

DRAFT REPORT

Sphere and HAP International Joint Response to Cyclone Nargis

16-29 July 2008, Myanmar

Reported by:

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1. Context and background

1.1 Background on Cyclone Nargis

In the early hours of 3 May 2008, Cyclone Nargis hit the south west corner of Myanmar. The storm travelled eastwards up the Irrawaddy Delta with great force and winds up to 120 miles per hour. It was estimated to be a category 3 cyclone. The storm surge in part of the delta was reportedly as high as 25 feet in places.

The storm struck Yangon for more than ten hours. Homes were flattened, more sturdy structures damaged, trees uprooted and power lines downed. In rural parts of the country up to 95 per cent of homes were destroyed.

Unofficial UN estimates put the death toll from the cyclone at 216,000 with 2.4 million affected in the 40 most severely impacted townships and approximately 110,000 people living in temporary settlements in 14 townships (UN OCHA May 22). Official government figures put the death toll at 77,738 dead with 55,917 still missing (Check figures). An estimated 2.4 million people were affected by the storm.

This is a situation that the country has not dealt with before and the scale of the needs is clearly massive. Casualty figures continue to rise. It is estimated that more than two million people have lost their homes or been severely affected¹.

The geographical context

Britain conquered Burma over a period of 62 years (1824-1886) and incorporated it into its Indian Empire. Burma was administered as a province of India until 1937 when it became a separate, self-governing colony; independence from the Commonwealth was attained in 1948. Gen. NE WIN dominated the government from 1962 to 1988, first as military ruler, then as self-appointed president, and later as political kingpin. Despite multiparty legislative elections in 1990 that resulted in the main opposition party - the National League for Democracy (NLD) - winning a landslide victory, the ruling junta refused to hand over power.

NLD leader and Nobel Peace Prize recipient Aung San Suu Kyi, who was under house arrest from 1989 to 1995 and 2000 to 2002, was imprisoned in May 2003 and subsequently transferred to house arrest. After Burma's ruling junta in August 2007 unexpectedly increased fuel prices, tens of thousands of Burmese marched in protest, led by prodemocracy activists and Buddhist monks. In late September 2007, the government brutally suppressed the protests, killing at least 13 people and arresting thousands for participating in the demonstrations. Since then, the regime has continued to raid homes and monasteries and arrest persons suspected of participating in the pro-democracy protests. The junta appointed Labor Minister Aung Kyi in October 2007 as liaison to Aung San Suu Kyi, who remains under house arrest and virtually incommunicado with her party and supporters.²

Over half of Burma's population consists of diverse ethnic groups who have substantial numbers of kin in neighbouring countries; Thailand must deal with Karen and other ethnic refugees, asylum seekers, and rebels, as well as illegal cross-border activities from Burma.

¹ International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, <http://www.ifrc.org/what/disasters/response/myanmar-nargis/index.asp>

² CIA World Fact Book, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/bm.html>

In less than three and a half years, Myanmar has been hit by three devastating disasters. First the Indian Ocean tsunami in 2004, then Mala – the 2006 cyclone that had hit the coast of Myanmar with winds of 185 kilometers an hour - and then the worst of them all: Cyclone Nargis.

When Cyclone Nargis hit earlier this year, it was a situation that the country had not dealt with before and the scale of the needs was clearly massive. Casualty figures continue to rise. The International Federation estimates that more than two million people have lost their homes or been severely affected.³

The government of Myanmar has been reluctant to allow in international aid making the humanitarian response extremely difficult and perpetuating the suffering of thousands of people in remote areas throughout the Irrawaddy and Ayeyawaddy deltas.

The Myanmar government has provided international non-governmental organizations, international organizations and the UN with guidelines when providing relief aid in response to Cyclone Nargis. These guidelines were developed by the government and include the Tripartite Core Group (TCG) which consists of high-level representatives of the Myanmar government, the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the UN, as part of the approval processes. The general reaction is a concern that these guidelines are slowing down the relief process. The International Federation and other agencies are meeting with key stakeholders to discuss possible options for streamlining approvals.⁴

The humanitarian community still finds operating in the affected areas extremely challenging because of lack of access and difficult communications. Travel permits to get to the affected areas for foreigners takes up to eight days to process. Therefore monitoring according to international standards is a challenge. Many field workers do not have emergency relief experience prior to Cyclone Nargis and are operating with little guidance on the recognised principles and methodologies used in humanitarian response.

³ International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies,
<http://www.ifrc.org/what/disasters/response/myanmar-nargis/index.asp>

⁴ IFRC Operations Update, 20 June 2008: <http://www.ifrc.org/docs/appeals/08/MDRMM00217.pdf>

2. The Sphere and HAP Joint initiative

Sphere

The Sphere handbook – Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response – includes a Humanitarian Charter which describes the principles on which Sphere⁵ is based, and minimum standards, indicators and guidance notes for use in humanitarian emergencies. There are minimum standards common to all sectors, as well as for the core areas of disaster response:

- Water, sanitation & hygiene promotion
- Food security, nutrition & food aid
- Shelter, settlement and non-food items
- Health services

The purpose of the standards is to improve the quality of assistance provided to people affected by disasters, and to enhance the accountability of the humanitarian system in disaster response. The revised, 2004 edition of the handbook is the product of 18 months' work and the involvement of over 4,000 people in 400 organisations in 80 countries.

Aim of the Consultancy

For the Sphere handbook to improve the quality and accountability of humanitarian response, it needs to be used effectively in emergency situations. Support to people to do this has been identified as an important need. The consultancy will aim to ensure that all relevant agencies are given the opportunity to build their awareness and practice in relation to Sphere standards, alongside other tools for improving quality and accountability (see below, 'Collaboration with HAP Support personnel') so that their work is representative of recognized "best practice" in humanitarian work. It will also be a learning experience informing possible future deployments of Sphere resource personnel.

Collaboration with Humanitarian Accountability Partnership (HAP) Support Personnel

There is a clear demand from NGO staff for integrated and coherent support to improve quality and accountability in the context of the Myanmar Cyclone Nargis Response. A deployment of Sphere and HAP support personnel that goes beyond conducting inter-agency trainings side by side was proposed. In the first week the team of two explored new modalities to provide joint support in future interventions, to maximise the expertise and resources of the two initiatives.

