

## Report on New Emergencies Policy Visit conducted in response to the Baluchistan Earthquake – Pakistan 12-18<sup>th</sup> November 2008

An earthquake of 6.4 magnitude shook the province of Baluchistan, in the early hours of 29 October 2008. The tremor was followed by a number of violent aftershocks. The district of Ziarat was most affected while areas of Pishin and Harnai were less badly affected.

The earthquake destroyed or damaged houses, buildings, water schemes, schools and health facilities. Due to the initial impact of the earthquake and severe after shocks hundreds of people fled their damaged homes and took shelter under the open sky in sub-zero temperatures. Assessments give at least 163 people killed and 500 injured and around 7000-10,000 households displaced.

The New Emergencies Policy (NEP) was invoked by HAP and Members in Pakistan to ensure that quality services through accountable practises are delivered. The humanitarian response to the earthquake in Baluchistan, which comes in the wake of a string of natural disasters in Pakistan, was seen as opportunity for HAP Members to show how far they've come in addressing past challenges and delivering better quality and more accountable programmes.

An NEP visit by HAP staff Shaukat Iqbal and Maria Kiani was undertaken from 12-18 November 2008 during which field sites visits, collection of beneficiary feedback, agency staff meetings and an orientation on HAP Principles of Accountability was conducted. This report is based on the findings of the NEP visit and also includes the good practices undertaken by our members.

- HAP Pakistan Programme is grateful for the cooperation of the participating agencies: Muslim Aid UK, CWS- P/A, Sungi Development Foundation, Care International in Pakistan and Concern Worldwide in Pakistan
- The HAP 2007 Standard and its implementation guide are available, free of cost at: [www.hapinternational.org](http://www.hapinternational.org)

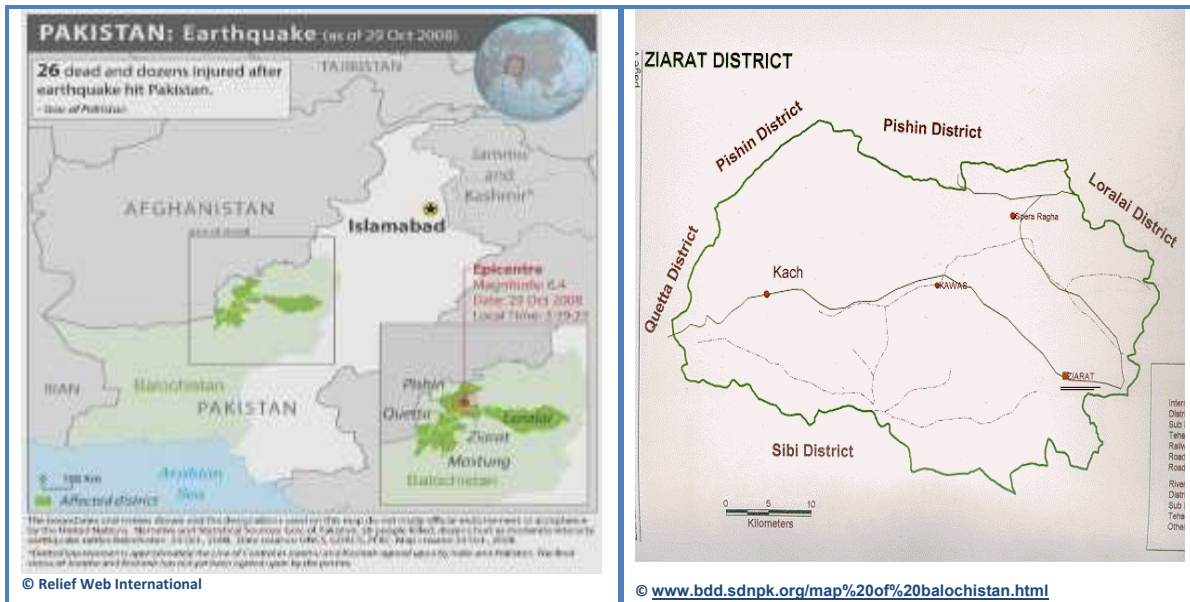


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A man amidst the debris of his house- District Ziarat, Baluchistan 2008  
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## I) Introduction

On 29<sup>th</sup> October, 2008 an earthquake measuring 6.4 on the Richter scale hit the largest yet poorest province of Pakistan. It left 163 dead and injured 175, affecting the districts of Ziarat, (see map below) Pishin and Harnai.



### Humanitarian Response

The National Disaster Management Authority and its provincial affiliates along with the Pakistan Army and Airforce led the relief and emergency response. National and international organizations reached the area and/or worked with their partners to provide humanitarian assistance.

### Humanitarian Needs

The Government of Pakistan, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), ICRC, and other humanitarian organizations confirmed an the immediate need for emergency shelter, food and health services for populations displaced by the earthquake.

