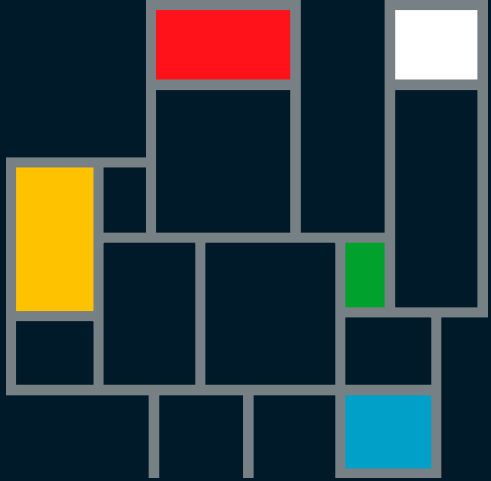


mission

READINESS: PREPARING FOR FIELD WORK



United Nations
OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

mission readiness checklist

THE PURPOSE OF THIS CHECKLIST IS TO:

- Ensure that proper arrangements have been made so that appropriate action can be taken quickly in your absence.
- Make sure that things run smoothly while you are away (car & home maintenance, bill paying, etc).
- Ensure that you obtain the information you need before departing for your new duty station.

To help you remember the smallest details, we recommend that you discuss and complete the various items listed in this section along with your partner or another responsible adult. Remember, this is for you and your family. If you feel your children are old enough to participate, it might be useful to approach this as a family discussion. Providing as many options and as much support as possible for those staying at home is always best.

before you go...

Before your departure, make sure that you have read as much as you can about all aspects of security. The UN publications available that cover this topic include the "Security in the Field" booklet issued by the United Nations Security Coordinator and the CD ROM entitled "Basic Security in the Field." Completion of the latter is mandatory for all UN staff.

It is important that your arrival details are given to the right person at the duty station well in advance and that you have received confirmation and details of the arrangements made for your transportation from the airport before you leave.

Should you stop over in countries where there is a known safety risk you are advised to remain in your hotel in the evenings.

MANDATORY

DONE

- a) Complete "Basic Security in the Field" CD ROM and bring certificate
- b) Inform Mission of arrival details
- c) Obtain and carry with you your travel authorization & security clearance
- d) Note name and phone number of person detailed to meet you on arrival
- e) Read security instructions

ADMINISTRATIVE

Bring the following ORIGINAL documents with you and also make 2 CERTIFIED copies.

Carry one set of copies with you and leave one copy with partner/ responsible adult.

DONE

- a) National Passport (renew before departure if necessary)
- b) Laisser-Passer (renew before departure if necessary)

- c) Yellow Fever vaccination record (where required)
- d) Driver's license (renew before departure if necessary)

Make 3 CERTIFIED copies of the following documents. Carry two sets with you and leave one set and the originals with partner/ responsible adult. *Do not carry the original of these documents.*

- e) Birth certificate
- f) Marriage certificate or equivalent
- g) Insurance documentation (e.g. life, health)
- h) Military discharge papers (where applicable)

Bring the following and leave a copy with partner/ responsible adult.

- i) Mission-specific insurance documentation
 - j) UN employment contract related to mission service
 - k) Security Clearance documentation (if required)
 - l) Social Security/Identification number
 - m) Direct deposit account number(s)
 - n) Comprehensive inventory of items packed including cost of item, year purchased. For items of high value include serial number and copy of receipt.
- Bring the following:
- i) 12 Colour passport sized pictures.
 - j) Original boarding passes, ticket stubs, and travel receipts for expense claim.

BUSINESS, BANKING AND FINANCE

If your bank records are in proper order before you leave, deposit and withdrawal problems are reduced or even eliminated. Consider the possibility of the following.

DONE

- a) Opening a United States Dollar bank account.
- b) On-line banking
- c) Giving Power-of-Attorney to a responsible adult

continued

Current copies of the following records, with details of how to access the funds, should be brought with you and should also be left with your partner/ responsible adult.

- d) Names and addresses of banks/ credit union accounts
- e) Savings/checking/direct deposit account number(s) and information
- f) Credit card number(s)
- g) Stockbroker name and certificate number(s)
- h) Bond company and certificate number(s)
- i) Mutual fund company and certificate number(s)
- j) Outstanding bill/loan repayment method
- k) Income-tax data
- l) Deeds etc. of residence/other properties
- m) Contents/personal property insurance
- n) Budget plan, if applicable
- o) Access to funds in emergencies
- p) Outstanding bill/loan repayment method

MEDICAL

Normally, all personnel will go through a medical screening examination carried out by a recognized medical practitioner. This may or may not involve a detailed briefing, so take care that the following points are covered. Note also that some medical planning may be necessary for your family members.

DONE

- a) Medical screening completed
- b) Vaccinations
- c) Medication supply arranged (where necessary)
- d) Protection against environmental factors (malaria)
- e) Condoms
- f) Feminine hygiene products
- g) Records of special conditions prepared (allergies)
- h) Blood type known
- i) Dental check-up
- j) Dental treatment completed
- k) Eye test/spare pair of glasses or contact lenses
- l) Living will made (see Appendices)
- m) Health and dental care plans current

YOUR FAMILY

DONE

- a) Mission discussed in detail with family or responsible adult
- b) Mission extension possibilities discussed
- c) Family support system established
- d) Quick access to emergency phone numbers
- e) Family communication plan worked out: (phone/e-mail/fax), with full details of mission address, home and office details, UN pouch etc
- f) Guardianship agreements completed
- g) Passports and visas current for all family
- h) Power(s) of attorney current
- i) Wills: yours and spouse's completed
- j) UN insurance beneficiaries designated

PRACTICAL SKILLS

In developing countries, certain skills take on added importance, particularly in emergency situations. Try to become proficient in as many of these skills as possible before you leave.

DONE

- a) First-aid and CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) with recognized certificates
- b) Swimming, at least 200 metres
- c) Driving a vehicle with manual transmission/ 4-wheel drive
- d) Basic car maintenance (e.g. changing a tire)
- e) Using a two-way radio
- f) Using a satellite phone

GEOPOLITICAL & CULTURAL AWARENESS

Make sure you learn as much as possible about the country you are going to, preferably from someone who has been there before, as local guide books and government publications may not be current.

This list gives some suggestions about the type of information you may need. The more you know, the better prepared you will be and the easier it will be for you to adapt.

DONE

- a) Geographical location
- b) Governmental system and major political figures
- c) Major ethnic groupings
- d) Basic traditions (do's and don'ts)
- e) Main religions
- f) Primary languages spoken
- g) Income per capita
- h) Major industries
- i) Natural resources
- j) Health and disease index
- k) Basic local language skills training material obtained
- l) Basic local language skills developed

Note: Use of a local language may in some circumstances have a political connotation – refrain from using local languages until after your security briefing

CLOTHING

Find out all you can about the terrain and weather conditions of your destination well in advance so that you pack the appropriate clothing. It is likely that some of the items you may need will not be available when you get there.

DONE

- a) Information on terrain/weather
- b) List of clothing requirements
- c) Required items obtained

HOME SECURITY & MAINTENANCE

You never know what might happen while you're away. The simplest problem could cause unnecessary stress. At the very least, it would be helpful to leave the following details/phone numbers.

DONE

- a) Heating and refrigeration specialists
- b) Plumbers
- c) Electricians
- d) Small-appliance repair firm
- e) Roofing repair company
- f) Leave a set of spare keys with responsible adult
- g) Re-route mail and cancel subscriptions
- h) Telephone / Mobile phone/ Internet —

- cancel or put accounts on hold
- i) Utilities — cancel or put accounts on hold
- j) Gym/ Country/ health club membership —
cancel or put accounts on hold

VEHICLE MAINTENANCE

Leave your vehicle in good working order and make sure the following documents are readily accessible.

DONE

- a) Service book
- b) Log book (ownership record)
- c) Insurance documents
- d) Dealer's address and contact numbers
- e) Automobile club membership
- Have a clear maintenance schedule for:
- f) Tire rotation/change
- g) Oil change
- h) Tune-up

ESSENTIAL READING

Many of the following materials can be obtained from the internet. See the section "Internet Links" p.75 for internet addresses.

DONE

- a) Handbook on United Nations Multidimensional Peacekeeping Operations, DPKO 2003
- b) Relevant Security Council Resolutions (mission mandates) and Secretary General's Reports for specific missions
- c) Mission briefing notes (available from recruitment offices)
- d) DPKO Gender Resource Package, DPKO, 2004
- e) Living in a world with HIV / AIDS: Information for employees of the UN system and their families, UNAIDS 2004
- f) *Security in the Field: Information for staff members of the United Nations system, United Nations, New York, 1998.

**The material in this booklet is also covered in the CD ROM "Basic Security in the Field".*

when you get there...

SECURITY

DONE

- a) Immediately on arrival, request a security briefing from the Designated Official or Security Officer ...
- b) Evacuation bag (15 kg) prepared & labeled (name & UN organization)

The evacuation bag should be a small backpack or duffel bag weighing no more than 15 kilos when it is fully packed.

The following items should be included :

- Swiss army knife, etc
- First-aid kit
- Compass
- Water bottle
- Flashlight
- Extra batteries
- Candles
- Matches
- Short-wave radio for international news

- programmes
- Mobile radio and/or cell phone (ensure phone will work in mission area)
- Prescriptions
- Medication
- Prescription lenses
- Legal documents (passports, birth certificates, marriage certificate, driver's license, property deeds, insurance documents)
- Essential clothing
- Other items you consider essential

HEALTH, FITNESS & STRESS

Physical fitness and a healthy lifestyle are not developed overnight. Now is a good time to examine your own approach, with the aim of arriving at your mission assignment in a fit and healthy condition. This will increase your overall performance, minimize the need for medical help, and make you less vulnerable to the added stress that overseas deployment brings.

Consider the following:

DONE

- a) Your general fitness level — an improvement strategy
- b) Stress management — dealing with added stress
- c) Substance abuse — nicotine, alcohol and caffeine
- d) Prevention of sexually transmitted diseases
- e) Lifestyle balance — work, play, rest, sleep
- f) Your own nutritional needs and sources
- g) Recreational and educational needs
- h) Hobbies — putting free time to good use

when you leave a mission or duty station...

Debrief with supervisor. Make sure you discuss the following items.

DONE

- a) Completion of assignments
- b) Assignment handover including handover notes to supervisor and to your replacement
- c) Organization of office (files: electronic and hard copy)
- d) Completion of performance appraisal

Complete all check-out procedures including:

- e) Return/transfer of all equipment signed out to you
- f) Copy of attendance record from human resources/personnel office
- g) Settlement of personal obligations (e.g., house, rent, financial)
- h) Goodbyes to colleagues and friends (including forwarding addresses and contact details)
- i) Final medical exam undertaken either prior to departure or immediately (within a month) upon returning to previous duty station or being at a new duty station
- j) Debriefing with staff counselor to discuss feelings, events, preparations for departure and move either on the mission during the month prior to departure or upon returning to Headquarters or Offices Away from Headquarters



mission readiness

PREPARING FOR FIELD WORK



United Nations

OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

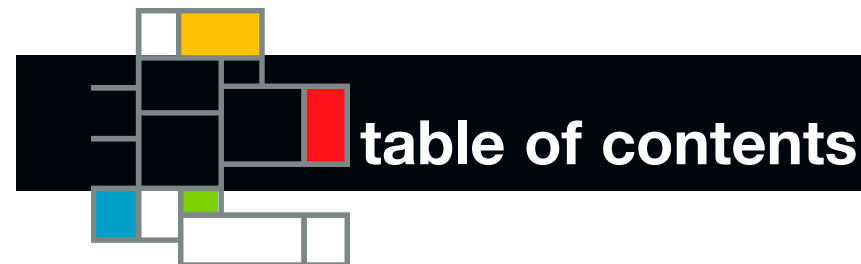


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Mission Readiness: Preparing for Field Work

United Nations
Office of Human Resources Management
New York, March 2005

Produced by the **Staff Development Service of the Division for Organizational Development, Office of Human Resources Management**, and the **Civilian Training Section of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations**, United Nations Secretariat, New York.

Revised and reprinted 2005.

Design: *The Complex, New York, Corp.*

OHRM wishes to thank the Department of National Defence, Canada, and its Directorate of Health Treatment Services, for permission to use materials from their publications “*Preparing for Deployment Stress*” and “*Preparing for Critical Incident Stress*”.

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foreword

Are you ready to move into a new physical and cultural environment? How can you prepare for the unexpected? What can you do to be ready to deal with the stress of conflict situations such as those you may encounter on a mission? What about all the details to be sorted out before you leave? Is your family going with you? If they aren't going to the new post, are they prepared for your absence? How will your partner and family cope while you're away or how will they cope in the new environment?

For most people, undertaking a field assignment is an exciting prospect, a chance to get away from the routine of life into the unknown. However, experience has shown us that all too often things do not quite turn out as one had imagined. The more prepared you are the better your chances of a satisfying and successful assignment.

Readying yourself to move is a long-term process. Preparation begins from the moment you consider the new assignment, continues throughout the duration of your assignment, and even extends beyond, as you move on to your next location or reintegrate into your previous lifestyle.

Good preparation is essential if you, and your family (if they accompany you), are to be able to function effectively in a new environment, new culture, and new living and working conditions. This is particularly true of a non-family mission assignment where you may face a greater risk of involvement in traumatic incidents than you have encountered in your work thus far. In addition, your family needs to be prepared to function well during your absence and to readapt to your return.

A whole host of issues is involved, from mundane organizational matters to complex emotional problems, which may arise from your field experiences. It is this process which we seek to address within the following pages. The booklet aims at preparing you for your field office move with regard to those areas outside the range of the proposed job — namely yourself, your family and your relationships.

We hope this booklet will assist you in your preparation for a new assignment, leading to enhancement of both your performance and your enjoyment of the experience, and we wish you every success in your forthcoming mission.



