

18/12/85?

CRDA

CRDA : ~~Proposed statement of members regarding statements made by MSF on re-settlement.~~

CRDA members' statement on re-settlement.

1. In recent weeks various CRDA members have been publicly and privately attacked by MSF for "supporting" the government's policy on re-settlement and for not publicising alleged abuses of this policy.
2. CRDA's position is that it does, through its members, (support the general policy of re-settlement, as this remains a defensible policy in the light of the chronic drought conditions of Northern Ethiopia.
3. However, CRDA members are aware that the re-settlement policy may be given a bad name both if it is implemented by compulsion, or if too many resources are diverted away from programmes of relief and rehabilitation in which CRDA members are collaborating with the RRC.
4. There is further the very real risk that the bad publicity stirred up by MSF will cause major aid donors to reduce both their immediate and long term aid commitments to Ethiopia in 1986.
5. Therefore CRDA members assert their long-term commitment to assisting the RRC in meeting the tremendous needs of Ethiopia in 1986, where members face difficulties in their programmes, they will continue to discuss these difficulties with the relevant officials both at a regional and national level, with a view to resolving them.
6. As regards the specific allegations of MSF that thousands of deaths have been "caused" by re-settlement, CRDA members would point out that it is impossible to prove or disprove this allegation, as many of the resettlers might have died of starvation or related diseases if they had stayed either in their own villages or in the relief camps.
7. CRDA members would like to make it clear that they do not intend to be diverted from their relief and development activities by the problems arising from the Ethiopian Government's resettlement programme. Given the continuing food deficit in Ethiopia, only a major effort by all its members combined with multilateral and bilateral aid programmes can prevent further starvation becoming evident by the middle of next year.

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CRDA feels that in spite of all the problems caused by resettlement,
it can achieve more by involvement rather than by boycotting it.
As humanitarian agencies our first concern must be to assist the
people of Ethiopia wherever they are.