



## **Workshop Report**

### **Humanitarian Assistance, Structures and Coordination in the Western Region on the 26<sup>th</sup> of July 2010.**

**Organized by NHRP, ACBAR and OCHA.**

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The NGO and the Humanitarian Reform Project<sup>1</sup>, in cooperation with ACBAR and OCHA invited on the 26<sup>th</sup> of July humanitarian stakeholders in the Western region to a workshop on Humanitarian Assistance, Structures and Coordination in the West region covering the 4 Western provinces Herat, Farah, Baghdadis and Ghor for a day of interactive discussion to increase the humanitarian reform awareness in the region and the awareness on what recourses are available on the Kabul level in addition to the global level. The aim of the workshop was to come up with practical suggestions and recommendations on how we can improve the humanitarian response capacity in the West and best utilize the resources available. A total of 60 participants ranging from UN, INGOs, NNGOs, ANDMA, PDMC and donors came together and the following is a summary of their discussions and recommendations.

#### **Outline of the workshop**

The workshop was divided into two parts, the first half of the day focused on presentations and framing the discussion and for the second part of the day the participants discussed the humanitarian coordination in the West and ways for improvement;

#### **Humanitarian assistance and humanitarian structures**

- What is humanitarian assistance and how do we distinguish it from long-term development.
- The Global Humanitarian reform process- background and purpose
- The global and national humanitarian structures for coordination, funding and leadership.
- Humanitarian resources on the Kabul level.
- The role of ANDMA, PDMC, OCHA and ACBAR in the West region, an overview of the current coordination mechanisms and interactive discussion on the coordination between them.

#### **Working group discussions;**

- How do the humanitarian coordination mechanisms in the West region currently work together in the region and with the mechanisms on the Kabul level?
- How can we improve the link between the coordination in the Western region and the Kabul level?  
Do we need to improve the link?
- What practical suggestions would the group wish to make to improve the humanitarian response capacity in the West and how can the Kabul level be utilized for that?

#### **Humanitarian coordination in the West**

The Western region has a relatively small number of long-term actors implementing programs and hence coordination does not always need to happen within a structured format but informally between organizations. Although that can be very useful on the response level the lack of formalized information structures can also negatively impact the wider general awareness of the situation in the region. The

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<sup>1</sup> NGOs and Humanitarian Reform is a 3 year NGO consortium project funded by DfID. Member agencies in Afghanistan are ActionAid, Afghanaid, CAFOD represented by Caritas Germany, Care International, ICVA, Oxfam, NRC and Save the Children

region is also characterized by having a number of organizations which have their main country offices based in Herat and not necessarily a presence on the Kabul level which can also be challenging in regards to information sharing between region and capital. Based on interviews during a previous mission and characterization from the workshop participants the humanitarian coordination in the Western region has suffered from weak information sharing, leadership and coordination due to capacity challenges among the various coordination foras affecting both the identification of gaps and avoidance of duplication. Efforts are ongoing on several levels to address these short-falls and the enthusiasm of the workshop participants certainly is promising in regards to improvement.

### **Participant recommendations**

The participant working groups had some very vibrant and intensive discussions and excellent presentations on their debates and their recommendations. The following is the main set of recommendations coming from the working groups.

- Participants agreed that there is not only need to improve the linkage between the Kabul structures and the region; there is also pertinent need to improve the coordination amongst the actors within the region. Participants expressed a confusion as to who is in fact the focal point among the various coordination bodies in the region; OCHA, ACBAR, PDMC, ANDMA or UNAMA. All of the coordination foras have a role to play but there needs to be a clarification for the humanitarian community in the West as to who is the first and last point on contact for both sharing and receiving information.
- The participants all agreed that there is a need for more coordination in the region, yet when discussed it became clear that what is needed is better coordination and not necessarily more. For organizations to ensure that they have relevant participation in coordination meetings, to ensure that meetings have clear objectives and are conducted in an efficient manner and for agendas to focus on action oriented coordination rather than information sharing. There are plenty of meetings going on in Herat, yet they fail to address the key issues relevant to the humanitarian stakeholders. It was agreed that there needs to be a clear structure for communication with the Clusters on Kabul level as well and for relevant clusters to be established in the region. The participants requested OCHA to evaluate which clusters would be most useful in the region and in which sectors the existing coordination mechanisms can be built upon and linked with the Kabul levels. As a minimum there should be clearly communicated Cluster Focal Points for each cluster which participate in the Line Department lead meetings and provide a link between the Kabul level and organizations on the ground. As a good practice it was mentioned that the establishment of the Protection cluster and the IDP task force has greatly improved the coordination and response within the sector. It was however emphasized that the relationship with the clusters is not only about the regional actors feeding in their information to Kabul but also for Kabul level clusters to pro-actively share their information and resources with the regional actors.
- Participants all emphasized the need for pro-active, strategic and institutionalized coordination mechanisms. Currently the humanitarian response is ad-hoc and reactive to situations and there is little work done in regards to preparedness, a comprehensive Who does What Where database is missing, there is a lack of Province and District profiles and no Early Warning Systems are in place. These are all areas where the participants expressed the need for the coordination actors to improve.
- Participants expressed the need to themselves to become better in sharing their information, to share good practices, to organize learning visits between organizations and foster more cooperation and partnership amongst the humanitarian community. In addition due to the number of actors in a relevantly small section of the region participants expressed the need for stronger steering of where new organizations and new projects of established are to be set up to avoid duplication and increase geographical coverage.
- There was strong consensus on the need for capacity building amongst actors in the region and particularly mentioned, but not exclusively, was ANDMA. Yet there was no clear expression as to which types of capacity building there is need for. The issue will be discussed further in the follow-up to the workshop.
- Participants also expressed a crucial need for a strategy for the civ/mil interaction, whatever the forum for the communication will be there is a need to avoid duplication of programming, address the

military transgressions of the civ/mil guidelines and how that affects the security of both humanitarian actors and beneficiaries and humanitarian access to communities. A separate workshop or meeting needs to be set up with the humanitarian actors as to discuss what kind of strategy would fit the humanitarian community.