While HAP and Sphere support personnel are jointly identifying and responding to the individual and collective needs of agencies working in Myanmar, this did not exclude the possibility of HAP or Sphere support personnel separately providing support (within a unified framework), if there was a demand for this. The Sphere Handbook and HAP Standard were presented as complementary tools that can be used separately or together.

⁵ Sphere, as used generally in these terms of reference, is three things: a [handbook](#), a broad process of collaboration and an expression of commitment to quality and accountability. It does not refer to either the Sphere Project or the Sphere Board.

Objectives

Working with HAP support personnel:

- To work in close collaboration with national and international agencies responding to the humanitarian crisis, to decide as quickly as possible the most appropriate ways (such as training, coaching, field level advice) to support needs for awareness raising and training on the effective use of Sphere, with the HAP Standard as appropriate.
- To deliver that support, with the aim of improving the quality and accountability of the response.
- To work in close collaboration with others (such as the NGO Liaison Officer, UN Clusters, INGOs, local NGOs and any other ‘quality and accountability’ initiatives such as INEE) who are working on complementary approaches, with a view to mutual learning and sharing of resources as appropriate.
- To identify during the two months of this consultancy the most appropriate ways to establish longer term support, and the funding and personnel that would be required to achieve this.
- To use this experience to advise on lessons learned, and how to improve the provision of similar support in future emergencies.

Activities

2.5.1. Representation and meetings

I was a part of Accountability and Learning Working Group meetings that were held on 16 July and 24 July. It was co-facilitated by HAP and Sphere. Minutes can be found in Annex 1.

A meeting with Karl Dorning, advisor of LRC, Myanmar, he provided a briefing on LRC activities and also discussed possibilities how they can support us to organize Sphere trainings at their venue.

One meeting with Ashim KR. Sarkar, representing an organisation called Lutheran World Service (LWS), India with a view to promoting and strengthening the implementation of the Sphere standards. They are currently working with partner organizations in Myanmar to Nargis Response. He was also interested to know my experience of the Sphere Focal Point Project in Pakistan.

2.5.2. Trainings

A. Initial Briefing on Quality and Accountability

A half-day workshop entitled “Quality and accountability” hosting 22 participants took place in Yangon on 21 July at Local Resource Center training venue. It was prepared and jointly conducted with Hap-I. This was a brief introduction to concepts of quality and accountability for members of the local Support Team that HAP and Sphere resource people are working with. It was the first in a series of meetings, briefings, training workshops and took development sessions.

A description of workshop and the list of participants are available in the Annex 2.

B. Brief Introduction to Quality and Accountability, HAP, Sphere and CoC

A half-day workshop entitled “Introduction to HAP, Sphere Minimum Standards and Code of Conduct” was held with approximately forty participants from 12 implementing partners of ACT. This workshop was held on 23 July at MBC, Yangon. It was an introduction to the concept of Accountability to beneficiaries and introduction to the concept of Sphere standards, Code of Conduct and HAP. As well as a discussion of accountability in practice, and how complaints in Burma are handled in a culturally appropriate way including complaints to regime. See participant list in Annex 3.

C. Introduction to Sphere and HAP

Half day training on “Introduction to Sphere and HAP” was conducted jointly by HAP/Sphere with staff of Local Resource Center (LRC) at their venue on their request. A total of 12 people attended this training to get knowledge on the use of Sphere minimum standards and HAP standards. Annex 4.

The participants got an opportunity to share their experiences in humanitarian response and discussed the basic concepts of quality and accountability in a contextually appropriate manner. They also highlighted some key points to ensure the quality and accountability in humanitarian assistance.

D. Introduction to Sphere (Level-1)

The Sphere Level 1 training was held on 28 July, 2008 at LRC training center, Yangon, Myanmar. Sphere trainers facilitated the workshop for a total of 22 participants from a variety of organizations.

The Sphere Project and HAP are working with the Accountability Learning Working Group to strengthen quality and accountability of the Cyclone Nargis response. Overall, this level 1 training was an introductory session on the Sphere Project and its important and discussed some current trends or events that have impacted our understanding of humanitarianism.



Facilitator introduced the structure of the Sphere handbook as well as key terminologies including Minimum Standards, key indicator, and guidance notes. Participants examined, analyzed, and presented various sections. Please refer to Annex 5 for complete workshop report and participant list.

2.5.3. Experience Sharing of the Sphere Focal Point Project in Pakistan

A case study on sharing the experience of the Sphere Focal Point Project in Pakistan was prepared and shared with a wide range of humanitarian community during the meeting of ALWGA and with the participants of trainings. It could be useful for organisations in Myanmar

who would wish to replicate practically this process in Nargis response or in another emergency.
Annex 6

2.5.4. Developing Data-base of Myanmar Contacts related to Quality & Accountability

The Sphere and HAP representatives worked closely with humanitarian community to accomplish activities during the period of one month. A comprehensive list of all people we interact with - as part of the ALWG, as part of the Core Support Team, UN Cluster meetings and others who attend meetings or trainings, etc was developed on excel sheet. It would help us to sort people and contacts to send emails about a certain topic. We can sort people who attended a specific event, etc. Annex 7

3. Recommendations and Lessons Learned

- Organizations have committed to provide quality and accountability tools translated into Burmese. But this process needs to be speed up and there should be a translation coordination team who can ensure the consistency and quality of translated materials.
- There should be appointed a Q&A Coordinator based in Yangon to provide ongoing support to the humanitarian response in Myanmar after the Sphere and HAP representatives.
- “The level of participants varied greatly in some of the workshops in terms of professional and English-speaking abilities. Workshops should be targeted toward different levels so specific needs can be met.”
- During pre-planning of the workshops, more attention should have been dedicated to the selection of participants. Invitation packages that included detailed information about the training and participant selection criteria should have been distributed well in advance to relevant NGOs, INGOs, and UN. So that the applicants who have not been selected should be informed timely to avoid any hassle during the training.
- There is need to put extra efforts to make a strong networking among active Sphere agents at national levels.
- In future, the lessons learned workshop should be arranged to give Sphere practitioners the opportunity to share and learn from each others’ experiences. It will also help to plan and inform Sphere and HAP future planning and strategies in Myanmar.
- To assist agencies to receive feedback from community so that they can further improve their response in future keeping in mind this lessons learned.
- Sphere and HAP jointly was an efficient way to raise awareness on quality and accountability in disaster response to the humanitarian community. Individuals and organizations have choice to select which Q&A initiatives they are interested to consider during Nargis response.
- It has been a great value to link experiences and lessons from other initiatives, such as the Sphere Focal Point Project in Pakistan during meetings, trainings and ALWG event. People appreciated it greatly and showed interest to know more about it so that a case study was developed to give them a clear picture to learn.

