



Impact Assessment Report

Strengthening Emergency Response Capacity of Local Humanitarian NGOs in Asia

A Project by National Humanitarian Network (NHN), Pakistan

March to December 2018

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Abbreviations

ADPC	Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre
APP	Asian Preparedness Partnership
BMGF	Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
DRC	Disaster Resource Centre
NDRP	National Disaster Management Plan
NGOs	Non-Government Organizations
NHN	National Humanitarian Network
PRP	Pakistan Resilience Partnership



Executive Summary

Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC) with support from Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) is implementing the program ‘Strengthening Capacity of Government, Local Humanitarian Organizations and the Private Sector on Preparedness for Response in Asia’ in 6 South and South-East Asian countries namely; Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Philippines and Myanmar. The program’s goal is to strengthen the emergency response capacities in these countries to better prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters. With the commencement of planned activities, it was envisioned that emergency response capacities in these countries will have improved.

This assessment report is geared to gauge the improvement in emergency response capacity of Pakistan’s Government, local humanitarian organizations and private sector; in the wake of activities conducted by the project from March to December 2018. The activities of the program were conducted under three thematic areas, that are, stakeholder coordination, capacity development, knowledge sharing & communication.

The assessment was carried out while employing both qualitative and quantitative data sets available with the program team. A detailed desk review of project documents was conducted by the assessment team. Informed by the desk review, the team came up with a detailed plan of one day assessment workshop, held in March 19 at Islamabad. Participants of all program activities were randomly selected to participate in the assessment workshop. Keeping in view the objectives of the assessment, the team came up with qualitative tool for conducting assessment workshop.

As a result of the exercise, participants shared that the program implemented by NHN had a very positive impact on stakeholder coordination for emergency response as it rallied and gathered all stakeholders under one roof at various occasions. The session on Humanitarian Coordination Architecture was very fruitful in establishing good coordination among stakeholders, as it gave them awareness about the importance of coordination while responding to a disaster.

Creation of Pakistan Resilience Partnership (PRP) has also strengthened stakeholder coordination. The partnership holds regular meetings and is beneficial to the cause of disaster response in the country. The capacity building of participants was fruitful due to appropriate choice of resource persons, quality training content and an involved, participatory training methodology. All these contributed to the success of the capacity building initiative by the NHN team. The trained staff at all levels is now more effective in their responses towards disasters and act as team to coordinate and deliver their respective responses to disaster. Therefore, the impact can be seen at an organizational level among all stakeholders.

The online portal and website of NHN are also a platform for knowledge sharing and keeps the stakeholders well informed. The roster of trainers is also available on-line and all organizations benefit from it. the program has impacted the traditional mindset of stakeholders about themselves and about others. Therefore, they are now having better coordination and mutual learning



opportunities, which in turn has increased the capacity of the network to respond to disasters in the country.



1. Introduction

Background

ADPC with support from BMGF is implementing the program ‘Strengthening Capacity of Government, Local Humanitarian Organizations and the Private Sector on Preparedness for Response in Asia’ in 6 South and South-East Asian countries namely; Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Philippines and Myanmar. The program utilizes a unique network approach by creating the Asian Preparedness Partnership (APP) – a multi-stakeholder regional partnership through the program. APP strives to improve inter-organizational coordination and dialogue between Governments, Local Humanitarian Organization Networks and Private Sector Networks for enhancing capacities through partnerships, knowledge resources, training and networking opportunities. The program’s goal is to strengthen the emergency response capacities in these countries to better prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters. With the creation of national partnerships in the program countries and commencement of planned activities, it was envisioned that emergency response capacities in these countries will have improved.

This assessment report is geared to gauge the improvement in emergency response capacity of Pakistan’s Government, local humanitarian organizations and private sector; in the wake of activities conducted by the project from March to December 2018.

