



# Beneficiary Communication and Accountability

*A responsibility, not a choice*

Lessons learned and recommendations  
Indonesia | Haiti | Pakistan

## How we work

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**Saving lives, changing minds.**



*Strategy 2020* voices the collective determination of the IFRC to move forward in tackling the major challenges that confront humanity in the next decade. Informed by the needs and vulnerabilities of the diverse communities with whom we work, as well as the basic rights and freedoms to which all are entitled, this strategy seeks to benefit all who look to Red Cross Red Crescent to help to build a more humane, dignified, and peaceful world.

Over the next ten years, the collective focus of the IFRC will be on achieving the following strategic aims:

1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disasters and crises
2. Enable healthy and safe living
3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace

### **Acknowledgment**

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## Acronym

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AtB	Accountability to beneficiaries
BCA	Beneficiary communication and accountability
BI	Beneficiary information
BRC	British Red Cross
COP	Community Outreach Programme
CRC	Canadian Red Cross
CRM	Complaints and response mechanism
CTC	Cholera Treatment Centre
ECB	Emergency capacity building project
FWSF-H	Federation-Wide Strategic Framework – Haiti
GAP	Global Accountability Framework
HAP	Humanitarian Accountability Partnership
HRC	Haitian Red Cross
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IRCS	Irish Red Cross Society
IVR	Interactive Voice Response
PMI	Palang Merah Indonesia (Indonesian Red Cross)
PNS	Partner National Society
PRCS	Pakistan Red Crescent Society
SCHR	Steering committee for humanitarian response
TERA	Trilogy Emergency Response Application

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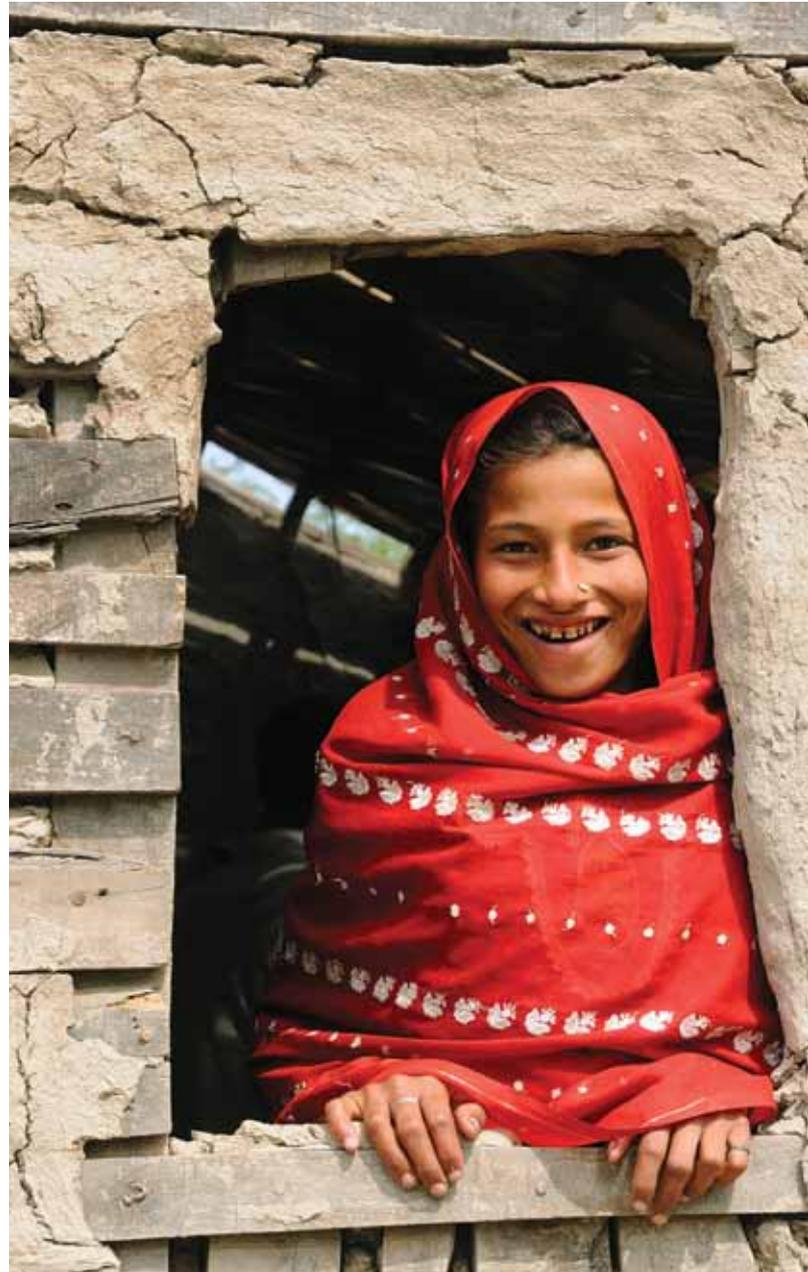
## Executive summary