Rosemary McCreery

Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management

on the move

PART ONE

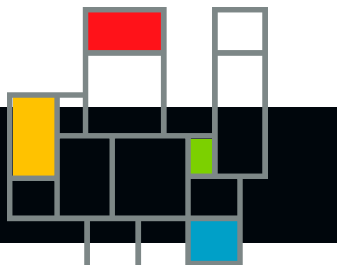
1

United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor: Oct-Nov. 1999. UNHCR Photo: M. Kobayashi



PART ONE

on the move



introduction

Moving, whether it is your office, your home, or your job, means change, and change, while often challenging and even exhilarating, can also be complex and difficult to manage. This booklet is intended to assist you in preparing yourself and your family to manage the changed circumstances created by your decision to move to a new assignment at a field mission or duty station. Whether this is your first field assignment or the latest in a series, the need for good preparation for both yourself and your family remains the same if you want to be in the best shape and frame of mind to meet the new demands.

The booklet, “Mission Readiness: Preparing for Field Work” begins with a *Mission Readiness Checklist* found on the overleaf of the front cover. Compiled based on the experiences of people travelling to and from assignments at Field Missions and Offices away from Headquarters, the checklist identifies actions in all areas of home and work life that need to be considered and completed before someone’s departure to a duty station. There is also a tear-out version towards the centre of the booklet for easy reference. You are strongly urged to review and complete this now. It is a useful tool to guide you through your preparation.

The booklet is divided into four sections. The first three sections, On the Move, Being There and Moving On provide information, evaluations and quizzes to help you prepare for the three major phases of a mission assignment. The fourth and final section, Additional Information and Worksheets, provides a glossary, some planning worksheets and lists of useful phone numbers and internet sites.

self-evaluation for mission readiness

The Staff Development Service of the Office of Human Resources Management and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations have

compiled two evaluation forms to help you determine your readiness for a new assignment. The Mission Readiness Self-Evaluation is intended to help you assess your own readiness for the conditions of a non-family mission assignment. The Family Readiness to Move evaluation provides some questions for you and your family to consider before making the move.

The Self-Evaluation is a valuable way of looking at your own suitability for a mission assignment. This is not a selection test. It is a training and research tool designed by a group of international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to help staff acquire a better self understanding and to track their own personal development

Various surveys and social studies have identified certain characteristics related to working with people under mission conditions. Your personal attributes are particularly relevant in situations where people of different backgrounds are required to work closely together in highly stressful situations.

Working through the Mission Readiness Self-Evaluation is intended to help you determine whether you are ready for mission work. There are some circumstances in which it might be advisable to postpone accepting a mission assignment. These include:

- Pending legal action
- Family crisis
- Pending marital separation or divorce
- An unresolved traumatic experience
- Treatment for a chronic ailment
- Treatment for alcohol or drug abuse

If any of these or similar circumstances are currently affecting your life or the lives of your family members, accepting an assignment before the issues have been resolved could be extremely stressful. We suggest that you consider all points of the Self-Evaluation, the Family Readiness to Move evaluation and the Mission Readiness Checklist carefully. If you find that you are having difficulty getting properly prepared or have any worries about your mission readiness, it is important that you contact a staff counsellor to discuss the issues in detail. Staff counsellor and stress counsellor contact numbers can be found in the fourth section of this booklet, “Part 4: Additional Information and Worksheets”.

SELF-EVALUATION

Under each of the following categories (a through k), choose the statement which best applies to you, circling the number to the left. When you have finished, follow the instructions on page 7.

(SAMPLE) PERSONAL MANAGEMENT SKILLS

Factor A: Positive attitudes (initiative, self-esteem, confidence)

- I I feel I have little control over what happens to me.
- II I know and respect my personal needs.
- III I am self-confident.
- IV I have the initiative, energy and capacity to accomplish what I set out to do.
- V I can recognize my strengths and weaknesses, know and respect my own limitations and learn from my mistakes.

PERSONAL MANAGEMENT SKILLS

Factor A: Positive attitudes (initiative, self-esteem, confidence)

- I I feel I have little control over what happens to me.
- II I know and respect my personal needs.
- III I am self-confident.
- IV I have the initiative, energy and capacity to accomplish what I set out to do.
- V I can recognize my strengths and weaknesses, know and respect my own limitations and learn from my mistakes.

Factor B: Adaptability, Flexibility

- I Changes are inevitable and I accept them.
- II I embrace change as a source of renewal; I promote change.
- III Change is disruptive; I avoid it if possible.
- IV I try to limit changes in my environment and life patterns.
- V Change can bring improvement; I believe change can be a positive force.

Factor C: Responsibility

- I I accept responsibility for all actions and decisions in which I have participated.
- II I try to participate in the definition of my responsibilities.
- III I take responsibility for what I am assigned to do.
- IV I exercise my judgment in situations where my responsibility has not been defined.
- V I prefer situations of limited responsibility where I am not accountable for final outcomes.

Factor D: Analytical thinking

- I Following my own instincts always serves me well.
- II I will consider the views and opinions of others before I form an opinion and I can revise my position in the light of new information.
- III I am able to structure and process multiple sources of information to evaluate situations, solve problems, and make decisions.
- IV I can see issues from other perspectives, but it's difficult to know what to believe.
- V I can identify pertinent information and resources and seek them out.

WORKPLACE SKILLS

Factor E: Leadership

- I I can adjust my leadership style to the situation at hand.
- II I attempt to lead occasionally without much success.
- III I know what situations are appropriate for my leadership style.
- IV I have neither a particular desire to lead, nor skill in leading.
- V I am occasionally successful in leading, largely by luck.

Factor F: Decision-making

- I I express my point of view in decisions affecting me.
- II I express my point of view in decisions affecting other people.
- III I tend to go with the flow of events.
- IV I am decisive about things that affect me.
- V I feel confident making decisions that affect other people.

Factor G: Organization

- I I know how to use and structure my time well.
- II I can plan and manage time, money, and human resources to achieve goals.
- III I often find myself unable to fulfil my commitments.
- IV I know it's important to organize myself, but it's often very hard to do.
- V I can set realistic goals and priorities in work and my personal life.

Factor H: Teamwork

- I I respect the thoughts and opinions of others in a team situation.
- II I am most productive in team situations.
- III I find teamwork situations inefficient and full of conflict.
- IV I usually prefer to work alone.
- V I work for group decision-making and support the outcome.

SOCIAL SKILLS

Factor I: Communication

- I I can talk to larger, unfamiliar audiences.
- II I don't feel comfortable talking about my experiences, or expressing my opinions and beliefs to others.
- III I feel comfortable talking to small groups of people I know (colleagues, family etc.).
- IV I actively seek opportunities to express myself.
- V It is a real effort for me to express myself but I try.

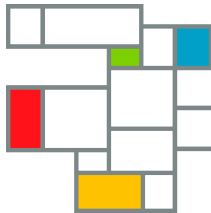
Factor J: Networking

- I I believe the most effective work is accomplished through networks.
- II Support and information from others would probably be good sometimes, but I don't know how to go about finding it.
- III I can maintain a network of persons for information, advice and support.
- IV I tend to work independently.
- V I know where and when to look for information and advice.

Factor K: Public Relations

- I I have no particular interest or talent in meeting the public.
- II I can participate in a public relations campaign.
- III I feel confident leading a public relations campaign.
- IV I am able to express my ideas clearly — in writing, orally or both.
- V I feel I can contribute a lot to a public relations effort.

Please continue to the next section to complete your self-evaluation.



UNDERSTANDING YOUR SELF-EVALUATION

Below is the value related to each response. Circle the response you checked and transfer the score circled in each category to the Score column below. Add them up to obtain your total score. To interpret your results, refer to the Guidelines for Interpreting Scores below the scoring table.

Example: you circled **V** as your response for **Factor a:** positive attitudes. Below in the **RESPONSE VALUES** column you circle **v=5**

In the **SCORE** column you would write 5 beside **Factor a.** Positive attitudes 5

Response Values

- Factor A:** i=1; ii=2; iii=3; iv=4; v=5
- Factor B:** i=3; ii=5; iii=1; iv=2; v=4
- Factor C:** i=5; ii=3; iii=2; iv=4; v=1
- Factor D:** i=1; ii=3; iii=5; iv=2; v=4
- Factor E:** i=5; ii=2; iii=4; iv=1; v=3
- Factor F:** i=2; ii=4; iii=1; iv=3; v=5
- Factor G:** i=3; ii=5; iii=1; iv=2; v=4
- Factor H:** i=3; ii=5; iii=1; iv=2; v=4
- Factor I:** i=4; ii=1; iii=3; iv=5; v=2
- Factor J:** i=5; ii=2; iii=4; iv=1; v=3
- Factor K:** i=1; ii=3; iii=5; iv=2; v=4

Scores

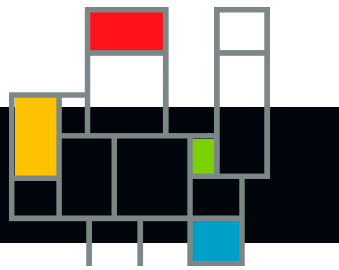
- Factor A.** Positive attitudes _____
- Factor B.** Adaptability, Flexibility _____
- Factor C.** Responsibility _____
- Factor D.** Analytical thinking _____
- Factor E.** Leadership _____
- Factor F.** Decision-making _____
- Factor G.** Organization _____
- Factor H.** Teamwork _____
- Factor I.** Communication _____
- Factor J.** Networking _____
- Factor K.** Public relations _____

TOTAL SCORE _____

GUIDELINES FOR INTERPRETING YOUR SCORES

A total of 40 and above indicates a high level of compatibility with the profile, while a total of 20 or less indicates a low level of compatibility. Generally speaking, higher scores would be more desirable for mission service.

As you review individual items, you should note your strengths (higher scores) as well as other areas (lower scores) where positive steps can be taken to improve your mission readiness.



preparing to go

YOUR NEW MISSION LOCATION

Become an expert on where you're going. In preparation for your assignment get as much information as possible about your new mission, its geography, climate, local conditions, and culture. You will also want to find out specific information about the security situation there. Travel guides and books, local guidebooks and government publications can provide helpful information about general conditions in the region you will be travelling to as well as the surrounding regions. However, these guides may also be out-of-date if the region has been in a state of civil disorder for any length of time and should be checked against current on-the-ground information. If possible, try to get in touch with someone who is currently at the duty station or mission. If that's not possible, then talk to people who have worked there at some point. Recent experiences will be more useful to you. The more information you can gather, the better equipped you will be to deal with the environment you will be entering.

Of course, if you are going to pack the proper clothing and gear, it is important to understand climate, rainfall, and general weather conditions of the mission. This can be accomplished by contacting the current UN mission in the area, consulting newspapers' international weather pages or using the internet to obtain the right climate information.

Every mission has its unique challenges. Certainly if you will be travelling to an area in conflict or where there are distressed circumstances, it is even more important for you to take the initiative in finding out as much as you can before you leave. This might include recent news reports and/or UN bulletins regarding the area. Such information could be the deciding factor in your safety and security as well as that of your family if they will be travelling with you. It can also make the difference in how well you are able to perform in the field.

As soon as possible, once the decision to go has been made, get a map of the area you will be working in and post it in your house. This will help you, your family, and friends visiting, become familiar with the new work site. It also helps all of you to begin the psychological process of adjusting to the idea of your impending move.

Look up the mission or duty station on the main UN website. For Peacekeeping Missions, start with the UN home page, click on *Peace and Security* then *Peacekeeping* (see "Internet Links") for information about mission mandate, local conditions, climate, culture, economy and financial and social systems. The website can also be useful in helping you understand what to expect in terms of housing, shopping and entertainment. This should be your first source of reference material.

mission conduct: what's expected of you as a UN employee

As an employee of the United Nations, you represent the organization in the field. In some cases, because of your remote location, you and your co-workers will literally **BE** the United Nations at your mission. Therefore we require the same standards of conduct in the field as we expect back in our home environment. In this section you will find a helpful list of reminders of what is expected of you and standards for conduct while on mission.

UN CORE VALUES

We have formulated our Staff Rules and Regulations around three core values: **Integrity**, **Professionalism**, and **Respect for Diversity**.

Integrity

- Demonstrates the values of the United Nations in daily activities and behaviours.
- Acts without consideration of personal gain.
- Resists undue political pressure in decision-making.
- Does not abuse power or authority.
- Stands by decisions that are in the Organization's interest, even if they are unpopular.
- Takes prompt action in cases of unprofessional or unethical behaviour.

Professionalism

- Shows pride in work and achievements.
- Demonstrates professional competence and mastery of specific assignments.

- Is conscientious and efficient in meeting commitments, observing deadlines and achieving results.
- Is motivated by professional rather than personal concerns.
- Shows persistence when faced with difficult problems or challenges.
- Remains calm in stressful situations.
- Knows how to respect and delegate authority.

Respect for Diversity

- Works effectively with people from all backgrounds.
- Treats all people with dignity and respect.
- Treats men and women equally.
- Shows respect for and understanding of diverse points of view and demonstrates this understanding in daily work and decision-making.
- Examines own biases and behaviours to avoid stereotypical responses.
- Does not discriminate against any individual or group.

FIELD SCENARIOS

Below are two scenarios which illustrate situations UN staff have encountered in the performance of their duties. What do you think the right answer is to resolve the issue for each scenario? Below the scenarios are excerpts which may help guide your decision. You'll find the suggested answers on **page 76 in Part 4**.

1. Edith has just been promoted to Chief of the Travel Section in her Peacekeeping Mission. She has been in the position for a month when one of her assistants comes in with a file for one of the staff members. The staff member has applied for home leave for himself and his family. The staff member is entitled to home leave and the tickets were issued. However, the assistant has heard that the staff member actually made a deal with a local travel agent, sold the original tickets to the travel agent, bought cheaper ones and split the savings with the agent. Edith tells her assistant that there is no proof of the accusation and that he shouldn't be spreading rumours. Is Edith right? Why?

2. You are the officer responsible for engaging a company to provide Information Technology equipment for your duty station. You are reviewing the responses to the Request for Proposal that have been forwarded to you from the Procurement Section. One of the responses looks very good and has a competitive price. However, you have worked with someone from that region before and had problems. You are not convinced that people from the region can provide the quality of materials and service you need. What should you do?

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

We have chosen detailed excerpts from **Status, Basic Rights and Duties of United Nations Staff Members: ST/SGB/2002/13¹** to give you a clearer idea of your responsibilities when on mission.

“The values that are enshrined in the United Nations organizations must also be those that guide international civil servants in all their actions: fundamental human rights, social justice, the dignity and worth of the human person and respect for the equal rights of men and women and of nations great and small.”

