

Addressing Humanitarian Effectiveness



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What is Effectiveness? It depends on where you are...

How do we know if a humanitarian programme is any good? What does 'good' look like, in an emergency context where, lamentably, people are likely to die, or at the very least lose assets, have to leave their homes, and suffer fear and uncertainty? These questions – about the quality and effectiveness of humanitarian responses – are at the heart of humanitarian evaluation, and have been a central concern of the ALNAP network for many years.¹

Many evaluators measure humanitarian performance according to the OECD DAC evaluation criteria. These criteria essentially say that there are eight factors which, taken together, define effective high quality humanitarian programme. They are:

Relevance / Appropriateness: The degree to which humanitarian activities are in line with local needs and priorities as they are understood by the affected population themselves.

Connectedness: The degree to which short term relief activity connect with longer term (developmental) activities.

Coherence: The degree to which activities take into account humanitarian values and principles, and human rights considerations.

Coverage: The degree to which activities meet all people in need.

Coordination: The degree to which the activities of any given actor are

carried out in coordination with other relief activities, to prevent duplication and gaps.

Efficiency: The degree to which the inputs (money and other resources) are well managed to produce the largest number of high quality outputs possible.

Effectiveness: This is a bit confusing – as we can think of all eight of these criteria adding up to effective performance, but, more narrowly defined, effectiveness is also the degree to which the specific project for programme met its stated objectives.

Impact: The positive and negative longer-term effects, both intended and unintended, of the humanitarian activity.

What is interesting about using these criteria to define a 'good' (or effective) programme is that they show how it can be difficult to achieve the highest levels of performance 'across the board', and that in many cases making a programme better in one way will make it less good in another (for example: achieving the highest levels of *coverage* – by ensuring you reach small, hard to reach populations – may not be the most *efficient* way of using scarce resources). The unpleasant reality is that humanitarian actors will often have to prioritise between different types of 'good', trading off good performance in one area as the price for doing better in another, and that there is often no 'right answer' about what to prioritise: in many cases, this

will come down to personal or organisational judgement.

It is worth noting, too, that very few – if any – of the groups involved in a humanitarian response would disagree with most of the criteria above. Where they may differ is in the relative importance of these criteria. So, for example, a donor may prioritise efficiency very highly, while field staff of an organisation are more concerned about coverage, and a community group representing some of the people affected focus on relevance. All three criteria matter to all three groups – but not, necessarily, in the same order.

A third, equally important point about using these criteria as a way of understanding what 'good' looks like in humanitarian action is that they do not come with a standard list of indicators or targets. Realistic expectations of humanitarian performance will depend on the context: it should be far easier to ensure good coverage, or indeed a cost efficient use of resources, in a context where the population is fairly concentrated and there is good infrastructure, than it is when supporting a mobile, dispersed population in a warzone. Targets for performance, or effectiveness as it is called by the WHS, should take context into account.

The criteria are, of course, only one way of considering performance, and they are certainly not perfect: in particular, they are not explicit about the role of accountability in enhancing effectiveness and

¹ ALNAP's humanitarian performance project, which addresses these questions, began with the report 'Counting what counts' and continues with the State of the System series. See <http://www.alnap.org/what-we-do/sohs>

improving quality in humanitarian contexts. They also make the implicit assumption that popular engagement and participation in programmes are tools to ensure relevance, rather than ends in themselves: a position which was discussed at the last ALNAP annual meeting (<http://www.alnap.org/meeting2014>) and which has been recently challenged at the World Humanitarian Summit Regional Consultation for North and South-East Asia.

Which raises the issue of the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit – and how the understanding of effectiveness gained by evaluators over many years should influence the discussions.

We would hope that delegates will recognise that effectiveness is multi-faceted; that all of these factors have to be taken into consideration; and that, while they may place key elements in different orders of priority, all of these elements are important. We would also hope that they are clear about the difference between aspiration – those things towards which we should all be working, in a genuine attempt to continuously improve – and present circumstances. Expecting people to consistently live up to lofty aspiration in the messy here and now is a formula for failure and cynicism. The test here will be the degree to which the summit is able to develop a clear, ambitious and realistic process of improvement.

Finally we would hope that delegates begin to wrestle with the difficult but crucial issue of context. Does effectiveness always mean the same thing, or does it differ depending on the nature of the place and nature of the emergency? The evidence of evaluations suggests that, within the broad scope of the criteria, the specifics of context matter. If the WHS can help all humanitarian actors to take a step towards programming that understands local constraints and capacities, and which is built on an understanding of local social, political, cultural and economic issues, it will have made a massive contribution. ■

– Paul Knox-Clarke,
Head of Research and
Communications, ALNAP, UK

ABOUT THIS ISSUE



- Humanitarian Effectiveness
- Transformation through Innovation
- Serving the Needs of People in Conflict

This issue of *Southasiadisasters.net* focuses on the theme of Humanitarian Effectiveness. In a fast changing world, the emergence of new challenges in the field of humanitarian action is becoming common. Consequently, it becomes imperative to shape the humanitarianism for this new age with the effectiveness to tackle all such challenges.

Achieving effectiveness in humanitarian action necessitates a better understanding of the context in which aid functions, so as to provide the right help to the right people at the right time in a sustainable manner. Humanitarian effectiveness also requires a reimagining of the parameters of how humanitarian action is assessed in the form of newer definitions and more inclusive evaluations.

This issue of *Southasiadisasters.net* contains articles and opinions that actively discuss the important theme of humanitarian effectiveness. Full of though provoking pieces, this issue not only raises the issue of redefining effectiveness in humanitarian action but also highlights good instances of effective humanitarian action from the field. Important issues discussed include 'Evaluating the Effectiveness of Finance in Community based Adaptation' to 'Redefining Effectiveness in Humanitarian Action' and from 'Tools Used by Agencies to Evaluate Humanitarian Action' to 'Building Leadership in the Humanitarian Context'.

Comprehensive in its scope, the present issue of *Southasiadisasters.net* is an attempt to capture the opinions of experts and practitioners from the field of humanitarian action on the theme of humanitarian effectiveness. This issue will no doubt prove to be a valuable resource to the consultative process for the World Humanitarian Summit. ■

– Kshitij Gupta, AIDMI

The first ever World Humanitarian Summit is going to be organized at Istanbul in 2016. Organized by the UN Secretary General, this summit aims to come up with path-breaking solutions to the pressing challenges of the humanitarian sector of this age. Four themes have been identified for this summit, they are:

- Managing Risk and Reducing Vulnerability

Evaluating the Effectiveness of Finance for Community-Based Adaptation

Over the past decade, as climate change adaptation has risen on the agenda of international development agencies, so too has the issue of increased transparency and accountability between donors and recipients of international development assistance. Embedded in this donor-driven push for accountability is the belief that projects or programmes should be able to demonstrate that they are 'effective' in order to qualify for international assistance. Few would argue that 'ineffective' projects deserve the scarce financial resources that are available, particularly in the case of adaptation – which receives less than 1% of overall global climate finance.¹ However climate change adaptation is a relatively new policy space, and there is no firm consensus yet on how to evaluate the effectiveness of adaptation projects and programmes.