Objectives of the Project

- To improve humanitarian leadership and coordination through systematic and local institutional strengthening
- To attain better coordination of humanitarian actions by enhancing humanitarian information management and knowledge exchange
- To attain faster and equitable access to information on humanitarian funding
- To establish more effective partnerships among national and local humanitarian actors

Keeping the above-mentioned objectives and corresponding activities implemented in mind, three themes were identified for assessment.

Themes for Assessment

The identified themes for assessment are as following:

- Stakeholder Coordination for emergency response
- Capacity Development of partner organizations
- Knowledge Sharing & Communication among stakeholders



Activities Conducted

The program in Pakistan conducted following activities from March to December 2018 under the above-mentioned thematic areas.

Thematic Area	Name of Activity	No. of Activities
Stakeholder Coordination	Establishment of PRP	1
	Revision of National Disaster Management Plan (NDRP)	1
	Workshop on Role of Media in Preparedness for Response	1
	Workshops on Business Resilience and Role of Private Sector in Preparedness for Response	2
	Policy Dialogue for Enhancing Partnership and Creation of Fund	1
Capacity Development	Training on Disaster Preparedness for Effective Response	6
	Training on Protection Principles & Sphere Standards	1
Knowledge Sharing & Communication	Online knowledge sharing portal functional	1
	Humanitarian Journal	1
	Workshop to discuss the possibilities of linking DRC and modalities of knowledge sharing by all stakeholders	1
	APP Brochure	1
	PRP Annual Report	1



2. Assessment Methodology

The assessment was carried out while employing both qualitative and quantitative data sets available with the program team. At this stage objectives of the assessment were also discussed with program team.

Objectives of the Assessment

After elaborate discussion with program team, following objectives were finalized for the assessment workshop:

- To evaluate the impact of program activities for improved program effectiveness and efficiency
- To determine the level of coordination achieved through the program activities
- To assess the impact of sharing knowledge and experiences before and after conducting the activities under PRP/APP platform
- To identify demands, practices and lessons learned for next phase planning

Desk Review

A detailed desk review of project documents was conducted by the assessment team. For this purpose, three quarterly progress reports, results framework, all published material by the program, individual activity reports of all activities conducted were reviewed carefully to come up with a plan for the assessment as well as tools required to conduct the assessment.

Plan of Assessment Workshop

Informed by the desk review, the team came up with a detailed plan of one day assessment workshop to be held in Islamabad. The plan has been detailed below:

Agenda for Impact Assessment Workshop

12th March 2019, Islamabad

Sr. No.	Topic	Timing
1.	Registration of Participants	10:00 - 10:30 am



2.	Round of Introduction/ Gelling Exercise	10:30 – 11:00 am
3.	Objectives of Activity	11:00 – 11:30 am
4.	Working Tea	11:30 am
5.	Stakeholder Coordination/Group Work	11:30 am – 12:30 pm
6.	Capacity Development/Group Work	12:30 – 01:00 pm
7.	Lunch	01:00 – 02:00 pm
8.	Capacity Development/Group Work (continued)	02:00 – 03:00 pm
9.	Tea	03:00 – 03:30 pm
10.	Knowledge Sharing & Communication/Group Work	03:30 – 04:30 pm
11.	Conclusion	04:30 pm

Sampling of Participants for the Workshop

In discussion with the program team, participants of all program activities were randomly selected to participate in the assessment workshop.

However, this random selection was carried out on the basis of a two-stage process. In the first stage, participants were divided into five groups, that is, the five groups of stakeholders engaged by the program during activity cycle, to ensure participation from all stakeholder groups.

In the second stage, participants were randomly selected, keeping in view their availability for participation in the assessment in Islamabad. As a result, ----- number of participants were selected to participate.