Demonstrate Loyalty to the Organization

“International civil servants should share the vision of their organizations. It is loyalty to this vision that ensures the integrity and international outlook of international civil servants; it guarantees that they will place the interests of their organization above their own and use its resources in a responsible manner.”

Show Integrity in Your Words and Actions

“The concept of integrity enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations embraces all aspects of behavior of an international civil servant, including such qualities as honesty, truthfulness, impartiality, and incorruptibility. These qualities are as basic as those of competence and efficiency, also enshrined in the Charter.”

Respect All Persons Equally

“Tolerance and understanding are basic human values. They are essential for international civil servants, who must respect all persons equally, without any distinction whatsoever. This respect fosters a climate and a working environment sensitive to the needs of all. Achieving this in a multicultural setting calls for a positive affirmation going well beyond passive acceptance.”

Understand and Exemplify Loyalty to the Whole United Nations System

“The need for a cooperative and understanding attitude towards international civil servants of other United Nations organizations is obviously most important where international civil servants of several organizations are serving in the same country or region.”

¹ SGB refers to Secretary General's Bulletin

Act with Impartiality

“If the impartiality of the international civil service is to be maintained, international civil servants must remain independent of any authority outside their organization; their conduct must reflect that independence. Impartiality implies tolerance and restraint, particularly in dealing with political or religious convictions. While their personal views remain inviolate, international civil servants do not have the freedom of private persons to take sides or to express their convictions publicly on controversial matters, either individually or as members of a group. This can mean that, in certain situations, personal views should only be expressed with tact and discretion.”

Be Sensitive to and Tolerant of Differences

United Nations Mission In Eritrea and Ethiopia. UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan Meeting UN Staff In Eritrea, July 3 2004.

“An international outlook... implies, respect for the right of others to hold different points of view and follow different cultural patterns. It requires a willingness to work without bias with persons of all nationalities, religions, and cultures; it calls for constant sensitivity to how proposals, events, and statements may look to others. It requires punctilious avoidance of any expressions that could be interpreted as biased or intolerant. Working methods can be different in different cultures. International civil servants should not be wedded to the attitudes, working methods or work habits of their own country or region. “

Avoid Stereotyping

“Freedom from discrimination is a basic human right. International civil servants are expected to respect the dignity, worth and equality of all people without any distinction whatsoever. Assumptions based on stereotypes must be assiduously avoided. One of the main tenets of the Charter is the equality of men and women, and organizations should therefore do their utmost to promote gender equality.”

WORKING RELATIONS

Managers and Supervisors must:

Demonstrate Respect for the Viewpoints of Others

“Managers and supervisors are in positions of leadership and it is their responsibility to ensure a harmonious workplace based on mutual respect; they should be open to all views and opinions and make sure that the merits of staff are properly recognized. They need to provide support to them; this is particularly important when they are subject to criticism arising from the carrying out of their duties. Managers are also responsible for guiding and motivating their staff and promoting their development.”

Model Desired Conduct

“It is natural for managers to be seen as role models and they have therefore a special obligation to uphold the highest standards of conduct. It would be quite improper for them to solicit favors, gifts, or loans from their staff; they must act impartially, without intimidation and favoritism. In matters relating to the appointment or career of others, no international civil servant should try to influence colleagues for personal reasons.”

Communicate and Share Information with Staff

“It is naturally incumbent on managers and supervisors to communicate effectively with their staff and share information with them. International civil servants have a reciprocal responsibility to provide all pertinent facts and information to their supervisors and to abide by and defend any decisions taken, even when these do not accord with their personal views.”

Ensure Instructions are Consistent with Official Functions and do not Threaten the Safety of Others

“International civil servants have to follow the instructions they receive in connection with their official functions and if they have doubts as to whether an instruction is consistent with the Charter or any other constitutional instrument, decisions of the governing bodies or administrative rules and regulations, they should first consult their supervisors. If they cannot agree, the international civil servant may ask for written instructions. These may be challenged through the proper institutional mechanisms, but any challenge should not delay carrying out the instruction. International civil servants may also record their views in official files. They should not follow verbal or written instructions that are manifestly inconsistent with their official functions or that threaten their safety or that of others.”

Report breaches of rules or regulations

“It must be the duty of international civil servants to report any breach of the organization’s rules and regulations to a higher level official, whose responsibility it is to take appropriate action. An international civil servant who makes such a report in good faith has the right to be protected against reprisals or sanctions.”

HARASSMENT

Harassment in any shape or form is an affront to human dignity and International Civil Servants must avoid it. They should not engage in any form of harassment and must be above any suspicion of it. International civil servants have the right to an environment free of harassment. It is the responsibility of organizations to explain their interpretation of the term and to establish rules and provide guidance on what constitutes harassment and how it will be dealt with.

Sexual Exploitation, Sexual Abuse & Human Trafficking (ST/SGB/2003/13)

Sexual exploitation is any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power or trust for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another.

Sexual abuse is the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions. **Sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18) is prohibited regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally.** Mistaken belief in the age of a child is not a defence.

Exchange of money, employment, goods or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour, **is prohibited.** This includes any exchange of assistance that is due to beneficiaries of aid programs.

Sexual relationships between UN staff and beneficiaries of assistance are strongly discouraged since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics and undermine the credibility and integrity of the work of the United Nations.

Trafficking in women or children is the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of women or children, using the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power or vulnerability or the giving or receiving of payments or benefits for the purposes of exploitation.

Exploitation includes exploiting the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation.

CONSEQUENCES

There are serious consequences for the above abuses and offences.

Civilian personnel:

- * Suspension without pay.
- * Fine.
- * Separation from service and summary dismissal.
- * Civilian personnel may have immunity removed by the Secretary General and be subject to the civil or criminal jurisdiction of the host country.

Military member of a national contingent:

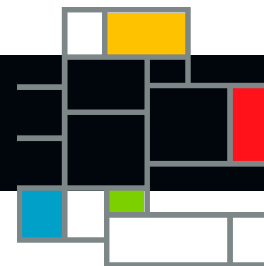
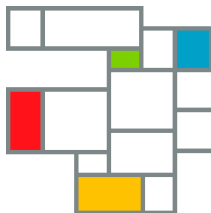
- * UN recommended repatriation.
- * Prosecution under own national criminal laws.
- * Military law.
- * Court-martial.

For Civilian Police & UN Military Observers:

- * Removal from position of command.
- * Recommendation to repatriate.
- * Written censure or reprimand, including possible recommendation of non-eligibility for future assignment with the United Nations.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Be a role model.
- Create an environment that discourages sexual exploitation and abuse.
- Provide information to and raise awareness of UN personnel.
- Provide information to local populations on the UN standards of conduct and complaints mechanisms available.
- Include UN standards of conduct in contracts with non-UN entities and individuals.
- Ensure that the mission or field office, has a Focal Point (and alternate) on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.
- Report rumours and allegations to the Focal Point on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.
- Cooperate fully with all investigations into allegations of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.
- Assist the mission in collecting timely and accurate data on cases reported, investigated and action taken as a result of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.
- Keep your UN department headquarters informed of cases reported, investigated and action taken as a result of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.
- Assist victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.



getting your family ready to go

In making a decision to move to a UN family duty station, or field mission where families can accompany the staff member, there are a number of issues which need to be carefully considered. Whether you are moving alone or with your family, it is essential that you get as much information as possible about the new location. What does it look like? What is the climate? What is the culture like? What are the laws and values? Are there security issues? Is there a suitable education system? What is the housing situation? What about food, entertainment? You will also need to carefully consider your current situation. If you own your home what will happen to it? Can you ship your furniture? And so on.

Once you have gathered as much information as you can about the new situation discuss it with your family members. Remember, the more information everyone has, the easier it will be to integrate into the new situation. The less informed any member of the family is, the greater the potential for unhappiness. So it is in everyone's best interest that all are well informed about what to expect. When you think you are ready, complete the evaluation below. The results may help you and your family make decisions that will work best for all of you and identify some actions that will make the experience easier to manage and ultimately more successful.

FAMILY READINESS TO MOVE EVALUATION²

On the Family Readiness to Move Evaluation below, rate each of the items under the following headings on a scale of -5 to +5 with +5 meaning you feel very positive with that factor in your new location, -5 meaning you feel that factor is problematic in the new location and 0 meaning that you have no feelings one way or the other about that item. If you don't have any information about an item put a question mark (?) beside it. If an item does not apply put NA in

² Adapted from: *Ride the Wave A Handbook for the Expatriate Family*; Monique Hammond, R.D.Thomas and Associates, (Minneapolis Minn., 2000).

the rating column. At the end of the evaluation you can make a note of all those items with question marks. These are areas where you may want to gather more information.

It is recommended that the ratings be done after discussion as a family group but the actual rating should be given by you and your partner either together or each doing a separate evaluation and then averaging the scores.

Try to give your first reaction as you read through the items. The more negatively you feel about an item, the more negative the score. When you finish, total up all the scores for each factor (see the *factor rating scale* to the right), then add the section scores on the scoring sheet to get your overall score.

FACTOR RATING SCALE

- +5** Very positive: we all accept it; have no problem with it
- 5** Very problematic: most of us/all of us do not accept this; we've got problems with this issue.
- 0** Neutral – no impact: this is not an issue for us
- NA** Not applicable: this doesn't apply to us
- ?** Need more information: we don't know enough to answer this

SECTION 1: MUST-HAVES

What do you, your partner and your family members absolutely need to have to be able to live comfortably and enjoy the experience? What can you all compromise on? What is not really important?

Rate the following items from **-5 to +5** in terms of how important they are to you as a family. Indicate **0** if the item has no importance at all. Then rate them again according to their availability in the new country and total the two scores.

Must-have Factors

- a** Personal safety
- b** Good education system
- c** Good restaurants
- d** Safe living conditions (water, disease, etc.)
- e** Freedom of movement
- f** Sports
- g** Libraries, bookstores
- h** Cultural activities: dances, festivals, music, concerts, museums, theatre, movies
- i** Friends of similar background, culture
- j** Own language
- k** Practicing belief system/religion

total score for must- have (add ratings 1 and 2)

Rating 1 **Importance**

- a** _____
- b** _____
- c** _____
- d** _____
- e** _____
- f** _____
- g** _____
- h** _____
- i** _____
- j** _____
- k** _____

TOTAL _____

Rating 2 **Availability**

- a** _____
- b** _____
- c** _____
- d** _____
- e** _____
- f** _____
- g** _____
- h** _____
- i** _____
- j** _____
- k** _____

TOTAL _____

SECTION 2: LOCATION

Based on the information you have gathered, how comfortable are you with the following factors:

Here's an example of how you might rate an item under "location". Your new assignment is in a developing country. The location is a small city with few of the amenities available in the city where you currently live. However, the country has a beautiful, temperate climate with wonderful national parks. As a family, one of your favourite activities is camping in national parks. You would probably rate the item: **"country"** as +5. From various sources of information you have learned that the security situation in the country overall is not particularly good, although it is not considered problematic in the city where you would live. People are advised to travel in the country in convoys. This is a moderate concern. You might rate the **"security"** factor as -2.

Location Factors

- a** Geography – mountains, jungle, plains ...
- b** Site – city, town, well developed, isolated...
- c** Security situation
- d** Climate – rainy, 4 seasons, heavy cold...
- e** Health risks (diseases, insects, plants, animals)
- f** Medical care – quality, cost, doctors, hospitals, pharmacies
- g** Dental care – quality, cost, accessibility
- h** Water sanitation/sewage systems
- i** Reliable power supply (gas, electricity)
- j** Accommodation – quality, area, availability
- k** Language
- l** Recreational facilities
- m** Education system
- n** Transportation services and systems
- o** Communication services – phone, TV, newspapers
- p** Financial services – banking system

Rating **(-5 to +5)**

- a** _____
- b** _____
- c** _____
- d** _____
- e** _____
- f** _____
- g** _____
- h** _____
- i** _____
- j** _____
- k** _____
- l** _____
- m** _____
- n** _____
- o** _____
- p** _____

TOTAL _____

SECTION 3: FAMILY SITUATION

How comfortable are you with what moving means for the following: Here's an example.

If your survival in the new location requires that you and your partner both work because your new salary will not be enough to support your family, you would give factor c) **“Need for a dual income”** a very low (-) rating (unless your partner also has a job offer at the new location) BUT if you and your partner have determined that the partner can actually continue his/her current work at the new location the score for a) **“Opportunities for partner to work in new location”** would be positive (+).

Family Situation Factors

- a Opportunities for partner to work in new location
- b Partner can leave current work easily
- c Need for dual income
- d Children's emotional state
- e Parents, close relatives, friends seriously ill, aging, needing special care
- f Pets' long quarantine, cannot be transported
- g Some family members have special health needs
- h Property can be easily rented or managed
- i Finances in order, can be managed from new location
- j Opportunities for family social activities, entertainment etc
- k Movie theatres available and safe
- l Bookstores, music stores etc available
- m Household goods, vehicles can be sold or stored
- n Boarding schools required – different country
- o Opportunities for community work, participation
- p Social opportunities (clubs, organizations)

Rating (-5 to +5)

- a _____
- b _____
- c _____
- d _____
- e _____
- f _____
- g _____
- h _____
- i _____
- j _____
- k _____
- l _____
- m _____
- n _____
- o _____
- p _____

When you have completed the ratings for each factor add up all the ratings to get a global estimate of your family's readiness to move.

TOTAL _____

Obviously the higher the overall score, the more you may assume you are ready for the move. But a lower score does not necessarily mean that you cannot fulfill your mission. Look at where the scores were low and consider how significant this factor is for you and your family. Are there any alternatives or compromises that might make the situation more acceptable? One good source for information for areas of concern or doubt is someone who has a similar background and family situation to yours and who has already lived in the country. Don't hesitate to seek the consultation of others who have had similar experiences. This will help

you and your family understand what problems you will need to be prepared for on your mission. Once you have answers to your concerns or doubts, you may wish to return to the Family Readiness to Move Evaluation and reassess some of the items in light of your new information.

When you and your family are ready, you should consider all of the information you have gathered and make a decision about who will be going to the new duty station.

getting in shape to move

As soon as you have made the decision to move forward with your new assignment to a field mission or duty station you need to start preparing both yourself and your family for the changed circumstances. Refer to the Mission Readiness Checklist at the front of this booklet. You may wish to use it to check off completed actions or carry the pull-out version from the middle of the booklet with you for easy checking as you prepare to move.