4. Proposed Actions Plans

- More Sphere Level 1 trainings will be repeated with various others NGO, INGO and UN as it is on high demands. After that Sphere ToT will be held with a selective group of participants who have attended “Initial Briefing on Q&A” and “Sphere Level 1” trainings to prepare a pool of resource persons in Myanmar.
- Attend UN Clusters meetings and conduct brief sessions to raise awareness on sphere minimum standards and HAP.
- Coordination with other quality and accountability initiatives such as INEE.
- Need to strengthen a good network of Myanmar NGOs for better communication.
- Sphere and HAP representatives should assist Q&A Tool Translation Coordination Team (people from five agencies who expressed interest and have begun translation of quality and accountability tools) to ensure consistency and quality.

Annex 1: ALWG Meeting

Accountability and Learning Working Group

Meeting minutes Wednesday, 16 July 2008

Agenda

1. Prioritisation of activities with HAP-Sphere
2. Confirmation of the ToR and members of the Support Team (core group)
3. Share latest on specific agency efforts to implement basic accountability measures
4. Special topic: How are agencies using the media to share information and how can existing options be maximised: what messages/type of information, what audiences.
5. Gender considerations from Protection of Women and Children Working Group
6. Integrated Monitoring Matrix
7. Translation of relevant materials
8. Next meeting: July 24, Thursday, 10:30-12:30

Participants

A total of 30 (thirty) participants attended, from: ACT, ActionAid, Alliance, CBI, Christian Aid, CWS P/A, Diakonia, ICCD, KMSS, LTC, MERLIN, NCA, Oxfam, REAM, Save the Children, STH, UNDP, World Concern, World Vision. **(With translation)**

1. Prioritisation of activities with HAP-Sphere

The group identified in what areas their respective organisations would benefit from briefings and training related to humanitarian accountability and quality management, including the implementation of Sphere Standards.

There are two options for the initial briefing on Quality and Accountability (2 ½ hours):

- Monday, 21 July, 13:00 – 15:30 at the LRC
- Wednesday, 23 July, 10:00 – 12:30 at the MBC. This meeting is hosted by ACT for their implementing partners so there may be some limitations on space.

For the core Support Team (see below), this meeting is the foundation of all other activities. This meeting is open to everyone. Please notify mblagescu@googlemail.com and shabanabhtt@gmail.com.

Don't forget to send in your requests for training as per the attachment.

2. Confirmation of the ToR and members of the Support Team (core group)

The HAP/Sphere resource staff will work closely with a core group of max 25 primarily national staff from INGOs, MNGOs, CBOs and the UN to build their capacity as a local support team. They will act as a national resource and advisory group on how to implement good quality programs and improve accountability to disaster-affected communities.

Some organisations have put forward names for this group, others are yet to do so. For the latter, please send in the name and contact details of this person as soon as possible. They will also attend the briefing next week (as above).

There will be some overlap between the Support Team and the ALWG (which will require less time commitment from its members). Tools developed by the Support Team will be shared with the ALWG on a regular basis. It was suggested that members of the Support Team will also play an active role in representing the ALWG and the Support Team at cluster meetings and other relevant coordination and

planning meetings, to ensure that the issue of humanitarian accountability and quality programming remains high on the agenda.

If you would like another copy of the Terms of Reference to be sent to you, let Monica know.

3. Share latest on specific agency efforts to implement basic accountability measures

World Vision: returned from a field visit to Pyapone, where they discussed primarily with staff the type of processes that can be piloted to strengthen humanitarian accountability. Currently choosing location to pilot the following:

- Mobile information boards at distribution points; they will also produce some leaflets and flyers for program-specific information
- Mobile suggestion boxes: to be managed by staff that are trained specifically for this task

Community volunteers are also selected by World Vision to enable better engagement with and feedback from disaster-affected communities

MERLIN

- Labuta ½ day training workshop
- Mapping different ways in which assessments are conducted and feedback provided at community level
- International staff training national staff on focus group discussion techniques, how to identify focus groups, etc
- Working through community health workers as channels for collecting feedback from communities

Save the Children

- Visit to Twantay to explore options for strengthening interaction with community based on the work to date of the local staff
- Office visibility: desirable or not? Can affect relation to other institutions. However, at one location, the head master raised a board which identified the temporary school as a Save the Children project
- Locals walking long distance to get to the Save office and provide feedback
- High level of community participation in project planning and implementation; collaboration between Parent-Teacher Associations, school management committees and Save

The group discussed:

- The importance of INGOs working closely with the communities to understand how feedback is currently provided and how information is shared
- Other appropriate means of communication such as loudspeakers should be explored
- Challenges of seeking approval from local authorities when any information is publicly displayed
- Feedback mechanisms as a risk management strategy; communities will raise their issues with the INGO/MNGO directly rather than approach other institutions, the NGOs will be able to address issues before they escalate
- Sensitivities around feedback mechanisms: they need to be clearly explained and their function clarified (what constitutes a valid concern, what type of feedback is sought, regarding what issue)
- Need to use a combination of approaches for collecting feedback; organisation-specific, inter-agency, through CBOs (such as the LRC pilots)
- Use national staff from the location where the project takes place as opposed to staff from other locations; they will not always understand the local sensitivities

- What is possible at one location may not be possible at another

4. **Special topic: How are agencies using the media to share information** and how can existing options be maximised: what messages/type of information, what audiences.

This topic was not covered and a few highlights were raised:

- At times, mass media using their own agenda rather than the humanitarian community using mass media to disseminate public interest messages
- Need to sensitise and raise the awareness of journalists on the basics of humanitarian action and the humanitarian imperative

UNDP, Save the Children, MERLIN, World Vision and others will send through details on how they have used mass media (radio, print, etc) to disseminate information. Let Monica know who to contact in your organisation to start building a shared understanding of what is or is not possible in this regard and where the opportunities lie.

5. **Gender considerations from Protection of Women and Children Working Group**

The Working Group circulated a 1-page document. This is attached here. A translation will be circulated shortly.