Donor agencies in the UK, such as the Department for International Development (DFID) and the International Climate Fund (ICF), routinely use metrics such as 'value for money' (VfM), the headline numbers of people supported by a project, and the existence of a robust 'theory of change' (ToC) to judge whether an intervention has been effective. Yet when it comes to adaptation projects these metrics are often too vague to capture the issue of greatest importance to donors and recipients alike – whether the lives of people in climate-vulnerable communities have directly

improved and been made more resilient by the intervention in question. Designing a methodology that can accurately measure the effectiveness of climate change adaptation interventions (especially one that is robust enough to differentiate between attribution and contribution) is a complex task. This is the conclusion of a recent UKCIP report, which claims that monitoring and evaluation (M & E) methodologies – tools used to determine the effectiveness of project interventions – are considerably more difficult for adaptation projects than for traditional development projects.²

With little available guidance for evaluating the effectiveness of adaptation projects and programmes, it is important that development practitioners, policymakers, donors and beneficiaries work together to develop and share emerging methodologies and best practices in this field. Such lesson-sharing will catalyse further research and piloting, and is therefore a vital first step in improving our understanding on what makes an adaptation intervention effective.

However this is only the first step. As a community of practice we need to move beyond the question 'how do we evaluate the effectiveness of adaptation interventions?' to cover an equally critical question: 'how do we evaluate the effectiveness of adaptation *financing*?' This second

question is arguably more critical, because it moves beyond the individual project level and challenges practitioners, governments and donors to explain how improvements in adaptation finance decision-making can catalyse long-term, transformative change that builds the resilience of vulnerable communities across the world. Lessons to this effect will be all the more critical if the international community is to hold true to its recent commitment to allocate 50% of the funds dispersed by the Green Climate Fund to adaptation.³

As this area of research and practice begins to develop, there are three specific themes that warrant particular attention, each of which correspond to a respective level of analysis – local/regional, national, and international.

The first theme is the importance of *comparability of adaptation interventions*. Impacts, outputs and outcomes (using log frame terminology) can be measured relatively more easily at the local level than at the sub-national, national or international levels. For example, ex-ante and ex-post participatory vulnerability assessments are effective evaluation tools that can provide accurate assessments of the effectiveness of community-based adaptation projects. The difficulty with these tools, however, is in aggregating the impact data across many projects

1 Climate Policy Institute's report 'The Global Landscape of Climate Finance 2013' estimates that total annual climate finance for adaptation is USD \$22 billion, out of a total of \$359 billion. When considering that only 15% of global climate finance flows from OECD countries to developing countries where the need is greatest (including many countries in South Asia), these numbers actual mask a considerably lower flow of international public finance for adaptation.

2 Guidance Note 1: Twelve reasons why climate change adaptation M&E is challenging. 2014

3 Green ClimateFund.GCF-PA.02/14.

from different communities, regions, or countries and ensuring they are all comparable. More guidance on how to aggregate these results is needed so that national funding agencies and donor governments can compare various interventions (e.g. a multiple-use water system in highland Nepal versus drought resistant seed varieties in the Sahel), determine which ones are more effective in reducing community vulnerability, and base their financing decisions accordingly.

The second theme is the importance of building institutions that are capable of promoting linkages between the local, regional and national level. National governments have an important role in supporting CBA. However the lessons from effective adaptation projects are often only visible at the community-level, and are far

removed from national planners who make decisions on where to allocate scarce budgetary resources. As such, measurement, reporting and verification (MRV) systems that channel lessons from local levels to regional and national levels need to be supported – so that effective local interventions can be replicated more broadly.

Finally, there needs to be increased attention at the international level to allocate climate finance based on the needs of developing countries. Currently the main metric that is used to evaluate whether the international climate finance regime is 'effective' is the volume of climate finance dispersed by Annex 1 countries. It is clear that volumes of climate finance – particularly for adaptation – remain woefully inadequate to meet the needs of developing countries.

However volume of finance is a quantitative metric that masks a lot of equally important qualitative questions that must begin to be asked more systematically by researchers, advocacy organisations, and developing country governments. These questions include: has climate finance dispersal focused on the most vulnerable countries? Has the finance been aligned with their main NAPA priorities? Who makes the financing decisions and are they truly representative of the needs of developing countries? If adaptation finance is to be truly 'effective', further efforts must be made to reframe the analysis so that future flows specifically targeted for countries, regions, and communities that are most vulnerable to the effects of climate change. ■

– Dave Steinbach,
Adaptation and Climate Finance
Consultant, Ricardo-AEA, UK

WOMEN AND CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION

Unequal Access to Opportunities: Adolescent Girls Face the Brunt of Climate Change

Across the world, women and children are facing a disproportionately high risk of the impacts of climate change. And although many researches have brought this point out, the representation of the risk among this margin is not equal either. The challenges of girls, especially adolescent girls in the face of changing climate need to be stated explicitly. Adolescent girls form an essential part of the support system for most families in the rural parts of most developing countries. From an age as young as 6-8 girls in many parts of the world start making significant economic and social contributions to their families. They are fully or at least partially responsible for gathering firewood,



Young girls participating in the discussion on the Impact of Climate Change on adolescent girls in Kusupur Panchayat, Odisha.

fetching drinking water, taking care of their younger siblings. More often than not, girls compromise on their future owing to the difficulties of their families and lack of opportunities.

In the past few years, the developmental trajectory of coastal Odisha (India) has suffered numerous setbacks due to frequent storms, cyclones and other hazards. Additionally the lack of infrastructure in the face of changing climate is posing huge problems in providing equitable growth opportunities to young girls. In a study conducted in March 2014 in Kendrapada and Jagatsinghpur districts by Regional Centre for Development Cooperation, 'lack of access to equitable education facilities' was identified as one of the major obstacles for adolescent girls. Low female attendance, high dropout rates, generation of an underutilized workforce of able young women and heavy burdening of non-schooling girls with household chores is the reality of adolescent girls in rural coastal Odisha today.

The inability of girls to attend school during their menstrual cycle is one of the main reasons for a lower attendance rate among girls as compared to boys. Adolescent girls in village use cloth napkins, as a result of which travelling to school and staying the entire day while menstruating where no toilet facilities are available is a difficult task. No provisions are made in schools to provide sanitary supplies for women or any change of clothing. As a result, on an average an adolescent girl misses a minimum of 25-30 days per year only on account of her menstrual cycle. These days are over and above the schooling days missed on account of bad weather, working in fields during harvesting season, managing

household chores etc. Moreover, low attendance does not allow girls to continue their education above 9th grade, since 10th grade requires a minimum attendance for taking their board examination, which is often unmet.

Lack of hostel facilities for girls pursuing higher education is a challenge for girls who wish to pursue higher education. Most high schools are located in block headquarters or revenue villages. Since the hamlets in Odisha are widely scattered, this is one of the reasons for high school dropouts among girls. Provision of school buses is not available in remote coastal areas and thus to continue schooling beyond secondary levels, making long and often unsafe journeys to school on foot or on cycle is a pre-requisite. Another reason for dropout is a general sense of devaluation of female education. The collective patriarchal thinking that also pervades in Odisha often berates the lives of adolescent girls in our country due to the belief that education is of no utility to the girl once she gets married as she wouldn't (and shouldn't) be allowed to work after her marriage.

