



香港大學

THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

Gallant Ho  
Experiential  
Learning Centre

# Safety and Security for Experiential Learning Activities

## **GHELC Student Workshop**

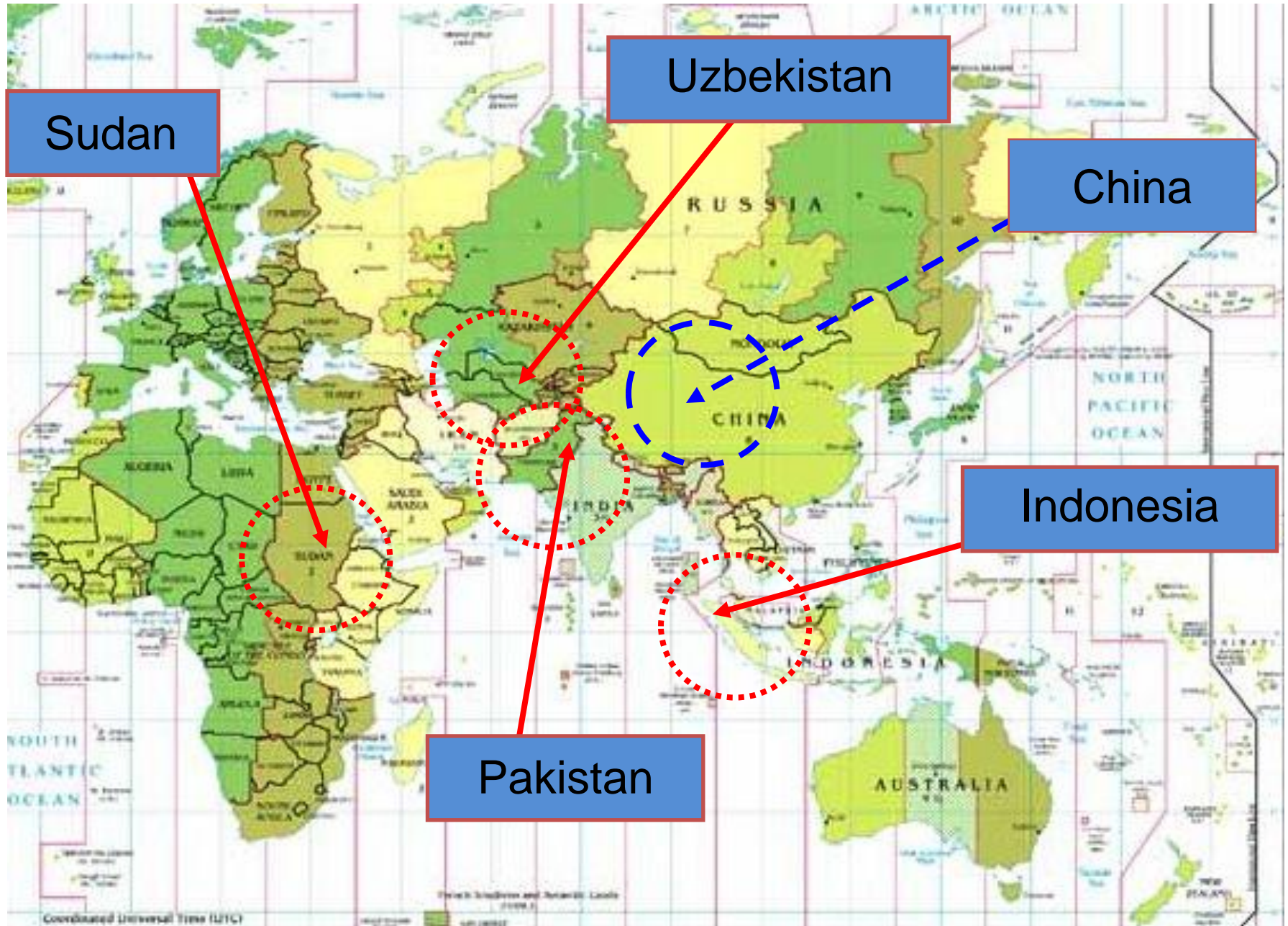
3<sup>rd</sup> March, 2014

Dr. Albert Ko

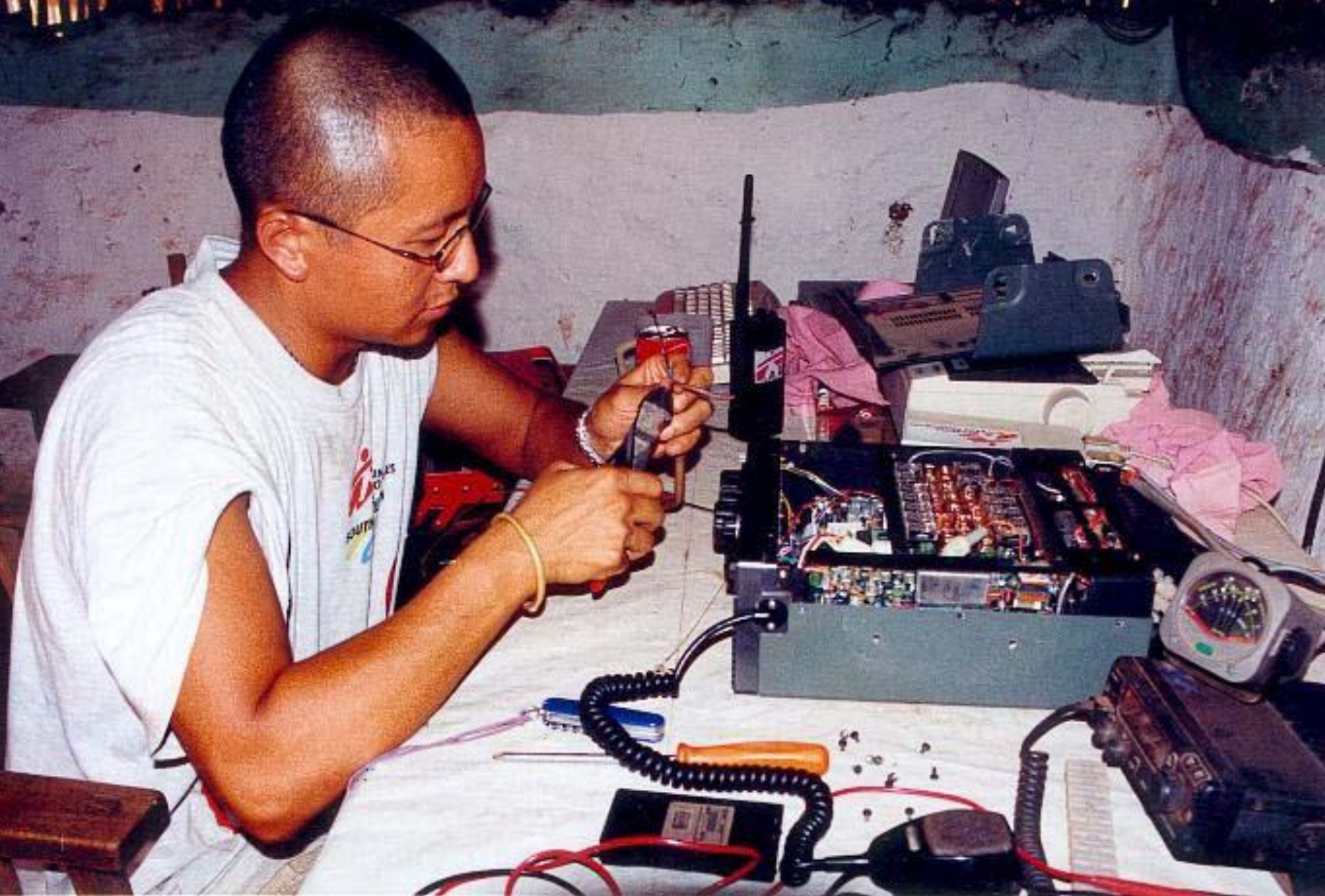
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Director

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# Qinghai-Tibet Highway

Xining -> Lhasa





## INPUT

- 2000 km of cycling
- 30 days on the Plateau alone
- Climbed over 5231 m



## OUTPUT

- Public donation of over \$200,000
- A 200 pages book in print



# Staying Safe

- Security Strategies
- Global Insecurity
- Runaway Backpacks
- Responsible Volunteer
- Security Tips





# Minimum Security

Personal conduct

Training and preparation

Security management

Regulations and contingency planning

Security phases

Critical incident management

Field movement control

Finance



# Security Strategies

## Acceptance

- Reduces or removes the threat by gaining acceptance for your presence and work

## Protection

- Aims to reduce vulnerability using protective procedures and equipment to “harden the target”