GETTING STARTED

Just as you are getting all of your material affairs in order, you need to “get yourself in order.” Ensuring your health—physically, spiritually, mentally and emotionally—is critical to a successful mission assignment. There are things you can do to prepare yourself.

To be appointed to a position in the United Nations you are required to have a complete physical examination from a UN approved doctor or other medical professional. We recommend you assess yourself and your family members using the Personal Health & Fitness Fact Sheet below. Bring this form with you when you consult with your physician. Please be sure to inform your doctor about your mission and the special circumstances of your personal health.


TAKE A LOOK AT THE FACT SHEET ON THE NEXT PAGE. ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS:

- How healthy do you think you really are?
- Where do you rate on these items?
- Do you know?

Try rating yourself by putting a check at the point on the scale that you think applies to you. Reviewing this list may make you decide it's time to make some lifestyle changes which could improve your health fitness and overall well-being.


PERSONAL HEALTH & FITNESS FACT SHEET

METABOLIC RATE

LOWER  HIGHER


<p>Less Healthy: Generally lower, fewer calories consumed per activity, tendency to accumulate more fat</p>	<p>Healthier: Generally elevated, more calories consumed in all activities, leaner figure</p>
--	--

BLOOD - CHOLESTEROL

LOWER  HIGHER


<p>Healthier: Decreased cholesterol (fat), triglycerides, blood sugar, insulin, adrenalin, clotting</p>	<p>Less healthy: Increased cholesterol, triglycerides, blood sugar, adrenalin, clotting</p>
--	--

BLOOD VESSELS/BLOOD PRESSURE

LOWER  HIGHER

<p>Healthier: Larger, more elastic, less obstructed with fat, freer circulation, lower blood pressure</p>	<p>Less healthy: Constricted, inelastic, clogged with excess fat, reduced circulation, elevated blood pressure</p>
--	---

BODY COMPOSITION

LOWER  HIGHER

<p>Healthier: Lean, with proportionally more muscle than bone. Muscles stronger, more firm, defined and efficient, tending to burn more calories</p>	<p>Less healthy: Fat, with proportionally less muscle than bone. Muscles weaker, less toned and efficient, tending to burn fewer calories, less sensitive to insulin</p>
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PERSONAL HEALTH & FITNESS FACT SHEET

LUNG CAPACITY

LOWER  HIGHER


<p>Less healthy: Restricted capacity for oxygen absorption and waste expulsion</p>	<p>Healthier: Expanded capacity for oxygen absorption and waste expulsion</p>
---	--

BONE DENSITY

LOWER  HIGHER


<p>Less healthy: Weaker, more porous and brittle</p>	<p>Healthier: Stronger, denser and more resilient</p>
---	--

JOINT MOVEMENT

LOWER  HIGHER

<p>Less healthy: Stiff, restricted, sometimes painful in motion</p>	<p>Healthier: Capable of a wide range of fluid motion</p>
--	--

EMOTIONAL STRESS

LOWER  HIGHER

<p>Healthier: More patient, tolerant, relaxed and enthusiastic</p>	<p>Less healthy: Impatient, critical, tense and depressed</p>
---	--

SELF-ESTEEM

LOWER  HIGHER

<p>Less healthy: Less certain, more doubtful and self-conscious</p>	<p>Healthier: More confident with positive appreciation of self</p>
--	--

making lifestyle changes

If you are not satisfied with your rating on some of the Health and Fitness scales what can you do to improve your condition?

Healthy eating can make a significant difference in your physical and emotional well being and plays a very important part in how well you manage the stress generated by the challenges of your new assignment.

However, with information on how to take care of your health coming from all directions it can be difficult to determine just what is “healthy eating”. What are the foods that are beneficial for you and what could be harmful? For example, fruits, vegetables, and whole grains provide energy and help prevent disease. They should be daily elements of your diet.

The Food Guide chart below, based on the Food Guide Pyramid created by North American nutritionists and health specialists, provides a handy reference for healthy eating. The emphasis is on the foods in the Grains, Vitamins & Minerals and Protein sections of the chart. While each of the food groups provides some nutrients, no one group provides everything you need. No single group is more important than another for good health. It is important to eat a variety of foods to get the nutrients needed and the right amount of calories to maintain a healthy weight.

“1 SERVING” IS...

Grains, Breads, Cereals, Rice & Pasta

- 1 slice of bread
- cup of cooked rice or pasta
- cup of cooked cereal
- ounce of ready-to-eat cereal



Vitamins & Minerals. Vegetables

- cup of chopped raw or cooked vegetables
- 1 cup of leafy raw vegetables

Fruits

- 1 piece of fruit or melon wedge
- cup of juice
- cup of canned fruit
- cup of dried fruit

Protein. Milk, Yogurt & Cheese

- 1 cup of milk or yogurt
- 1 to 2 oz. cheese

Meat, Poultry, Fish, Dry Beans, Eggs & Nuts

- 2 to 3 oz. cooked lean meat, poultry or fish
- 1 cup cooked beans
- 3 eggs
- 6 tablespoons of peanut butter

Fats & Added Sugars. Fats, Oils & Sweets

LIMIT CALORIES FROM THESE
especially if you need to lose weight

We understand that different people from different dietary cultures will inevitably make different choices. We provide this chart only as a reference to help you determine if you’re making healthy choices in your diet.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Women & older adults = 1600 calories per day ■ Active women, most men, children, teen girls = 2200 calories per day ■ Active men & teen boys = 2800 calories per day 	<p>1600</p> <p>2200</p> <p>2800</p>
---	--

THE WORD ON FAT AND ADDED SUGARS:

Fats, oils, and sweets are foods such as:

Salad dressings, Cream, Butter, Margarine, Sugars, Candies, Sweet desserts, Soft drinks, Alcoholic beverages.

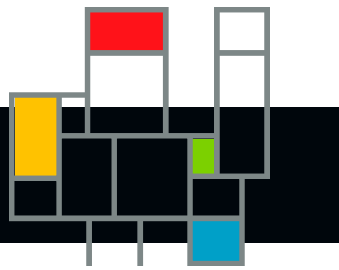
These foods provide calories but few vitamins and minerals.

GO EASY ON FOODS FROM THIS GROUP.

Foods from the other food groups can also be high in fat and added sugars, such as **cheese or ice cream** from the milk group or **fried potatoes** from the vegetable group. Be aware of fat and sugar content in your choices from any of the food groups.

The following suggestions may be helpful.

- E**at a variety of different foods to get the needed nutrients.
- A**void saturated fats, butter, lard, tropical oils.
- T**rade sugary snacks for fruit, yogurt, crackers.
- S**tay away from high fat foods.
- M**aintain a healthy weight – improve eating habits.
- A**lcohol in moderation
- R**eplace salt with creative seasoning.
- T**ry a daily serving of fruit and vegetables.



fitness and exercise

Health experts tell us that a sedentary, physically inactive lifestyle can increase the risk of contracting heart disease, infections, high blood pressure and other cardiovascular conditions. For example, in one western country over 250,000 deaths a year have been attributed to disease resulting from inactivity.

Even jet lag can be reduced with exercise. Studies have shown that exercise can help your body adjust to a time change. Outdoor activity like brisk walking or jogging sends your body a message about the new daylight hours as well as giving you a chance to orient yourself physically in the new environment.

However, it isn't always possible to engage in vigorous physical exercise each day, nor is everyone physically able to manage it. Do you have to be an athlete to get the health benefits of physical activity? The answer is **"NO"!**

In fact, regular moderate activity over a minimum period of time can be just as effective as vigorous physical exercise. What does this mean? Thirty minutes or more of moderate activity at least five days a week has been shown to be adequate exercise. Accumulated periods of activity, like climbing several flights of stairs once a day, and walking several blocks can be equivalent to a sustained work out. The accumulation of short bouts of activity can also produce the positive effects of strenuous aerobic activity.

Getting the right amount of physical exercise in the environment of a non-family field mission can be difficult. Walking back and forth to work is often not possible because of the security situation. Gymnasiums, swimming pools and exercise facilities may not be available and even if they are available, it is frequently difficult to find time to get to them in the highly pressurized work environment.

It is important however, to find alternatives so that you are getting the kind of exercise your body requires. Walking around the mission compound, using stairs instead of elevators, trying Yoga, Tai Chi or another form of exercise can all be useful methods for maintaining your physical and emotional balance. Take along with you to the mission a cassette or CD player and CDs or tapes with music for stretching and aerobics exercises. Make space and time in your residence, even if it is a single room, to do them.

You don't have to feel guilty about taking 30 minutes to increase your health and productivity. Remember, your physical health goes hand-in-hand with your mental health. Being in good physical shape will allow you to deal better with the stresses of your mission.

be fit and stay healthy

GETTING HEALTH INFORMATION

Travelling to new locations, especially locations with different climates and at different levels of development, requires a big adjustment for body and mind. You will have a much better experience and be able to work more effectively if you take the time to find out what health precautions you need to take before you set out.

The UN Medical Service provides a Medical Travel Kit to staff members who are required to travel for their work. If you have access to the UN Medical Service either at a headquarters office or a duty station, make sure you inform them of your anticipated travel and get the travel kit. If you do not have access to a UN office, the contents of the UN Medical Travel Kit and accompanying instructions are outlined on the following pages.

You can use this list to assist in preparing your own medical travel kit.

UN MEDICAL TRAVEL KIT – CONTENTS:

Condition	Medical Supply	How To
Insect bites	Deet lotion and Permethrin spray	Use DEET Insect Repellent directly on skin. If using sunscreen, apply the sunscreen first and then the repellent. Apply Permethrin spray to clothing and mosquito net. Do not apply Permethrin spray on skin.
Sunburn	Sunscreen spf 15	Use sunscreen. Wear protective clothing and eyewear.
Itchy skin	After Bite and After Burn	Topical treatment for insect bites, stings, sunburn, and allergic skin reactions (like hives).
History of severe allergic reactions, especially insect bites	Epi-pen	Use as directed.
Prevention of red eye	Eye drops	
Pain and/or fever	Ex. Strong Tylenol & Motrin	Take 2 tablets. If necessary, repeat in 4 hours.
Severe diarrhea	Diamode (2mg) generic for <i>Imodium</i> ®	Take 2 capsules (4 mg.) Repeat 1 capsule after each watery stool. Do not take more than 8 capsules (16 mg.) in 24 hours. After 3 days of treatment, if symptoms persist, see a doctor.
Dehydration	Oral hydration salts	Severe diarrhea causes dehydration and loss of electrolytes. It is essential that these be replaced. Dissolve 1 packet of ORS in 1 liter of cool boiled or bottled water. Drink as much as needed. If puffiness of eyes occurs, stop taking the solution. Drink plain boiled or bottled water instead. Do not boil the solution after it has been mixed as this will destroy its effectiveness.

UN MEDICAL TRAVEL KIT – CONTENTS:

Condition	Medical Supply	How To
Upset stomach/ heartburn/diarrhea	Diotame and Tums	Chew 2 tablets. Repeat hourly if necessary. Do not take more than 8 doses in 24 hours. Do not take this medication if you are allergic to aspirin.
Wound care	Gloves, Providone, Iodine, Swabs, Bacitracin Ointment, Assorted Bandages, Sterile Gauze	Topical antiseptic – After Cuts and Scrapes towelettes Topical antibiotic – Bacitracin Ointment Bandages include butterfly sutures, 6 knuckle and 6 fingertip
Water purification	Potable Aqua Tablets (50 tablets per bottle)	If boiled or bottled water cannot be obtained, tap water should be treated with Potable Aqua. Put one tablet of Potable Aqua in 1 liter or quart of water. Cap loosely to allow a small amount of leakage. Wait 3 minutes, shake container to allow screw threads on the closure to be moistened, then tighten cap. Wait 10 minutes before drinking. Do not swallow these tablets.
Prophylaxis	Disposable needles & syringes, condoms	Intended for your personal use should you need a blood test, injection or vaccination during your mission.

YOUR PERSONAL HEALTH FACTORS

Even before you finalize your decision to travel, you should be discussing the situation with your health professional. Each person's risk level on exposure to disease is different and dependent on a variety of factors. Discuss with your health professional your current health and the following factors:

- Where you are going and what are the conditions there?
- Will there be a change in climate while you are there?
- Will you be living in tropical conditions or desert conditions?
- Do you have a physical condition, such as asthma, which could be affected by the environment?
- Discuss your anticipated accommodations and how long you expect to be there.
- If you plan to live in the local community, you will probably be exposed to different health risks than if you were living in accommodation at the mission.
- Consider the food and water sources and ask about ways of minimizing your risks from these areas.

REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED IMMUNIZATIONS

Please contact the *United Nations Medical Service* for advice about appropriate immunizations for your mission area.

REMEMBER: Diseases which no longer or rarely occur in developed countries can be active in the developing areas of the world.

IMPORTANT: Some immunization or vaccinations require an 8-WEEK time period for completion so it is important that you make this an early part of your preparation.

SOURCES OF DISEASE³

Some of the common risks for disease transmission include food and water, insects, and sexual activities.

Food and Water

- This is the most common form of disease transmission for someone travelling to a new country. Travellers' diarrhea, hepatitis A, typhoid, polio and cholera can all be transmitted through contaminated food or water.
- Make sure your drinking water is purified. Carry waterless soap to wash your hands when soap and water are not available or the water is suspect.
- Food must be well cooked or washed and peeled.
- Hepatitis A is prevalent all over the world with the exception of Western Europe, Canada, United States of America, Australia and New Zealand.
- Typhoid fever is found in many parts of the world.
- Asia, the Middle East and most of Africa are high-risk areas for polio.

Insects

Malaria, dengue fever, West Nile disease, yellow fever and Japanese encephalitis are all transmitted by infected mosquitoes. Most of these are found in tropical and developing countries although West Nile disease is also found in developed countries with temperate climates. The best protection against insect borne disease is insect repellent, protective clothing and sleeping under mosquito netting treated with repellent. South America, Africa, the Middle East, India and Southeast Asia are risk areas for malaria.