High dropout rates have led to a pool of an underutilized productive young workforce in our country. Many capable girls, who in the course of their education and beyond could be the change that we wish to see in our country, get sucked into the four walls without a choice or voice. This situation is made worse in the presence of the threat of increasing number of natural disasters and a changing climate which tends to set back the course of development many years back.

The woes of changing climate in Odisha have forced migration upon its population. Due to lack of opportunities, men migrate to far off

states such as Kashmir, Kerala, and Gujarat etc. However, in the light of changing climate patterns, this is a luxury affordable only to young men. They travel to far off places in search of a livelihood to support their families whereas women and girls more than often than not stay behind in the village to look after the home. Since most of these families are hard pressed for money, survival is tough when the men move out. Mobility for women is a challenge, with most women never having ventured out of their villages even to the nearest town.

Most families depend on their farms for food and rains and ground water for survival, but due to the change in the weather pattern, uncertainty is always looming large above these families. Due to inland flooding, increasing salinity of water is becoming a major hurdle in the lives of young girls and women who depend on groundwater for everything. The girls who are left behind are left to deal with these problems without the capacity to cope with these problems. The increase in number of disasters in Odisha due to climate change has made the future even bleaker for these young women. With no opportunities to migrate plus the added burden of being uneducated, climate change has increased the underlying risk. Although the impact is not so clear right now, in the future these girls will be more exposed to the risks of climate change. With the rising sea levels and submergence of whole villages under the sea, girls need to voice their concerns and prepare themselves for their coming future. Thus creating equal opportunities for girls with an emphasis on education is one of the important risk reduction strategies' we must focus on to build climate change resilient individuals and communities. ■

- Meghna Goyal

Building Leadership: What it takes in a Humanitarian Context



Humanitarian Leadership Academy.

Photo Credit: Save the Children

The world in which humanitarian organisations operate is changing and becoming far more complex. This has a significant impact on humanitarian workers who are already required to cope with increasingly uncertain political and security conditions, urbanisation, new technology, and changing global relations. This increasingly complex environment is coupled with a shortage of adequately trained national frontline responders, particularly in leadership roles, within countries and regions where disasters are more prevalent.

The consensus across the sector is that we need to develop a new generation of humanitarian leaders in order to reduce the impact of future crises and save more lives. There is an urgent need to professionalise the humanitarian sector and make learning and development opportunities more accessible to people in vulnerable communities. A particular focus needs to be community leaders and those who

are the first responders in humanitarian crises.

Justine Greening, UK's Secretary of State for International Development during her recent speech at the World Bank spring meetings urged a re-thinking of how we tailor a humanitarian response to different contexts. She highlighted that "for natural disasters the primary aim must be to support countries to manage disasters by themselves, drawing on civil society and private sector support."

The Humanitarian Leadership Academy, a new global initiative, aims to bridge that leadership gap by opening access to knowledge and quality learning with a principal focus on improving humanitarian action and leadership development.

Collaboration is at the heart of meeting a challenge of this scale and the Academy recognises that experts from different sectors need to work together to connect and advance the

best humanitarian learning and development programmes currently available in the world. **This will provide the opportunity for people to build the skills to lead and for organisations to further develop their ability to measure and continuously improve their work.**

In January I participated as a faculty member/mentor on the **Humanitarian Leadership Programme (HLP)**, a programme that we have developed in partnership between the Australian Government, Deakin University and international humanitarian agencies. The HLP aims to develop the leadership behaviours of senior humanitarian practitioners. Deakin University ran a study following Typhoon Haiyan and initial findings show that more than 30 HLP graduates were instrumental in supporting an effective response in the weeks after the catastrophic typhoon hit. The findings suggest that the leadership behaviours developed during the programme were extremely relevant to responding effectively on the ground. This was highlighted by a number of heads of organisations who witnessed this first-hand from programme graduates.

The **Executive Leadership Coaching for UN Humanitarian Coordinators** is another new leadership development intervention which has been piloted by the Humanitarian Leadership Academy, in collaboration with UN OCHA and Save the Children. During the first pilot, five executive coaches offered one-to-one coaching for ten UN Humanitarian Coordinators. The coaching is a six to nine month engagement with

monthly virtual coaching sessions, that last 60-90 minutes.

During every coaching engagement, the Humanitarian Coordinator set the agenda on what they wanted to focus on, offering a valuable opportunity to step outside of their busy roles to reflect. Professional coaching can enhance decision-making skills, increase interpersonal effectiveness and confidence, and improve the attainment of a range of goals. The ALNAP report *Leadership in Action - Leading effectively in humanitarian operations* (2011) argues that coaching is "one of the key ways that leaders are able to identify blind spots and draw the leader's attention to their flaws or unbalanced strengths; as well as harnessing and flexing their areas of strength."

The feedback from the first pilot which ran from June 2013 to early 2014 indicates that the coaching has been of huge benefit to UN Coordinators, and one of the participants highlighted that: "**The programme helped me discover the**

leader in me and realise the broad impact of my actions." We've since begun a second pilot of the programmes we strongly believe that providing coaching to key leaders that operate in highly pressured environments has the potential to have a far reaching impact.

While we acknowledge that people who will benefit from these initiatives are senior leaders in the sector, the Academy recognises that we need leaders at all levels in order to cope with the changing nature of our work. Focusing on future generations of humanitarian leaders, last month we saw 11 frontline staff in east Africa graduating from the **professional diploma in 'Humanitarian Health and Nutrition for Practitioners'** that was accredited by the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine (LSTM). The graduating students from South Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan, Tanzania and Malawi successfully completed an integrated curriculum designed to equip them with the skills and knowledge to deliver field health and nutrition interventions in

emergencies. A further 17 East African staff are halfway through their Professional Diploma in 'Humanitarian Health and Nutrition for Managers' which is also accredited by LSTM. The unique integrated curriculum has enabled graduates to improve quality within their frontline projects as well as enhance their county programme's response capability.

As a new initiative, the Humanitarian Leadership Academy is making its first steps in supporting the transformation of the sector's approach to leadership in order to reduce the impact of future disasters. We are only just beginning and we recognise that there is a lot of work to do. This is why we aim to be a catalyst, bringing together cross-sector insight and expertise to provide access to quality learning and knowledge, and a means to measure its impact on crisis response and recovery. ■

- **Jeز Stoner**,
Director,
Humanitarian Leadership Academy,
Save the Children, UK

Building Capacities to Integrate Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) with Climate Change Adaptation (CCA)

What does it take to design training modules that integrate DRR with CCA for sub-national officials?

Based on over past three years' field experience, the All India Disaster Mitigation Institute (AIDMI) is drawing up a process for such a design. The key topics that are coming up include ways of communicating with communities; assessing information needs of local officials; planning processes; children receiving enough attention in decision making; need for hospital (and bio-waste) safety; and ways of developing long term perspective of such integration. Suggestions and ideas are invited. To join this task team be in touch. ■

- **Mihir R. Bhatt**



Photo: AIDMI.