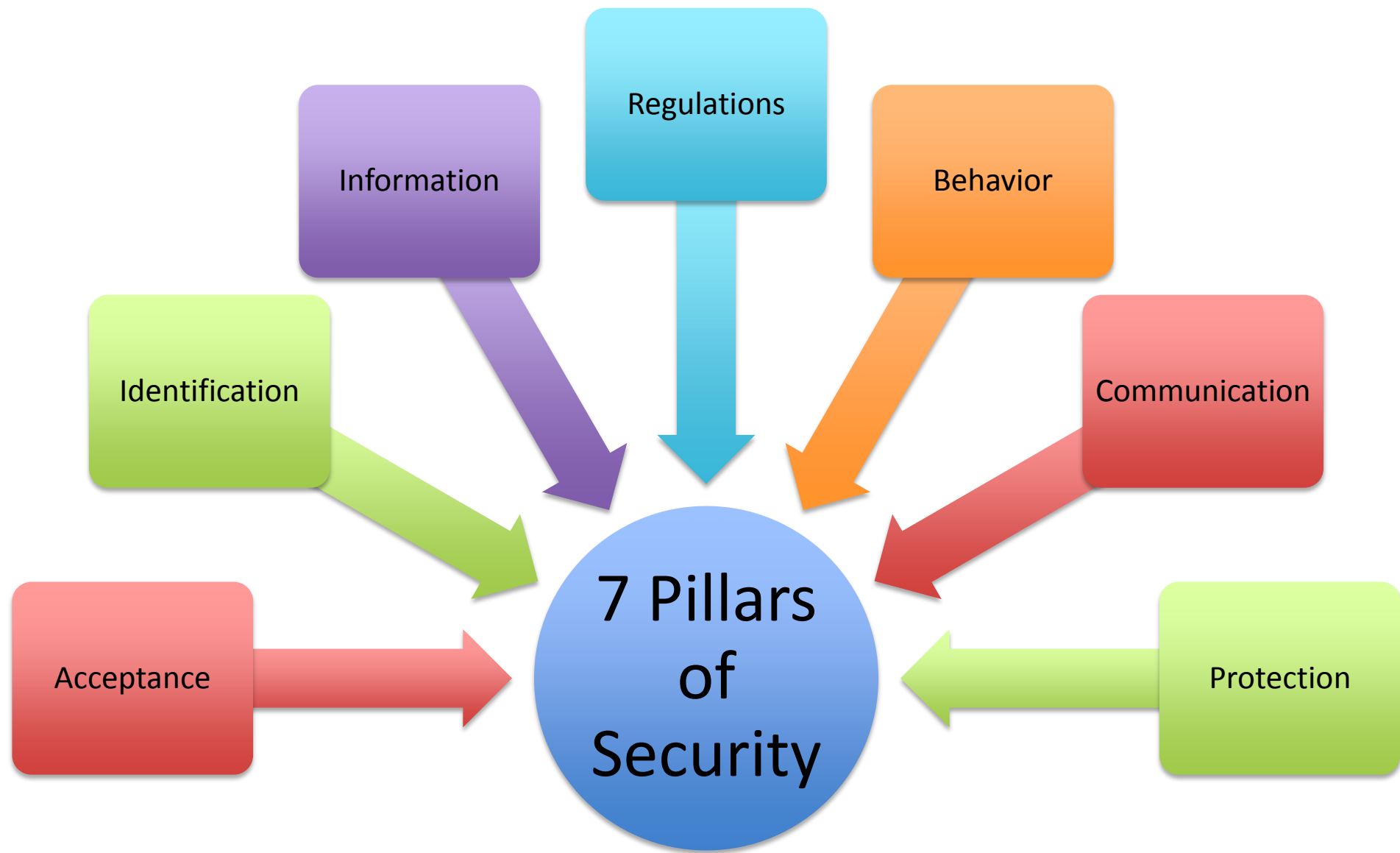
## Deterrence

- Counters threats with legal, political or economic sanctions and/or armed actions that have severe impact on those presenting the threat