### HAP Members in Pakistan

Currently there are eleven HAP Members working in Pakistan: ACTED; CARE International; CPDI; Concern Worldwide; CWS Pakistan/Afghanistan; Muslim Aid; Oxfam GB, Save the Children-UK, Sungi–Development Foundation, World Vision International and Merlin (joined in 2009).

### Humanitarian Quality and Accountability

The Baluchistan earthquake response follows a string of natural disasters which have struck Pakistan in the past 4 years. Various agencies including HAP Members have been responding to such crises. As Members of HAP International, agencies commit to make a special collective effort to apply the HAP Principles of Accountability from the outset of all new humanitarian emergencies in recognition that “It easier to do it right from the start” and that “the more difficult the case, the stronger the rationale for accountability”. The earthquake in Baluchistan provided an opportunity for the humanitarian agencies to prove how far they’ve come in addressing past challenges and delivering better quality of services. As a consequence it is expected that the show casing of accountable practices and learnings will lead to the empowerment and enhancement of the dignity of disaster survivors.

For this purpose a New Emergencies Policy meeting was held on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2008 <sup>1</sup> in Islamabad in which six HAP Members and two non HAP members participated. At

#### Fast Facts

Type: Natural Disaster – Earthquake  
 Date & Time: Wednesday, October 29, 2008 at 04:54:18 AM  
 Magnitude: 6.4  
 Location: Baluchistan province in south-western Pakistan  
 Epicenter: The epicenter of the quake was in Chiltan Mountains, 80 kilometers northwest of Quetta (capital of Baluchistan) aftershocks of 4.5 and more continue to occur.  
 Terrain: Harsh and inaccessible  
 Weather: Extreme

Fatalities: 166  
 Injured: 357  
 Displaced households: 7000-10,000  
 Houses damaged: 9,897  
 Villages affected: 281  
 Total affected population: 68,200  
 Source: National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) of Pakistan

<sup>1</sup> Regretted: World Vision International, Oxfam GB, ACTED, Save the Children UK

this meeting, the agencies discussed options to ensure the quality and accountability of their humanitarian response, and assess it as outlined in the HAP 2007 Standard in Humanitarian Accountability and Quality Management.

The participants unanimously decided the following outputs and goals for the NEP visit and follow-up.

1. On site/ field support in Baluchistan should be provided in which:
  - Assessment of agency work should be reviewed in light of the HAP Principles
  - Gaps, if any should be identified and corresponding support be provided
2. A one day orientation on the HAP Principles of Accountability should be for agency partners, emergency and newly inducted staff in Baluchistan
3. A complaints mechanism workshop should be held in Islamabad for HAP Members in order to enable them to create agency specific complaints system.
4. Tools for monitoring and evaluation and continual learning should be developed and shared by HAP Members in Pakistan.

### Costs

The Pakistan Programme of HAP International bore the costs of the NEP visit. HAP staff was accompanied by agency staff during the visit to their respective areas of operation.

HAP International is grateful to Concern Worldwide for hosting and bearing the cost of the orientation on Humanitarian Accountability and HAP, held for the I/NGO community in Quetta on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2008.

## II) Summary of Activities

Date	Agency	Activity
12 <sup>th</sup> November	Concern WorldWide	Meeting held with emergency response team
13 <sup>th</sup> November	Muslim Aid	Field Sites Visited
14 <sup>th</sup> November	Local Government & Humanitarian Community	Attended General Coordination Meeting with District Nazim ( Mayor) and District Commissioner, Director Social Welfare, Director Health and 15 agencies
15 <sup>th</sup> November	CWS P/A and SPO	Field Sites Visited
16 <sup>th</sup> November	HAP	Field Update Disseminated
17 <sup>th</sup> November	CWS P/A and SPO	Debrief Session
18 <sup>th</sup> November	Humanitarian Community in Baluchistan	Orientation Session
31 <sup>th</sup> December 09	Care International in Pakistan	Meeting held with emergency response team and management in Islamabad

### Summary of Member Activities:

Below is a summary of activities undertaken with the member organisations. These are discussed in greater detail in the findings and recommendations section and the section on good practices. HAP Members remained most active in the District of Ziarat as it was the most affected.

#### 1. Muslim Aid

- Distribution site visited in Wam: District Ziarat
- Community feedback gathered in Wam and Khanwari Baba: District Ziarat (see map above)
- Discussions were held with disaster survivors regarding the quality and service of aid, information and transparency. Other topics explored with the community included, beneficiary criteria and participation along with possibilities of improvement to complaints and response mechanisms.
- The Muslim Aid distribution site also displayed a model of transitional shelter. The model has been created based on the feedback given by the disaster affected communities of Wam. It has been modelled according to the needs and specifications set out by the community through a process of consultation and participation. *(More in the section of good practises)* The construction has been started on over 1000 such shelters.