Data Collection Tool

Keeping in view the objectives of the program and those set for the assessment, the team came up with qualitative tool for conducting assessment workshop. The workshop, as is evident from the above-mentioned agenda, was designed to have three group works, one on each of the identified thematic areas, that is:

- Stakeholder Coordination for emergency response
- Capacity Development of partner organizations
- Knowledge Sharing & Communication among stakeholders

For each group work, the participants were asked to respond to following probing questions, while keeping in view the activities conducted by the program:

- What Worked? (as in what was successful among all program activities)
- How It Worked? (as in how the successful activities became so)
- Why It Worked? (as in the reasons for its success)
- How It Will Benefit Future? (as in its sustainability and future positive usage)
- What Is Required? (as in what was missing from program activities and how it can be included in future planning)

To keep a close track and understanding of all program activities and respective responses by the assessment workshop participants, they were further requested to reply to above mentioned five question at following levels of intervention:

- Individual level (as at grass-roots level)
- Organizational level (as at meso-level)
- System level (as at macro-level)



3. Findings of the Assessment Workshop

The one-day assessment workshop was successfully held in Islamabad on 12th March 2019. For the sake of clarity this section of the report will present the findings of the workshop as these were discussed during the workshop. Therefore, the findings will also be presented for each thematic group separately.

Stakeholder Coordination for Emergency Response

The result framework of the program lays down following outcomes/outputs for stakeholder coordination.

1. Established networks / partnerships of Government, National and Local Humanitarian Organizations, Civil Society Groups and Private Sector within one regional platform
2. Established and/or strengthened coordination committees within countries
3. National/Sub-National Emergency Operations/Response Plans and/or Contingency Plans developed/updated incorporating roles for LNGO, Private Sector, etc.

With these outcomes/outputs, the participants of the workshop shared the impact of the program at individual level as of utmost importance. They shared that before the implementation of the program, stakeholders were working in silos. It was only civil society organizations who had a bit of coordination among sister organizations but state departments were totally ignorant of what other stakeholders were doing for disaster resilience. According to the participants, the program implemented by NHN had a very positive impact on stakeholder coordination for emergency response as it rallied and gathered all stakeholders under one roof at various occasions. This increased the coordination among stakeholders as they exchanged views and got to know what other stakeholders were doing. As an impact the coordination is very strong among even at the district level. Civil society organizations, different rescue departments of the state, media and private enterprise is not well aware and coordinate frequently at district and provincial levels.

The participants shared that the session on Humanitarian Coordination Architecture was very fruitful in establishing good coordination among stakeholders, as it gave them awareness about the importance of coordination while responding to a disaster. The way trainer emphasized and elucidated the importance of coordination during training made them go pro-active with regards to better coordination among stakeholders. Moreover, the diagrammatic representation of different stakeholders and their roles during disaster response were very persuasive in strengthening coordination among individual and institutions. This has enabled establishment of networks of stakeholders at the district level, which are functional, responsive and alert to respond to any disaster at district level.

At another level, the participants shared that creation of PRP has also strengthened stakeholder coordination. The partnership holds regular meetings and is beneficial to the cause of disaster response in the country. All stakeholders are represented in the PRP, which makes it more



sustainable. The PRP is a good platform to review policy, practice and because the state institutions at provincial and federal level are also part of it, therefore it has all the legitimacy to act on behalf of all stakeholders. The PRP also has working groups on different issue-based themes and contributes to the knowledge base of all stakeholders. Which has enabled the partnership to respond to disasters at all levels in the country.

Capacity Development of Partner Organizations

The result framework of the program lays down following outcomes/outputs for capacity development.

1. Priority training courses developed and conducted
2. Learning events, mock drills, simulations and field visits/study tours conducted

The participants of the assessment workshop shared that at individual level they have profited the most from capacity building activities of the program with regards to ‘the right way and time for emergency response’, ‘minimum standards for disaster response’, difference between, response, recovery and rehabilitation, importance of information gathering and sharing during and after disasters. All these topics discussed during training sessions were extremely well received by the participants. They shared that though they were doing work on these issues before, however, their insights increased manifold after having attended the training programs by the NHN team.

This capacity building of participants was fruitful due to appropriate choice of resource persons, quality training content and an involved, participatory training methodology. All these contributed to the success of the capacity building initiative by the NHN team. The participants further shared that all trainees were with a positive attitude, ready to learn new concepts and un-learn the traditional manner of thinking and practice of the topics, therefore, the training cycle proved to be a success and now all stakeholders have a cadre of well-trained staff at all levels of the delivery ladder.