Person to Person

Contaminated needles, syringes, blood and unprotected sexual activities can all be the source of diseases such as Hepatitis B and HIV/AIDS. Avoid body piercing or tattooing.

hiv/aids⁴

HIV and AIDS continue to affect the lives of millions around the world. Until a vaccine or cure is found, our best weapon against HIV/AIDS is knowledge.

³ Adapted from: *The health facts you need...before you travel*; Aventis Pasteur Inc.; US 2002.

⁴ Adapted from: *Living in a world with HIV/AIDS: Information for employees of the UN system and their families*; UNAIDS; 2004.

HIV CAN BE ONLY BE TRANSMITTED BY THREE PRIMARY METHODS:

- Unprotected sexual contact (primarily anal and vaginal).
- Exposure to infected blood and blood products (primarily through unscreened blood transfusions and the use of contaminated needles, syringes and other piercing instruments like scissors, razor blades, knives).
- Transmission from an HIV-positive mother to a child.

WHAT IS HIV/AIDS?

First discovered in the 1980s, HIV (Human Immuno-deficiency Virus) was found to be an infectious agent now known as a retrovirus. This agent causes what we call AIDS—Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome—not one, but a cluster of other diseases. The virus attacks and destroys certain white blood cells that are essential to the human immune system.

After a variable period of time, the virus becomes activated and then leads progressively to the serious infections and other conditions that characterize AIDS. Without treatment, HIV infection almost invariably leads to AIDS, which almost invariably leads to death. Today however, there are treatments that slow the progression of HIV infection and allow people infected with the virus to live healthily and productively for many years.

HIV-infected individuals become more infectious as they progress to HIV-related disease and AIDS. There is also an early one-to-two week period of infectiousness around the time of seroconversion—that is, when antibodies first develop. After testing, a person carrying the virus is deemed “HIV-positive.”

The infected person becomes susceptible to a wide range of “opportunistic” infections, such as, Pneumocystitis carini pneumonia (PCP), which rarely occurs in persons with normal immune systems; tuberculosis (TB), and rare cancers such as Kaposi’s sarcoma (KS). HIV may also attack the brain causing neurological problems.

WHO CAN GET HIV/AIDS?

The prevalence of HIV infection among sexually active men and women varies according to geographical area or population subgroup, such as heterosexuals, men who have sex with men (MSM), sex workers, or injecting-drug users. Generally, the likelihood of becoming infected with HIV sexually is related to the number of sexual partners and unprotected sex acts you

have. In other words, the more sexual partners you have, the greater your chance of becoming infected. The less protection that is used during sexual activity, the higher the risk of contracting or transmitting HIV. Remember: it takes only one act of unprotected sex to put you at risk for HIV.

Disease patterns differ substantially between and within regions. Heterosexual transmission is the primary source in sub-Saharan Africa and in the Caribbean, while men who have sex with men represent the largest share of cases in Latin America and in many industrialized countries. In Eastern Europe, Central Asia, the Middle East, North Africa and parts of South Asia and Latin America, injecting-drug use is the primary source of HIV infections.

Kissing has not been shown to transmit AIDS, as saliva itself does not appear to carry the virus. However, if there is bleeding of the gums or the presence of mouth sores, there is a chance of transmission.

In other words, it is very important that you **KNOW YOUR SEXUAL PARTNER** and **ALWAYS USE CONDOMS** during sexual intercourse.

ESSENTIAL PREVENTION TOOLS:

- Access to condoms
- Access to First Aid kits
- New syringes

ACCESS TO SAFE BLOOD SUPPLIES AND STERILIZED EQUIPMENT:

The United Nations, through agencies like the World Health Organization, has established reliable blood transfusion centres to ensure safe blood supplies. However, all UN employees are urged to adopt measures to reduce serious injuries in motor vehicle accidents, not only for obvious reasons, but because they represent a particular risk for HIV infection in those localities lacking safe blood supplies.

The most important thing you can do to ensure that you have minimized your risk of contracting HIV is to think in advance about ways you might come into contact with the virus and how you can plan to avoid transmission.

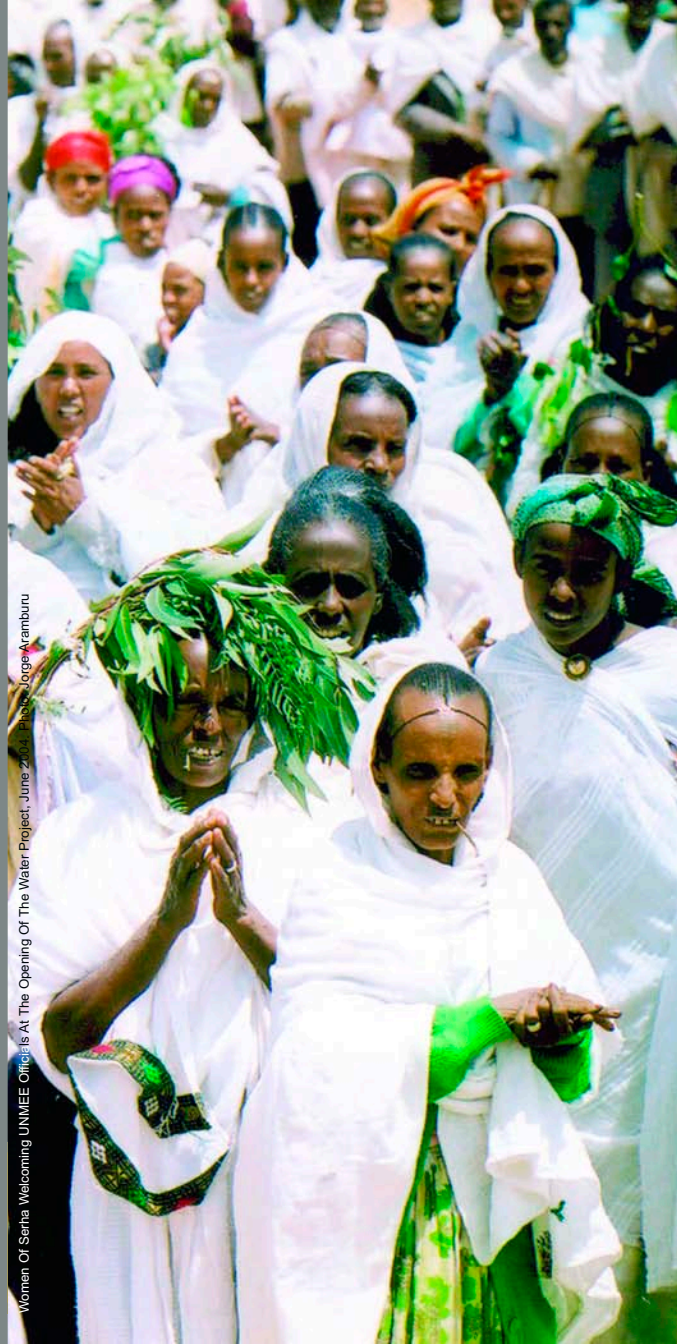
For more information, we recommend you read the booklet “*Living in a World with HIV/AIDS: Information for United Nations Employees and their Families.*” (See *Internet Links*).

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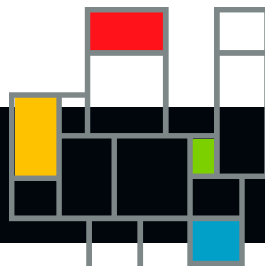
PART TWO

being there

Women Of Serha Welcoming UNMEE Official Is At The Opening Of The Water Project, June 2007. Photo: Jorge Aramburu



PART TWO being there



arriving at the new duty station

When you arrive at your new duty station, be prepared to handle changes in living conditions. The local food will probably be different from what you are used to eating. What is available may be limited. Local custom may require, for example, the use of different spices, only cooked food, no alcoholic beverages and other differences. Accommodations may be much more basic than those to which you are accustomed and local rental conditions will need to be verified with your colleagues. You will need to become familiar with new administrative and personnel requirements and be sure you know and follow the security conditions and procedures in place.

FINDING YOUR WAY AROUND

You may know a colleague, or have been provided with the name of a staff member at the new duty station, who will serve as your “First Contact” and assist you in getting the information you need about community conditions such as best living areas, banking, stores, medical facilities and more. If you do not have a First Contact assigned before your arrival, ask your supervisor to assign someone from your new work unit as a resource to help you get settled.

Check-in Process

On your arrival you will need to complete a check-in process to meet administrative requirements for working at the duty station.

On the first day of your arrival, make sure you obtain:

- a security briefing,
- an up-to-date list of emergency contacts,
- an ID card and
- a radio, if available.

Induction/Orientation

In order to assist you in obtaining all the necessary information and making the best possible informed decisions regarding your living and working environment, you should complete an induction/orientation programme within the first two weeks of your arrival at the duty station.

This orientation programme should provide you with detailed information on topics including: mission mandate, objectives, areas and responsibilities; security and safety (e.g., driving, personal); radio communication and emergency procedures, unexploded ordnance (UXO) and mine awareness, as appropriate to your mission area. Other topics include the situation regarding human rights, child protection, sexual exploitation and abuse, gender awareness, dealing with the media and HIV/AIDS.

Meet Your Work Unit

Contact your supervisor on your first working day to discuss the new job and plan the activities which will help you familiarize yourself with the new requirements. Be sure to include the following items in your discussion and planning with the supervisor:

- orientation/induction,
- section/unit/individual work plan,
- expectations and responsibilities,
- performance appraisal,
- work contacts and introductions,
- work team arrangements (meetings, events etc.).

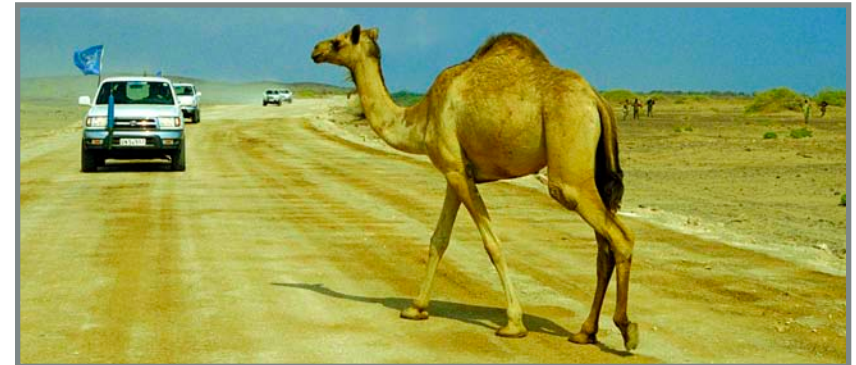


Photo: UN/DPI Photo

United Nations Mission In Eritrea and Ethiopia, February 2001. A convoy of UNMEE vehicles in the ASSAB area in Eritrea.

stress management

Changing jobs or offices is stressful even if you remain within your own cultural context. Moving to a new duty station such as a Peacekeeping Field Mission often involves conditions such as a new language, new climate, new culture, and working with new organizations / governments, which can multiply by many times the stress you might normally feel. It is important that you learn to identify your own reactions to stressful situations and how to manage the stress to make the new assignment as productive and enjoyable as possible for yourself and for your family if they are accompanying you.

HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT STRESS?

Before reading further, find out how much you know about stress with the short quiz below. Also review the CD-ROM “*Stress Management*” (answers to the quiz may be found on pages 76-77 in part 4).

TRUE FALSE STRESS STATEMENT

Indicate whether the following statements are right or wrong by putting a check ✓ under True or False in the columns below.

- | True | False | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1. Stress is always negative. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. Loneliness over a prolonged, unrelieved period can cause burnout. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3. Being required to move to a new job is a psychosocial stressor. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4. The stress reaction is triggered by our perception of something as dangerous. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5. Having a pet can help reduce medical problems associated with stress. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6. Drinking wine or spirits can help reduce stress by helping the individual relax. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 7. To be effective, critical incident defusing has to be done within 48 hours of the incident. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 8. Stress research tells us that the death of a loved one is the most stressful experience a person can have. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 9. Age, education, gender and fitness are all factors which determine how you manage stress. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 10. Carrying on with your daily activities as normal is a good coping mechanism after a critical incident. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 11. When you are under stress, your breathing becomes shallow and rapid. |

stress and distress

Stress can be defined as any demand or change that the human system (mind, body and spirit) is required to meet or respond to.

Stress is therefore part of everyday life. Blood circulation, walking, eating, talking and even playing are what we call “normal stressors”.

Experts differentiate between **ACUTE STRESS** and **CHRONIC STRESS**. Within each type of stress (acute vs. chronic), the level of stress is evaluated by considering its frequency, duration and intensity.

ACUTE STRESS refers to our body’s reaction to a threat to our well-being, be it physical or psychological. Acute stress prepares the body to protect itself, and represents a survival function.

CHRONIC STRESS (also referred to as **CUMULATIVE STRESS**) describes stress which builds up, often unrecognised, over a period of time. Chronic stress can easily become distress when it occurs too often, lasts too long and is too severe.

It is important to note that what is distressful for one person may not necessarily be distressful for another. Your individual perception, i.e. the degree of threat you feel and the amount of control you have over the circumstances, can effect the degree of distress you personally experience. We know from stress research that the single most stressful experience most people have is to feel that they cannot control their circumstances.

The factors that influence your perception and management of distress are many and varied. They may include:

- Your past experiences
- Education
- Skills
- Personal philosophy
- Age
- Gender
- Fitness level
- Self-esteem

GENERAL ADAPTATION SYNDROME (GAS)

Learning to recognize the early signs of distress is an important factor in stress management. Psychologist Dr Hans Selye⁵ defined a concept called the “General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS),” in which he breaks down the onset of distress into three distinct phases:

1. The Alarm Phase.

In the presence of a threatening or dangerous stressor, we react with the “flight or fight or freeze” response. This reaction increases adrenalin flow and prepares us to run or to fight or to stay still. It is our body’s automatic reaction to a threat, and it is designed to keep us alive. If we respond physically, such as by running or fighting, or even with verbal aggression, much of the stress could be dissipated. But unless there is a direct threat to our safety, certain more extreme reactions that could dissipate the stress are rarely appropriate in today’s world. So, we learn to adapt, which leads us to the next phase.

