



Project author or developer:
Dan O'Neill, Ellsworth Culver

Where:
US / United States / Multnomah County

Website:
www.mercycorps.org/

Sometimes you see too much in this business, resulting in horror fatigue," says Mercy Corps co-founder Dan O'Neill. "But you use the nightmare for fuel." The organization he first established as the Save the Refugees Fund in response to the atrocities of Pol Pot's Cambodian killing fields has certainly matched that ethos, growing into one of the pre-eminent international development NGOs in the world today.

Based in Portland but active in over 41 countries, Mercy Corps's pioneering commitment to using relief and recovery programs to strengthen civil society for the long-term has seen the diversification of its high-impact, cost effective activities across a range of program areas and locations.

What sets the organization apart is its leadership in using social innovation as an engine for sustainable development "and unlike other actors focusing on entrepreneurial strategies in "stable" operating environments, Mercy Corps works in this way with affected communities as a means to accelerate the process of post-disaster or post-collapse recovery. From helping restore local economies in the aftermath of the Haiti earthquake via a mobile banking solution, to fighting malnutrition in Indonesian slums through a microfranchise system of vendor-managed food carts, the NGO consistently looks to foster indigenous entrepreneurship, rebuilding social capital and stimulating markets.

Convinced of the value of taking "responsible risks" backed by rigorous monitoring and evaluation " Mercy Corps focuses especially on engaging partner communities to identify solutions proven to work in specific contexts and bring these to scale. As such, the organization's greatest impact is arguably linked to its ability to strengthen the resilience of communities with a view to future shocks, beyond the millions of lives touched through immediate relief efforts. (Presented by <http://theglobaljournal.net/group/top-100-ngos/>)