## 2. Church World Service (Pakistan/Afghanistan) working through their partner, Strengthening Participatory Organization (SPO)

- Distribution sites visited in Spayzandi, Warchoom: Union Council Khawas- District Ziarat.
- Prior to the earthquake, local disaster response volunteer teams had been already identified and trained by SPO. These local volunteers and SPO emergency response teams reacted quickly to the disaster and undertook swift assessments and began their beneficiary selection processes within hours of arrival. The rollout of CWS winterised tents and food items to the affected areas are near completion. Disaster survivors outside of CWS P/A & SPO distribution sites have reportedly said, “You can take 10 of the other tents distributed and give us one of your winterised tents.”

## 3. Care International in Pakistan

- Care undertook a timely and rapid response to the emergency in Baluchistan. It completed its distribution of 500 winterised tents along with other aid. After the completion its emergency response, Care exited the province of Baluchistan, which is not included in the long term strategic work plan. However, it continued and completed its follow up and monitoring activities through partners.

## 4. Concern Worldwide

- Concern responded rapidly to the disaster and completed its aid distribution within the first 3 days of the earthquake.
- On 18<sup>th</sup> November Concern hosted a half-day orientation session on HAP Principles of Accountability for the humanitarian community working in Baluchistan at its Quetta office.

## III) Findings & Recommendations

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The initial phase of relief and rescue was conducted by the Pakistani army and air-force personnel while local authorities, I/NGOs, political parties and non-local citizens, responded soon after.

The section on the ‘six benchmarks’ of the HAP 2007 Standard are restricted to HAP members which participated in the NEP. While the section titled ‘other issues’ is related to other humanitarian actors which have impacted the operational context.

### 1) HAP 2007 Standard in Humanitarian Accountability and Quality Management

The [HAP 2007 Standard in Humanitarian Accountability and Quality Management](#) is a quality assurance tool for humanitarian organizations. By comparing an organization's processes, policies and products to the Standard's six benchmarks, it is possible to measure how well the organization assures quality and accountability in its humanitarian work.

Generally excellence is measured by international standards in different ways. For example:

- Product Specifications: usually measuring the final outcome or deliverable.
- Process Specifications: usually measuring the methodology used so as to obtain a stated result, including the management of activities that lead to the stated result.

The HAP Standard employs both of these (and more) as it seeks to measure:

- a. Accountability and quality commitments made by an aid agency and as specified in their [accountability framework](#) – the product.
- b. Quality Management System – the processes used by the aid agency to achieve the commitments made
- c. [Quality of Service](#) – the good practice employed by the aid agency as viewed through the eyes of disaster survivors, affected communities, partners, aid practitioners and other specified stakeholders.

- **Benchmark 1: Humanitarian Quality Management System**

*‘The agency shall establish a humanitarian quality management system’*

The HAP Standard is a quality assurance standard, where the quality and accountability commitments made by the aid agency are collated into an accountability framework, which proceeds to outline the activities which the aid agency intends to carry out in order to demonstrate that it meets the specified requirements of the

commitments made. *Making the accountability framework publicly available is an essential component of quality assurance as it aims to inspire confidence in both disaster survivors and aid practitioners that the expected level of excellence is being attained.*

The HAP Standard defines a **humanitarian quality management system** as a ‘designated set of processes that enable continual improvement in an agency’s performance in meeting the essential needs and respecting the dignity of disaster survivors’. A humanitarian quality management system is, in essence, the means by which an agency’s humanitarian accountability framework (HAF) is implemented, monitored, and improved over time.

Even if operating through a management system, in the absence of a HAF’s agencies are not able to clearly or systematically demonstrate the implementation of their accountability and quality commitments. Disparately applied or piecemeal approach to the HAP Standard will cause an agency to fall short of meeting quality and accountability targets.

We look forward that all our members will move ahead systematically to fulfil their commitments to accountability and quality by putting into place and practising a humanitarian quality management system.

- **Service Delivery Process**

During the visits to Muslim Aid and CWS- P/A field sites and interviews with affected communities, disaster survivors expressed their satisfaction with the service and quality of the aid delivered to them. The community felt that the staff was accessible and helpful. Relationship with the community was strengthened by the field staff of these agencies directly as well as through community representatives and volunteers. Greater outreach was achieved as these persons had very good knowledge of the area local norms customs and traditions and could speak local language.

Concern Worldwide, Care International in Pakistan and Sungi also intervened and conducted a rapid response. These agencies too used local partners, community organisations and local volunteers as well to ensure consent and acceptance and participation of the affected area population.

- **Quality of Aid**

HAP members adhered to or determinedly attempted to apply Sphere standards in their humanitarian response.



Muslim Aid Staff taking notes after a meeting disaster survivors in Wam, Ziarat.



