



ACBAR

The NGOs and Humanitarian Reform Project

A chance to influence the humanitarian system



Workshop Report

Humanitarian Assistance, Structures and Coordination in the North Region on the 12th of July 2010.

Organized by NHRP, ACBAR and OCHA.

The NGO and the Humanitarian Reform Project¹, in cooperation with ACBAR and OCHA invited on the 12th of July humanitarian stakeholders in the Northern region to a workshop on Humanitarian Assistance, Structures and Coordination in the North region covering the 5 northern provinces Balkh, Samangan, Jowzjan, Sari Pul and Faryab 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 North and best utilize the resources available. A total of 50 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 north 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 North region, interactive discussion on the complementary role of each.

Working group discussions;

- How does the humanitarian coordination in the North region currently work together with the mechanisms on the Kabul level?
- How can we improve the link between the coordination in the North 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 North and how can the Kabul level be utilized for that?

Humanitarian coordination in the North

The relative security of the North has fostered a close cooperation between the humanitarian community and the governmental structures when it comes to responding to natural disasters. The workshop participation shows the committed engagement of the local government in the north to not only take an

¹ 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

active role in the provision of humanitarian assistance but to preferably lead these efforts. ANDMA has been in the process of establishing itself in each province since 2005 (?) and the PDMC each have an annual Provincial Disaster Management Plan which is developed with the support of UNDP. Due to the region being prone to natural disaster the main humanitarian emphasis has been and is emergency response.

Participant recommendations

The outcome of the group discussions focused heavily on the role of ANDMA and the need for improved capacity within ANDMA. Despite the morning presentation on the cluster system etc there were no recommendations as to how improve the communication with the Kabul clusters. There was unilateral agreement that there is a need to improve the coordination both within the region and between the region and Kabul but the main reference is between the provincial ANDMAs and the Kabul level ANDMA. The provincial ANDMA offices are severely under resourced in terms of logistical means and supplies of any kind, no vehicles, no computers, phones and very low salary rates to offer experienced staff. Hence the main recommendation which was made by all the working groups is:

- **For the Afghan Government and the international community to properly resource the provincial ANDMA offices and build their capacity.**

The discussion and recommendations on how to increase the humanitarian response capacity within the region were many and quite detailed. The main recommendations are the following;

- Increase the assessment capacity among the humanitarian stakeholders by agreeing upon common criteria's and methodologies.
- Increase pre-positioning of supplies by establishing warehouses in each province.
- Establish a roster in the north with experienced humanitarian staff who can be deployed to rapid response teams.
- Increase the coordination and information sharing between the international community and government lead coordination mechanism focusing on building upon the Provincial Disaster Management Plans.
- Ensure that regional coordination is established between the governmental lead coordination mechanisms.
- Preemptively work on identifying vulnerable areas and populations as a part of emergency preparedness.
- Increase the capacity of ACBAR to play a greater role in ensuring a close linkage between the NGO community and governmental lead coordination mechanisms on a provincial level.
- Ensure more opportunities for general capacity building with trainings and workshops relating to humanitarian assistance.

NHRP recommendations

As the NHRP has had a chance to observe the discussions and conduct a humanitarian coordination assessment in the region previously during the year we take the opportunity to also include a few recommendations based on these observations.

- The close cooperation between the humanitarian community and the local government structures is excellent and the efforts to build the local capacity are highly commendable. However, in light of the degenerating security situation in the region it is of importance for all humanitarian stakeholders to ensure that the humanitarian response within the region is perceived to be neutral and impartial by all parties to the conflict to ensure continued access to populations in need. The role of OCHA as a neutral intermediary should be emphasized and supported by all involved.
- The focus on humanitarian assistance in form of emergency response has been very good and it is excellent that the humanitarian stakeholders are aiming to improve the response capacity. The NHRP would however also recommend that equal attention is given to the ongoing humanitarian needs to ensure that gaps are identified and met. Actively discussing and ensuring coordination of for instance the levels of malnutrition, gaps in health provision and vertical programming potentially needed,

displacement and protection issues, food insecurity and general advocacy just to mention a few could ensure greater capacity to meet the needs of the population.

