



HIU Highlights Report No.3: April 24 – June 15, 2004

On June 8th, the HIU Executive Steering Committee approved a revised mission statement for the unit (new language italicized): The Humanitarian Information Unit (HIU) serves as a USG interagency *center* to identify, collect, analyze, and disseminate unclassified information critical to USG decision-makers *and partners* in preparation

for and response to humanitarian emergencies worldwide, *and to promote best practices for humanitarian information management*

This report describes select initiatives underway, recent collaborations, key meetings, and upcoming items of interest. Your feedback is appreciated!

A. Status of Select Initiatives:

Efforts Relating to Sudan:

Briefing to Administrator Natsios: On Tuesday, May 25, a team from the HIU and NGA briefed the USAID Administrator, DCHA senior leadership, and members of the Response Management Team on commercial imagery and informational products related to the crisis in Darfur, Sudan. This briefing was organized by the HIU and the briefing team included Alan Davis, David Springer, and Noam Unger from the HIU and Dan Miller and Jim Goslee as NGA representatives. The Administrator requested 30 poster-size copies of an HIU map for use at the Darfur donors' conference at the UN in Geneva on June 3. The map, dated May 27, incorporated commercial imagery and highlighted over 220 damaged and destroyed villages and was provided to the Government of Sudan, the UN, and a number of donor country representatives attending the conference. The HIU provided this map to the State Department's Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor Bureau (DRL) for inclusion in their Darfur Burning pamphlet that DRL A/S Craner is hoping to take with him to Khartoum. The HIU also updated the map on June 14 to include information on over 370 destroyed and damaged villages.

Information sharing: The HIU continues to promote the sharing of USG data on Sudan and will continue to produce and disseminate updated visual analytical briefing products on Darfur. These products are distributed to relevant partner bureaus and agencies throughout the USG, including teams in the field, as well as to the UN, InterAction, and NGOs working in the region. USAID Assistant Administrator Winter used an HIU map and data concerning destroyed and damaged villages in testimony to the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on Africa on June 15. (POC: Noam Unger)

Populations at Risk Information Project:

The HIU hosted a Workshop on Systematic Population Estimation on May 13-14 with the US Census Bureau and the National Academy of Sciences. The 60 participants in this event included geographers, demographers, analysts and other advisors from the USG, academia, and the private sector, as well as international experts from various UN agencies. The workshop, sponsored by the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research, brought producers and users of population data from varied backgrounds together to discuss approaches to population estimation in data-poor and crisis-prone regions of the world.

The workshop resulted in recognition of the need for a more systematic USG approach to sub-national population estimation and the creation of the interagency Populations at Risk Information Working Group. The membership of this working group is illustrative of the many stakeholders interested in improving sub-national demographic information in countries of concern. The group includes representatives from: State/INR, State/PRM, State/OES, USAID/DCHA, USAID/GH, USGS, NASA, NGA, CIA, DIA, Census Bureau, NOAA, and NAS. One of the goals of the working group is to produce prototype country packages of information on populations at risk. The primary focus countries at this early stage are Mozambique and Haiti. (POC: Noam Unger)

HIU Iraq Reconstruction WebGIS:

HIU staff has recently identified solutions to improve functionality of the Iraq Reconstruction WebGIS, which is under development. Improvement efforts are supported by NGA and its contractor, ESRI. These efforts are scheduled to be completed in early August. ESRI will demonstrate improvements made to the website on July 12. In order to build website content and identify user needs, HIU staff has met with various agencies to determine how the HIU can support their efforts with the GIS-based website. The HIU is also assisting with communication between agencies as the changeover in Iraq approaches; HIU's focus is on helping agencies understand the best technical capabilities in Iraq and the needs for technical efforts in the future. (POC: Tiffany Hill)

HIU 20 Countries of Humanitarian Interest and Concern (CHIC):

The HIU created a collaboration eRoom for this activity that includes a common calendar, a discussion forum, a reference library, a collection of country folders, and lists of focus countries from USAID/DCHA, USAID/DCHA/CMM, USAID/DCHA/FFP, Millennium Challenge Account, Presidents Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), Complex Emergency Database project, and International Crisis and Group's (ICG) Crisis Watch. Individuals from State, USAID, the UN, academics and an NGO are participants in this eRoom. (POC: Dennis King)

B. Collaboration Efforts:

Groove software approved by the State Department:

On May 5, the State Department's Information Technology Change Control Board (ITCCB) approved HIU's submission request for installation and use of Groove software on OpenNet for

information sharing and collaboration related to Iraq. HIU and State Department's Iraq Transition Team are using Groove to share information and collaborate with the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) in preparation for transition to the US Embassy.