2. The Adaptation Phase.

When the stressor continues unresolved, the intensity of the first phase is often lessened, but not lost, and the “adaptation phase” begins. Vital biochemical, physiological, psychological and spiritual resources are spent sustaining the person against the original stressor. During this phase, the mind, body and spirit are struggling to adjust to the new “burden” of the stressor, as it is a natural tendency of humans to seek homeostasis (for humans, this means a physically peaceful state). Problems occur when the level of adaptation needed is too great, or goes on for too long a period of time.

3. The Exhaustion Phase.

As a direct result of the long-term distressors or daily cumulative stressors, after a certain period of time (depending on the person concerned), a person may begin to show signs of breakdown. A number of physical, mental and behavioural conditions can be manifested (as outlined below, under “Common Symptoms of Distress”), all of which may be symptoms of unresolved distress.

CUMULATIVE STRESS

Many people suffer from cumulative stress — stress which builds up over time. This may be the result of severe, long-standing situations or it

may be an accumulation of the small daily stresses of everyday life. To manage these, as well as other more acute events, it is important to learn which distressors affect you most of all. Because of the slow build-up of these stressors, people often fail to recognize the impact on their system. Awareness of the potential danger of these accumulated stressors is a key to effectively managing your stress.

COMMON SYMPTOMS OF DISTRESS

Physical	Psychological	
Fatigue	Memory loss	Verbal outbursts
Back pain	Poor concentration	Increased smoking
Headache	Decreased self-esteem	Heavy drinking
Stomach pains	Depression	Eating disorders
Increased susceptibility to illness	Chronic anxiety	Sleep disturbances
	Irritability	

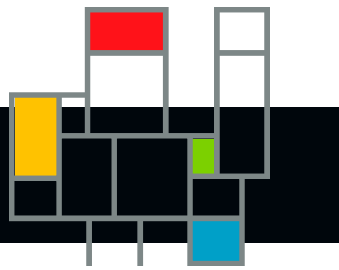
MINIMIZING THE EFFECTS OF STRESS

While no one can lead an entirely stress-free life, there are a number of things you can do to minimize the overall effect of all types of stress syndromes. In addition, the healthier and fitter you are (physically and psychologically), the more capable you will be of dealing with stress.

Stress Minimizers

- Identify the major stress factors in your life
- Learn either to accept what you cannot change, or to get out of a situation that is too stressful for you
- Learn to be assertive but not aggressive
- Learn how to manage your time well
- Make sure to get all the sleep you need
- Exercise at least three times a week for endurance and strength
- Eat a well-balanced diet related to your activity level
- Avoid excessive use of alcohol, caffeine and nicotine
- Know and practice your philosophical/spiritual approach to life
- Accept creative challenges
- Use your free time constructively
- Learn the healing value of relaxation and meditation
- Spend time with family and friends

5 Philip Goldberg; *Executive Health: How to Recognize Stress Danger Signals and Manage Stress Successfully*; New York, McGraw-Hill, 1979.; pp 25-26.]



critical incident stress

A **critical incident (CI)** is defined as an event out of the range of normal experience — one which is sudden and unexpected, makes you lose control, involves the perception of a threat to life and can include elements of physical or emotional loss.

Critical incidents include natural disasters, multiple-casualty accidents, sexual or other types of assault, death of a child, hostage-taking, suicide, traumatic death in family, duty-related death of a co-worker and war-related civilian deaths.

Less familiar than cumulative stress and more difficult to deal with is **“critical incident stress”** — the reaction to a **critical incident**. It is estimated that 25% of individuals in North America alone will experience an event that qualifies as a **“critical incident.”** In other more politically unstable parts of the world that figure may be even higher.

Although a critical incident may occur at any time, anywhere, there are certain occupational groups that are at an increased risk of exposure to traumatic events. These include fire-fighters, emergency health-care workers, police officers, search and rescue personnel, disaster relief and humanitarian aid workers, and United Nations peacekeepers, staff members, observers and monitors.

CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS: THE FACTS

The unusually strong physical and emotional reactions experienced in the face of a critical incident are referred to as **CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS (CIS)**. A strong reaction is normal. The person(s) involved perhaps cannot function as they normally would either during the CI or afterwards. Few people remain unaffected by a critical incident, although reactions may differ. Some reactions are immediate. Some reactions may occur days, weeks or even years later. Current research suggests that those who show little outward reaction and who appear emotionally “numb” may have the greatest likelihood of developing psychological difficulties at a later point.

The severity of reactions depends on various factors relating to both the incident and the individual. Some of these factors are described below:

EXAMPLES OF UN WORK-RELATED CRITICAL INCIDENTS:

Outbreak of hostilities

- ★ Pinned down in a crossfire situation by rifle, rocket and mortar, you are trapped in a location with limited food, no fresh water and no heat or light for almost four days.

Evacuation

- ★ You are caught in the middle of a civil war. Eventually you are evacuated to a safe place, but not before witnessing several people being brutally beaten or shot.

Peacekeeping mission

- ★ Some people from your team are attacked in a hotel lobby. Everyone is robbed, three are badly beaten, and one woman is beaten and raped.

On a project

- ★ Humanitarian workers involved in a disease-prevention project are hit by a severe tropical storm. Many locals are killed and several team members are injured.

FACTORS OF CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS

The Individual

- past experience
- personal loss
- perception of threat
- personal ability to cope
- available social support

The Incident

- suddenness
- intensity
- duration
- proximity to the event

IMMEDIATE REACTIONS TO A CRITICAL INCIDENT

Physical

- nausea
- muscle tremors
- sweating
- dizziness
- chills
- increased heart rate
- increased blood pressure
- hyperventilation (fast, deep breathing)
- difficulty sleeping
- poor appetite

Mental

- confusion
- difficulty making decisions
- impaired thinking
- memory loss
- difficulty in problem-solving
- difficulty doing simple arithmetic
- difficulty remembering names of things

Emotional

- anxiety
- anger
- fear
- irritability
- guilt
- overwhelmed feeling
- grief
- hopelessness

Behavioural

- increased use of alcohol, nicotine or prescription drugs
- emotional outbursts
- aggression towards others
- isolating self from others

DELAYED REACTIONS TO A CRITICAL INCIDENT

Physical

- fatigue
- heightened startle reflex (overreaction at a sudden noise or movement)
- sleeping problems such as:
 - can't fall asleep
 - nightmares
 - night sweating
 - restlessness
 - waking up early
 - difficulty waking up
- poor appetite or eating too much
- hypervigilance – being overly aware of what is around you

Mental

- decreased problem-solving
- poor concentration
- memory problems
- difficulty making decisions
- flashbacks (re-experiencing what happened)

Emotional

- fluctuating moods
- feeling abandoned
- resentment
- feeling of alienation
- numbness
- depression
- sadness
- anger
- despair

Behavioural

- aggression towards others
- isolating self from others
- emotional outbursts
- increased use/misuse of alcohol, nicotine, prescription medication drugs

All the reactions described on the previous pages are **NORMAL** symptoms experienced by **NORMAL** people following an **ABNORMAL** event.

These symptoms can temporarily interfere with a person's ability to cope at work or at home. For the majority of people most symptoms will diminish in intensity and frequency within a few days or weeks.

Research suggests that the following coping mechanisms may be helpful:

COPING DURING THE CRITICAL INCIDENT

- Recognize the signs of critical incident stress
- Maintain a positive attitude
- Try to control your breathing — slow, regular, and deep
- Focus on the task in hand
- Stay in contact with others by talking
- Look after yourself — food, water, clothing, and rest
- If exposure is prolonged, take breaks and rotate tasks.

COPING AFTERWARDS

- Talk about the event — what you saw, heard, smelled, and did
- Talk about your reactions, particularly how you felt
- Practice stress-management techniques such as:
 - Deep-breathing exercises
 - Progressive relaxation
 - Meditation and/or prayer
 - Physical activity
 - Music, reading
- Use humour — making jokes can make it easier to accept what has happened
- Attend specially designed group sessions (see below)

PROFESSIONAL HELP

A number of group techniques have been developed by professionals to assist emergency services personnel, such as ambulance drivers and fire-fighters, to deal with critical incident stress. You are strongly advised to attend the sessions available at your duty station. The following descriptions can give you an idea of what these sessions provide.

Critical incident stress *defusing*

This is a group meeting of all involved in the critical incident. It takes place within 8 to 12 hours after the event to give everyone the chance to talk about what happened and to discuss their feelings and reactions with others who were there. This session is usually led by someone who has received basic training in critical incident stress management, possibly a colleague. During the meeting there is a chance to learn more about the specialized support services which exist at your particular duty station and to schedule further sessions.

Critical incident stress *debriefing* (CISD)

Usually taking place 12 to 72 hours after the critical incident, this more specialized session is led by someone with extensive training, usually part of a critical incident stress team. The purpose is not to provide formal counselling, but to give all involved a further opportunity to discuss their thoughts and reactions openly in a safe environment. The following list of suggested “do’s and don’ts” are provided to help you get the maximum benefit from critical incident stress management strategies.

MANAGING CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS

- think you’re going crazy
- try to resist recurring thoughts, dreams or flashbacks
- withdraw from family, friends, colleagues
- think you are the only one who has been affected
- drink alcohol excessively
- abuse medication
- have unrealistic expectations for recovery — it takes time

* don't



- expect the incident to bother you
- remind yourself that your reactions are normal
- get plenty of sleep and rest
- spend time with family, friends and colleagues
- maintain a balanced diet with minimum caffeine and sugar
- exercise daily on a moderate basis
- take time for leisure activities
- learn as much as possible about critical incident stress
- talk to trusted family, friends, counsellor
- minimize use of alcohol and drugs
- treat yourself especially well

IF YOU ARE A FAMILY MEMBER OR FRIEND



- listen carefully
- spend time with the affected person
- offer your assistance and listening ear
- reassure them that they are safe and that their reactions are normal
- help them with routine tasks like cleaning, cooking and caring for the family
- allow them some private time
- don't not take their anger (or other feelings) personally
- tell them you are sorry such an event has happened and you want to understand and help them
- call for help or support as soon as you feel **you** need it

post-traumatic stress disorder

Critical incident stress is a major factor in the development of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). However, the onset of PTSD can often be prevented by proper preparation, plus the appropriate use of defusing and debriefing (CISD) group and individual sessions after the critical incident has taken place. PTSD is a medical diagnosis made according to specific criteria by medical/mental health professionals. It can include chronic symptoms of critical incident stress that interfere with work and social life long after the event.

Critical incidents cannot be predicted, nor can critical incident stress or post-traumatic stress disorder always be prevented. However, your ability to cope will increase if you are fit and healthy in all these different dimensions:

- Psychological
- Spiritual
- Emotional
- Physical
- Social



STRESS MANAGEMENT MEANS:

- Sensible eating
- Taking time to enjoy life
- Rest and relaxation
- Exercise and education (about CIS)
- Social support (family, friends)
- Satisfying expressions of spirituality and sexuality

living and working in a diverse workplace

With almost 200 countries belonging to the United Nations organization, working for the United Nations means you will be working with people from many different backgrounds and cultures. In addition, taking up an appointment at a field mission or a UN duty station in a different country means you will not only be interacting with people from a different culture on a work-related basis but also living in a society whose beliefs, values and standards may be very different from your own. While this is often a very enriching experience it can also be very difficult if you are not well prepared for the challenges implicit in such an environment.

The two main sources of differences between people are biology and culture.

By biology we are referring to physical differences such as sex, hair, eyes, skin colour, and height. These are produced by our genetic structure. But no two people have exactly the same genetic coding thus no two people are exactly the same (excluding identical twins). Most biological differences have little importance on their own. It is how we view them that gives them importance. How we view biological differences is determined by culture.

CULTURE

When we speak of culture we are generally referring to the beliefs, shared values, customs and practices, arts and intellectual achievements of a people or race. Culture is how we are raised to view and practice life. It shows up in how we make, do and celebrate things. Culture provides terms such as “us and them.” It plays a large part in our understanding of who we are.

Race is a term used to refer to physical differences like hair, skin tone, facial features. But these are artificially selected determinants since there are

many physical differences like weight, arm length or shoe size which could be used as differentiating factors. More significant are the economic and social issues associated with the concept of race. Race refers to how society views the characteristics that result from genetic similarities.



Photo: UNDP/Photo

United Nations Mission in Eritrea and Ethiopia. Under a quick impact project financed by UNMEE and the Embassies of Italy and Holland, for the construction of houses in Shambiko, Eritrea, a visit took place in the town to assess the construction project. Shown, a woman demonstrates making bricks which will be used for the construction of new homes.

Race and culture are two of the concepts we use in understanding and establishing our personal identities and belief and value systems. We associate ourselves with a race (e.g. European, Inuit, African) and a culture which is sometimes, but not always, associated with a religion (e.g. Jewish, Mkonde, French). We then develop attitudes about those who are different.

COMMUNICATING ACROSS CULTURES

Communication, particularly oral communication, can often be one of the biggest cross-cultural challenges because it relies heavily on our understanding of what we are seeing and hearing. Research tells us seventy per cent (70%) of communication is non-verbal. Our understanding of what we are seeing, reading, or hearing may differ depending upon the cultural backgrounds of the person communicating and the person receiving the communication. What we understand depends upon how we interpret words, tone and gestures to define the intent of the speaker and then how we react to the understood intent, that is, the impact of the communication.

The impact of a communication, the meaning we understand or infer, is often conditioned by our culture. Conditioning refers to the automatic

response produced by repetition of messages leading to action based on belief. Prolonged conditioning is powerful and can result in biased action.

Misalignment between intent (communicator) and impact (receiver) is one of the most frequently occurring sources of problems among co-workers.

When you consider communication, especially cross-cultural communication, try comparing it to an iceberg or a termite mound. What you see in both cases can be huge. If you are looking at icebergs from the deck of a ship they may tower a hundred feet or more over your head. But what you see above the surface of the water is only 10% of the complete mass of the iceberg. Similarly with the termite mound, what is immediately visible, no matter how big it looks, is only a small percentage of the whole structure.

When we first communicate with a person, like the iceberg, we can only see perhaps 10% of the person's cultural attributes. The most important aspects, the values, attitudes and beliefs, are usually hidden. Nevertheless we tend to make assumptions based only on the tip of the iceberg, the part we see.