Education and DRR: School Safety Management Information System

Bangladesh is categorised as one of the most disaster prone and climate vulnerable countries in the world but has also become known for its innovations in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) at the national, local, and community levels. Natural hazards have had severe and harmful impact on children's education in Bangladesh. As a result of the high frequency of disasters, tens of thousands of children lose precious educational hours every year. This loss translates into higher drop-out rates, lower academic achievement and disparities in fulfilment of the to a quality, basic education. It is predicted by the Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies that both the frequency and intensity of hydro-meteorological hazards will increase in Bangladesh and those communities in the coastal belt and flood prone areas will be particularly at risk. This can significantly worsen access to education for Bangladesh's most vulnerable children.

BANBEIS (Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics), records for 2011 record report 113,823 institutes for education (Primary, Secondary, College, Madrasah, Technical & Vocational, Non-Formal Education). Various governments' authorities maintain information about schools, students, teachers etc. However, they have don't adequate information about disaster risk, vulnerability or capacity of these schools. For this reason, government as well as civil society stakeholders find effective decision-making for continuation continuity in pre and post disaster situations very challenging. SSMIS

has covered six types of heterogenous educational institution.

This project is designed for developing a School Safety Management Information System (SSMIS) for Education Cluster in Bangladesh involving Bangladesh Shishu Academy (BSA) and National Children Task Force (NCTF). This is an initiative to develop information and communication technology (ICT) for monitoring disaster vulnerability and capacity of schools in all phases of disasters. It is intended that by managing information - related to DRR and EiE (Education in Engineering), decision by both government and the Education Cluster in Bangladesh will have greater support to assure the educational continuity for children in any given situation.

The SSMIS is also consistent with the recently adopted DRRE and EiE framework. It has demonstrated the feasibility of a GIS/map-based real-time online educational information management system.

This project could be a model both nationally as well as internationally. By applying GSM, Internet, GPS, Smart Phone, Google Map, Synchronized RDBMS, the SSMIS has become a significant demonstration of an educational information management system (EMIS) that incorporates school vulnerability and capacity assessment, as well as a providing a platform for post-disaster damage assessment.

The SSMIS relational database design took into consideration General Information about each institution as well as information about the following three Pillars based on Disaster Risk Reduction in Education (DRRE) and Education in Emergency (EiE) framework:

- Pillar 1:** Safe Learning Facility
- Pillar 2:** School Disaster Management
- Pillar 3:** Risk Reduction and Resilience Education

The Education Cluster in Bangladesh has broad mandates and concerns for disaster risk reduction and response in the education sector. Among its



major objectives are the establishment of a dynamic website to serve as a knowledge management portal (<http://educationclusterbd.org/>) and a Online GIS/MAP based School Safety Management Information System - SSMIS (<http://ssmis.educationclusterbd.org/>) to support policy and decision before and after disasters.

Information Coverage: SSMIS covered the following major information-

- GIS/GPS Data (Latitude, Longitude and Altitude)
- Photograph of School/Institute
- Catchment Area
- Disaster/Hazard History
- Infrastructure Information
- Drinking Facilities Information
- Risk/Vulnerability Profile
- Preparedness and Contingency
- Sanitation Information
- Common Facilities
- Students and Teachers Information
- SMC/Governing Body Information

Involvement of NCTF and Young Volunteers: The National Children Task Force (NCTF) is an independent nationwide child-led organization with 20,000 members (approx.) which is supported by Bangladesh

Shishu Academy (BSA). Initially NCTF had been an initiative of Save the Children with support from UNICEF, Plan and others and later on was mainstreamed. Now Bangladesh Shishu Academy (BSA) is providing office space and support for housing NCTF secretariat in all 64 districts. NCTF monitors and advocates child rights issues all over the country.

In this SSMIS project young volunteers from NCTF are involved in School Data Collection, GPS/GIS Data Collection, Data Quality Control & Checking, Data Entry, Capacity building and Advocacy & Information Sharing.

Incorporating GIS/MAP in SSMIS:

For a dynamic GIS mapping, SSMIS project has used open source Google Map Engine; where users can explore school catchment area as well as their vulnerability.

Each school is identified in the project by geo-spatial information that allows schools to be displayed on a digital map. Global positioning systems (GPS) are used to identify latitude, longitude, and altitude, and to mark schools using a point, line or polygon (tracing the full school campus area).

System Generated MIS Report for Decision Making: The SSMIS is capable of producing various reports for both Pre- and Post-disaster situations:

Pre-Disaster MIS Report:

1. Report by Building Structure Type
2. Class Room Condition
3. School's Common Facility
4. Risk Assessment by Disaster/Hazard
5. Risk Assessment by Impact Disaster/Hazard
6. Report by Student Ratio
7. Report by Teacher, Vacant Position and Non Educational Staff
8. Report by Student Learning Source about DRR
9. Report by Risk Category
10. Report by Drinking Water Facility
11. Report by Preparedness and Resilience Education
12. Report by Sanitation Facility
13. Report on Institute Geographical Position

Post Disaster MIS Report:

1. Rural and urban affected schools
2. Affected schools by management type
3. Affected schools by geographical location
4. Affected schools by damage type
5. Financial requirements analysis. ■

- Md. Wazior Rahman

Deputy Manager, GIS-MIS
Save the Children in Bangladesh



In this SSMIS project young volunteer from NCTF involved for School Data Collection, GPS/GIS Data Collection, Data Quality Control & Checking, Data Entry, Capacity building and Advocacy and Information Sharing.

Heat Wave in Indonesia: A Short Review

Climate Change could lead to extreme temperature shifts, such as heat waves. Heat wave is a phenomenon which is observed when temperature increases above the average temperature for a certain time span (Robinson 2001). There are two views on what might cause heat waves. On the one hand, heat wave is thought to be a result of anthropogenic activities. Industrial activities, forest conversion, and high consumption of fossil fuel are a cause of release of massive amount of carbon dioxide (CO₂) into the atmosphere and are considered to be the main drivers of global warming. The second opinion is that the heatwave occurs as an element of El Niño. El Niño causes changes in the currents of the Pacific ocean that leads to warmer weather and droughts. El Niño is believed to be a dominant factor responsible for the heatwave disaster during 1997-1998 in Asia (Kripalani and Kurkani 1999).

As of today, heat waves do not occur in Indonesia. However, Indonesia is a country vulnerable to extreme weather events due to climate change. During 1844-2006, 37 out of 47 drought in Indonesia have been association with El Niño (Staringa 2008). El Niño is a natural process that influences the dry season, bring high precipitation and could cause abnormal increase of temperature (Brasseur 2009). There is a link between anthropogenic caused heatwaves and El Niño, the combination of them will intensify the heat waves in a region with specific atmospheric and geographic pattern (Meehl & Tebaldi 2004).