6. **Integrated Monitoring Matrix**

For next meeting on July 24, all ALWG participants to prepare suggestions on how the ALWG can start collecting and collating information for the Integrated Monitoring Matrix - the Accountability part.

7. **Translation of relevant materials**

KMSS, World Vision, MERLIN, World Concern met to discuss some of the basics for moving forward with higher quality translation of materials from English. The following were agreed as steps to be followed:

- The LRC will maintain an inventory and the masters of any translated work
 - Before any organisation starts a new translation, notify the LRC to
 - Notify them of the full title of the document that you are planning to translate
 - Check whether the document has already been translated
 - Check whether anyone is working on a translation of the same document
 - If no translation exists and nobody has started translation, communicate the proposed timeline, when a draft will be ready to share with the LRC and the contact details of the person in charge of translation
 - In as far as possible, aim for a two-way translation of the document to check quality
 - Any document that is being translated / is in circulation will have:
 - Name of the translating organisation
 - Version number
 - Date last updated
 - Contact details
 - Once a draft translation is available, it will go to LRC
 - LRC will explore options for having a “testing group” and convene a quality control group
 - LRC will update the inventory to indicate document translated and the material will be disseminated accordingly
8. Next meeting: July 24, Thursday. Location and time to be confirmed after checking availability with the LRC.

Annex 2: Summary Notes for Participants

Briefing session on Quality & Accountability:

13:00-15:30, 21 July 2008

Local Resource Center, Yangon

1. BACKGROUND

This was a brief introduction to concepts of quality and accountability for members of the local Support Team that HAP and Sphere resource people are working with. It was the first in a series of meetings, briefings, training workshops and tool development sessions.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose for this initial briefing is two-fold: 1) To give participants an opportunity to share their experiences in humanitarian response and 2) To briefly introduce some of the basic concepts of quality and accountability in a contextually appropriate manner, and the support being offered from HAP and Sphere in Myanmar.

3. OBJECTIVES

By the end of the session, participants will:

- Have developed a shared understanding of what defines quality and accountability in the Myanmar context
- Agree on some of the key terms/concepts in the local language
- Know about some of the international quality and accountability initiatives, HAP and Sphere included
- Decide next steps in their engagement with the HAP/Sphere resource people

4. AGENDA and KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

A. QUALITY, ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITY

Participants were divided into four groups and discussed a daily life scenario. The purpose of this exercise was to enable participants to define basic key elements of accountability and how accountability relates to quality and responsibility. The real life situation was then translated into a discussion in the context of humanitarian work in Myanmar.

Summary of discussion

- A good quality product does not guarantee a satisfied customer. The quality of the process matters too.
- In any relationship, responsibility lies with both parties – the service provider and the customer. However, for the customer to be able to raise an issue, there needs to be an understanding of the service on offer.
- From here the idea of informed consent, i.e. the customer can only make a decision and agree to a service, when that service and its expected consequences are understood.
- We as aid agencies are busy, rushed and don't always tell the beneficiaries what we are going to do and the impact this will have on their lives.
- Too often, we assume the responsibility to deliver certain work just because we consider ourselves "experts" without anyone having asked or consented that we go ahead with that work.
- There is an implied need to clarify expectations on both sides and that can only happen if the following take place:
 - Agencies are transparent and communicate relevant information to communities

- Agencies engage with communities; they listen to them and respond to their voices before they take action
- Agencies make a promise to continuously address feedback from communities, including in relation to unwanted/unexpected circumstances and behaviors

Myanmar – how to describe accountability:

(Highlights from the discussion)

- It is about responding to a need,
- Providing information on a proposal to address the need,
- Seeking approval on how the need is being address
- Acting accordingly

- Accountability is about being respectful, treating communities with dignity , responding to the needs of disaster-affected communities and enabling them to have a say in decisions that affect their lives
- Accountability is about a continuous dialogue asking several key questions, including:
 - Are we doing the right think for those we want to serve? / have we set ourselves the right targets by engaging communities that will be affected by our work?
 - Are we doing it in the right way? Have we chosen the most appropriate approach in delivering our work?

B. QUALITY & ACCOUNTABILITY INITIATIVES

The objectives of this session was to familiarize the members of the Quality and Accountability Support Team with other initiatives so they understand what other tools there are available and they are able to make a more informed decision on what to use in their future role as a resource team for the NGO community in Myanmar. The following quality and accountability initiatives were briefly discussed.

SCHR 1971

- Voluntary alliance, now of 9 of the largest organisations
- Began peer review in 2003

NGO Code of Conduct – 1994

- Principle 9 ‘we will hold ourselves accountable to those we seek to assist and from those we accept resources’



People in Aid 1995

- Improving human resource management in the sector, including staff consultation and capacity building and training
- Today an organisation of about 100 members

Website: <http://www.peopleinaid.org>

ALNAP – 1997 Sector-wide active learning membership network to improve Q&A by sharing lessons, identifying common problems and building consensus

- Today an organisation of full & observer members

Website: <http://www.odi.org.uk/alnap>

Sphere Project – 1997

- Humanitarian Charter, standards, indicators, guidance notes in 4 sectors
- Today 16 member board and a learning programme

Website: www.sphereproject.org

HAP-I – Humanitarian Accountability Partnership

- Started in 1998, formalised as a Partnership in 2003 to strengthen the quality and accountability of humanitarian action.

The mission of HAP is to make humanitarian action more accountable to its intended beneficiaries through self-regulation, compliance verification and quality assurance certification

- It now has 22 member agencies that have made a formal commitment to comply with, and report against, the Principles of Accountability and 4 associate members. Of these, 5 have been certified of compliance with the [HAP Standard](#).
- “accountability is the means by which power is used responsibly”

Website: <http://www.hapinternational.org>

Good humanitarian donorship 2003

- Seeks to define the principles that should inform donors’ practice

Website: <http://www.goodhumanitariandonorship.org/>

Emergency Capacity Building Project

- 7 agencies working to improve emergency response and preparedness.
- Focus areas: Risk reduction, staff capacity, accountability and impact measurement and Information and Technology Requirements.
- Focus on learning, testing good practice, sharing results with the humanitarian sector.