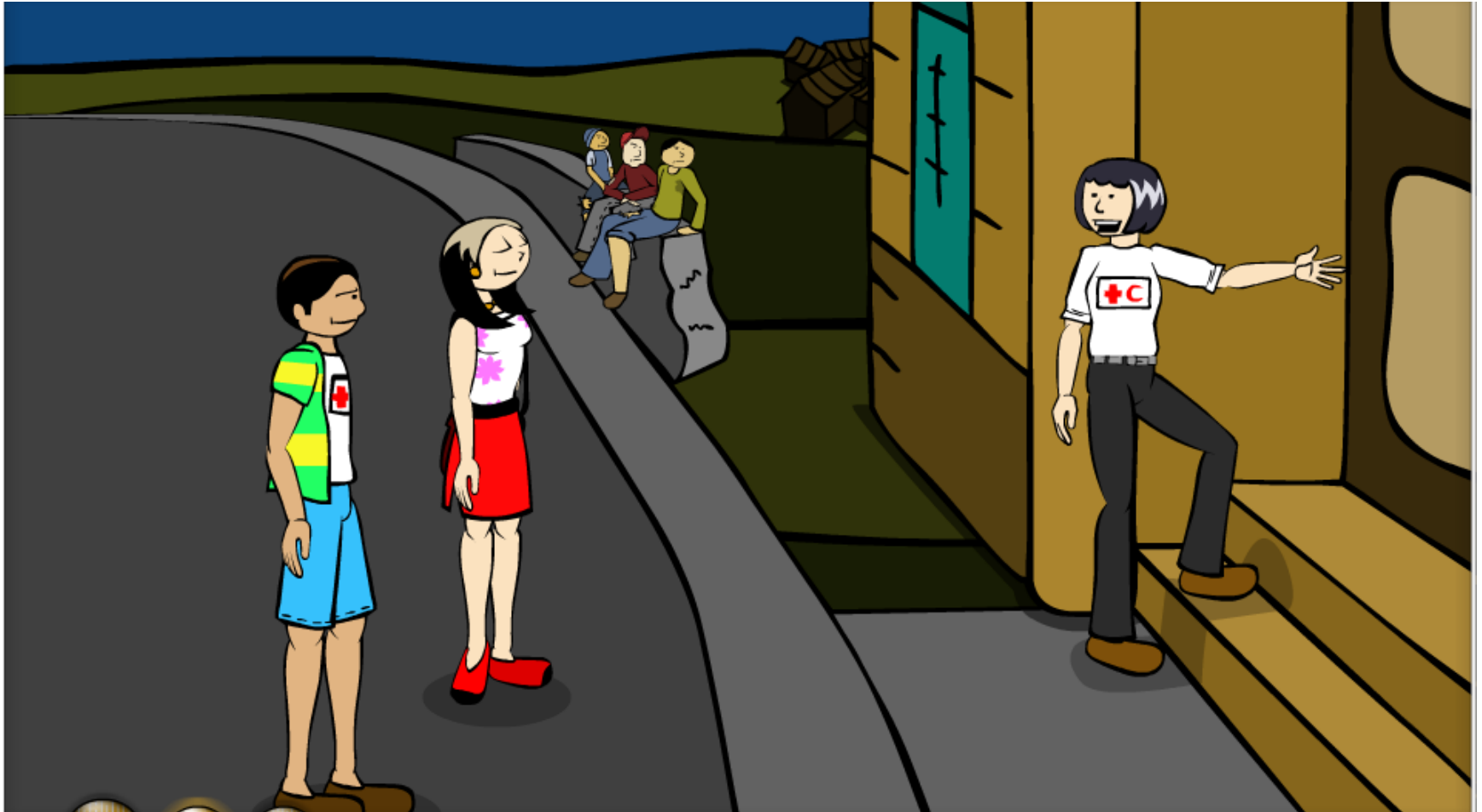
# Acceptance





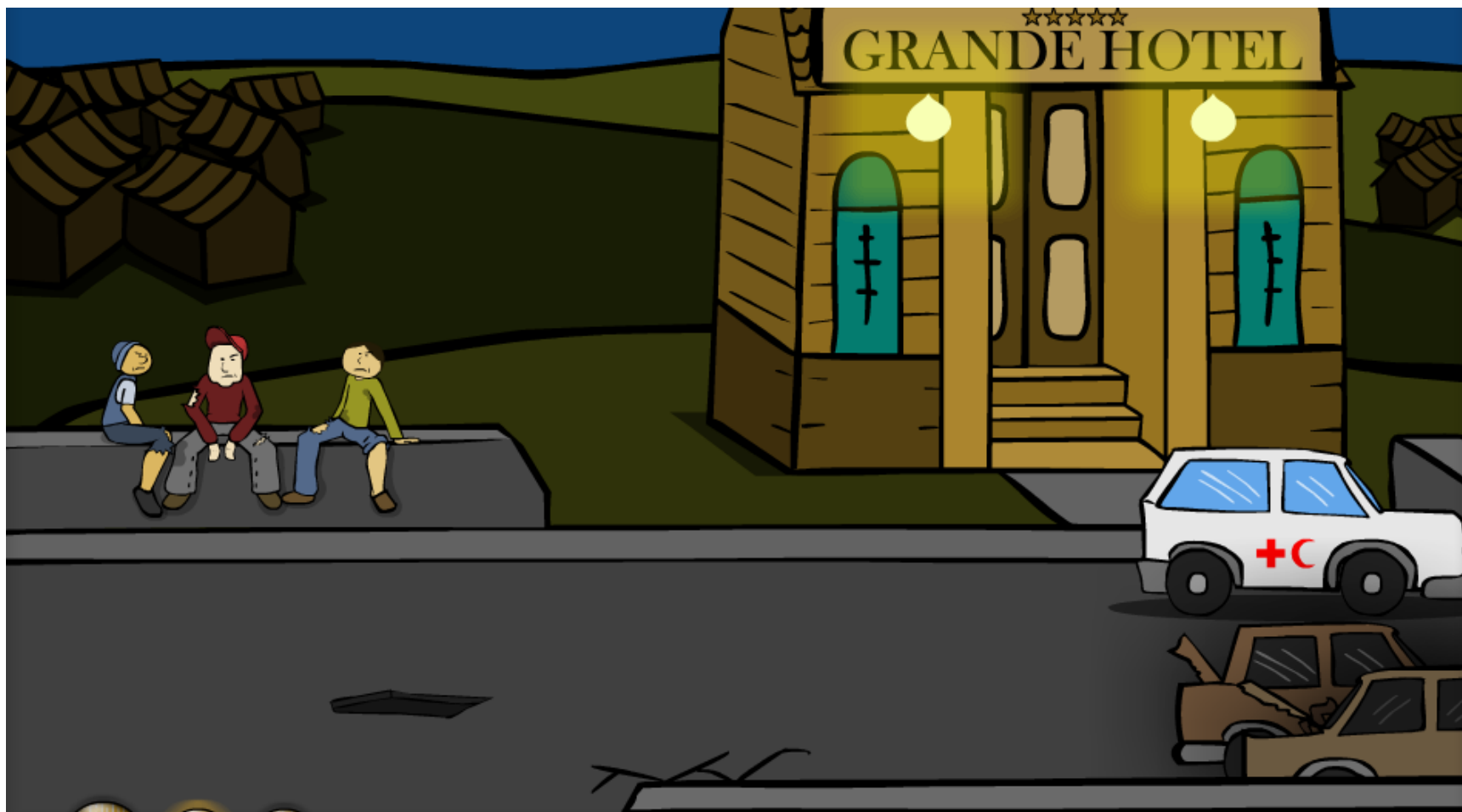


























# What contributes to insecurity globally?



Competition and no code of conduct



Less respect for international humanitarian law



Nature of armed conflict



Aim of humanitarian aid



Beneficiaries' part of the conflict



Disintegration of state structures



Natural disasters



Poverty leads to increased criminality

# Competition and No Code of Conduct

The number of humanitarian organizations has increased significantly over recent years. Many of these organizations operate with good intentions but without adherence to a code of conduct. All want to be seen assisting beneficiaries and often make promises they cannot deliver. This impacts on other organizations working in the same operational area.



