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InterAction

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InterAction

Comprised of a vast assortment of more than 160 U.S.-based relief, development, environmental and refugee agencies active in over 100 nations, *InterAction*, founded in 1984, leads the United States as one of the most effective advocates for individual and country autonomy. In attempt to assist people and developing nations in obtaining this objective, *InterAction* agencies "promote economic development and self-reliance, improve health and education, provide relief to victims of disasters and war, assist refugees, advance human rights, protect the environment, address population concerns, advocate for more just public policies and increase understanding and cooperation between people."

Mission and Objectives:

InterAction exists to:

- Enhance the identity, autonomy, credibility and diverse perspectives of each member agency.
- Provide a broadly based participatory forum for professional consultation, coordination and concerted action.
- Foster the effectiveness and recognition of the PVO community, both professionally and publicly.
- Set a standard of the highest ethics in carrying out its mission.

Members of *InterAction* pride themselves on their rapid responses to crises and other similar events. They typically are the first to respond to a community's cry for assistance, addressing individual victim concerns in addition to those affecting the community as a whole in effort to prevent future tragedies. *InterAction* agencies do their utmost to aid refugees, protecting their rights in disaster consumed environments. Members also focus on development policy and practice, encouraging communicative relationships on all levels of policy development. Members also take a special interest in enlarging the constituency on Capitol Hill, in the Executive Branch and among the American public to increase support of worldwide humanitarian efforts. Furthermore, *InterAction* staunchly endorses the advancement of gender equality in policy and in practice, nationally and internationally. With respect to ethical matters, *InterAction* requires each member to rigorously uphold a strict set of ethical standards.

Mine Awareness CARE

While many of *InterAction*'s members focus primarily on poverty and hunger issues, several heavily promote mine awareness through a variety of inventive methods. CARE, one of the world's largest private international relief and development organizations, is teaching the people of Kosovo how to recognize and avoid landmines through a community mine awareness project, involving 200 villages province-wide. It has trained 5,000 volunteers in mine awareness, and its pocket-sized mine safety handbook has been adopted by the United Nations as its standard field guide.

Save the Children

In Afghanistan, a country known as one of the most heavily mined countries in the world, Save the Children, an organization devoted to rescuing the children of the world, introduced participatory games and activities to help the children recognize and avoid mines. To date, the organization has reached over 100,000 youth, holding events in mosques, community centers, hospitals, health clinics and homes in efforts to educate the greatest number of children. Additionally, its program extends beyond simple landmine awareness to include a variety of school related subjects to promote the overall education of the children inhabiting these affected areas.

Church World Service

Church World Service, a collective of multiple religious denominations wishing to assist the disaster stricken people of the world, in cooperation with the Mines Advisory Group, teaches Cambodians of the dangers of landmines by instructing them how to avoid landmines and the proper procedures to follow when accidentally discovering one. MAG and CWS held a training session attended by 24,128 people in Kompong Thron in 1998. The basic message stressed to the participants of the session was to "Stop, Think, Choose, Act" when encountering a landmine.

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