CWS - P/A distribution site in Spayzandi, Ziarat

## ▪ Benchmark 2: Information and Transparency

*'The agency shall make the following information publicly available to intended beneficiaries, disaster-affected communities, agency staff and other specified stakeholders: (a) organisational background; (b) humanitarian accountability framework; (c) humanitarian plan; (d) progress reports; and (e) complaints handling procedures'*

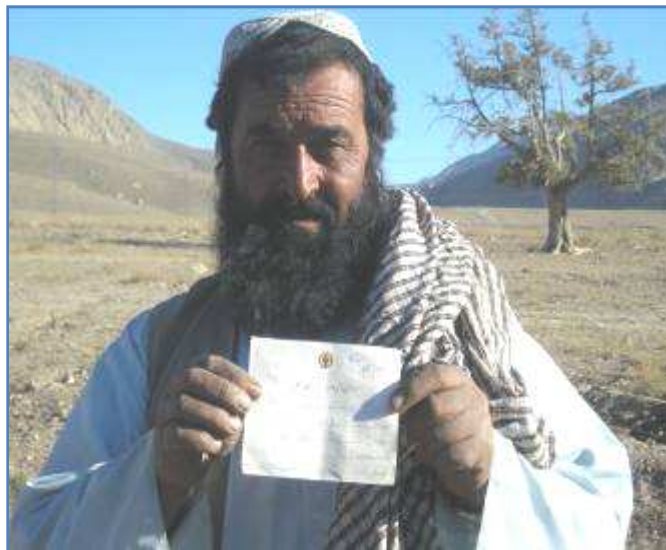
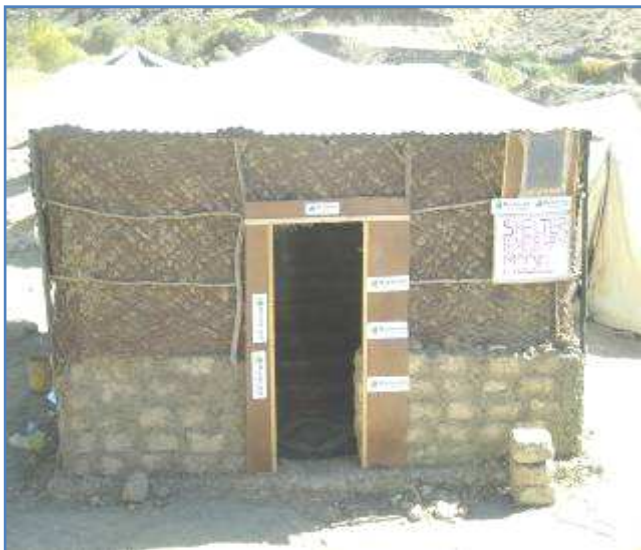
The earthquake hit areas of Baluchistan have little or poor communications infrastructure. Radio, television or phones (land or mobile) services are inadequate, adding a structural barrier to effective and timely flow of information to disaster affected survivor communities and other stakeholders.

Overall the disaster survivors themselves were unable to distinguish between the various humanitarian agencies delivering aid. Lack of information amongst the females was more acute, however this can be attributed to the conservatism and cultural norms of the area which forbid interaction of females with non family males or females.

No special efforts were made to share information with the communities else than verbal exchange of limited information. It was found that the agencies briefed their focal person community and certain communities about their organizational background. However information on humanitarian accountability framework, humanitarian plan, progress report or complaints handling procedures to the disaster affected communities remained lacking. In some cases communities need to be informed and explained the organizational justifications of short term interventions. This information in various formats, updates and reports may have been made available to the local government and humanitarian community but disaster survivors remained less informed, particularly, about the duration of the intervention, progress and complaints systems.

Improved communication, increase of information, transparency and clarity by *all* humanitarian agencies is imperative. Expectations of the disaster affected community are especially high due to the news of donations and funds allocated by international community and the national government. Agencies will need to clearly inform the communities on the basics such as what, when, how, where and why of their operations.

HAP Members like Muslim Aid, CWS P/A and Care International in Pakistan, engaged with the communities in various ways. Muslim Aid and CWS P/A (along with their implementing partners: SPO) included local volunteers in trained<sup>2</sup> disaster response from the earthquake affected area. The volunteers enabled the agencies get familiarized with the community needs, geography and also garner feedback. The feedback was incorporated through various means. SPO's rigorously trained community volunteers proved to be an asset for the effective channel and source of information. This improved the quality of service delivery and increased the acceptance from the affected communities.



<sup>2</sup> These volunteers had received training on disaster management and response prior to the earthquake by SPO. For more see the Better Practices Section.

A transitional shelter model as seen above (left) was placed by Muslim Aid Shelter at its field site. Disaster affected communities visited the site and gave their feedback regarding the suitability, sustainability and construction time and material to the staff. Based on the feedback from the community the changes to the building material and design of the roof were undertaken.