## Less Respect for the Emblem and International Humanitarian Law (IHL)

Previously, the Red Cross and Red Crescent emblems were well recognized and respected. These emblems provided a degree of protection to personnel. International humanitarian law (IHL) also provided a further layer of protection, and parties to a conflict operated within the laws of armed conflict.

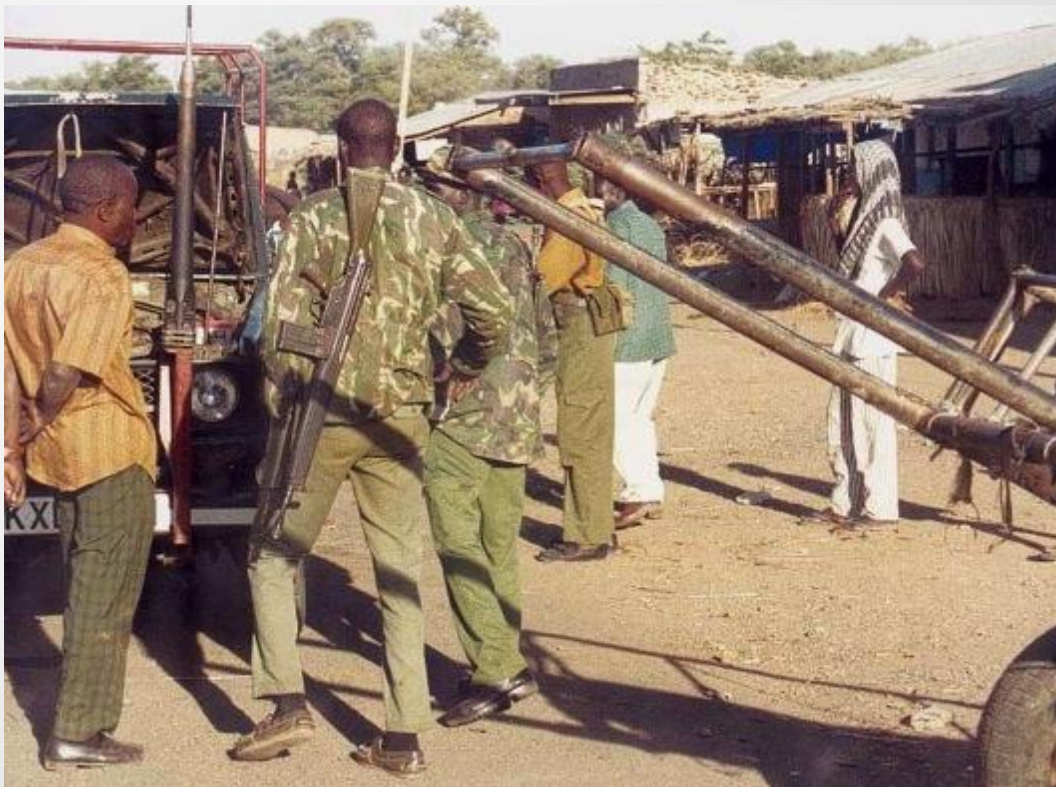
However, in recent times, there have been attacks on Red Cross and Red Crescent staff. Staff must be aware that the emblem does not provide a 'bulletproof vest' and that, today, it may provide less protection than it once did.