- In addition to increasing the capacity of ANDMA and the PDMCs the NHRP would recommend a good line of communication with the humanitarian clusters in Kabul to ensure that information from the northern region is included in the national strategy and that the region can benefit from the resources available. There does not seem to be a need or a wish for all the clusters establishing themselves in the region but the system of focal points and regular structured communication supported by OCHA would still go far.
- Lastly, improving the capacity for information management in the region mapping out the presence and capacity of all humanitarian actors and with a commitment from all stakeholders to share their assessments, response reports etc being recorded and analyzed by OCHA should be prioritized.

The NHRP would like on behalf of the organizers 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 north and the intention and the willingness for achieving that has certainly been displayed in this event.

For questions or comments please contact:

Lydia Geirsdottir
Humanitarian Reform Officer Afghanistan
Lydia.geirsdottir@af.care.org

List of participants *(contacts can be obtained from OCHA or ACBAR):*

Abdul Ghafar	C.E.O	ARCS	Jowzjan
Abdul Qahar	Finance Offier	DHSA	Balkh
Abdul Wahab	Director	Anama	Faryab
Ali Ahmad	Site Manager	SUWA	Faryab
Aminullah	Project Site	Tear Fund	Jowzjan
Diego Fornanda	Programme	WFP	Mazar AO
Dr. Aminullah	P.C	BDN	Balkh
Dr. Farid Ahmad	Acting PM	BDN	Baghlan
Dr.Bashir	Pr.M	Action Aid	Balkh
Elisabeth	Advisor	SIDA	Balkh, Samangan
Eng. Assad	Site Engineer	COAR	Faryab
Eng. Jamal	Regional Manager	AREA	Jowzjan
Eng. Qaderi	Manager	ACBAR	Balkh
Eng.Aziz	Head of ANDMA	ANDMA	Jowzjan
Eng.Hashim	Head of office	NCA	Faryab
Eveline	HOSO	OCHA	Mazar

Fahim	CCBHIO Project Incharge	ARCS	Balkh
Fardeen	TL	NRC	Sare Pul
Fida Mohammad	General Manager of Relations	Governor Office	Jowzjan
Hafizullah	Pharmasist	S.C.A ACTED	Sare Pul
Haidar Ahmad	Deputy Program Manager	ZOA	Jowzjan
Haji Azim	Action Aid incharge	Action Aid	Jowzjan
Hamrah	Coordinator	ACBAR	Balkh
Hasib	Deputy	Mercy corps	Balkh
Hayatullah	Disaster Specialist	Sare Pul	Sare Pul
Kamaluddin	Anti Disaster Expert	Samangan PDMC	Smangan
Karyab	SNA	FAO	Mazar
Laily Ahmadi	Monitor Officer	AREA	Balkh
Mirwais	P.M	CHA	Balkh
Mirwais Muzafar	Humanitarian affairs officer	UNOCHA	Balkh, Mazar
Moh.Hussain	Head of Sara Meyasht	ARCS	Samangan
Mohammad Taher	Head of ARCS	ARCS	Mazar
Mohammad Yasin	Finance Assistant	CARE	Balkh
Naqibullah	HAO	UNOCHA	Faryab
Naqibullah	PM	NP/RRAA	Faryab
Naseer Yusufi	MVTC PM	ACTED	Faryab
Nazar Moh.Rashed	Head of private sector services	Faryab PDMC	Faryab
Rahmatullah	Disaster Specialist	Jawzjan PDMC	Jowzjan
Rajab Ali	Head of ANDMA	ANDMA	Samangan
Saboor Ghaznawi	PA	UNAMA	Balkh
Sayed Faiz	Head of ANDMA	ANDMA	Sare Pul
Sayed Ismail	Office Manager	HELVETAS	Samangan
Sayed Tariq	C.M	IRD	Sare Pul
Shafi Fazil	SUWA	Faryab PDMC	Faryab
Shalu John	Admin	DACAAR	Balkh

Showdi A?	Program Coordinator	AAA	Balkh
Showkat	Head of Base	ACB	Samangan
Sriram	Prog.Officer	UNHCR	Mazar
Sultan Aziz		B.P.G	Balkh
Zahid	Director	ANDMA	Balkh