Website: <http://www.ecbproject.org>

INEE

- INEE's Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies, Chronic Crises and Early Reconstruction The minimum standards are the result of two years of consultative work facilitated by the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies' (INEE) Working Group on Minimum Standards, involving over 2,250 individuals from more than 50 countries.
- The standards represent a universal tool to define a minimum level of educational quality and help ensure the right to education for people affected by crisis. The Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies comprise five categories: minimum standards common to all categories, access and learning environment, teaching and learning, teachers and other education personnel and education policy and coordination.

Website: <http://www.ineesite.org>

Quality Compass, Group URD

Website: <http://www.urd.org>

The facilitators summarised the session and each quality and accountability initiative was explained in more detail. Work developed by the Sphere Project and the Humanitarian Accountability Partnership (HAP) will be explored in more detail in future workshops and through practical application in working groups.

5. EVALUATION

Participants were asked to share their individual level of satisfaction at the end of the session. The results were positive. The only qualitative feedback was to use more practical examples, which the team will do in subsequent sessions.

Facilitators

Annie Lloyd, Sphere Project Consultant
alloyd1704@gmail.com

Monica Blagescu, HAP International Field Representative mblagescu@gmail.com

Shabana Bhatti, Sphere Focal Person, CWS Pakistan/Afghanistan
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Annex 3: List of Participants to the Initial Briefing on Quality and Accountability, July 21, LRC

Name	Organization	Job Title	Phone	E-mail	Tick if you are the part of core team
Achini Adikaram	World Vision	Hat Manager		Achini_adikaram@wvi.org	√
Isabelle Risso-Gill	Merlin	MRT Assistant	095154942	isabelle@merlin.org.uk	
Nan Myat Thoder	Merlin	Country Director Assistant	095183936	pa@merlin-myanmar.org	
Thin Thin Lyat	Merlin	Finance & Admin Manager	095142733	Myanmar-fm@merlin.org.uk	
U Thi Myt	UNDP	M&E Expert			
Hilda Thin Thi Lcyr	UNDP	Programme Analyst	512910-9	Hilda.t.t.lcyr@gmail.com Hilda.t.t.kya@undp.org	√
Naw Gah Htoo	UNDP	Programme Assistant	542910-9 ext. 315	Naw.gay.htoo@undp.org	√
U Tha	UNDP	M&E Specialist	095071517	Iyawlu2005@gmail.com	√
Ngwe thein	CBI	Project Manager	537888	cbigm@myanmar.com.mm	√
Aung Min	REAM		01703072	Aangmin72.mp@gmail.com	√
Tin Tin Yee	NCA	National Program Crd	095155136	ttinyee@gmail.com	
Nang San Kham	Diakonia	Liaison Officer	0950-00675	diakonia@myanmar.com.mm	
Hlang Myat	CBI	Information Officer	09-5053917	cbiinfo@myanmar.com.mm	√
U Aung Myint	REAM	General Secretary	223405	Am-ream@myanmar.com.mm	
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Annex 4: List of Participants to the Introduction to Sphere and Code of Conduct, July 23, MBC

Name	Organization	Job Title	Phone	E-mail	Tick if you are the part of core team
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Name	Organization	Job Title	Phone	E-mail	Tick if you are the part of core team
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S Aung Htetlin	PKC	Project Officer	-	-	
Ye Ltut	LA	Project Coordinator	0951-26957		
Aung Aung	LA	Translator	-	oo.aungaung@gmail.com	Interested but have to take permission from his organisation

Annex 5: List of Participants to the Introduction to Sphere and HAP, July 25, LRC

Name	Organization	Job Title	E-mail	Phone
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Annex 6: Sphere training, Level 1: Training Report

Yangon, 28 July 2008 at LRC

Facilitators:

Annie Lloyd: Sphere Project (Consultant)

Shabana Bhatti: Sphere Focal Point Pakistan (CWS)
(hosted in Myanmar by Save the Children)

Background

As part of the need to strengthen quality and accountability of the Cyclone Nargis response; the Sphere Project and HAP are working with the Accountability Learning Working Group. This level 1 training was an introductory session on the Sphere Project and there is the possibility for participants to do further training on Sphere, including a Sphere Trainers of Trainers (ToT) course. There are also possibilities of workshops on Humanitarian Accountability and Quality management (HAP benchmarks).

Objectives of the workshop:

At the end of the workshop, you will be able to:

- Discuss some current trends or events that have impacted our understanding of humanitarianism
- Describe why the Sphere Project is important
- Discuss the Sphere Project's structure and process
- Describe the Sphere handbook's basic structure
- Describe the difference between Minimum standards, Key indicators and Guidance notes

Participants:

There were 29 participants from a variety of organisations. The list of participants is attached in annex 1. Twenty six participants completed evaluation forms.

Content of the training:

- Introduction: The participants listed (using 'post-its' on a flipchart) their knowledge about the Sphere project (most knew nothing about it or only a little) and their expectations - and these were checked against the objectives.
- Humanitarianism, accountability, the history and structure of the Sphere project: using PowerPoint slides, brainstorming, discussion & a film
- The handbook: Each participant received a copy of the Sphere handbook, and went through the handbook to understand the content & structure.
- Common standards: group exercise, looking at the 8 Common standards with examples of the relevance to work here in Myanmar.
- Standards, indicators, guidance notes: PowerPoint slides & examples to understand the meaning and difference.
- Application of Sphere: group exercise, brainstorming how the Sphere handbook can be used, e.g. for assessments, monitoring etc.
- Translations of the handbook: various translations are being done, and the aim is to pull all these together. LRC will be focal point.
- Action points: each participant wrote one action point they would do in the next month, following this training.