# The Nature of Armed Conflict

Increasingly, internal conflicts involve *irregular combatants* that have extremely limited knowledge of the laws of armed conflict, while often their tactics pay little heed to humanitarian values. The threat to humanitarian workers in these conflict zones is often high.



# Aim of Humanitarian Aid

Some organizations operate, in effect, as an arm of national policy. As such, their programmes are tied to expected results that will benefit specific beneficiaries and are, therefore, not independent. Often, military resources are used to deliver aid, creating confusion since they carry arms one day and bags of food the next.



# Beneficiaries' Part of the Conflict

Where there are a high number of refugees or internally displaced people in a conflict zone, they are often still caught up in the conflict. Factions may cross borders to attack them in refugee camps or to attempt to recruit new fighters.

Beneficiaries may also be **attacked by protagonists** as part of a terror campaign to destabilize the country and strengthen their position. This poses a threat to Red Cross and Red Crescent personnel working to bring aid to those in need of assistance.





# Disintegration of State Structures

Increasingly, there are cases where the state has little control over various areas of the country. In these areas it is, therefore, unable to ensure basic security or the provision of the basic necessities for living. The situation in Iraq and Afghanistan are present-day examples of this.



# Natural Disasters

Deployment response times to natural disasters have decreased significantly. Where it previously may have taken weeks to get a relief operation under way, today Field Assessment Coordination Teams (FACT) and Emergency Response Units (ERU) can be deployed within hours to the site of a disaster. Often, therefore, the disaster is still going on and personnel become *part of it*. The threats to the safety of personnel can be high.





# Poverty Leads to Increased Criminality

In many disaster and conflict zones, people have lost almost everything. This often results in them resorting to crime to feed their families. As aid workers, we are often seen as rich by the local population's standards and are not spared being targets of crime just because we are there to help them.





# BEFORE





# AFTER



# Car Accidents













# Run Away Backpack





# Run Away Backpack / Grab Bag

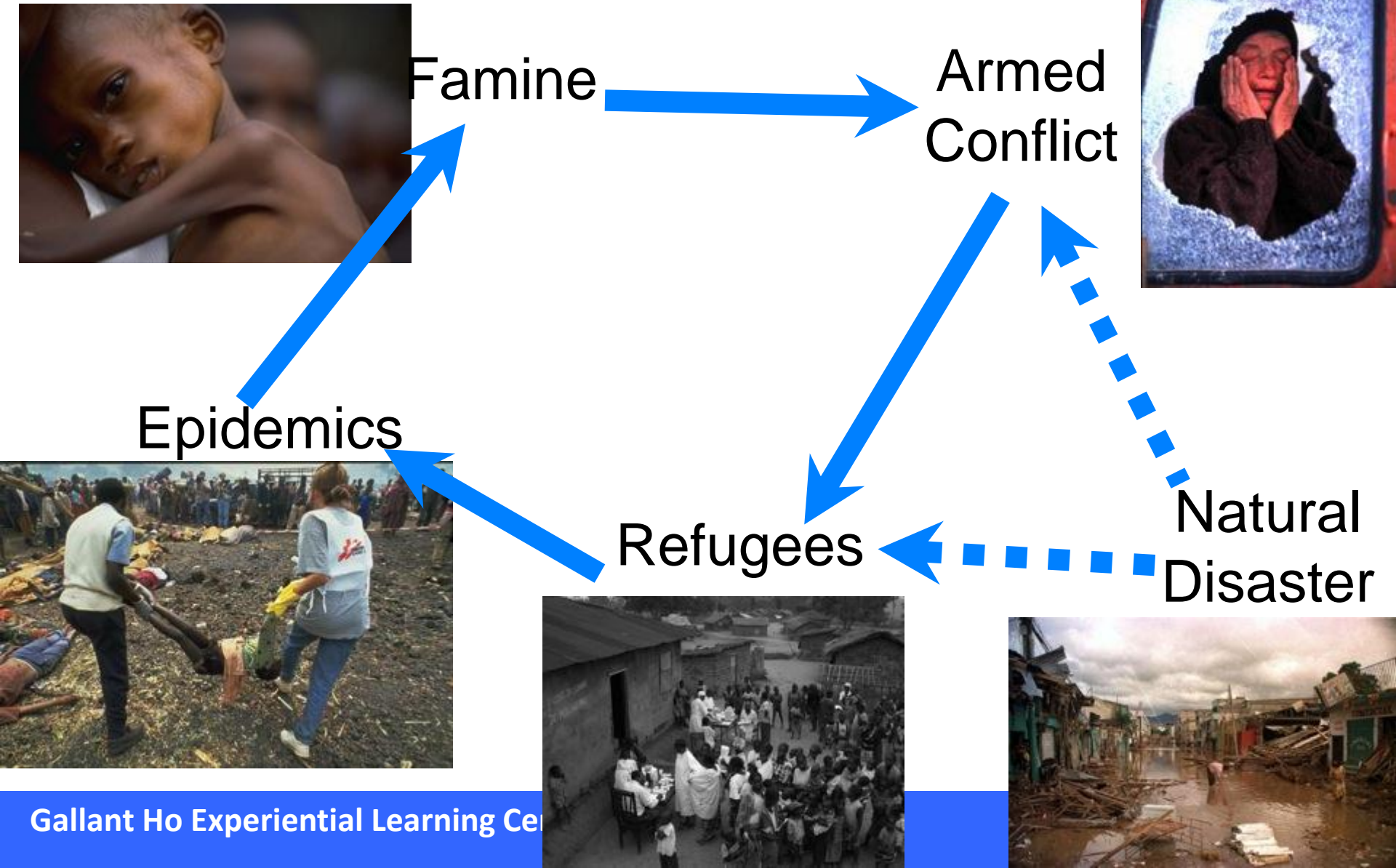
- Identification - passport
- Communication Device
- Key contact list
- Flashlight
- Compass
- Knife
- Raincoat/warm clothes
- Reflective material
- Lighter/Matches
- Emergency Manual
- Food – 2 Days
- Water – 2 Days
- Medication and records
- Ropes
- Whistle
- Map
- Pen & Paper
- Spare glasses
- Emergency cash
- Comics/Candy/etc.