Indonesia is influenced by combined El Niño forcing and rapid



Photo: Ghonjess Panuluh

Anthropogenic activities release massive carbon to the atmosphere, have made Indonesia as one the largest carbon contributor of greenhouse gases.

deforestation that lead to warm events (Patz & Kovats 2002). It was reported that in Kalimantan, Sumatera, and Jawa, there was an increase in temperature from average 34°C to 39°C. However, the increases have never been reported as heat wave and it is believed they are a normal change since Indonesia is located in equator line and has tropical climate.

In fact, the increased temperature has affected humans, crop yields, and environment in Indonesia. The period 1997-1998 is the hottest one measured so far in Indonesia. The heat brought a devastating drought and peatland fires in Sumatra, spread the thick smoke and transboundary haze to the ASEAN countries, and exacerbated respiratory diseases and cardiovascular illnesses. The haze also caused decreased economic activities, especially in trading and tourism in Indonesia and other affected countries.

Weather anomaly associated with El Niño led to decreased rice production. Food crops are sensitive to lack of water and susceptible to temperature and humidity shifts. Peng et al. (2004) stated that the increasing of temperature by 1°C will hamper the paddy production by 10%. The El Niño- associated drought in 1991 led to the failure of 23% paddy field, unprecedented losses in rice production and resulting 600.000 tons being imported to feed the people in Indonesia (Harger 1995). The warm event in 1998 also caused a shift in the rainy season and delayed the rice planting (Rosenzweig et al. 2001), increased the hunger and in loses in farm revenue up to 25% (Lal 2007 in Staringa 2008).

The increase in temperature is observed also in Papua. Malaria is spreading up to higher elevation (2000m asl) in the central Jayawijaya district (Eipstein et al. 1998; Bangs &



High traffic volume and poor housing infrastructure in Jakarta lead to warm event in regional scale called urban heat island.

Subianto 1999). Within 10 weeks, more than 550 people died by dramatic increase in malaria related to the El Niño (Bangs and Subianto 1999). Regions with higher temperatures and/or rainfall associated with El Niño may increase the transmission of malaria and dengue. Warmer temperature has reduced the time for vector to breed, also tends to increase biting behaviour of smaller adults mosquitos in order to reproduce.

Warm events could happened in large cities with high traffic volumes and poor housing infrastructure (Woodward et al. 1998). Jakarta is one of the best examples for regular extreme heat events (Woodward et al. 1998). For the period 1840-2000, the temperature in Jakarta has increased with up to 1.5°C, 3 times higher than what the scientists predicted (Harger 1995). This shift triggers heat on a regional scale that is known as urban heat effect island. Urban heat island will cause heat stroke island, a hyperthermia, as people are too sensitive to the heat. The hyperthermia usually attacks elderly and the urban poor who suffer from heat exhaustion.

Heatwave is a serious disaster that impacts economic activities, human health, and the environment. A climate simulation system made by IPCC (2007) has predicted that heatwave will be more intensive, more frequent, more severe, and will be spreading to other areas. Hence, attention to anthropogenic factors that lead to the increasing of temperature is needed. Besides, strategy for climate change adaptation and mitigation should be implemented and also be supported by national and global institutions. ■

- Eka Hesdianti,
Indonesia

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Tools Used by Groupe URD to Involve Communities in the Evaluation of Humanitarian Action

Created in 1993, Groupe URD¹ is an independent institute which specializes in the analysis of practices and the development of policy for the humanitarian and post-crisis sectors. Its role is to help organizations to improve the quality of their programmes through evaluations, research and training.

In order to work close to field realities and to share lessons, Groupe URD has established several observatories of aid practices – currently in Haiti, and formerly in Chad and in Afghanistan.

Groupe URD engages consistently with people who have been affected by crises. They have a central place in the Quality Compas², the quality assurance tool that Groupe URD developed in 2004. We believe that their voice is very important when evaluating the quality of humanitarian action and is therefore given a prominent place in our evaluation methodology. When we are involved in an evaluation, we try to make it as participatory as possible. In order to do so, the following three conditions need to be in place:

- **A skilled and qualified team to conduct the participatory evaluations.**

In the same way that putting in place a participatory programme requires qualified personnel to be able to engage respectfully with the communities involved in the programme at all stages, conducting a participatory evaluation requires evaluators with human and



Photo: Groupe URD

interpersonal skills and experience in participatory methods. A climate of mutual trust is very important to make a participatory evaluation effective. This allows frank and constructive discussions with communities. In general, assessment teams have very limited time with the crisis-affected people and their ability to establish mutual trust depends heavily on their human qualities and interpersonal skills as well as their experience. Groupe URD pays particular attention to the human and relational qualities of its evaluators and their expertise in participatory methods. The organisation has been established through knowledge and experience of participatory methods, notably through our involvement in the "ALNAP Global Study on Consultation and Participation of Disaster-affected Populations"³, and the "Participation Handbook for humanitarian field workers"⁴, and having developed a training module on Participation for aid workers.

We are also careful about the composition of our evaluation teams. As it is important for an evaluation team to reach all the social and cultural categories of a community, Groupe URD endeavours to have gender-balanced and multicultural evaluation teams.

- **Adequate resources dedicated to discussion with communities.**

The involvement of communities has a cost. Distances can be very large between the various population groups. Necessary resources for communication with people (time, means of travel, etc.) should be carefully assessed and allocated. In some contexts, the security of the evaluation team and communities needs to be taken into account when implementing a participatory assessment. During preliminary discussions with the commissioning body, we ensure that the necessary resources are being allocated to implement a participatory evaluation. Regarding the time spent

1 www.urd.org

2 <http://www.compasqualite.org/en/index/index.php>

3 <http://www.alnap.org/resources/studies/participation>

4 <http://www.urd.org/Participation-Handbook>

on communication with communities, experience has shown that at least one third of the time of the mission in the country needs to be dedicated to communication with communities.

- **A set of participatory tools and the ability to adapt them to different contexts.**

Several participatory tools which are often used in development programs were adapted to humanitarian action in the "Participation Handbook for humanitarian field workers". The following tools are those which Groupe URD uses most often:

- The Problem Tree – this allows the evaluation team to assess the relevance and effectiveness of the programme by comparing the priority needs at the time of the initial assessment and at the time of the evaluation.
- The Historical Timeline – this shows key events from the perspective of communities and the degree of their involvement in these events and their intrinsic capacity to recover from crises. It can also highlight communities' perception of the major phases of the programme.
- The Venn Diagram (stakeholder analysis) – this reveals the importance that communities attach to external stakeholders. The position given to each organisation involved in the programme provides insight into how close they are to communities and the role that they play within them.

In general, these tools are applied in focus groups. The composition of a focus group should include good informants (covering the diversity of cultural and ethnic communities social categories) while avoiding the maximum tension that can be created within communities. As the overall results of evaluations are rarely



Photo: Groupe URD

disseminated to the communities, we make a point of giving the community a summary of the working session that we have had with them.

Knowledge of the tools is important, but the most important factor is the evaluation team members' attitude towards the communities and their capacity to adapt the tools to find the best way to get them involved in open discussion.

Recently, we have introduced the use of video to record people's testimonies, which increases their impact.