The project based on community participation also allowed the community to decide and plan what their contribution in terms of manpower and labour.

Similarly the distribution token handed out by CWS-P/Aas seen above (right) contained organizational background and values. *(For more see section on Good Practices)*

▪ **Benchmark 3: Participation and Informed Consent**

*‘The agency shall enable beneficiaries and their representatives to participate in programme decisions and seek their informed consent’*

Communities and their representatives were satisfied with the efforts made by the HAP Members in regards to this benchmark. The Members ensured the participation of the community and their representatives through various means and levels. During needs assessment by Sungi the communities in Union Council Khawas identified that they need warm clothing for women and children. During the second phase of the intervention, Sungi complied on this request and warm clothing of good quality was distributed.

HAP Members attempted to increase the participation and ownership of the community. Care International in Pakistan, Muslim Aid and CWS- P/A made use of community based organisations, community members and representatives to support transportation, arrangement, ware-housing and distribution of their relief items. Local knowledge of geography and terrain, information of the worst affected segments of population and knowledge of cultural norms helped them to increase their outreach and have a timely and effective response.

The efforts to increase participation of the community proved useful to agencies in improving their security and safety in since incidents of looting had occurred in the operational area which was inaccessible and bereft with other risks as well.

▪ **Benchmark 4: Staff Competencies**

*‘The agency shall determine the competencies, attitudes and development needs of staff required to implement its humanitarian quality management system’*

The specialized staff of disaster response/management units of the HAP Members responded to the earthquake. Apart other development needs that might be internally determined by agencies, Members will need to develop the capacity of their staff on Benchmark 2 (information and transparency) and Benchmark 5 (complaints –handling). By implementing a humanitarian quality management system, an agency will better prepare and enable its staff to apply these Benchmarks during disasters.

During interviews with Care International staff it was noted that the senior management increased the decision making powers of its field staff during the response. This ability to make onsite and rapid decisions amplified the confidence and performance of the field staff and gave them a sense of achievement and ownership of the project.

It is Sungi’s emergency response practice that during distributions and key meetings with the community, members of the senior management team are present. This oversight is to ensure the accountability and performance of the field staff. In addition, Sungi, composed a HAP Team which monitored the intervention in real time *(see section on Good Practices for more)*.

## ▪ **Benchmark 5: Complaints Handling**

*'The agency shall establish and implement complaints-handling procedures that are effective, accessible and safe for intended beneficiaries, disaster-affected communities, agency staff, humanitarian partners and other specified bodies'*

Unfortunately, no complaints redressal systems were pre-established or created during the intervention. The absence of any complaints system is of concern. To make a complaint through a safe and effective system is a right of the disaster survivor and the duty to provide a safe and effective system rests with agency. HAP Members have committed to the right of complaint in the Principles of Accountability and the HAP 2007 Standard.

Some agencies felt that they were carrying out short term interventions which did not necessitate a complaints handling system. In the absence of complaints systems, disaster survivors will seek other ways and means to register their discontent- and most often it is through media or through physical means.

***"In the absence of complaints mechanisms disaster survivors start to use media as a complaints forum."***

Comment of a Humanitarian work participating in "Orientation on Humanitarian Accountability and HAP" 17<sup>th</sup> December, 2008 Quetta Baluchistan

The right to complain remains a cornerstone of making humanitarian action accountable to disaster survivors and failure to do so would mean that agencies fall short of their commitment to humanitarian accountability and quality.

## ▪ **Benchmark 6: Continual Improvement**

*'The agency shall establish a process of continual improvement for its humanitarian accountability framework and humanitarian quality management system'*

Presently, due to the absence of contextualised/ Pakistan specific HAF's the members, this benchmark is not fully implemented.

However, the lessons learned and experience gathered from the humanitarian response in Baluchistan need to be incorporated into the knowledge management system of every organization in order to further improve preparedness, performance, humanitarian accountability and quality in the next humanitarian response.

To increase learning and sharing between the HAP Members, HAP Pakistan programme will be restarting its peer support meetings on thematic areas.

Individual follow-up meetings with the members who participated in the NEP will be conducted as well.

## 1) **Other Issues**<sup>3</sup>

### a) **Coordination**

The immediate relief and response to the earthquake was conducted by the Pakistan Army and disaster authorities. Due to the memories and experiences of the earthquake of 2005 still fresh in the memories of people of Pakistan and the political unrest in Baluchistan the earthquake became an emotive issue. Besides the national and international NGOs responding there were numerous political, religious and interest based sections which responded, the assessment of which is outside the purview of this report.

However, it is pertinent to comment on the overall coordination of the humanitarian sector and shed light on the issues of delays in response, duplication of distribution and dumping of relief items onto the road side.