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Never before has communicating with those we work with been more essential.

The combination of rapid urbanization and population growth, alongside the proliferation of short message service (SMS) and internet based technology, making it possible for communities to publicize how they are being affected by our actions have changed the humanitarian landscape. Though information and mobile phone technology had been growing in the years before 2010, the Haiti Earthquake raised awareness of how these technologies support disaster response and communication. The response in Haiti changed humanitarian communication. This creates enormous challenges, as well as opportunities, for the Red Cross Red Crescent.

Notwithstanding this shift, consideration still must be given to the many communities we work in where families regularly rely on many different communication channels including radio, television and direct communication to receive important information. Issues of credibility of information, literacy and cultural context can play a part in how this information is received, understood and used by communities regardless of the channel used. For example, in many rural communities, information is transmitted through established community leaders or heads of households. The trust in this information can be much higher than other sources, such as radio or mobile phone messages. Each channel of communication used requires careful consideration in light of context; face-to-face can be effective but resource intensive, while mass communication tools reach larger geographic areas at the touch of a button. Our success depends on how we approach these contexts and established channels; integrate our existing resources and emerging resources and technologies to establish or maintain strong two-way communication and feedback with these communities. The provision of information is not enough.



This document highlights the work that needs to be undertaken internally within the Red Cross Red Crescent to mainstream this approach; including experimenting, training, strengthening and building on already established two-way communication mechanisms. To realize this crucial approach existing systems and processes will also need to reflect how two-way communication can be achieved in the response, recovery and developmental phases of programming. Prepositioning approaches with National Society partners, identifying and establishing preferred communication channels within country context and introducing two-way mechanisms and tools to effectively respond is critical.

The links that the programme has to accountability, and the role of communications in supporting an environment of accountability in programming should also be highlighted. The programme can, and has, provided innovative options to increase transparency and participation, monitor programmes and established effective complaints and feedback mechanisms.

Raising awareness of this approach, working closely with sector operational staff, training key volunteers and staff to implement beneficiary communication and accountability approaches and developing sound indicators to measure our performance will ultimately aim to lead to better programming. Understanding that communication is more than the delivery of information, that true dialogue should encompass asking, receiving and acting on information we receive. Feedback is critical to effective communication between parties. An investment in information management technology and the capacity to manage these systems should also not be forgotten.

Meeting our mandate in the face of these challenges requires a new way of operating. Reducing vulnerability and building safe and resilient communities means empowering communities as how to access services and resources, particularly in the immediate aftermath of disasters. Information bestows power. People need it as much as water, food, medicine and shelter. The learnings of the Indonesian, Haiti and Pakistan Beneficiary Communication and Accountability programmes have provided the Movement with examples of one and two-way communication and advocacy approaches and tools. It is these experiences that will provide the basis for ongoing dialogue with communities and partners about how we approach and implement our work in the face of these emerging trends. It is our responsibility to act now.

# Warung Kuipi R-Pi



## Document objectives and audience

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This document outlines lessons learned from recent beneficiary communication and accountability (BCA) programmes in Indonesia, Haiti and Pakistan and provides recommendations and emerging guidelines for volunteers and staff in the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement on how to incorporate BCA into emergency response, recovery and development work. Although the field materials developed and reviewed were primarily generated from emergency response, volunteers and staff can apply these materials in recovery and pre-disaster programming. BCA can be operational in any phase of the programme cycle.

