it might take 18 days.

My companion was Roman, a 22 year-old Russian who was to be my right hand man and interpreter. Our Land Rovers were duly loaded with spares, fuel, water, tool kits and so on, and the convoy set off from the Caucasus. Only 2,300 miles to Tashkent.

On the first stretch of our route there were few roads, just scrubland and blowing sands, small villages frequented by donkey carts and the odd child. After 6 hours we had only covered 120 kms, after constant delays at security checkpoints. At every stop, the vehicles were strip-searched. Every guard fancied something else from our supplies. Roman was working overtime at each checkpoint, explaining in words of two syllables who we were and where we were going. Humanitarian Aid, Emergency Relief, Red Cross, UN and so on, all meant nothing to the local bobbies.

50 kms of blowing sand followed, no road, just a line of fallen telegraph poles. We passed no other cars. A local farmer told us to stick within sight of the poles and we'd come out the other end.

Somewhere in Dagestan we reached a sand-bagged bunker beside the road. Out of a camouflaged canopy emerged a Russian Major, the first senior officer we had met. He invited us to stop for a swim, lunch and, of course, vodka. It would have been fabulous to chat and cool down, but we were still 100 kms from anywhere. Photos were taken, addresses swapped and off we went. He radioed ahead to make our passage easier – but warned that it wouldn't make a hoot of difference.

Approaching the Caspian Sea, the road passed through

stunning mountain scenery, vines running down slopes to the tarmac's edge. Orchards and lush pasture were interspersed with the first signs of the Azerbaijani oil industry: oil wells and 'nodding donkeys'. After a brief stop for a puncture, we arrived in Baku as the sun set over the 12th century fortress walls. Here we hoped to find a boat to cross the Caspian. Our luck was in: we heard there was a ship leaving around midnight. All efforts would now concentrate on getting aboard.

Soon we were approached by two policemen who offered to show us where to get boat tickets and local currency. They took us into a huge Soviet-style building, down darkened corridors and into a tiny room with a cubby hole in the corner: the ticket office. There was much counting of money, with the ticket-seller getting confused by heckling from our police friends. Sensing something was up, I told Roman to watch them. Then there it was. The larger of the two

*"He put \$200 of ours in his pocket."*

men did something to distract us: he dropped his radio with a clatter. Roman looked away, but I kept my eye on the other man as he reached in through the cubby hole and slowly took \$200 dollars worth of our local currency and put them in his pocket.

I raced across the room and challenged him. I put my hand into his pocket and retrieved the money. They retreated into a corner and sulked, frantically lighting cigarettes. The tickets finally arrived.

We sailed at 2 o'clock next morning, though I did contemplate abandoning ship. The main sitting area had been gutted by fire, leaving molten seats, black soot and burnt ceiling hanging down everywhere. Our luxury cabin, for the 16-hour journey, had four bunks in a tiny, boiling room, full of mosquitoes and cockroaches, with sheets that you could catch something from. Our disgust

obviously showed, because the ship's engineers offered to rent us their cabins. For \$5, the difference was incredible: these cabins were well ventilated and clean. The loo was broken, but at least there was one. The shower consisted of a pipe straight out of the ceiling: luxury.

We disembarked before dawn. A massive oil and gas refinery lit the sky as we hit the road east into the huge emptiness of the Karakum Desert. Nine hot hours later we arrived in Ashkabad, the capital of Turkmenistan. The drivers slept under a tree while I looked for a phone to contact MERLIN London. I got through to David McCauley, Asia Desk Officer, who had just told a meeting that he had heard no news of us since we left Dagestan, 1,000 kms back. He was quite pleased to get my call.

Later that day, I heard on the BBC that there had been a massive earthquake just over the border in Iran. Terribly close yet so far. No doubt someone from MERLIN would try and get in from Afghanistan. I was far closer, but a huge mountain range and a lack of papers prevented me from entering Iran.