This trained staff at all levels is now more effective in their responses towards disasters and act as team to coordinate and deliver their respective responses to disaster. Therefore, the impact can be seen at an organizational level among all stakeholders. The system of response both at inter and intra organizational level has improved manifold due to capacity development of staff at all levels.

This effort by the program team is bearing fruits now and the impact can not be only seen at the system level but also at network level as the participation of trained staff at different forums and networks at all levels of administrative divides has improved manifold.

Another aspect which has shown significant impact is that after having attended different trainings by program team now the organizations have started to conduct strategic planning at organizational level. This planning was absent at organizational level before. Now the organizational leaders and staff think it is imperative to plan strategically even before disasters occur. The participants shared



that such strategic planning, which was part of trainings sessions, has enabled their respective organizations to strategically place the assets and bottlenecks in a perspective and prepare for mitigation strategies beforehand. This has not only saved the organization's precious resources but has also enabled them to respond to disasters more efficiently.

Knowledge Sharing & Communication Among Stakeholders

The result framework of the program lays down following outcomes/outputs for knowledge sharing.

1. South-South Knowledge Exchange On-line portal developed
2. Knowledge products (leaflets, process documents, brochures, publications, success stories, etc.) developed and shared
3. Repository of priority Training modules made available for access through e-learning platform (online)
4. Experts/Volunteers roster which can be accessed for technical and managerial support for capacity building, and emergency response activities established and managed

The participants of the assessment workshop were of view that usage of social media, like whatsapp group of all stakeholders keeps them all well informed about new development and emerging issues. They all feel part of a process, where they can contribute meaningfully. The NHN team keeps these groups well informed with regular updates and keeps on populating stories. There is also a sense of security for all on such groups because the groups are very well moderated.

The online portal and website of NHN are also a platform for knowledge sharing and keeps the stakeholders well informed. The rooster of trainers is also available on-line and all organizations benefit from it. The on-line portal and website plug a very big gap of information, which was there for those who worked on disaster preparedness and response in the country. Now courtesy this program a standardized, meeting minimum requirements, all information is available to all those stakeholders who wish to benefit from it in any way or the other.

The journal being published by the program is also another important product the participants appreciated much. They were of the opinion that such publications are very important for highlighting new emerging issues in the field and provide a window of peer learning through published successes and how they went about. By which the rest of the organizations learn and also can adapt their own interventions to better suit the specific context and thus employ successful models of intervention.

Frequent and on time information sharing also has impacted the perceptions of stakeholders about each other. Usually stakeholders have misconceptions about each other, that is, the state institutions had negative image of civil society and vice versa. Media had negative perception of private enterprise and so forth. However, the program has been successful in clearing these myths from the minds of stakeholders by providing transparent and on time information, which is correct.



Thus, the program has impacted the traditional mindset of stakeholders about themselves and about others. Therefore, they are now having better coordination and mutual learning opportunities, which in turn has increased the capacity of the network to respond to disasters in the country.



5. Recommendations

Having shared the findings of the impact assessment, this section will briefly share the future directions and program planning for the next phase, thus completing the last objective of the assessment. Following recommendations were shared by the participants of the assessment workshop for the program team to review.

- All contact persons or coordinators among stakeholders be nominated keeping in view their respective knowledge level pertaining to disasters and response
- Disaster resilience infrastructure and networks are functional at district level. However, these must also be made at the tehsil and union council levels for appropriate and immediate responses to disasters
- Advanced level capacity building of stakeholders is need of the hour and must be prioritized
- Capacity building for communities must also be made part of the program and those communities should be trained who are vulnerable to disasters
- Model rescue centers be established at district level
- IEC material, publication and all research material should be made available in local language, for these to have a better reach out. In this way such material will be even more helpful in creating awareness regarding disasters, response and resilience