All humanitarian agencies have a duty to act responsibly and to the highest standards to ensure that the political and cultural context remains conducive. In politically restive and conservative areas the need to work collectively and responsibly becomes even more critical.

<sup>3</sup> This section does not specifically refer to the HAP Members, but is based on the feedback from them and other agencies working in Baluchistan.

## i. Assessments

Certain staff of members and other I/NGOs emphasized that for the Baluchistan earthquake was a small scale however, a very large number of assessments and surveys took place. In some cases, assessments and inputs by local partners or even field staff were not given credibility due to the variance in form and format or joint assessments that were compiled were delayed and I/NGOs had already initiated their response. Repeated individual assessments carried out by humanitarian agencies caused the local communities discomfort and raised complaints and in some cases delayed the response as well.

This can be attributed to lack of coordination, lack of confidence in shared assessments and/or waiting for staff from head offices to arrive to undertake assessments. Sadly this is not a new problem. During the floods of 2007 in the province, one village had 80 individual agency assessments before relief was provided to the affected community.

The UN has created the Multi-cluster Rapid Assessment Mechanism (MCRAM) which is a collective assessment system and shared publicly, however, the benefits of this have yet to gain currency and be proved conclusively for all agencies to follow. The assessments of the Pakistan Humanitarian Forum also proved to be collected too late – with some PHF members going ahead and starting their distribution in the view of the urgency of the disaster.

To overcome these issues it was recommended that :

- Field office, local staff and where possible focal persons in the communities should be empowered to carry out rapid assessments. As inhabitants of the area they are familiar with the language, culture and geography of the area. For this purpose adequate authorization to the field office staff should be given along with their capacities improved to undertake this task satisfactorily. (*also see HAP 2007 Standard Benchmark 4: staff competencies*)
- To avoid duplication of work, visits and repetitive questions to disaster survivors, assessment forms for such emergencies should be standardized, accepted and should be made available to all organizations.
- In the absence of a humanitarian accountability framework and publicly accessible humanitarian plans of agencies, disaster survivors and affected communities, local authorities and other stakeholders remain at a loss to grasp the scope and scale of the response of the agency. Humanitarian Accountability Framework which is a linch-pin for maintaining quality and accountability should be drafted and implemented.

## ii. HAP Participation in General Coordination Meeting

HAP Staff member, Shaukat Awan participated in the general coordination meeting held in the office of the District Commissioner of Ziarat. The HAP Principles of Accountability were shared with the participating agencies. Special emphasis was laid on the critical need of improving individual and collective flow of information from the humanitarian actors to the disaster affected communities. In addition avenues for registering complaints should be provided to them as well.

Creating an information cell for the communities which gathered outside the office was unanimously decided.

Coordination efforts by the local government and humanitarian sector were criticized by the communities as they were not allowed to participate in these meetings. For the district government the different shelter designs of various organizations were a challenge as every organization had a different cost, type and model for the temporary shelters. Lack of coordination among the organizations was visible and to some degree a sense of competition over the shelter design and areas to intervene. The local government evaluated that the response of I/NGOs was far bigger than the scale of the disaster but at the same time it kept on identifying new areas for interventions or programmes based on the complaints of the communities. Some organizations at times did not feel comfortable about the coordination mechanism, and suggested cluster approach.

## iii. Joint tracking system

Due to the uncertain security situation and fear of looting and rioting, a joint tracking system of vehicles being transporting goods over long distance was recommended in interview meetings by Care International in Pakistan. Collective movements of goods to ensure higher level of safety of personnel and secure passage routes could be an effective and efficient way to reach disaster affected areas in safe and timely manner.

## b) Maintaining Quality and Effectiveness of Aid

### ▪ Maintaining quality of aid delivery

Some agencies being supply driven rather than needs driven dumped or distributed inappropriate relief items due to which most vulnerable or affected disaster survivors got little amelioration. The disparity of in the quality of overall material distributed began a cause for discontent amongst the affected communities. In the debris of damaged or destroyed homes and bitter winter months, shelter remained the priority need for disaster survivors and tents, transitional shelter becoming non negotiable item of need. Varying qualities of shelter were distributed by the intervening numerous political parties, interest and volunteer groups, grass-root organizations and international NGOs. In the below freezing temperatures of the province, the large number of non-winterized tents proved to be in appropriate and inadequate. It was seen that although aid has been distributed, it has not necessarily been according to need. This has led to harsh reactions from the disaster affected communities. Sporadic cases of looting of winterized tents were reported in Zindra (District Ziarat) and protests by the communities have led to regular road blocks and blockades.