- Lastly the need for addressing advocacy issues was raised frequently, the main advocacy areas need to be mapped out and a strategy for addressing them agreed upon.

The decision among the participants is that the workshop recommendations be reviewed in the next HRT meeting and that the HRT will become the venue for a developing a strategy as to how the recommendations will be implemented and followed-up.

### **NHRP recommendations**

As the NHRP has had the opportunity to observe the participant discussions and previously do a short coordination assessment in the region we take the opportunity to put forward a few additional recommendations, although it must be mentioned that the participants have done an excellent job in identifying the main areas in need of improvement;

- The participant's decision to utilize the HRT as their main general coordination fora is excellent and we would suggest that in addition of the HRT intention to set up a plan for the implementation of the recommendations, the HRT as a regular annual activity also sets up a workplan outlining the major issues that need a concerted effort during the year to ensure proactive and prepared response capacity.
- As access seems to be the main hindrance for a comprehensive geographical spread of organizations it would be worthwhile to address this issue as the main advocacy issue which needs a coordinated approach.
- It is the perception of the NHRP (corrections are welcome) that a humanitarian dialogue among actors on areas such as principled approach, Do No Harm, civ/mil distinctions etc is not frequent in the region, as a part of the capacity building and advocacy strategy increasing the humanitarian stakeholders awareness on these approaches might be very useful.

The NHRP on behalf of the organizers would like to thank all participants for their active participation, especially to those who traveled far to attend and we wish you the best of luck with implementing your recommendations. This workshop is only one step among many to better addressing the needs of the population in the West and the intention and the willingness for achieving that has certainly been displayed in this event.

For questions or comments please contact:  
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### **List of participants** *(contacts can be obtained from OCHA or ACBAR);*

No	Name	Agency	Designation	Province
1	A. Afzali	ARCS	DM	Herat
2	Abdul Baqui	CRS	Monitoring Officer	Herat
3	Abdul Basir Atef	HT	Head of Support Services	Herat
4	Abdul Karim	UNHCR	Project Officer	Herat

5	Abdul Rahim	Agriculture Directory	Consultant Research	Herat
6	Abdul Razeq	HT		Herat
7	Abdul Raziq	DACAAR	Provincial Manager	Herat
8	Ahmad Shah	MOPH	PHA	Herat
9	Ali Ahmad	A.I.L	Finance Maneger	Herat
10	Ali Reza	CVG	Logistics	Herat
11	Aslam	WCUK	Field Director	Herat
12	Azizullah			Herat
13	Bashir Ahmad	INTERSOS	APM	Herat
14	Basir Amini	WFP	SPA	Herat
15	Dr. Nasar Ahmad Timori	MOVE	Project Officer	Herat
16	Dr. Parwiz Sultani	WVI	CHA Zone Manager	Ghor
17	Dr. Qaisani	IFRC	Project Officer	Herat
18	Dr. Sabawoon	USAID	PMS	Herat
19	Dr. Sebghatullah Habibi	ARAA	Programme Officer	Herat
20	Dr. Shakib	WVI	Acting Health Manager	Herat
21	Dr. Shams	DCA	DRPD	Herat
22	Dr.Nazir	RAADA	Director	Herat
23	Ed Crare	WV	Project Director	Herat
24	Edris	JRS	PA	Herat
25	Faisal	CVG	Coordinator	Herat
26	Fariba	NRC	PO	Herat
27	Farid Niazi	ACBAR	Area Manager	Herat
28	Ghafoor Jalali	ODSLP		Badghis
29	Ghulam Rasul	DOLSA	CPAN-TA	Herat
30	Halima	CRDSA	Admin	Herat
31	Hayatullah	CHA		Herat
32	Kazem Shakib	VWO	Technical Advisor	Herat
33	M. Hasib	UNFAO	Sr. RFA	Herat
34	M. Ishaq	NPO/RRAA	Provincial Manager	Herat

35	M. Nadir	UNAMA	F.A	Herat
36	M.Nader	BDN	Operations Manager	Herat
37	Maojkokcha	INTERSOS	PM	Herat
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40	Mohammad Sardar	Economic Department	NGO's Officer	Herat
41	Naim Gul	WDOA	Admin Officer	Herat
42	Najebullah Taheri	SDO	Project Manager	Herat
43	Naser	Help Germany	R.L.O	Herat
44	Nazir Ahmad	UNOCHA	DB Clerk	Herat
45	Nazir Ahmad			Badghis
46	Omar	ACBAR	Logistics Officer	Herat
47	Omid Ahmad	AHDAA		Herat
48	Osman	MMA	head of Office	Herat
49	Rafi	NHC	NNLTO	Herat
50	Rafi	ACBAR	Admin	Herat
51	Ronnie Calito	OCHA	HAO/CM Coord	Herat
52	Roya	ACBAR	Programme Officer	Herat
53	Saddudin	ADO	Admin	Badghis
54	Saeed	GP	OM	Herat
55	Said Wahidullah	DAIL	Adviser	Herat
56	Shewa	WASSA		Herat
57	Silvia Risi	CESUI	CR	Herat
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