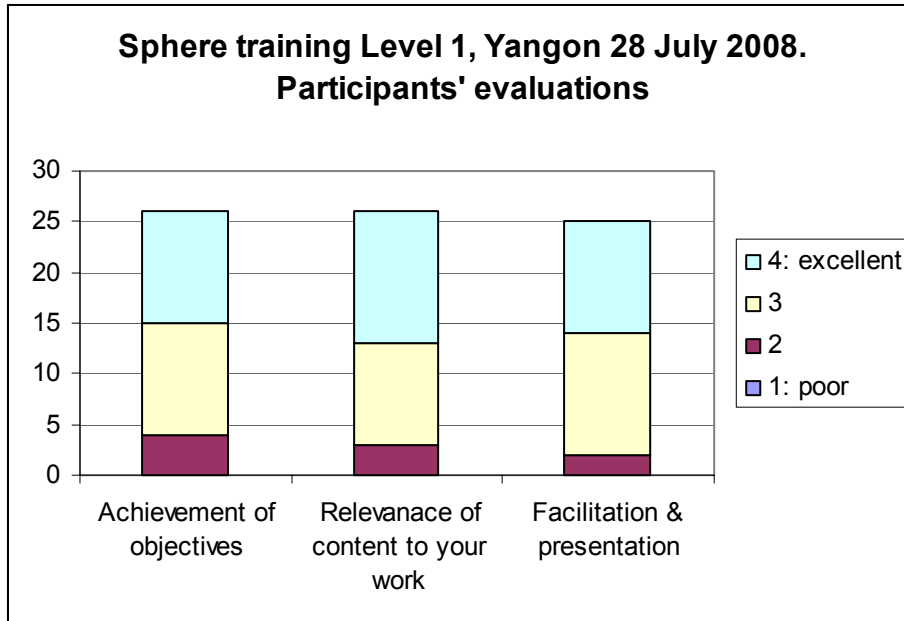
Review, wrap-up and complete evaluation forms.

Main messages:

- Politics, funding, competition, growing demand for resources, and our own past failures all influence the way organisations and individuals aim to develop professionalism in the humanitarian sector.
- The humanitarian context always remains an essential factor when planning humanitarian responses.
- There are hundreds of organisations and people who have contributed to the Sphere Project and the content of the Sphere handbook.
- The Sphere Project is a process, one output of which is the Sphere handbook
- The Sphere handbook when used intelligently, can contribute to improving the effectiveness of humanitarian organisations.
- There is logic to the structure of the handbook that makes it clear and easy to use.
- There are hundreds of organisations and people who have contributed to the Sphere Project and the content of the Sphere handbook.
- The Humanitarian Charter is a statement of values for humanitarian organisations, based on existing international legal instruments
- Minimum standards build on the Humanitarian Charter. They are **universal goals for helping people achieve the right to life with dignity**
- Key indicators are observable signals that the minimum standards have been achieved and serve as **tools**. These are intended to be universal. However, there may be certain situations where specific indicators may not be appropriate, or met. Where this happens, it is important to explain why the indicator has not been used or achieved.
- Guidance notes assist when applying and adapting key indicators, and provide additional information.
- The Humanitarian Charter, minimum standards, and key indicators are useful throughout the humanitarian project cycle, and present opportunities for organisations to build capacity in a number of areas.
- The proper use of the Sphere handbook requires a thorough humanitarian contextual analysis.
- One of the benefits of using standards is that it reduces bias in assessments, leading to improved quality.
- Use of the Sphere handbook in the field has contributed greatly to the Sphere process.

Participants' evaluations:

As can be seen by the graph below, the majority of the participants felt the objectives were achieved (42% marked 'excellent'), the training was relevant to their work,(50% marked 'excellent') and were happy with the facilitation and training (42% marked 'excellent'). The participants ranked these questions 1 (poor) to 4 (excellent). Very few marked 2, and no one marked 1 for poor.



Comments on the evaluation forms: –

What improvements/changes should be made for another workshop:

- More group work.
- Anne you are great & I really enjoyed today training. Thank you very much. Shabana thank you for sharing your experience from Pakistan
- Start time. People came in late. Reminders should be sent to participants next time so it won't start late. Good training, very little use of acronyms!! If translation is needed, participants should be grouped together with at least one person who may be able to translate.
- We need more time frame and input about Sphere project so that proper discussion can come out at next workshop. This kind of workshop should be held for humanitarian workers
- More skills & training to have capacity-building in humanitarian expected to be an effective service from me to people. If the clients/audience have to state.... answers, the hard copies are needed to be delivered before because this is a delicate as well as a technical one to observe and comprehend thoroughly about this noble project. Training on this project will be really beneficial for social work, the spirited effort for the humanity and well-being, I firmly believe.
- It would be more interesting if you use more pictures written on flipcharts. This is the first time training related to accountability and quality issues for disaster related things. It is better than what I've expected and thank you for giving me the chance to participate; I believe that I could contribute to the success of Sphere project.
- Start early
- Translation is very important to receive details for language is difficult to understand.
- There should be a specific translator, as today translator is not a real translator, I mean he is also a participant and it is a little bit difficult.
- for another workshop, I want to suggest is to give more information about the Sphere project
- So far so good, interesting & fruitful training
- Classes should be divided for those who need translation and who need not. Translation makes the temp slower.
- It is my fault that I don't know clearly the objective of this workshop and what Sphere is, but, after clear discussion, I'm really interested. It would be more

convenient for both parties if the objectives and other training content are already translated and the participants carefully selected.

- Need more workshops; I would like to attend from Sphere because Sphere gives me many things I knew, before I don't know.
- To share some reading materials before the workshop
- Want to learn from past experience
- don't check a name exactly because of dignity
- More longer time with many examples
- All people don't understand the 'common-standard exercise very well. Indicator: not all the examples are what you want (could be a language problem), this needs to be fixed. The term "accountability" should be clarified. In Myanmar, combinations of different INGOs = accountability.
- Anyway, your objectives are very good, whatever you do are best. Thank you for your kind training.
- From my point of view, the workshop is really nice and useful. However, it will be better if the trainers could adapt the participants' conflict and arguments more vulnerably. What I found out was that some of them debated in some irrelevant issues, this may be because of the language barrier. Anyway, the workshop was nice.

Comments from the facilitators

The training seemed to go well, although the organisation could be improved, splitting participants into different groups, with those who need translation together; but this was difficult to organise. It would be good to get some key points like 'accountability' translated. It may be better to replace the exercise on the application of Sphere with an exercise on looking at the Technical chapters, to encourage participants to be more familiar with the content of the handbook. The training room was good, although the group was quite large.

Next steps:

- There is another Level 1 training taking place on 11th August at the LRC. Please tell others and anyone who wants a place – email me.
- There is a Sphere Training of Trainers (ToT); planned to take place on 8th, 9th, 14th, 15th & 16th. If you wish to apply, please see the attached information and reply to me as soon as possible, places will be selected by end of Tuesday.
- Everyone should look at their pink cards with the planned activity in the beginning of September & email me and the rest of the group on their progress!
- If anyone/agency wants further support concerning the Sphere project, please do email me.