On 15<sup>th</sup> November, while en route to monitor a distribution centre in Warchoom, HAP field staff, along with other travellers, were held at a blockade in the road near the village of Wam. Villagers had blockaded the road in protest over the lack of appropriate shelter. It came to light that the community's frustration and anger was exacerbated by the death of a young boy. A family lost their 8-year-old boy after they resorted to lighting a fire for heating purposes in their tent to keep warm throughout the night. In the night winds, the fire quickly got out of control engulfing the tent, killing the boy and severely injuring another. Non-winterised tents distributed by numerous I/NGOs and local authorities proved inadequate for the bitterly cold and snowy winter with temperatures plummeting to  $-13^{\circ}\text{C}$  and lower.

## c) Media

The earthquake in Baluchistan was actively covered by the media. Interviews and assessments conducted by the media brought to light an overstated assessment of the scale of destruction. This perception, apart from other factors has been exacerbated due to the lack of relevant, effective and timely information (Benchmark 2) provided by the agencies to

- a) disaster survivors and affected communities who provided the media with the information and opinion
- b) other stakeholders - which includes media itself.

In addition to not providing information to disaster survivors and relevant stakeholders, if the I/NGOs fail to provide accessible and safe complaints redressal systems the disaster survivors will register their complaint to an ever watchful media.

The media for was also used for image-making by partisan groups (political parties, interest groups etc) and some I/NGOs had distribution points only on the road side to gain prominence and coverage.



## d) HAP Orientation

As recommended by the HAP Members participating in the NEP, an orientation on Humanitarian Accountability was held in Quetta, Baluchistan. This half day orientation was conducted on 18<sup>th</sup> November at the Concern Worldwide office and was attended by staff from agencies working in Baluchistan such as: Mercy Corps; WESS; CRS; Save US; Taraqee Foundation; Seher; BEEJ; IDO; CPD and Root Work,

HAP Pakistan is grateful to Concern for arranging, hosting and participating in this event, which was attended by staff from local and international NGOs. Concern's commitment and efforts to increase humanitarian accountability is commendable.

## IV) Good Practices

### 1. Creating Accountability Committees and Teams

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During its response to the Baluchistan earthquake Sungi Development Foundation created what it calls Sungi's HAP Team. This team consisted of the gender, democratic and human rights and community infrastructure and production managers and worked alongside the disaster response teams and other field staff. Tasked with the responsibility to self-evaluate the humanitarian response, Sungi's HAP Team analysed what improvements could be made to further strengthen and manifest Sungi's commitment to humanitarian accountability.

This self-evaluation was done in real time and through the process of onsite monitoring, interview with disaster survivors and meetings. Follow up monitoring visits were also conducted. In particular this team assessed how well the HAP benchmarks were being implemented, were the vulnerable segments of the community addressed, was the beneficiary criteria, needs assessment accurate, how was the distribution process conducted etc. This follows in line with previous practise at Sungi in which core/senior management are present onsite during a humanitarian response to ensue high levels of staff accountability and performance. Having undertaken this kind of practise for the first time, Sungi is keen to refine and systemize this practise for future humanitarian responses.

It is pertinent to add a similar practice in which Sungi has formed Community Humanitarian Quality Management Teams in Mardan and Lower Dir in the province of NWFP where due to conflict, inhabitants have been internally displaced and are living in camps or host families. These teams consist of five members of the IDPs and have been given an orientation on humanitarian accountability and their rights as disaster survivors. Furthermore, they have been given roles and responsibilities to gather feedback from the community regarding these issues and others, and share them with Sungi staff. In order to increase transparency, the budget and value of items distributed have also been shared with the community via these committees, signboard and leaflets.

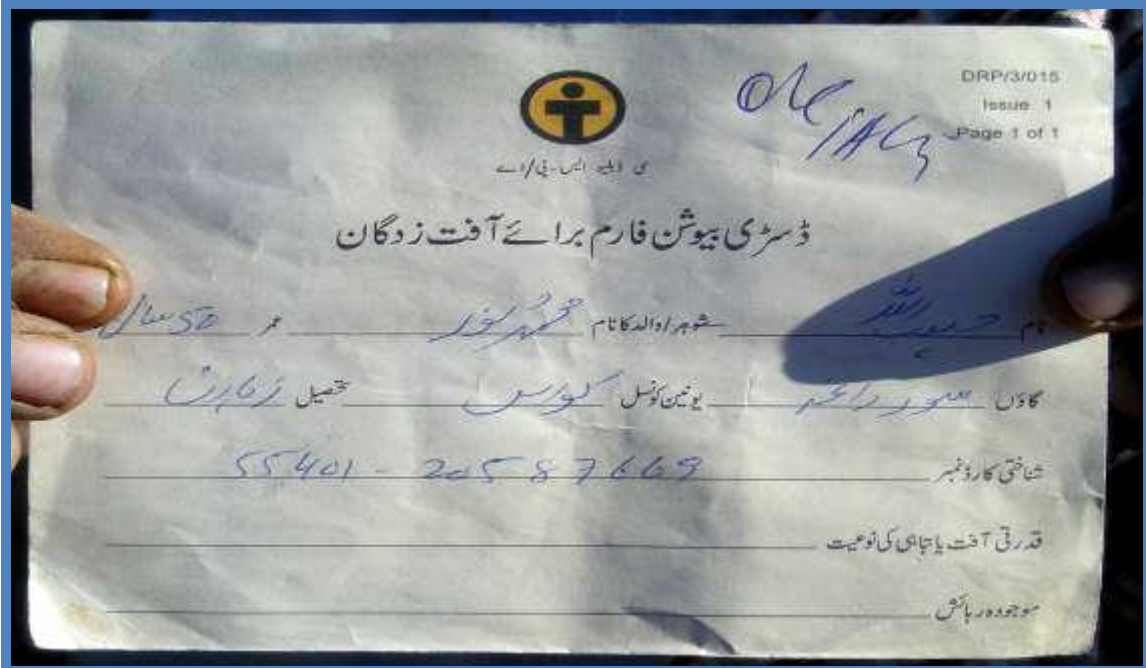
Along with having an oversight role these teams open up a credible channel of communication and are a step toward improved relationship between Sungi and the affected community.

