

## Charity Watch

The world was deeply saddened by the devastating earthquake and its aftershocks in Nepal. It is difficult to imagine the severe damage to property and the huge loss of life and the associated injury to thousands of people. Many people here want to offer help, even though Nepal is half a world away. For those who want to give, a frequent dilemma is to decide which organization uses contributions most responsibly and effectively.

In an attempt to be more discriminating, I have started asking benevolent organizations. "What percent of money contributed goes to program?" Frequently I am informed that only 10% of donated funds goes to program! The rest goes for fund raising and overhead.

The Peace and Justice Committee and the Financial Stewardship Committee of the Mennonite Church of Normal have subscribed to a semi-annual publication called, "Charity Rating Guide and Watch Dog Report" from the Charity Watch organization. The report rates hundreds of organizations on effectiveness, percent of overhead, transparency, etc. and give a final grade from A to F. The Mennonite Central Committee gets an A- rating.

My wife and I plan to use the information in this publication to help guide our donation decisions in the future.

The guide is in our Church Library. I encourage all of you to make use of it.

John Bertsche