Annex 7: Case study

This case study is aimed at sharing the experience of the Sphere Focal Point Project in Pakistan. It could be useful for organisations in Myanmar who would wish to replicate practically this process in Nargis response or in another emergency.

The Sphere Project

The Sphere Project was launched in 1997 by a group of humanitarian NGOs and the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement. The Sphere handbook – *Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response* – includes a Humanitarian Charter which describes the rights of people affected by a disaster, and minimum standards, indicators and guidance notes for use in humanitarian emergencies.

The purpose of the standards is to improve the quality of assistance provided to the people affected by disasters, and to enhance the accountability of the humanitarian system in disaster response. However, the Sphere handbook is to be used taking into account the specific context of the affected populations and their indigenous coping mechanisms.

The Sphere Focal Point Project in Pakistan

For the first time in response to a new emergency, the Sphere Board agreed to field a Sphere Focal Point for four weeks during the first three months of the response to the South Asia earthquake, October 2005. Two Sphere specialist trainers shared this consultancy, and were hosted during November and December 2005 by Church World Service-Pakistan/Afghanistan (CWS-P/A), based in Islamabad, Pakistan.

The aim of the Sphere Focal Point position was to ensure that all relevant agencies were given the opportunity to develop their awareness and make necessary changes in the practice in relation to Sphere standards, so that their work was representative of recognised “best practice” in humanitarian assistance. It was also a learning experience for the Sphere Board and office. In addition, it has informed the possible establishment of a protocol for supporting 'new emergencies' in future.

Based on the positive response to the work of the initial Sphere Focal Point deployments, and continuing demand for training and support on the use of Sphere in the response to the earthquake, CWS-P/A employed a Sphere Focal Point for a period of 6 months ending December 2006. During this time, the post holder was supported by three periods of up to 4 weeks each by an International Training and Sphere Specialist (ITSS). The link with the earlier work carried out by the Sphere focal point position fielded by the Sphere Board was important, and the care was taken to maintain contact with representatives in Pakistan of the initial contributing agencies. Their ongoing commitment to supporting more effective implementation of Sphere in the earthquake response provided a sound basis for six months project period. Needs expressed by agencies and requests made by counterparts for follow-up to Sphere initiatives were the driving factors to extend the role of the Sphere Focal Point for the next two years.

The Role of the Sphere Focal Point is to:

- a) Improve the quality and accountability of the response to those affected by the disaster, by ensuring that all relevant agencies are given the opportunity to develop their awareness and practice in relation to Sphere standards.
- b) Share the learning and experience of using Sphere standards in this context, with a view to informing similar work in future emergencies.
- c) Help organizations developing an understanding of the application of Sphere approach and process to ensure quality in disaster related interventions.
- d) Ensure the close links between Sphere and other relevant initiatives on quality and accountability and the value of working together for improved quality and accountability.

The Sphere Focal Point Project activities have included the following:

- a) **Capacity Development:** Capacities are central to implementation of Sphere. Sphere training program (briefings, 1 to 3 days orientation trainings, 5-day ToT & lessons learned follow-up

workshops) has been designed and implemented to develop capacities of the local community, INGOs, UN and local government officials on emergency preparedness and response including Sphere Standards, 'The Code of Conduct', 'Accountability' (in coordination with HAP-I). So far 536 humanitarian aid workers have been trained on sphere minimum standards.

- b) **Liaison with the Sphere Project Office in Geneva** has been maintained to share the learning and experience of implementing Sphere standards in this context, providing to the Sphere office information and advice on the best way to manage such initiatives in future.
- c) **Production & Dissemination of Sphere Material:** Sphere handbook has been translated and published (Urdu/Pashto/Dari languages) to increase the access to and understanding of implementing Sphere standards in a variety of local contexts. The sphere poster translated in Urdu language and a leaflet as compendium of Sphere handbook for easy reference and raising awareness on key issues have also been compiled, printed and disseminated. A total of 3,417 books in various languages and other material have been distributed so far.
- d) **Technical Support:** Continuous support has been provided to relevant agencies to meet Sphere standards. The technical support includes, but has not been limited to, advising, training and coaching individuals who have been identified as focal points or resource persons on Sphere.
- e) **Coordination and Networking:** Coordination and links with other 'Quality and Accountability' initiatives involved in disaster preparedness and response such as Humanitarian Accountability Partnership-International (HAP-I), INEE, and Groupe URD (Kabul) have been particularly vital in taking forward the agenda of quality and accountability. In addition to holding joint seminars and conferences on quality and accountability, periodic communication and participation at trainings and other events have been ensured
- f) **Representation:** The Sphere Focal Point has been regularly representing Sphere at coordination meetings (such as UN, Government, local and international NGOs, etc.) and selected cluster meetings, with a view to promoting and strengthening the implementation of the Sphere standards.
- g) **Compliance:** Assessing the compliance with Sphere minimum standards has been critical. The Sphere Focal Point has contributed to developing methods to monitor and assess, and if possible the impact, of the effective use of Sphere. An Inter-agency Sphere Review has already been conducted in collaboration with Care International and the World Vision. The aim of the review was to determine whether or not the selected projects were in compliance with Sphere Standards. It was a learning experience for all involved including individual agencies and staff, community members, and the Sphere Project.

Lessons Learned

- After the ToT, Sphere graduates need ongoing support to conduct their own trainings. The Sphere Focal Point has been offering support in designing and conducting training jointly with their staff and implementing partners, and, as a result, has built a strong network of Sphere trainers across Pakistan.
- The Sphere training is currently designed with deliberate emphasis on disaster response; however, there is a strong need to put equal emphasis on disaster preparedness. Therefore, the possibility of a separate workshop for Sphere on disaster preparedness and monitoring and evaluation has to be explored.
- Needs to put extra efforts to make a strong networking among active Sphere agents at national and the regional levels.

