

## **Stakeholder Meeting on Social Accountability and Transparency in Disaster Response**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>No. of Participants</b>	<b>Speakers</b>
26-10-10	Shiza Inn	135	- Irfan Hote (ActionAid Pakistan) - Rashid Rahman Advocate (HRCP) - Shaista Bukhari (Women's Rights Association) - Sohail Javaid (Labour Party Pakistan) - Farhan Ahmed Khan - Bushra Naqvi - Nasreen Jaffery (D.O., Social Welfare Department)
		<b>Partakers Echelon:</b> Representatives from OCHA, WFP, government departments (Department of Social Welfare, Rescue 1122), flood affected communities especially women, media, lawyers' forum attended the event.	

### **Objectives:**

- To promote aid effectiveness in disaster hit areas through social accountability and transparency.
- To form a group of civil society members including civil society organization, lawyers, journalists, public departments & institutions, community ingredients etc. to observe and ensure transparency and accountability in disaster response.

### **Agenda:**

- To evaluate aid and support mechanism for flood affected people.
- To assess needs and problems of flood affected people.
- Discuss role of civil society watch group in ensuring social accountability and transparency in disaster response.
- To develop a core accountability strategy for rehabilitation of flood affected communities.

### **Proceeding:**

The purpose of the meeting was to closely observe the overall disaster responsiveness in flood affected areas and define a strategy to make certain disaster response effectiveness for flood affected communities by ensuring social accountability and transparency.

Representatives from different civil society sections including UN humanitarian and disaster response sections (OCHA, WFP), INGOs, media, lawyers, government departments (Social Welfare Department, Rescue 1122) attended the meeting and expressed their viewpoints and concerns on disaster response for flood affected areas in districts of Southern Punjab. Meeting participants agreed that in natural disasters aid

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effectiveness can only be ensured if the process is transparent and accountable to the beneficiaries and is being carefully watched. They asserted that first step to ensure accountability and transparency is assessing the true needs of disaster affectees and creating equilibrium between needs and services.

International, local organization and public departments responding to the disastrous situation shared the progress of disaster response during a recap session to analyze the current efforts being made in affected areas. It was acknowledge that despite of limited resources community response to flood was encouraging. Statistical presentations by community organizations illustrated that 62 out of 93 union councils are severely affected by the recent floods in district Muzaffargarh and 300,000 houses are damaged. NGOs, government departments and army worked to rescue flood affected people but timely measure were not taken to minimize the damage caused by flood.

Food and other daily usage items were provided to the affectees living at the outskirts of flood affected areas whereas those who were stuck in the middle of the affected areas didn't get much. 180 families were registered by the local authorities to get relief goods but 136 families were benefited others were left without any facility. Community workers set poor management and lack of transparency the main reason for ineffective aid distribution and emphasized on improved mutual coordination for the rehabilitation of affected communities.

Social Welfare Department is planned to set up Stakeholders' Groups in all flood affected district for best evaluation and monitoring. SWD provided hygiene kits and food items to the flood affectees and further emphasis was laid on improving the distribution system.

At the end of the meeting it was agreed by all the stakeholders to form a strategic watch group to ensure social accountability and transparency in disaster response.

### Objectives of the watch group:

- To share and improve existing accountability mechanisms with all watch group members.
- To ensure mechanisms in government departments are in line with social accountability and transparency guidelines.

### **Important Decisions:**

- A watch group was formed comprising of beneficiaries from flood affected communities, civil society groups, representatives from UN bodies including OCHA to ensure social accountability and transparency in disaster response.