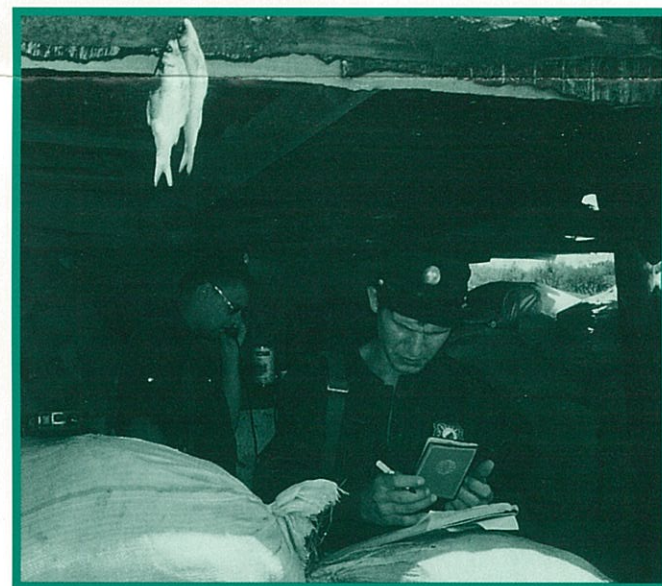
Next morning I was woken at 2am by heavy knocking at the door, opening it to find Glyn and Richard, MERLIN's two logisticians from Afghanistan. They had spent 5 hours coming up from the border in a taxi held together with string, which was not an experience they wanted to repeat when there were our comfortable Land Rovers to travel in. We handed over two of the vehicles and waved them off towards the Afghan border.

In Bokhara, we just had time to visit some of the remarkable historical sites. This city was once the largest commercial centre on the Great Silk Road. The scale of its mosques and madrasahs has to be seen to be believed – beautiful, light blue, mosaic domes, shimmering in the sun.

Finally we reached our destination: Tashkent. We left the last Land Rover with the International Red Cross, to await collection by MERLIN volunteers from Tajikistan. With a huge weight off our shoulders, and pleased to have beaten our schedule by two days, we flew home.

My flight stopped at Moscow, where I heard that one of the Land Rovers had already been used to reach the earthquake in Iran. It was MERLIN's only vehicle in the area capable of crossing that frontier.

*A long way from home: David Newall reaches Bokhara (above left) after facing questions at a very long series of checkpoints (below). (Pictures by David Newall)*



## Global round-up

**May** **Haiti:** Assessment of medical needs on one of the world's poorest islands, but an emergency relief programme is not required. **Sierra Leone:** MERLIN expatriate staff are airlifted to Liberia and London as a military coup wreaks havoc across the country. Local staff continue basic medical care and feeding for severely malnourished children and pregnant women, while maintaining treatment of Lassa fever patients. **Afghanistan:** Team arrives in Badghis to assess medical needs and support the province's only hospital. Programme now extended to setting up four basic health clinics in rural areas and renovating the water and sanitation system in Badghis hospital.

**June** **Democratic Republic of Congo:** MERLIN flies in extra medical staff and emergency supplies to provide vital care for villagers and refugees in the forests of eastern Congo. Also begins a mass measles vaccination programme in the area. **Tajikistan:** Since the break-up of the Soviet Union, the Tajikistan government has had insufficient funds to continue fighting malaria. The number of cases is rocketing. MERLIN is monitoring how the disease spreads, and how best to establish a comprehensive malaria control programme. MERLIN also trains local staff in diagnosing and treating patients. **Siberia:** Russian Ministry of

Health announces that MERLIN's TB project in Tomsk will become a pilot study for other TB control programmes across Russia.

**July** **Sierra Leone:** A MERLIN volunteer flies 1.5 tons of essential medicines to Kenema in a solo mission to resupply the MERLIN health clinics and feeding centre, which have been cut off by civil war. Flown in from neighbouring Liberia, the medical supplies will last 4 weeks. An expatriate team waits on standby in neighbouring Liberia, to return and restart a full emergency relief programme when the fighting stops. **Chechnya:** One year after the peace process begins, health needs remain as great as ever. MERLIN continues to monitor its Chechnya programme from neighbouring Ingushetia. Local staff continue to implement full health care programme with MERLIN training and support. **Afghanistan:** MERLIN prepares for possible cholera epidemic in the mountains of Badakhshan by delivering vital medicines – often by donkey – to health clinics in inaccessible areas.

**August** **Liberia:** MERLIN opens 8 health centres in remote areas previously cut off from humanitarian assistance, as successful elections promise an end to civil war. **Montserrat:** Medical team fly in to reinforce response capacity on the island.