### 2. Communicating organisational values to communities

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After needs assessment and setting their beneficiary criteria, CWS-P/A distributed tokens to their intended beneficiaries. One half of the token was given to the disaster survivor while the other remained with the field staff. These tokens detail the disaster survivors name and contact information. All information given or asked is in local language.

This token is also used for giving information about CWS- P/A to the disaster survivor. On the back side of the token organizational values are given. It also highlights CWS P/A's commitment to impartiality, participation, accountability and dignity of disaster survivors. By highlighting its commitments and principles of working CWS-P/A increases its level of transparency and opens itself to accountability to disaster survivors.



Habibullah, a disaster survivor in Spayzandi holding a distribution token of CWS-P/A. The token displays his contact details.



Overleaf: The distribution token showing CWS P/A organizational values and highlights its commitment to: impartiality, participation, accountability and dignity of disaster survivors.

Often, disaster-survivors do not understand who the intervening agency is or what they do. This creates confusion and increases speculation. By giving this information in written form the agency can decrease and prevent misinformation and also give the disaster survivors a better understanding of the agency working in their area. In case low levels of literacy prevail, an explanation of the information on the token would be necessary.

The disaster response unit at CWS P/A has these tokens ready and keeps them in stock. The tokens are an effective and quick way of informing disaster survivors during the relief and response phase especially since community mobilisers maybe not be able to establish and develop a relationship with the affected community during emergency phase.

### 3. Empowering Staff

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Care International in Pakistan conducted a rapid response and relief operation in Ziarat District in Baluchistan. During interviews with the staff, they felt that a critical success factor in their intervention was the decision making powers given by the senior management to the staff in the field.

This allowed the staff in the field to make timely decisions regarding the security of personnel, relief goods and distribution. Empowered with the go ahead from senior management, the disaster response team in the field conducted needs assessments. In order to under take a speed response, distribution was started simultaneously as the assessments got finalized and conducted during the day as well as night. This enabled Care to distribute critically needed winterized tents to the affected persons in a effectively and efficiently.

The field team ensured that during transporting and distribution members of the community were involved. Brief orientation sessions were also conducted for these community members and local partners. The ability to make critical decisions rapidly along with the encouragement from the head office gave the field staff a sense of achievement.

### 4. Role of Local Partners

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Local partners played a significant role for the intervening agencies. After the completion of the humanitarian response and the exit of Care staff, a local organization was engaged for to independent verification and monitoring. This third party evaluation by a local organization increased the understanding of Care about the impact of its work.

In addition, to increase institutional learning Care requested key staff from its local partners in Shahzad Kot and Karachi to work along them in the Baluchistan earthquake response. These partners had earlier worked with Care in the emergency response to the floods of 2007. This was seen as a way in which Care staff could learn from the experiences of the partners and enrich the field staff teams learning and performance.

### 5. Using and building upon the capacity of community

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Muslim Aid and CWS- P/A were supported by community representatives who were trained by Strengthening Participatory Organisation (SPO) prior to the earthquake. These representatives were skilled and well respected community members who proved to be invaluable assets for the agencies and facilitated their intervention.

SPO has well established Capacity Building for Good Governance and Capacity Building for Emergency Response programmes. These programmes engage grassroot level organisations or community institutions and build their capacities in planning, funding and monitoring their own development projects. In case of disaster, the first responders are the affected community itself. SPO has trained numerous grassroot and community institutions which actively participate in the disaster risk reduction (preparedness, prevention, mitigation) and response, rehabilitation and reconstruction and facilitate intervening agencies in this regard as well. *More can be found at:* <http://www.spopk.org/>

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