The use of participatory approaches previously in the programme is an important factor which influences the participatory evaluation. When the programme to be evaluated is itself sensitive to the participation of communities or has an effective feedback mechanism⁵, there are several advantages for participatory evaluation: the programme teams are open to the use of participatory methods with communities; the latter are already familiar with some participatory tools and react quickly to the tools used by the evaluation teams; and it is easier for the

evaluation team to create confidence within the community. When the programme to be evaluated is not implemented with participatory methods, the evaluation team's participatory approaches are likely to disturb the communities. They may be wary and reluctant to be involved in frank discussions and to provide information which is considered sensitive. It may lead to tension (e.g. unhappy groups who have been excluded from the programme).

Groupe URD's ability to involve communities in evaluation processes is limited by its low level of influence over the Terms of Reference of the evaluation and over the dissemination and implementation of evaluation recommendations.

In the future, Groupe URD's main focus regarding the participation of communities will be to increase the involvement of communities in the evaluation process as a whole (from the Terms of Reference to the dissemination of results). We will also increase our use of video. ■

– **Bonaventure Gbetoho Sokpoh,**
Evaluator and Researcher,
Groupe URD, France

⁵ Bonino F., with Jean, I. and Knox Clarke, P. (2014) Closing the Loop – Practitioner guidance on effective feedback mechanisms in humanitarian contexts. ALNAP-CDA Guidance. London: ALNAP/ODI

Emerging Opportunities in Disaster Risk Reduction – Climate Change and the Role of the Engineer

There is a growing role for disaster risk reduction (DRR) engineers and associated professionals. Their focus must now go beyond reprioritizing local resilience through, for example, labor-based approaches and capacity building for effective maintenance, to rethinking the materials and techniques prioritized in new design and construction.

One aspect of this is choosing between infrastructure designed to survive disaster intact (failsafe design) and infrastructure that embodies the principles of 'safe failure'. The latter is invariably cheaper, and can be constructed such that in the event of disaster, the cost of repair and recovery is limited, both in terms of human resources and materials.

Another is the use of gabions (metal cages filled with stone or rubble) in north Pakistan as a resilient form of wall construction. During an earthquake, even if the gabions move or stones 'shake out' of the mesh cage, the overall structure is still left intact. Even if the walls sustain damage, a full collapse of the roof will be prevented by the arrangement of the gabions. This design also supports any subsequent relief and recovery work to locally sourced, renewable materials.

This last point is crucial to the 'safe failure' approach – infrastructure can be designed so that certain core elements are protected and can be reused. Building back better should then take less time, require fewer



Completed School-cum-Cyclone Shelter, Bangladesh.

resources and leave a fraction of the carbon footprint of traditional reconstruction techniques and materials.

This concept of resilience is already reflected in how the civil engineering is defined. In 2003, the Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE) changed its original definition of civil engineering from "*the art of directing the great source of the power of nature for the use and convenience of man*" to "*the exercise of imagination to fashion the products, processes and people needed to create a sustainable natural and built environment.*"

This new definition requires a new approach to engineering design, particularly in choosing materials and processes. As the ICE goes on to say, civil engineering "*requires a broad understanding of scientific principles, knowledge of materials and the art of*

analysis and synthesis. It also requires research, team working, leadership and business skills. A civil engineer is one who practices all or part of this art."¹

Instead of producing designs that are strong enough to overcome the forces of nature, we as engineers now recognise we must operate within the limits of environmental resources and climate change – as well as within the limits of our own technology – in determining what the most appropriate solution in any given location might be.

As has been well-documented, climate change and urbanisation are two of the main drivers of the increased risks associated with climate-driven events, particularly hydro-met hazards, such as storms and floods. The risks they pose in inducing failure in infrastructure are becoming more frequent, larger and

¹ See <http://www.ice.org.uk/downloads//bailey.pdf>

more complex, with often unforeseen failure mechanisms.

Climate change will be an agent of change for all countries at varying levels of development, and those that can understand comprehensive disaster risk management are better-placed to help society, moving forward into the Post-2015 Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction (Hyogo Framework for Action 2, or HFA2).

Making infrastructure more 'climate resilient' is integral to disaster risk management. One example of how this is being effectively implemented is in the Islamic Development Bank-funded 'cyclone shelters-cum-schools' programme in Bangladesh. The team of engineering and development consultants managing the programme, IMC Worldwide, has factored long-term climate change and rising sea-levels into its design and construction processes.

Each building has been designed to harvest rooftop rainwater to counter the shortage of potable water

available from boreholes as arsenic contamination and salination levels increase further inland. However, the team recognizes that hard engineering is by itself not sufficient and stresses that the ongoing success of this project is as much down to its work in improving disaster preparedness in the community, as in the provision of the buildings themselves.

Furthermore, climate resilience should take into account social considerations and wider institutional resilience, and be viewed as something more proactive than simply an adaptive response to the inevitable. As well as limiting the risks associated with climate change, we must act to put in place a zero carbon future. This means cohesive global action to make do with fewer resources, alongside investment in new infrastructure that reduces climate change impacts.

Such action begins at the community level, through development of locally appropriate solutions that deliver better resilience, improved

maintenance and lower carbon – both at the build and in-use stages. A good example of this type of community-centered activity is IMC Worldwide's ongoing project work in Pakistan, developing resilient classrooms and school infrastructure that substitute high-carbon concrete, brick and steel solutions with locally sourced materials where possible. Communities are involved at every stage of project planning, implementation and management, leading to improved local skills and resilient construction techniques.

The decisions that we make while meeting the demands for new infrastructure will have a direct impact on factors such as greenhouse gas emissions and the use of natural resources, all of which will ultimately have an effect on climate change. A clear vision is needed to help us make these kind of complex decisions, balancing growth and sustainability. ■

– **Steve Fitzmaurice,**

Principal Consultant, Disaster Risk Reduction & Low-Built Carbon Environment, IMC Worldwide, UK

COUNTRY HUMANITARIAN PERSPECTIVE

A Window to Charity in China

The future of the world may well be in China's hands, so it's important to recognize the soft spots as well as the callouses. In the philanthropic and humanitarian fields, China's new profile as one of the world's largest economies has raised a lot of attention.

China has a rich tradition of charitable giving. In the post-Mao period (1978-present), China's citizens are once again allowed to participate in private philanthropy, which they do often and enthusiastically. This new grassroots charitable activity is

often accomplished by a single click, tap, or swipe: using the most up-to-date technology enabling large numbers of Chinese to give easily. Similarly, the Chinese government is now willing to admit that the Chinese people may sometimes need material assistance, and is open to allowing private and even foreign monies to provide for those needs. China's leaders are also interested in the global perks of soft power, gleaned by becoming involved with international humanitarianism, and in the domestic acclaim brought by a heightened world reputation. As

China gets richer, China can—and should—play a role in helping the world's neediest, but the rest of the world needs to recognize and encourage that potential.