# Ever-changing Needs





# Dos and Don'ts for Volunteers

## Dos

- Keep your team informed of your actions and locations at all times
- Plan your trip, report departure, maintain regular contact with your team, confirm arrival
- Avoid movement alone and after dark
- Respect local laws, habits and traditions
- Know your security rules and emergency plan
- Maintain high level of security awareness
- Know the communication and transportation means available in your area
- Know the location of the nearest hospital or health post
- Make multiple copies of your passport and document
- Always remain calm and polite



# Dos and Don'ts for Volunteers

## Don'ts

- Panic under threat
- Take risks
- Use a camera without permission
- Provoke situations
- Lose your integrity; maintain a professional distance from the beneficiaries
- Lose your head and argue



# Maintain Cultural Sensitivity

- Prepare to learn and adapt to new ways of getting things done
- Show respect and interest for other cultures
- Base your acts on the local culture
- Assume there are differences until you are sure of the similarities
- Be flexible and tolerant to other people's customs. Do not assume your own ways and culture are better
- Do not get upset when you are unsure of a situation or other people's reactions
- Do not assume the worst. Look for other explanations if the other person's behavior seems to be offensive
- Show ethical behavior. You are a "foreigner" 24 hours a day, seven days a week







# Airport Security Tips

- Act as if you know the airport and be confident
- Do not leave your bags unattended
- Do not put your travel wallet in the tray of a trolley
- Keep bags in sight. Put your foot through the shoulder strap if the bag must be placed on your side
- Be wary of strangers talking to you (Kenya example!!)
- Always pack a set of warm clothes in your HAND LUGGAGE
- All medicine, valuables, important documents and equipment are in your HAND LUGGAGE
- Never agree to carry anything for anyone you do not trust 100% (MSF Indonesia example!!)
- Never agree to look after a stranger's bags



# Taxi Security Tips

- Don't be a gentlemen! Get in before the girls!
- Make sure your luggage has actually been put into the taxi before setting into the taxi
- Always sit in the back seat but not directly behind the driver
- Keep your bags on the floor and lock the doors and windows





# Hotel Safety

- When checking in, be aware of who is in the lobby watching and listening
- Select a room on floors between 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup>
- If reception announces your room number out loud when you check in, ask for another room
- Never give out your room number to strangers
- Never invite stranger to your hotel room
- Never leave valuables lying in your room
- Use the safety lock on the door
- Memorize the nearest emergency exit route



# Natural Disaster – General

## Before

- Plan and evacuation route
- Agree on a regrouping point in a safe area
- Runaway backpack
- Keep yourself updated on the situation

## After

- Regroup and conduct headcount, get to know all members' location
- Inform HKU colleagues
- Check and treat injuries
- Beware of second waves of disaster





# Natural Disaster – Earthquakes



# Natural Disaster – Earthquakes

## Indoor

- Stay away from windows, mirrors, heavy furniture
- Stay inside the building
- Hold tight to your communication device and whistle