Collaboration with the Office of the Global AIDS Coordinator (S/GAC):

The HIU continues to assist the Office of the Global AIDS Coordinator with information management. Current progress includes the production of 14 map posters for each of the Focus Countries for the June Ambassador's Conference in Johannesburg. The HIU is also participating in the technical working group to develop the President's Emergency Plan Database. (POC: Kathleen Miner)



The poster at left was created for the Office of the Global AIDS Coordinator to bring attention to the President' Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief.

C. Selected Meetings and Presentations

HIU Executive Steering Committee Meeting

The HIU held its Executive Steering Committee meeting on June 8. Committee members were updated on the work of the unit and they discussed its future direction. The Committee approved new wording for the HIU mission statement, and it also approved the addition of John Kelmelis, of USGS, to the Committee. Dr. Kelmelis is currently Senior Counselor for Earth Science at the Department of State.

Participation in JFCOM/Interagency Pre-Conflict Management Tool Exercise

On 28 April, the DoD Liaison officer to the HIU participated in the US Joint Forces Command (USJFCOM) Pre-Conflict Management Tool (PCMT) Workshop. The interagency activity involved predictive analysis applied to a hypothetical Uzbekistan Conflict Prevention Exercise.

Monthly Civil Affairs Roundtable at the Pentagon

The DoD Liaison Officer to the HIU attended the monthly Civil Affairs Roundtable at the Pentagon on May 11. One of the key topics of discussion was the way ahead for Civil Affairs Information Management Transformation and how best to implement the recommendations of the CA Information Management Working Group. The attendees, from various offices within the Pentagon, the Institute for Defense Analysis and the US Army Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute, decided that a new DoD policy needed to be drafted that would emphasize

the importance of incorporating the latest information management concepts and doctrine into CA and Civil-Military Operations, particularly in support of complex humanitarian emergencies. The attendees also agreed that the results of the CA Information Management Workshop sponsored by ASD/SOLIC and hosted by the HIU need to be briefed at the upcoming Worldwide Civil Affairs conference, scheduled to be held in Raleigh, NC 18 – 19 June.

Other Selected HIU Meetings:		
ENTITY/OFFICER	DATE	TOPICS
Sally Hacker and Keith Rautio from US Transportation Command's (USTRANSCOM) Information Operations Directorate	Apr 26	Discussed mutual benefit from closer cooperation and sharing of information management products and data bases
Graham White, consultant for the EU	May 5	Humanitarian aid worker security
Michael Miller, DAA USAID/GH meeting with Alan Davis and Kathleen Miner	May 7	Briefing on the HIU
USAID/FFP and USAID FEWS	May 17	Discussed potential global humanitarian food need map
Alan Davis and Doug Nash attended the Steering Committee Meeting for Interagency Transformation, Education and After Action Review (ITEA)	May 19	Discussed ways to increase interagency sharing of data and information, as well as the importance of collaborative tools within the interagency environment to promote a better common operational picture
John Kautz and team from DIA	May 20	Briefing on the HIU
Steve Epstein, USAID/DCHA/OTI	May 21	Discussed potential for Darfur atrocity mapping
JFCOM SOSA team	May 27	HIU briefing and discussion of Effects Based Operations, Operational Net Assessment, and System of Systems Analysis
Alan Davis meeting with PRM PDAS Richard Greene	May 27	Courtesy call
A/S Craner (DRL), PRM P/DAS Greene, and representatives from DRL, AF, and PRM	May 27	HIU and NGA briefing on Darfur, Sudan
Alan Davis meeting with Ronald Birk, Director, Earth Science Applications Division, NASA	June 1	Courtesy call
USAID/DCHA representatives	June 1	Discussed 20 CHIC project and demonstrated use of eRoom collaboration tool.
CMM – InterAction Inaugural Quarterly Meeting on Conflict Early Warning	June 2	DRC, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea (w/ brief presentation by Dennis King on 20 CHIC project)
John Tsagronis, Senior Advisor to USAID Administrator	June 3	Briefing on the HIU
Populations at Risk Information Working Group	June 3	Discussed next steps to engage the science community and develop a country package prototype
Col. Arnyce Pock, U.S. Air Force Office of the Surgeon General	June 4	HIU briefing and discussion of the USAF International Health Specialist Program

D. Other Items of Interest:

New HIU staff:

Since the last HIU Highlights Report, the unit has welcomed the following people to its staff:

David Dodson, Economist (State/INR short-term detailee)

Walter Adcock, Foreign Affairs Officer (State/INR short-term detailee)

Scott Bostic, Intern (United States Military Academy)

The HIU also welcomes the hiring by INR of Humanitarian Affairs Analyst Dennis King into a full-time State Department Civil Service position with the unit.

E. Upcoming Items:

Pending HIU Website:

Currently, the HIU is investigating the best approach to allow the unit to have its own informational website where the team can post current products and news about HIU efforts. This website will eventually be the front page of the Iraq Reconstruction WebGIS interface, but should be finished before the end of the month.

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