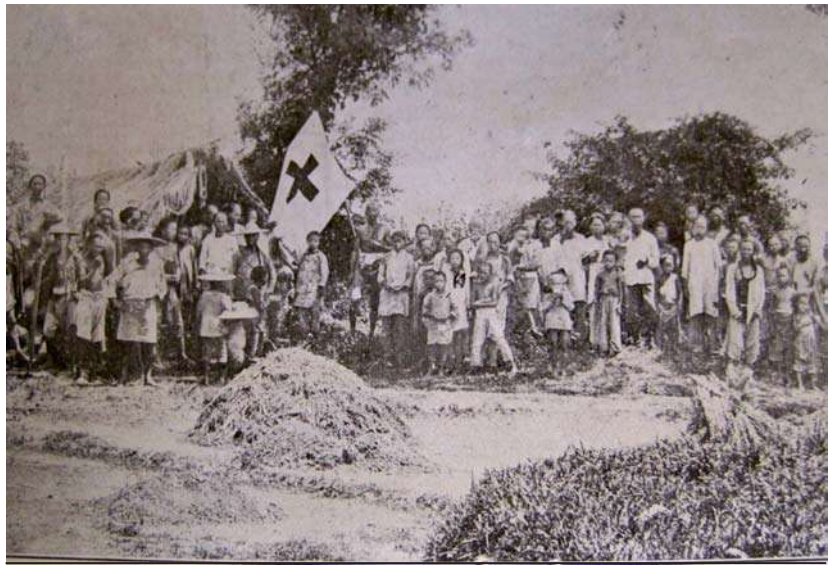
China's charitable past is an important indicator of China's potential as a philanthropic player. In ancient China, mutual aid societies were formed as early as two thousand years ago to improve people's wellbeing. By the 14th century, private individuals formed well managed, well funded associations to provide aid to animals, children, orphans,



widows, the sick, the poor, and the dead, as well as to build schools, hospitals, temples, and ancestral halls. Leading religious and philosophical strands such as Buddhism and Confucianism legitimated and inspired this charitable behavior. In China, the responsibility to give charity grows with increased ability to give: that is to say, the more you have, the more you should give. Charitable associations and widespread giving became a feature of Chinese life over the last 300-plus years.

The government itself was seen as the ultimate benefactor of the people, with stringent responsibilities to provide for the Chinese people in times of dearth or disaster. In the late 19th century, technological innovation increased the philanthropic reach of the state and of private donors across China, with the advent of trains, printing technologies, telegraphy, biomedical advances, and photography. Private and quasi-private charitable organizations began to extend their networks to the national level, emboldened and encouraged by a weak state that needed the wealthy elite to provide aid on its behalf. By the beginning of the 20th century, China had even joined the world community with international philanthropy, forming an indigenous Red Cross Society, joining the International Committee of the Red Cross in 1912, and donating to world relief. The first half-century was a time of flourishing and innovative philanthropic activity in China, primarily involving Chinese and diasporic Chinese, but also benefitting from international involvement, particularly during WWII.

The dominant Maoist/Marxist ideology of the period 1949–1978 completely shut down any private charitable activity in China, and changed China's official stance on



Chinese Red Cross work in the Famine of 1921.

world humanitarianism. Now in position of power, China's state insisted on affording other countries the very sovereignty China was denied during "the century of humiliation" (1840s–1940s), even in the realms of humanitarian intervention. During the Maoist period, an instrumentalist approach to humanitarianism dominated Chinese international giving, and that attitude still obtains today in official circles. Involvement by the state in social welfare issues, already a basic tenet in traditional China and buttressed during the Mao years, continues to be a salient characteristic of China's charitable sphere.

China's charitable past is an important indicator of China's potential as a philanthropic player. In ancient China, mutual aid societies were formed as early as two thousand years ago to improve people's wellbeing.

Nonetheless, in China today there are many private individuals, NGOs, GONGOs, newly approved private trusts, corporate entities and state branches that give to charity. Diasporic Chinese also contribute greatly to China's wellbeing, donating schools and scholarships, hospitals and medicines to China. The number of wealthy Chinese is growing exponentially, and the amount of money they donate is also increasing year by year. Government regulation has not kept up with the new general openness to philanthropy in China, but legislation is in the works to make giving easier and less risky for Chinese and international donors in China, including corporations, non-profits, and individuals. In understanding Chinese charity, it is important to disaggregate the term "China," and recognize that giving in China takes place in many different circles, in many different ways, and with many different impetus—the same as giving in any country around the world today. An openness to understand the culture and context of Chinese charity is critical to allowing Chinese charity to flourish both domestically and internationally in the years to come. ■

- **Caroline Reeves**, Ph.D., Associate in Research Harvard University, Fairbank Centre, USA

Stabilizing Mali in the Aftermath of a Multidimensional Crisis



Mali, a landlocked country located in the region of the Sahel, is slowly recovering from an unprecedented multidimensional crisis that hit the country in 2012. Following a coup d'état in March of that year, separatist Tuareg rebels overran the three northern regions of Mali. They were then toppled by several extremist groups, including some linked to Al-Qaeda, who took advantage of the power vacuum that had been created. Ousted in the beginning of 2013 by a French-led military intervention, the jihadist groups continue to operate in the area, notably by resorting to terrorist action through sporadic attacks and kidnappings, in spite of the presence of the remaining French troops, and of the United Nations (UN) peacekeeping mission in Mali (MINUSMA), which was established by the Security Council and started operations on 1 July 2013.

The crisis that hit Mali had deep rooted causes. It was a political crisis at heart, largely sparked by the longstanding grievances of the minority Tuareg ethnic group directed against the central Malian Government. However, it also stemmed from issues linked to poor governance, corruption, as well as development and humanitarian challenges arising from recurrent vulnerabilities and food crises. Indeed, Mali, as much of the Sahel region, is affected by chronic food and nutrition insecurity. This year, it is estimated that 1.5 million people need immediate food assistance and 2.1 million people face moderate food insecurity. Hence the combined factors of conflict, chronic food and nutrition insecurity, and repeated food crises have amplified the

magnitude of the 2012 crisis, exacerbating the humanitarian situation of millions and causing significant displacement of people inside the country and in neighboring countries.

In the face of a multidimensional crisis, stabilizing a country requires a multifaceted response. This involves ensuring security, addressing chronic and immediate humanitarian needs, restoring state authority and social services including water, electricity, education and health, rehabilitating infrastructure, fostering reconciliation and dialogue amongst and between communities, and working towards early recovery and the resumption of economic activity and development. While life-saving assistance is still sorely needed in many areas of Mali, in the northern but also in the southern regions, addressing the chronic nature of the crisis by securing livelihoods, creating jobs, especially for young people, and strengthening resilience is another key priority. Creating an enabling environment for the resumption of development work is a key condition to stabilization and this is why improved security conditions are so important and the work of UN peacekeepers so critical.

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Achieving stabilization requires a synergy of actions articulated within a broad-based strategy in support of Government efforts and calling upon humanitarian and development, and civilian and military actors to complement each other's efforts.

Although more resources are needed, the UN and partners are already actively engaged in a wide range of sectors including education, development, reestablishment of the rule of law, protection of civilians, nutrition, food, early recovery, and human rights. Programmes are being implemented both in the southern and in the northern part of the country, despite considerable access constraints in the North. Much has been done to rehabilitate public infrastructure, such as police stations, courts and prisons in order to support the Government's efforts to redeploy its administration and services.