Diversity has many dimensions, not just race or gender, yet despite the fact that we know of its complexity, we tend to associate a person's behaviour with a single obvious factor. For example, the statement "Oh, it made her cry, but she's a woman," suggests that crying occurred because of gender. According to that statement, a man in a similar circumstance would not have cried. Underlying this is the implication that the event which provoked the tears was not really that serious. When we make and act on such assumptions we often find ourselves in cultural conflict. This prevents us from moving on and finding the similarities that lie beneath the differences and could lead to understanding.

Our capacity to work as a team, meet mission objectives and build relationships with local communities and authorities is dependent upon our skills and attitudes in understanding and adapting to people, their culture, practices, expectations, beliefs, values and environments.

REMEMBER: On a mission or UN Duty station, our EVERY action and behaviour will be observed and judged, influencing people's perception of the UN and consequently our reputation and relationship with others. Our actions will continuously impact on the culture we are working in. We need to be constantly aware of and reflect on the consequences of our actions.

DON'T...

Attitude

- Use Preconceptions
- Use Stereotypes
- Make assumptions
- Assume similarities
- Evaluate based on own standards

Language/Speaking

- Use idioms, slang, jargon
- Make jokes (Humour rarely travels well)
- Use idiomatic expressions
- Introduce sensitive social issues
- Use a mock accent

Non-verbal

- Use Gestures
- Rely on Body language
- Overuse eye contact
- Smile inappropriately (e.g. too often)
- Touch people without knowing what the cultural norm is
- Invade personal space

DO...

Attitude

- Test assumptions
- Test for understanding
- Genuinely respect others and their differences
- Learn what behaviours are considered respectful and disrespectful in the culture
- Understand different styles
- Be aware of what gestures and physical proximity may mean in the culture of the person you are communicating with

Language/Speaking

- Use inclusive language that encourages openness and trust
- Use "I" statements to share feelings about offensive remarks and behaviour e.g. "I feel hurt when you say that"
- Simplify, rephrase
- Use examples
- Summarize
- Reflect back what is heard – content, feelings, assumptions
- Articulate when you speak

Non-verbal

- Ensure your body language demonstrates openness, receptiveness
- Be aware of pacing and timing
- Slow down
- Listen for feelings
- Use gestures, body language, eye contact appropriate to the culture of the person with whom you are communicating



diversity and cross-cultural checklist

The following checklist is a guide to asking questions about yourself and others. This will help you identify similarities and differences that will lead to working more effectively in your cross-cultural work environment.

VALUES AND BELIEFS –

What do they mean for our behaviour, work practices, approach to issues such as health promotion?

- What are shared, how do they differ, what do I / others find difficult to accept?
- What is expected – societal / UN / individual?
- How do these differ between locals/ between locals & Internationals?
- What happens when these expectations are not met?
- What is the role of religion – types of religion, influences and practices?
- What cultural / ethnic groups exist and what are the roles within those?

GENDER:

What are the implications of the culturally specific gender roles and expectations for:

- Our behaviour?
- Work practices?
- Provision of goods and services?
- Opportunities for employment, education and political participation?
- Approach to counselling?
- Seeking feedback?
- Making a complaint?
- Dealing with issues such as sexual abuse, harassment, promotion of health practices, e.g., HIV/AIDS?

WHO HAS POWER, STATUS, AND AUTHORITY IN THE COMMUNITY?

How does this impact on teams in the workplace?

- How are decisions made, by whom and in what circumstances – authoritarian, consensus, joint, collaborative; individuals, men, women, groups, elders, superiors; societal class; work, formal, informal, family ?
- Are there special ways of conducting meetings, greetings, doing business, negotiation, making agreements – changing agreements, admitting mistakes, “saving face”, making apologies?
- How are disputes resolved?
- Who do you need to approach and how when negotiating something, seeking a decision?

RESPECT -

How does one demonstrate respect?

- What helps you gain respect and lose respect?
- Are there dress codes?
- When visiting someone are there special ways of entering the house? Having a meal? Bringing gifts? Eating and drinking?

EDUCATION AND WORK PRACTICES -

What are the implications for recruitment, initiative, supervision, capacity building, making decisions, giving responsibility?

- What is the level of education in the local community (for men, women, boys, girls)?
- What attitudes exist regarding time?
- What is the understanding of punctuality?
- How is feedback given in the workplace (public, private, direct, indirect)?
- What is the attitude to supervision?
- Are employees supposed to use their own initiative?

COMMUNICATION

- What subjects do you NOT talk about in public?
- How are greetings and introductions handled? – use of names, physical greetings, eye contact (male-male, female-male, male-female) ?
- Are there physical gestures and body language with special meaning (expressing approval, disapproval, getting someone’s attention)?
- Saying “no” – how do you say no? How is it interpreted?
- How do you communicate “possibly”, “we are looking at it”, planning for it” without promising or building up expectations that cannot be met?

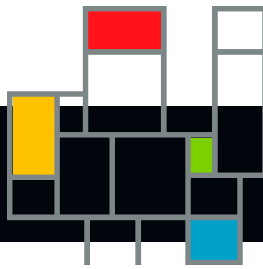
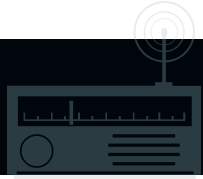
DIVERSITY QUIZ

Before doing the quiz – review the CD-ROM “Diversity Training” for more information on living and working in a multicultural environment.

Check your knowledge about working in a diverse environment by answering True, False or Don’t know to the statements below. The answers are on page 77 in Part 4.

True False Don't Know

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| ___ ___ ___ | 1. Notions of respect are culturally determined. |
| ___ ___ ___ | 2. Misunderstanding the intent of the speaker and the impact on the receiver is one of the most common causes of cross-cultural clashes |
| ___ ___ ___ | 3. Cultural differences mean that our minds do not process information in the same way. |
| ___ ___ ___ | 4. Indirect cultures consider a person or group weak if they use a 3rd party to give negative feedback. |
| ___ ___ ___ | 5. 70% of communication is done through tone, gestures, body position and eye contact. |
| ___ ___ ___ | 6. It is always correct to use the right hand when offering or accepting a gift. |
| ___ ___ ___ | 7. “Stand on your toe” is an expression used in Botswana to mean the same as the English expression “once in a blue moon”. |
| ___ ___ ___ | 8. Xenophobia refers to fear or contempt for that which is foreign, especially strangers. |
| ___ ___ ___ | 9. The Charter of the United Nations is the first legal document in international law specifically outlawing sex as a basis for discrimination. |
| ___ ___ ___ | 10. Race determines how we make, do and celebrate things. |



USING A TWO-WAY RADIO

If your assignment requires you to learn how to use a two-way radio, it is suggested that you obtain a thorough briefing on its operation and maintenance. It is also a useful skill for anyone going on mission.

PHONETIC ALPHABET

When spelling out words or using letters in messages while transmitting or receiving with a radio unit, always use the phonetic alphabet.

When transmitting information, always spell out unusual names.

Numbers should also be transmitted individually and then as a whole number. For example, vehicle license number **U N S 1 2** is transmitted:

U, N, S, 1, 2, (pause), UNIFORM, NOVEMBER, SIERRA, ONE, TWO.

All base stations identify themselves with their unique phonetic alpha-
bet name followed by **CONTROL**:

Tango Control, Charlie Control, Foxtrot Control and Sierra Control.

When using the phonetic alphabet say the letter first followed by its identifier, as follows: **'A' - ALPHA, 'B' - BRAVO** etc.

PHONETIC ALPHABET CHART

A — ALPHA	H — HOTEL	O — OSCAR	V — VICTOR
B — BRAVO	I — INDIA	P — PAPA	W — WHISKY
C — CHARLIE	J — JULIET	Q — QUEBEC	X — X-RAY
D — DELTA	K — KILO	R — ROMEO	Y — YANKEE
E — ECHO	L — LIMA	S — SIERRA	Z — ZULU
F — FOXTROT	M — MIKE	T — TANGO	
G — GOLF	N — NOVEMBER	U — UNIFORM	



Above: UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti, MINUSTAH. WFP delivers emergency aid to the town of Fond Verrettes to assist the victims of the floods in Southeastern Haiti. This was the first aid transport by road since the floods and transported 34 metric tons of supplies in 11 trucks. Below: On 21 May 2004, the Security Council, acting under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter, authorized the deployment of the United Nations Operation in Burundi (ONUB) for an initial period of six months.



Top: Evert Schneider. Bottom: Eskinder Debebe

3

PART THREE

moving on

Bir Lahlou, Western Sahara, 22 June 2003. Sigpos (left) and Bir Lahlou - Fort Bently. Photo: Evan Schmelder



PART THREE

moving on

leaving the mission

As with pre-deployment, it is also important to plan for your departure from a mission and adjust to returning to your previous home base or to moving to a new duty station. “Moving On” will usually entail a transition process for both yourself and your family. Being aware of the factors involved and taking steps to address them will assist you and your family through this process.

To support you in understanding and managing the personal changes which you have gone through and in preparing for other changes you may encounter in your move, it is strongly recommended that you arrange a debriefing session with a Staff Counsellor. This should take place either before you leave the current mission or duty station or immediately after your arrival at your new assignment, whether this is a new office or a return to your original home.

post-deployment — coming home

As a result of your assignment to a non-family mission, changes will probably have occurred in the relationship you have with your partner, children, relatives and friends. It is important to be aware of the possible changes, understand what is happening and work this through with those involved.

REACTIONS TO YOUR RETURN — WHAT YOU MIGHT EXPECT

Knowing and understanding what sorts of reactions to expect from yourself, your partner and your family on your return will help make your reunion and reintegration a less stressful, far more enjoyable experience.

IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU:

- **i.** Understand what personal change you have gone through e.g., critical incidents, change or reinforcement of values, expectations, dreams, desires, attitudes, professional skills, life experiences, behaviours, that may affect you (physically, emotionally, spiritually, or psychologically), your relationships and attitudes to your new work / living environment.
- **ii.** Prepare for changes in family and friends e.g., as a result of personal relationships, re-location / move, deaths / births, impacts of changes or (non) change in lifestyle, having things in common, expectations, attitudes towards you/them, impact of separation, anticipation of going or not “home”, changes in opportunities or need for independence.
- **iii.** Prepare for changes in the work environment e.g., responsibility, ability to make decisions, autonomy, challenges, routines, predictability, flexibility in job, work hours, use of skills and assets, travel, leave and time off, interest of others in your previous work, loss of new work colleagues and friends.
- **iv.** Be proactive in demonstrating the value of new skills, knowledge and experience in application to the new work situation e.g., accepting new responsibilities, applying lessons learnt, sharing experiences and knowledge with new colleagues.
- **v.** Receive a final medical (to identify any health / medical issues to be addressed prior to departure to home, old or new duty station). Ensure that your medical is up to date if travelling to another duty station.
- **vi.** Complete all check-out procedures, assignment hand-overs and settlement of personal obligations.

YOU AND YOUR PARTNER: COMMON REACTIONS

- Difficulty re-establishing emotional and sexual intimacy.
- Feelings of excitement, disorganization, resentment, frustration.
- Grieving over loss of freedom and independence.

What can you do?

- Communicate openly and honestly — accept your feelings as normal and not a threat to the relationship.
- Try and be patient with yourself and your partner.
- Renegotiate your roles and responsibilities — the workload can again be shared, but perhaps in a new way.
- Celebrate together the personal growth each has achieved during the separation.
- Continue to participate in a support group/network.
- Seek professional counselling (clergy, social worker, doctor, psychologist) for continuing signs of critical incident stress or other concerns.

HOMECOMER'S REACTIONS

- You may want to talk about what you saw and did. Others may seem not to want to listen.
- You may not want to talk about it when others keep asking.
- You may miss the excitement of the deployment for a while.
- You may experience a range of emotional reactions such as excitement, disorganization, resentment and frustration.
- Some things may have changed while you were away; roles may have changed in managing basic household chores.
- Face-to-face communication may be hard at first.
- Re-establishing emotional and sexual intimacy may be difficult.
- Children may have grown and may be different in many ways.
- Partners may have become more independent and learned new coping skills.
- Partners may have new friends and support systems.
- You may have changed in your outlook and priorities in life.

THE HOMECOMER FROM THE PARTNER'S PERSPECTIVE

You may find the homcomer:

- Changed both physically and emotionally.
- Feels closed in, having been used to the open spaces of the mission location.
- Appears overwhelmed by the noise and confusion of home life.
- Is on a different schedule of sleeping and eating (including jet lag).
- Wonders if he/she still fits into the family.
- Wants to take back all the responsibilities he/she had before leaving.
- Feels hurt when young children are slow to hug him/her.

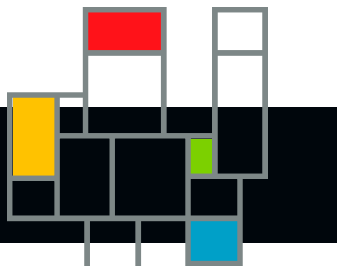
REACTIONS OF CHILDREN TO THE HOMECOMER

- Babies less than a year old may not know you and may cry when held.
- Toddlers (1-3 yrs.) may hide from you and be slow to come to you.
- Pre-schoolers (3-5 yrs.) may feel guilty over the separation and be afraid of your reactions.
- School-age (6-12 yrs.) may want a lot of your time and attention.
- Teenagers (13-18 yrs.) may be moody and appear not to care.
- Any age may feel guilty about not living up to your standards.
- Some may fear your return (“Wait until Mummy/Daddy gets home!”).
- Some may feel torn by loyalties to the partner who remained.

Photo: A. Brizzi



"Mother and Child" is a gift of Italy to the United Nations, presented in 1989. The statue is the work of Italian sculptor Giacomo Manzù, and is located in the North garden of United Nations Headquarters.



renegotiation, reintegration, reunion

COMMON REACTIONS OF SUCCESSFUL REINTEGRATION

Feelings of intimacy, closeness, confidence in relationship(s).

A successful reunion means your successful reintegration and renegotiation of the relationship, but how can you achieve this? Begin by relaxing as much as you can and enjoying your family. Try applying the following suggestions.

HOMECOMERS...

- Communicate as openly and honestly as possible.
- Support the good things your family has done.
- Take time to talk with and listen to your partner and children.
- Make individual time for each child and your partner.
- Go slowly when re-establishing your place in the family.
- Be prepared to make adjustments.
- Renegotiate your roles and responsibilities if necessary — the workload can again be shared but perhaps in a new way.
- Remember that romantic conversation can lead to more enjoyable sex.
- Take time to listen and to talk with loved ones in the extended family.
- Go easy on partying.
- Continue to participate in a support group/network.
- Seek professional counselling (clergy, social worker, doctor, psychologist) for continuing signs of critical incident stress or other concerns.