## Outdoor

- Move away from buildings, trees, and bridges
- Stay away from telephone and power lines
- Stay calm in the open

## Vehicle

- Stop quickly and STAY IN THE VEHICLE
- Once the quake is over, proceed with caution and avoid bridges and ramps
- Move away from buildings, trees, and bridges



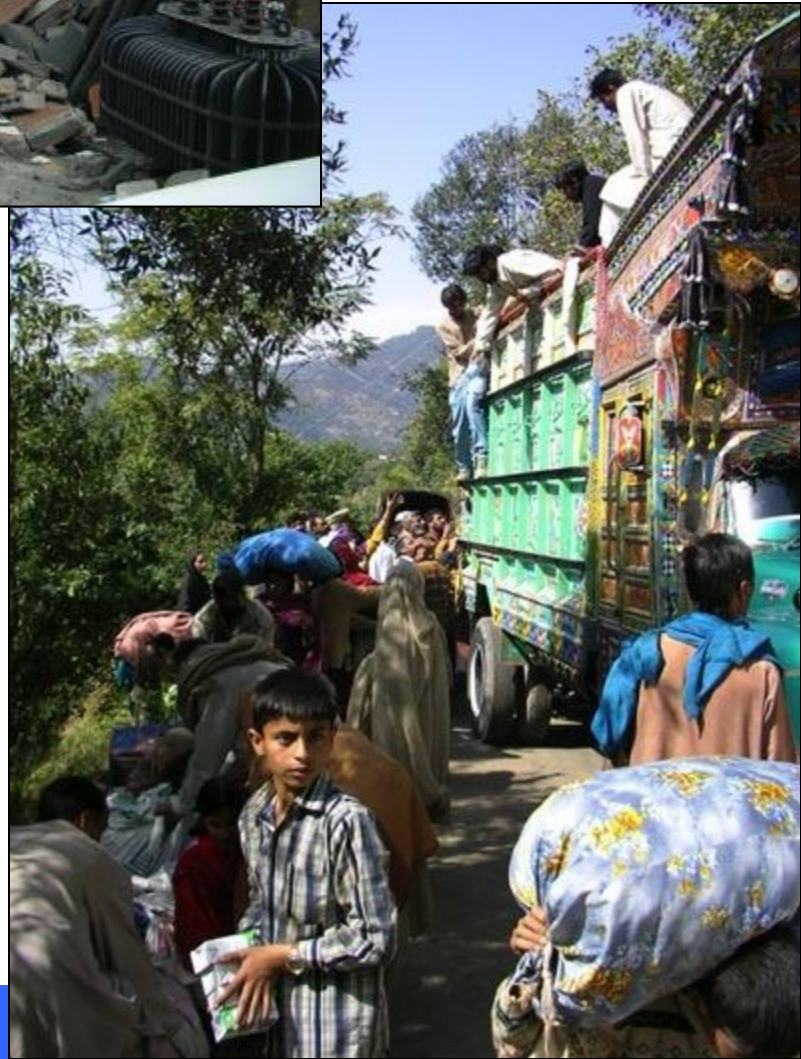
# Natural Disaster – Earthquakes

## After Earthquakes

- Beware of aftershocks
- Check your team
- Inspect the building for damage, get out if you are unsure of its safety
- DO NOT use electrical switches, appliances, telephones, and gas stoves
- Watch out for gas leakage and sparks
- Watch out for hanging wires and cables
- Never touch downed or damaged power lines
- Don't try to fix the power line or put out the fire yourself











# Natural Disaster – Tsunamis





# Natural Disaster – Tsunamis

## Before

- Pick an elevated inland location as regrouping point
- Learn the fastest way there
- Consider traffic congestion and panicked traffic flow

## After

- Watch out for second wave
- Stay out of buildings surrounded by water
- Check if water is safe to drink
- Water may be electrically charged
- Roads may have weakened
- Clean and disinfect every wet thing (sewage, mud)
- Watch out for landslide



# Natural Disaster – Tsunamis



# Natural Disaster – Hurricanes

## Before

- Get to a safe structure on high ground
- Board up and tape the windows
- Have food and water available
- Raincoat

## During

- Stay inside
- Stay away from loose material and windows
- If the building fall apart, STAY INSIDE! – protect with rugs and blankets
- Stay in the car if you are driving – stay in the open and avoid trees and powerline





# Health & Safety













# Basic Health Precautions

- Food, eggs, shellfish, ice-cream
- Water, ice, etc.
- Animals and insects, snakes, scorpions
- High altitude response
- Malaria – Lariam, Doxycycline, etc.
- Make sure you have required vaccinations
- Psychological preparation (expectation management)
- Team dynamic (mind-body interaction)



# Basic Health Precautions



# Basic Health Precautions





# Thank You

