



HAP during new emergencies

Reflections and Observations
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Quality and accountability in the humanitarian system

- Who are the drivers of change? “Go tell this to them!”
- Waste due to pre-packaged, interest driven or inappropriate aid.
 - Pakistan Earthquake - 2005
 - Bangladesh Cyclone - 2007
 - Sri Lanka Conflict - 2009
- Quality (fit for purpose & efficient)
- Funding & proposals

“Donors fitting squares into circles”

“Who are donors accountable to?”

(Senior national staff– Sri Lanka)

Quality and accountability in the humanitarian system

- Role of coordination forums and clusters for beneficiary accountability?
“Emergencies need more integrated approaches rather than sectoral/structural approaches.” (Senior national staff– Sri Lanka)
- Other players in the humanitarian sector...
- Voluntary self-regulation or enforced regulation?
- Decision making processes? ‘Principles vs pragmatism’
- The context blanket
- ‘Rights based approach needs to be more elaborate in HAP’
(National staff member)

Quality & Accountability in the organisational system & processes

Benchmark 1: Humanitarian Quality Management System

- Lack of prioritisation and integration lead to staff seeing accountability as an add-on, additional work or after thought
- Policies need implementation, verification and improvement
- Quantitative/output driven rather than qualitative/ process driven
- How are difficult decisions made?
- Disconnects between Headquarters and the distant 'field'

Benchmark 2: Information & Transparency

- ‘Which country is your organisation from?’
(Interned beneficiary in Sri Lanka)
- Time, deliverables (and what to do with them), beneficiary selection criteria are often not known
- Transparent agencies benefit from improved relationships and better security – HAP Member in Kashmir

“We should know what is taken on our name and what is spent for our recovery. We should not just be an instrument to get money and spend for the luxuries of NGOs.”

Disaster survivor in Kashmir, 2005

Benchmark 3: Participation

- What **IS** participation?
- Who participates and when?
- Gender - Women only?
 - Increased vulnerabilities of men and boys in conflict
 - Singular focus on women can sometimes be counter-productive leading to perpetuation of exploitation and sense of victimhood

Benchmark 4: Staff Competencies

- Lack of prioritisation and drive for accountability leads to lack of awareness and implementation
- An agency's accountability to staff
- Staff lack of awareness on humanitarian principles and acceptable practices (inductions? Trainings? etc)
- Staff turnover, Cultural context and sensitivities
'We have to wait for staff to obtain visa so we can even begin the operations' (Staff member- Sri Lanka)

Benchmark 5: Complaints Handling & Redress



- More boxes??
- **Fear and lack of trust** amongst staff and beneficiaries
- Feedback vs complaint
- Issue of referrals
- A way to improve response and save money
- Penalise the silent ones?
‘Organisational culture needs to be more conducive’
(National Staff Member)

Benchmark 6: Continual Learning

- **Are** we learning?
- Are we learning the right lessons and in the right way?
- Are our peers learning?