To volunteer with MERLIN  
call 0171 487 2505

### Congratulations...

*...to volunteer Reg Kingston, who has been awarded an OBE for his work on cancer research. Surgeon Reg has volunteered for MERLIN in Rwanda and Sri Lanka...and to former MPs Stan Orme and Mike Watson, both of whom have been elevated to the House of Lords. Earlier this year Stan and Mike supported a motion in the House of Commons calling for greater funding for MERLIN's work...*

*RESPONSE is published quarterly by MERLIN, a British medical charity which provides emergency medical care in disasters worldwide.*

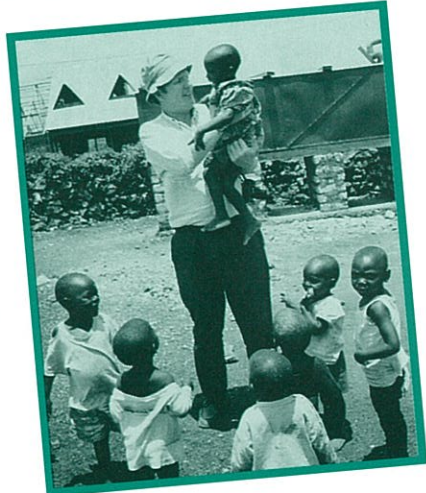
*Donations to MERLIN can be sent to our head office: MERLIN, 14 David Mews, London W1M 1HW (tel 0171 487 2505, fax 0171 487 4042, email merlin@gm.apc.org).*



# Supporters' News

## A message from eastern Congo

from Dr Christopher Besse,  
MERLIN's Chief Executive



Letitia stopped us in the corridor of Lulingu Hospital. Her blank stare and confused look brought our whirlwind visit to a halt. Her swollen arms hung floppily by her sides and she looked up with a mixture of terror and excitement. Her discoloured hair and pot belly told some of the story. She wrapped her little limbs around the nurse and smiled as she led us off to a chamber of horrors. Here we saw the last stages of the suffering we had heard rumours about: wards full of adults with advanced malnutrition or machete wounds – feverish, unconscious, and quiet, very quiet. I could not believe that so many people had been abandoned by the rest of the world. No food, no medicines. No dignity.

It was two months ago that I flew over the thick jungle of eastern Congo in a little Cessna, to visit MERLIN's team in Lulingu. We had to move fast. We lobbied other agencies, shouted to London for help, for volunteers, for money. Forty people were dying every day in this little mission hospital and that was only the tip of the iceberg. 25,000 people were not going to die of starvation and disease in this forest – if we could help it.

As I write this, MERLIN has a small plane dropping food, medicines and vaccination equipment into the hospital at Lulingu. Our team of doctors and nurses are visiting 44 healthposts in the area.

Back in London, it is sometimes difficult to put this work into the complicated political context – but then we didn't create MERLIN for the politicians, we did it for Letitia and her extended family of forgotten people. For four years now, we have been working in disaster zones like the Great Lakes. We will be there in four years' time, if necessary.

For me, it is a privilege to be able to help. We have the volunteers. The human needs are obvious. I must turn to you for the financial resources to carry on.

*Christopher Besse*

**"The human needs are obvious.  
I must turn to you for the  
resources to carry on."**

**Please help us to respond to emergency needs  
throughout the world.**

**Make a donation today.**

I enclose a donation to help MERLIN:

☐ £20   ☐ £50   ☐ £100   ☐ £250\*   ☐ Other £ \_\_\_\_\_

\* If you are a UK taxpayer, and you give a donation of £250 or more, it is worth a third as much again to us when you fill out a Gift Aid form. We would be delighted to send you one.

☐ I would like to learn about ways to make tax-effective donations.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number \_\_\_\_\_

Job Title \_\_\_\_\_

Organisation \_\_\_\_\_

Please make cheques payable to 'MERLIN'. For credit card donations, please call 0171 487 2505.  
Please return this coupon to: MERLIN, 14 David Mews, Porter Street, London W1M 1HW.

Registered charity no. 1016607.

NLA97

## Coming soon...

For information on all these events, please contact Kate Mervyn Jones  
in the Marketing Department, on 0171 487 2505.

### The MERLIN Ball

At the Waldorf Hotel, London, on Saturday 27th September 1997. Tickets are nearly sold out for MERLIN's first charity ball. In addition to the customary champagne, dinner and dancing, guests will be entertained by a variety of classical musicians, and encouraged to enter the grand prize-draw for a chance to win a pair of ruby and pearl earrings made by Theo Fennell. Some tickets are still available.

### Sky Dive for MERLIN

Fancy plummeting 10,000 feet for MERLIN? Several brave people, including MERLIN staff members, have already signed up for this

challenge, currently planned for mid-October. If you would like to take part in this or any other sponsored challenge for MERLIN, we would be delighted to talk to you – whether to climb up Mount Kilimanjaro, follow a pilgrimage route through Spain, or run a marathon.

### Emerging Markets Game

Following on from the huge success of the Foreign Exchange Game last February, MERLIN is currently planning an evening in November for Emerging Markets specialists to pit their dealing skills against each other. If you would like to know more, please call Claire Meyer on 0171 223 9739, or Kate in the Marketing Department.

