

Christine Schmitz

Christine Schmitz was born in Germany and trained as a nurse between 1981 and 1984. After her first experience abroad with a German non-governmental organisation (NGO), she joined the international medical NGO Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF).

Her focus was mainly in acute crisis areas. Her list of missions with MSF reads like a roll-call of the wards during the last decade: Turkey and Iraq in 1991, Somalia in 1992, Croatia and Liberia in 1993, South Sudan in 1994, Dagestan/Chechnya and Bosnia in 1995, Iran in 1996, Sierra Leone in 1997, Albania in 1999, East Timor, Philippines and Uganda in 2000, and South Sudan this year. Her most striking experience has been the mission in the Bosnian enclave of Srebrenica. Together with an Australian doctor she witnessed the enclave's brutal taking by the Bosnian-Serbian army in July 1995. The deportation of women and children and the killing of thousands of men remain in her memory. Her resolve was strengthened by this and she continues to assist others, both at home and abroad.