PARTNERS...

- Avoid scheduling too many things.
- Go slowly in making adjustments.
- You and your partner may need time for yourselves.
- Remind your partner that he/she is still needed in the family.
- Discuss sharing of family chores.
- Stick to your budget until you have had time to talk it through along with time for your family.
- Make individual time to talk.
- Be patient with yourself and your partner.

REUNION WITH THE CHILDREN

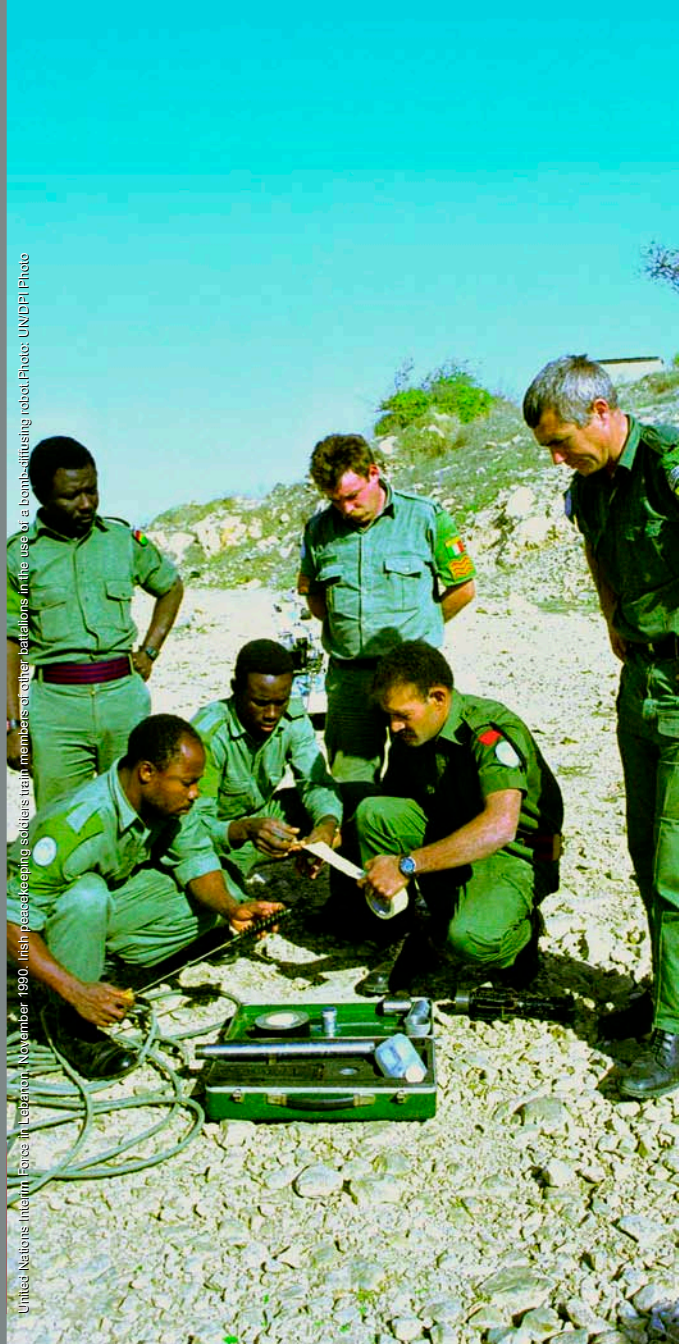
- Go slowly; adapt to the rules and routines already in place.
- Learn from the way your / partner manages the children.
- Be available to your child with both time and your emotions.
- Let the child set the pace for getting to know you again.
- Delay making changes in rules and routines for a few weeks.
- Expect the family to have changed while you were away.
- Focus on successes with your children — limit your criticisms.
- Encourage children to tell you about what happened while you were away.
- Make individual time for each child and your partner.

REMEMBER: The challenges of separation and reunion provide new opportunities for your relationships — a time to evaluate the changes that have taken place within and between you and your partner, to redefine roles and responsibilities, and to synthesize all the changes into a renewed and rejuvenated relationship.

additional

INFORMATION & WORKSHEETS

United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, November 1990. Irish peacekeeping soldiers train members of other battalions in the use of a bomb disposal robot. Photo: UNDP/Photo



PART FOUR

Additional Information

glossary

The following is an explanatory list of the less familiar phrases which appear in the text.

Critical incident (CI)

An event outside the range of normal human experience which causes distress to almost everyone. Such events are usually sudden and life threatening and often involve physical or emotional loss.

Critical incident stress (CIS)

A term for the unusually strong physical and emotional reactions experienced in the face of a CI.

Critical incident stress debriefing (CISD)

Conducted by specially trained staff, this is designed to lessen the impact of a CI. Ideally taking place 48 to 72 hours after the event, a CISD is an organized group meeting which allows and encourages those involved to discuss their thoughts and reactions in a safe, non-threatening environment.

Critical incident stress defusing

A meeting directly after a CI which allows those involved to describe what happened, talk about their reactions and get information about normal stress reactions and support services available.

Chronic (cumulative) stress

Stress which builds up, often unrecognized, over a period of time. Some issues may be big and long lasting while others may be small or just part of the problems involved in everyday life.

Deployment

An assignment away from the normal place of duty and/or headquarters, often unaccompanied by partner or family.

Distress

Stress when it occurs too often, lasts too long and is too severe may lead to distress.

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)

A medical diagnosis which can include chronic symptoms of critical incident stress that interfere with work and social life long after the critical incident.

Responsible Adult (RA)

A close friend or family member designated to handle your personal documents or transactions while you are away on a mission assignment. For the sake of simplicity we have used the phrase “responsible adult” to describe this person.

Partner

Used in this booklet to refer to a husband, wife, or companion.

Stress

Defined as any demand or change which the human system (mind, body, spirit) is required to meet or respond to.

worksheets

In the Introduction to this booklet reference is made to various worksheets. Below are a variety of worksheets, including basic information and information about wills and powers of attorney, intended to help you and your partner sort through the necessary details.

BASIC INFORMATION

1. Self

Full name: _____
Address: _____
Nationality: _____
Social Security number: _____
Date of birth: _____
Residence tel.: _____
Position/occupation: _____
Employer: _____
Address: _____
Business tel.: _____
Fax: _____ E-mail: _____
Location of important documents: _____

2. Partner

Full name: _____
Address: _____
Nationality: _____
Social Security number: _____
Date of birth: _____
Residence tel.: _____
Position/occupation: _____
Employer: _____
Address: _____
Business tel.: _____
Fax: _____ E-mail: _____
Location of important documents: _____

3. Children

Full Name: _____
Address: _____
Nationality: _____
Social Security number: _____
Date of birth: _____
Location of important documents: _____

Full Name: _____
Address: _____
Nationality: _____
Social Security number: _____
Date of birth: _____
Location of important documents: _____

Full Name: _____
Address: _____
Nationality: _____
Social Security number: _____
Date of birth: _____
Location of important documents: _____

Full Name: _____
Address: _____
Nationality: _____
Social Security number: _____
Date of birth: _____
Location of important documents: _____

Full Name: _____
Address: _____
Nationality: _____
Social Security number: _____
Date of birth: _____
Location of important documents: _____

wills & powers of attorney

STANDARD WILL

Name: _____

Address: _____

Social Security number: _____

Date of birth: _____

Nationality: _____

Name of Executor: _____

Full address: _____

Tel.: _____ Fax: _____ E-mail: _____

Co-Executor: _____

Full address: _____

Tel.: _____ Fax: _____ E-mail: _____

Alternate Executor: _____

Full address: _____

Tel.: _____ Fax: _____ E-mail: _____

Location of original will: _____

Location of copies: _____

LIVING WILL

Agent: _____

Full address: _____

Tel.: _____ Fax: _____ E-mail: _____

Location of document: _____

POWERS OF ATTORNEY

Health-care Power of Attorney

Agent: _____

Full address: _____

Tel.: _____ Fax: _____ E-mail: _____

Location of document: _____

Special Power of Attorney

Agent: _____

Full address: _____

Tel.: _____ Fax: _____ E-mail: _____

Location of document: _____

General Power of Attorney

Agent: _____

Full address: _____

Tel.: _____ Fax: _____ E-mail: _____

Location of document: _____

staff and stress counsellors – phone numbers

FOCAL POINTS

New York:	Staff Counsellor, UNHQ	+1-212-963-2530 +1-212-963-7044 +1-917-488-5142
	Stress Counsellor, UNSECOORD	+1-917-367-4065 +1-917-367-4089 +1-917-367-3039 +1-917-367-4064

internet links

UNITED NATIONS - GENERAL

United Nations

<http://www.un.org>

Human Resources Handbook

http://intranet.un.org/hr_handbook/sourcedocuments

Staff Counsellor UN HQ NY

<http://iseek.un.org> (find under “more” in menu)

Security Council Resolutions & SG Reports

<http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/>

Office of the UN Security Co-ordinator (UNSECOORD)

<http://extranet.unsystem.org/unseCOORD/>

HIV/AIDS

<http://unworkplace.unaids.org>

Employment

<http://jobs.un.org>

UN DEPARTMENT OF PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS

DPKO Peacekeeping Missions

<http://www.un.org/peace>

Peacekeeping Best Practices Unit

<http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/lessons/>

Handbook on United Nations Multidimensional Peacekeeping Operations

<http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/lessons/>

DPKO Gender Resource Package

<http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/lessons/>

OTHER USEFUL LINKS

Relief Web

<http://www.reliefweb.int/>



Photo: UNDP/Photo

A volunteer in El Salvador poses with local children.

answers to quizzes and scenarios

ANSWERS TO FIELD SCENARIOS: PAGE 10

1. If the accusation is true the staff member has committed a serious breach of conduct and demonstrated lack of integrity. While Edith is correct that there doesn't appear to be proof and that unsupported accusations are not acceptable, nevertheless the staff member was right to report the possible breach to his supervisor. He should be congratulated for having reported the breach and warned not to discuss this further, particularly since there isn't any proof. Given the seriousness of the possible breach, Edith should report this to her manager (Chief of Section or Chief of Administration) and request an investigation. It is the responsibility of the Head of Mission to initiate an investigation.
2. As a UN employee you are required to respect diversity. In addition, part of the UN mandate is to conduct fair and objective global competition. Basing an employment decision on previous information related to a different person who comes from a specific culture or geographic region demonstrates bias. It contravenes all of the core values. Ensure that your competitive process has ways of verifying candidates' or companies' abilities. A good competitive process which includes elements like objective testing, demonstration of previous work, competency-based interviewing and in-depth reference checks should help supervisors and managers ensure that potential staff or suppliers have the knowledge, experience and skills necessary to do the required work successfully.

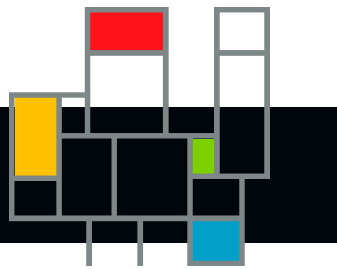
ANSWERS TO THE "HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT STRESS?" QUIZ: PAGE 38

1. **True.** Stress can be very useful because it generates physical and chemical reactions in the body which prepare us to meet any challenging situation. Stress can serve as a survival mechanism enabling us to mobilize maximum physical energy and focus complete concentration on a perceived threat or emergency.
2. **True.** This is an example of what is called cumulative stress. This can lead to physical and mental dysfunction if left unresolved for a long period. There is more information about this in the section on cumulative stress.
3. **True.** A psychosocial stressor is a combination of an individual's thought processes and the social situation imposed upon him/her.
4. **True.**
5. **True.** Medical studies have shown that pet owners perceive their pets as supports. Pets can help reduce stress-aggravated conditions such as heart disease and high blood pressure.

6. **False.** One may feel relaxed after a drink but the stress inducing event remains. Alcohol is a depressant, impacts on all bodily systems, and can create physical and psychological dependency.
7. **False.** Critical Incident defusing should be done as soon after the incident as possible but within the first 8 to 12 hours. After 12 hours the defusing is no longer relevant and a Critical Incident Debriefing session should be held. See "Critical Incident Stress" in Section 2, "Being There", page 44.
8. **False.** According to stress research the most stressful experience is having no control over a situation.
9. **True.**
10. **False.** Pretending everything is normal, ignoring the event, or not talking about it is an avoidance tactic and can result in physical and/or emotional difficulties in the future.
11. **True.**

ANSWERS TO DIVERSITY QUIZ: PAGE 55

1. **True.** Race and culture are two of the concepts we use in understanding and establishing our personal identities and belief and value systems.
2. **True.** Confusion and misunderstanding of intent and impact is the major cause of communication breakdown.
3. **True.** Our minds are influenced by our personal and group history. While this helps us make sense of things, it can also keep us from understanding and working with each other. For example in the Philippines, patting someone on the head denotes friendliness; in other cultures it shows lack of respect and may even be viewed as an aggressive action.
4. **False.** In indirect cultures avoiding direct confrontation is essential so using a 3rd party to express disagreement or criticism is not only correct, it is demonstrating respect. Direct confrontation results in loss of face for both parties and could produce resentment and dislike in the party criticized.
5. **True.** 70% of communication is through body language.
6. **False.** In some African and Asian cultures it is insulting to offer or accept a gift with one hand. Gifts must be offered and accepted using both hands.
7. **False.** In Botswana, if you say "*stand on your toe*", you're asking the person to wish you luck. It is similar to the English expression "*cross your fingers*".
8. **True.** Xenophobia can lead to prejudice and may underlie notions of racial supremacy.
9. **True.**
10. **False.** Culture determines what we make and celebrate and why. For example, in West Africa handwoven luxury fabrics have always been created for special occasions like religious ceremonies, weddings and for chiefs and kings. The countries have special names for their luxury fabrics, *kente* in Ghana; *bogolan* in Benin; *teratera* in Niger; *ndop* in Cameroon.



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United Nations Mission In Eritrea and Ethiopia, February 2001. A convoy of UNMEE vehicles in the ASSAB area in Eritrea.



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