## Thank you

**We are very grateful to the following organisations which have made donations towards our work in the past four months:**

Lonely Planet, KeyMed Ltd, Bisley Office Equipment, Redwave Films Ltd, Booker plc, Glaxo Wellcome plc, Waterlow Legal Publishing, Worlds Apart, Symantec, Overland Shoes Ltd (CAT), Deusex Machines Ltd (Computers), John Ellerman Foundation, A B Charitable Trust, P G & N J Boulton Trust, Batchworth Trust, Jerwood Foundation, Collier Charitable Trust, Medical Insurance Agency, Bernard Sunley Charitable Foundation, The Reuter Foundation, War Child, GOAL, IDS Solidarity Group – University of Sussex, St Columb Major Parochial Church Council, Worth School, Ongar United Reformed Church, Woodfield County Primary School, The Centre for International Briefing.

### Rags to riches

A special 'thank you' to the students of the Royal Free Hospital School of Medicine, London, for adopting MERLIN as one of their charities for Rag Week 97. Their sponsored events, including a quiz extravaganza and a bed race around

Hampstead, raised several thousand pounds for MERLIN. We hope to see them again – as volunteers after graduation!

### Walking that extra mile

London health worker Isabella Smith was so moved by pictures of the civil war in Sierra Leone that she organised a sponsored walk in Hyde Park to raise funds for MERLIN's work there.

Isabella, who was born in Sierra Leone, said: "I could see the country where I grew up being destroyed. I felt that if one person did something it would make a difference. I couldn't think of a better charity than MERLIN to get help there quickly, and I know every penny will go to Sierra Leone."

On a summer afternoon in July, over 30 people took part in the 6 mile walk around Hyde Park. With sponsorship money collected by the participants, they hope to raise over £1,000 for MERLIN's emergency relief programme. A big 'thank you' to Isabella Smith for organising the event, and to everyone who did the legwork.

## Where in the world...?

### Volunteers in the field (as of 15 August 1997)

#### Liberia

Simon Arthy  
Rob Bennett  
Sophie Bruas  
Anna Cressey  
Rupert Gill  
Jenny Hopps  
Sadie Scullion  
Derrick Tate

#### Democratic Republic of Congo

Sue Cutter  
Jasper Elgood  
Rendt Gorter  
Jane Drapkin  
Erich Hajek  
Nick Lessof  
Valerie Plaid  
Mike Roe  
Jeff Warwick  
Nick Weatherill

#### Uganda

Ed Cooper

#### Sierra Leone

Guy Millington  
Kathleen Skinner

#### Afghanistan

Richard Corbett  
Hanna Froehlike

Nigel Barnden  
Panna Erasmus  
Dale Lightening  
Yohannes Hagos  
Andy Howe  
Addi Koster  
Marie Kirwan  
Marie McGrath  
Adrian Porter  
Susan Sandford  
Glyn Taylor  
Tim Barker  
Marleen de Tavernier  
Karine Zander

#### Chechnya

Daniel Kolthoff  
Tim Chiswell  
Carol Fenn  
Gail Taylor  
Smruti Patel

#### Moscow

Yves Horent  
Megan Thomas

#### Siberia

Fraser Wares  
Carl Clowes

#### Tajikistan

Angela Bone  
John Cobley

Koos Messelink  
Sarah Pitt  
Simon Taylor

#### JUST BACK

#### Eritrea

Nicholas Mellor

#### Liberia

Rink de Lange  
Leanne Olson

#### Haiti

Pierre Mazars  
Elena Tiffert-Vaughan

#### Democratic Republic of Congo

Patrick Saez  
Syed Alatas  
Jean Bernard Bouvier  
Gilbert Coomans  
Graham Davison  
Aiden Fitzpatrick

#### Rwanda

Danielle Mazars  
Pierre Mazars  
Jessica Barry  
Ailsa Denney  
Notburga  
Timmermans

#### Sierra Leone

Vince Diamond  
Beth Dunn  
Naimh Bowes  
Aiden Fitzpatrick  
Nuahn Marbiah  
Jose Sanchez  
Kathleen Skinner  
Megan Thomas  
Andy Featherstone

#### Afghanistan

Sheila Hudner  
Sara Nam  
David Newall  
Michael Roe

#### Sri Lanka

John Bygate

#### Chechnya

Matthew McGlennon  
Susan Lillicrap

#### Siberia

Bart Jacobs  
Gini Gleissberg

#### Tajikistan

Sohrab Baghri  
Taz Khaliq  
Peter Medway  
David Murdoch