However, no progress will be sustainable without national reconciliation and a comprehensive peace deal. The Government, supported by the international community, must continue – and with added urgency – to work towards finding a political solution to the crisis as well as creating conditions that will be conducive to socio-economic recovery by investing at the local level in forward-looking programmes for the reconstruction and development of the northern regions. While partnerships are important to success, the stabilization of Mali depends primarily on the will of the Malians to turn the page and join forces for a peaceful and prosperous future. ■

- David Gressly,
Deputy Special Representative of the
UN Secretary General in Mali

ALNAP's Research Work: 2013–2014 Highlights

ALNAP is a unique system-wide network dedicated to improving the performance of humanitarian action through shared learning. The ALNAP Network currently has over 80 members, including members based in South Asia: AIDMI and SEEDS (India), ICIMOD (Nepal), and COAST (Bangladesh).

ALNAP's *research* activities are developed by the London-based Secretariat with guidance from the Steering Committee and in consultation with ALNAP Members. The *communication* of research findings within the Network and the broader humanitarian sector, as well as the provision of *support and guidance* for humanitarian professionals, is vital for organisational and individual learning processes that lead to positive change.

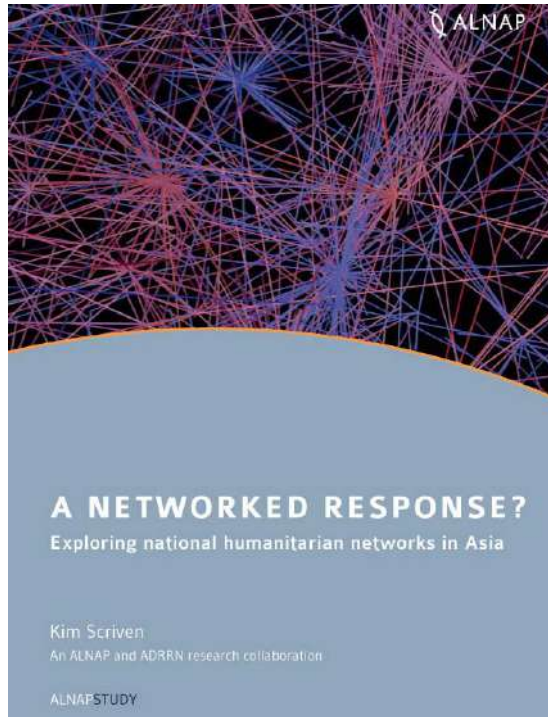
Below are a few highlights of 2013–14 research projects, the findings of which are globally applicable.

Responding to Earthquakes and Floods

Aimed at humanitarian policy and operational staff, ALNAP's two most popular lessons papers, *Flood Disasters* and *Responding to Earthquakes*, introduce key lessons from previous relief and recovery operations. These and other ALNAP Lessons Papers are available at www.alnap.org/publications.

Urban Response

ALNAP's work on urban response includes two Lessons Papers, *Responding to Urban Disasters: Learning from previous relief and recovery operations* and *Humanitarian*



Interventions in Settings of Urban Violence, and the *Urban Humanitarian Response Portal (UHRP)* (www.urban-response.org), which holds over 1,400 resources relating to crisis response in urban environments. The UHRP hosts a regular webinar series as well as the *Urban Response Community of Practice* (<https://partnerplatform.org/alnap/urban-response/>), which has become a vibrant community of over 500 members.

Humanitarian Networks

Being a humanitarian network ALNAP has experienced first-hand the power of collective, coherent action, which has led us to focus on what are the important 'success factors' in making networks effective.

The ALNAP Study *A networked response? Exploring national humanitarian networks in Asia* explores a number of networks across Asia. It

extracts some of the learning from this region and turning it into guidance that anyone involved with starting, managing or participating in a humanitarian network may find useful. The study, discussion starter and three case studies (Afghanistan, Bangladesh and the Philippines) are available at www.alnap.org/ourwork/networks.

Quality and use of evidence

Following our Annual Meeting on *Evidence and knowledge in humanitarian action* in 2013, the Secretariat published an ALNAP Study, which looks into questions such as: What is evidence and what do we need it for? How good is the evidence that is currently available? How can we improve the quality and use of evidence? Does evidence get used by decision-makers? The authors of the study identified six criteria to judge the quality of evidence that is generated and used in humanitarian action. It is hoped that the debate that is only starting will lead to humanitarian action becoming more effective, ethical and accountable.

Insufficient Evidence? The quality and use of evidence in humanitarian action is available at www.alnap.org/ourwork/evidence.

Humanitarian Leadership

For the last three years now, ALNAP has been carrying out research into how current approaches to humanitarian leadership can be improved. Our latest publication *Who's in charge here? A literature review of approaches to leadership in*

humanitarian operations considers some of the assumptions that we commonly make around operational leadership, and investigates the potential relevance of alternative approaches to leadership, and how they might be implemented in the international humanitarian system. www.alnap.org/ourwork/leadership

Engagement of Crisis-affected People

ALNAP's Annual Meeting on *Engagement of crisis-affected people in humanitarian action* in March 2014 attracted over 200 participants from more than 100 organisations. A comprehensive collection of meeting resources is available at www.alnap.org/meeting2014.

Humanitarian Feedback Mechanisms

In March 2014, we released a range of publications looking at the effectiveness of humanitarian feedback mechanisms. The aim of the project was to document what works and why when using beneficiary feedback mechanisms in a variety of humanitarian emergency settings; to capture learning from field staff; and to include beneficiaries' voices in

these on-going discussions. This ALNAP/CDA joint research resulted in a variety of publications, such as the ALNAP Practitioner Guidance *Closing the loop: Effective feedback in humanitarian contexts*. All publications are available at www.alnap.org/ourwork/feedback-loop.

Evaluating Humanitarian Action Guide

This guide supports evaluation specialists and non-specialists in every stage of an evaluation, from initial decision to final dissemination. It is currently being piloted all over the world in three different languages. We invite humanitarian organisations, particularly from South Asia, to participate in the piloting of the guide and give us their feedback on this resource. More information and contact details can be found at www.alnap.org/eha.

Using Evaluation

A result of several years of research into the utilisation of evaluations this study presents a framework on strengthening humanitarian evaluation capacities. It will allow individuals, teams and organisations

to structure a debate around the many factors that have an impact on humanitarian agencies' ability to commission, conduct, and utilise evaluations in a more effective way. The ALNAP Study *Using Evaluation for a Change: Insights from humanitarian practitioners* is available at www.alnap.org/using-evaluation.

Humanitarian Evaluation Community of Practice

ALNAP's evaluation team recently launched the *Humanitarian Evaluation Community of Practice*, a virtual space for professionals wishing to follow debates, share ideas and receive latest research findings. You can join the community at <https://partnerplatform.org/humanitarian-evaluation/>.

The coming year will open new areas of research and engagement and the Secretariat, on behalf of the ALNAP Network, is looking forward to working with existing and prospect members and partners in the South Asia region. ■

– Franziska Orphal,
Communications Officer, ALNAP, UK

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