Annex 8: Myanmar Contact related to Quality & Accountability

Sr.#	Name	Organisation	Job title	Email	Phone number	AFFILIATIONS AND ACTIVITIES ATTENDED (insert number 1 if attended and 2 if planning to attend)							Other notes
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1	Achini Adikaram	World Vision	HA Manager	abini_adikaram@wvi.org		1	1	1			2		
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4	Alexandra Levaditis	World Vision	HA Associate Director	Alexandra_levaditis@wvi.org	98030550	1							
5	Alison Maccoll	Help Age International		amaccoll@helpage.org							2		
6	Andrew Kirkwood	Save the Children		akirkwood@savechildren.org.mm								Steering Committee for NGO Liaison	These people should be CC'd on any HAP/Sphere activities in Myanmar
7	Antonio Massella	OCHA	Deputy Head of Office	Massella@un.org		1							
8	Ashim KR. Sarkar	Lutheran World Service, India	Project Coordinator	indianargisresponse@gmail.com	95-1-535205, 524387, 503734			1					
9	Aung Aung	LA	Translator	oo.aungaung@gmail.com	-			1					
10	Aung Kyaw Kyaw	World Vision	Program Officer	Aung_kyaw_kyaw@wvi.org	525191			1					
11	Aung Min	REAM		Aangmin72.mp@gmail.com	1703072		1	1					
12	Aung Moe Kyaw	MBCU	Project Officer	Aungmk9@gmail.com , mbcu@mptmail.net.mm	01-211278, 215875			1					
13	Aung Moe Then	LRC	Technical Officer		95116194			1					
14	Aye Myat Thu	LRC	Information Management Crd	amt1983@gmail.com				1					
15	Ben Ford	Action Aid		benford@fastmail.fm		1							
16	Birke	Malteser		birkeh@malteser-myanmar.org.mm							2	requesting one-one assistance from HAP/Sphere	

17	Carla Brewing Ton	HER	Director	burntwords@gmail.com		1								
18	Caroline Hotham	OXFAM	Deputy Country Director (Programmes)	carolinehotham@googlemail.com	095 25 14 95	1	1	2	2	2				He will nominate his staff to attend these meetings.
19	Chessy Naing	STH	Asst. Coordinator	Ms.chessy111@gmail.com	665713	1								
20	Choo Kyaw Thu	Alliance		choophuah@alliance.org.mm		1					2		requesting one-one assistance from HAP/Sphere	
21	Christine Taylor	UNDP	Communications	Christine.taylor@undp.org	542910-9	1								
22	Claire Light	OXFAM		clight@myanmar.com.mm									Steering Committee for NGO Liaison	These people should be CC'd on any HAP/Sphere activities in Myanmar
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24	Daire	Care Myanmar		daire@care.org.mm	095-058630					2				
25	Dan Baker	HC		baker@unfpa.org									UN Contact	
26	Daw Aye Aye San	Myitta Mon			291 491, 291491						2			CBI hand-delivered this name to Monica after MNGO meeting
27	Daw Cho Thiri Aung	MWEA			09 5011 913						2			CBI hand-delivered this name to Monica after MNGO meeting
28	Daw Khin Thet Maw	MWEA			09 5011 913						2			CBI hand-delivered this name to Monica after MNGO meeting
29	Daw Sane Sane	REAM	CEC	dawsanesane@gmail.com	223405	1								
30	Daw Yi Yi Win	SVS			392 146/ 09 80 24741						2			CBI hand-delivered this name to Monica after MNGO meeting
31	Dayko	Alliance	PSO	orangutana@gmail.com	556002	1		1						
32	Dr. Allan Saw	CA	Emergency Programme Officer, Burma	allancasaw@gmail.com	95146786			1						
33	Dr. Handel	Pwo Kener Cong	Information Officer	hondelthomy@gmail.com	09-5098606			1						
34	Dr. Kyaw Thu	Alliance		kyawthu@alliance.org.mm	1555653			1	2	2				
35	Dr. maung Maung Sein	HDU Project, UNDP	M&E Specialist	Maung.maung.sein@undp.org	01-503902			1						

36	Dr. Pyae Phyo Aug	LRC	Technical Support Officer	www.jjh9999@gmail.com		1		1					
37	Dr. Taw Moc	TLMI	Country Operation Manager	scum@tlmi_in_myanmar.org	2970911, 095157781			1					
38	Dr. Wah Wah Lynn	LRC	Technical Supprt Officer	wunnalynn@gmail.com	95029802			1					
39	Eduardo Klien	HelpAge International	Regional representative	eduardo@helpageasia.org mcpu@helpageasia.org				1					Sending his 2 staff.
40	Eric	IRC		eric.james@theirc.org							2		
41	Eric Johnson	ACT	Coordinator	ejo@dca.dk merocoordinator@gmail.com	09 500 5490								
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43	Genevieve	World Vision	DME Coordinator	Naw_genevieve@wvi.org	525191			1			2		
44	Gerry Fox	Pyoepin (British Council)		gerry.fox@pyoepin.org		1							
45	Hannah Reichardt	Save the Children	M&E Officer	h.reichardt@savethechildren.org.uk		1							
46	Hew	Mercy Malaysia		eddyhew@gmail.com	2099171						2	2	
47	Hilda Thin Thi Lcyr	UNDP	Programme Analyst	Hilda.t.t.lcyr@gmail.com , Hilda.t.t.kya@undp.org	512910-9	1	1						
48	Hint Wat Yee	PMA	Accountant	hninwutyeeek@gmail.com				1					
49	Hlang Myat	CBI	Information Officer	cbiinfo@myanmar.com.mm	09-5053917		1	1					
50	Hnin Phyn Kaung	TLMI	TSU Manger	tsu@tlmi_in_myanmar.org	297091			1					
51	Hoosein Kader	CMRFT	President	kader@myanmar.com.mm	09-80-30873		1	1					
52	Hussain Qadir	Cholia Muslim Religious Fund Trust	President		98030873						2		
53	Isabelle Risso-Gill	MERLIN	MRT Assistant	isabelle@merlin.org.uk	95145942	1		1					
54	Ja Tum Seng	OXFAM	Po	Proff-c@myanmar.com.mm	95174256		1	1					
55	Julie Belanger	Field Coordination		julie.belanger@undp.org									UN Contact

56	Justin Corbett	Paung Ku		jcorbett@savechildren.org.mm		1							
57	Karl Dorning	LRC	Advisor	karl@myanmar.com.mm	95177371	1		1					For his staff, LRC
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60	Khin Maung Lwin	Care Myanmar		kmlwin@care.org.mm		1				2			
61	Khin Mg Htwe	MBCU	Project Officer	Hwak85@gmail.com , mbcu@mptmail.net.mm	95-1-211278, 215875			1					
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