The lessons learned are captured from practical field experience and inputs gathered from current and previous field teams. After three mega disasters in less than six years<sup>1</sup>, two occurring within 12 months of each other, a unique opportunity existed to capture the lessons learned within the three respective responses from the volunteers and staff still involved. This document provides a reference to the current key documents available in the BCA field, including guidelines, workshop results and evaluations of specific phases and disasters.

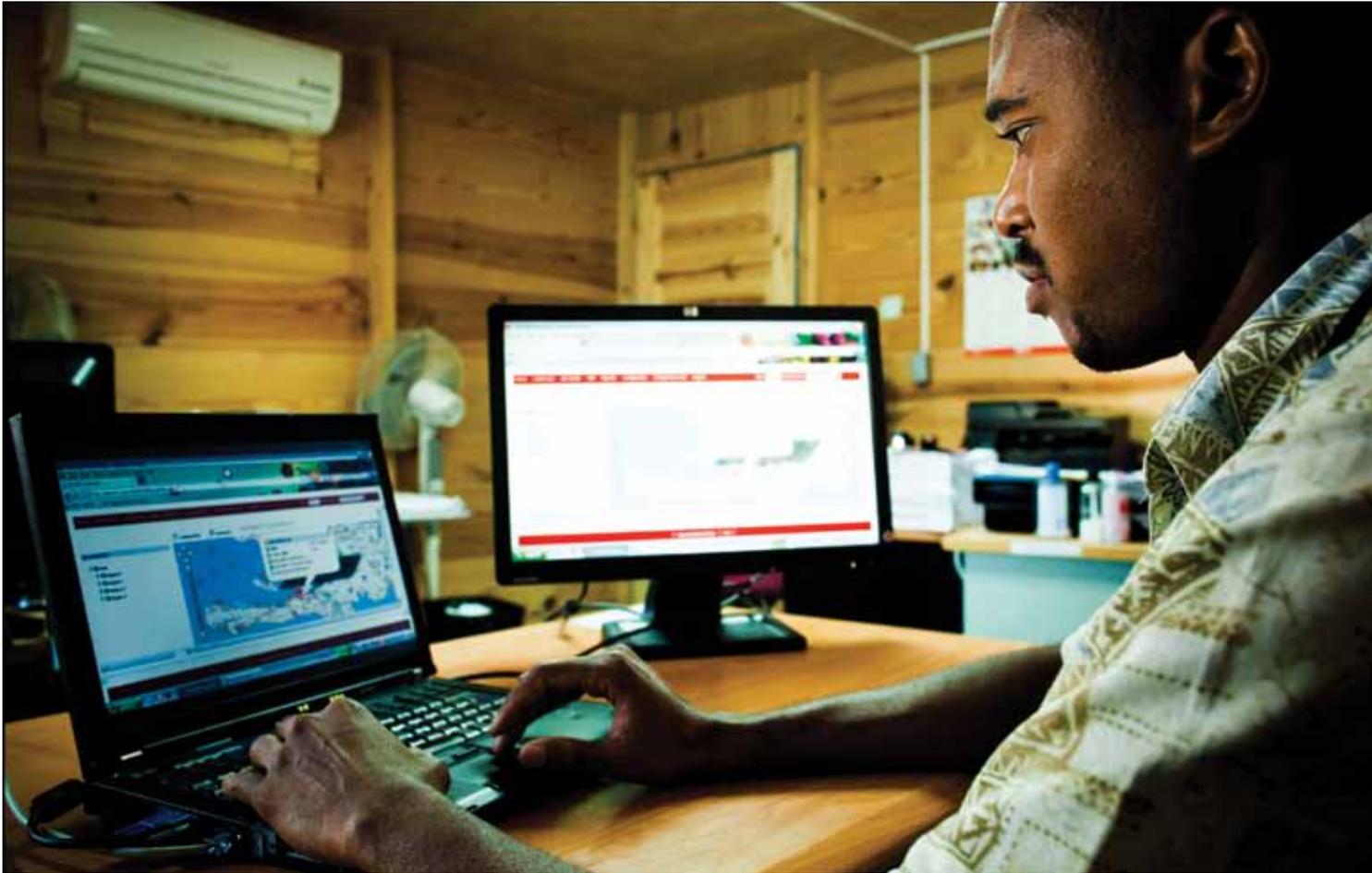
Red Cross Red Crescent volunteers and staff have produced innovative results in the field. This document builds on this base and provides practical recommendations that will assist in institutionalizing BCA in all programming. Summarized, the recommendations include:

1. Further experimentation, innovation and training during emergency responses, and in developmental programming, particularly focused on two-way communication and information management and advocacy;
2. The integration of BCA aspects into existing systems, policy and guidelines;
3. Further integration of BCA tools within operational programmes;
4. The development of new guidelines or policies where necessary.

A detailed list of recommendations can be found in the document on page 16. For ease of reference, this document refers to the various programmes, supported by partner National Societies (PNS) and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) as beneficiary communication and accountability programmes.

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<sup>1</sup> Asian Quake and tsunami 2005, Haiti Earthquake 2010 and Pakistan Floods 2010.



## Methodology and key documents

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The methodology builds on a wide range of evaluative and reporting activities where available. This includes a desk review of existing documents, interviews and workshops with key BCA programme volunteers and staff, and operations staff as follows:

- A comprehensive literature review of external and internal documents relevant to the BCA responses in the three countries mentioned above. This includes appeals, documents from the Beneficiary Communication Movement Coordination Group and minutes of meetings. Key programme documents collected during the process will be released on FedNet in 2012.
- Extensive interviews and discussions with key stakeholders in the BCA programme and operational programmes in the three operations reviewed.
- Field visits to the selected sites to gain first-hand information of the implementation of the BCA programme in Haiti.

A two-day workshop from the 29 to 30 September 2011 supplements the individual interviews, in the field and remotely, for team members who had left the programme. Where possible through interviews, different stakeholders within each operation supplement, triangulate, and at the very least verify the information. Annex 1 and 2 contain a list of key documents and stakeholders consulted.

# The meaning of beneficiary communication and accountability

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The Haiti workshop explored the meaning given to beneficiary communication and accountability by staff operating across the spectrum of BCA programmes (PNS and IFRC). The two-part meaning developed during the workshop covers beneficiary communication and beneficiary information (BI) representing the dual elements of the programme as follows:

## **BENEFICIARY COMMUNICATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

Beneficiary communication (two-way) and accountability delivered through a number of different channels should prioritize feedback from the beneficiary. Most importantly, beneficiaries participate in the process of improving their situation. Beneficiary communication or two-way communication engages communities in dialogue, by managing the information both sent to and received from beneficiaries and integrating beneficiary feedback into the decision-making process of programmes.

## **BENEFICIARY INFORMATION**

Beneficiary information (one-way) can also deliver content using a range of channels. This information contains messages that suggest protective behavioural change, or safety warnings, for example: “wash your hands to prevent cholera,” or “a hurricane is expected to hit your area within the next 3 hours”. It also has value during the early warning of disasters. It utilizes processes that allow for the dissemination of life saving information. BI does not generally engage beneficiaries in a process of consultation.

With the recent re-invigoration of the beneficiary communication movement working group a definition has been discussed building on the above foundations;

*Beneficiary communication aims to save and improve lives through the provision of timely, relevant and accurate information and support an environment of transparency and accountability through the creation of feedback mechanisms.*

# History of beneficiary communication and accountability programming

Communicating with affected populations has historical precedent within the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement. The Movement’s strong volunteer network undertakes this important work everyday. Anecdotal evidence suggests that many National Societies experiment with different forms of communication tools and methods to engage with “at risk” and “disaster affected” communities through a bottom-up approach or forward accountability. Communication methods have included high-tech solutions that rely on SMS technology, as well as the use of traditional media such as newspapers, television, radios, community notice boards, and face-to-face meetings and discussion groups.

The use of multimedia to communicate in a systematic stand-alone programme first appeared in Aceh in 2006. The Community Outreach Programme (COP), supported by the Irish Red Cross Society (IRCS) and developed in the aftermath of the Asian tsunami, empowered beneficiaries to act on their own behalf to identify resources and take action in order to achieve the best solution to the problems they encountered during the tsunami recovery process. The COP established two-way communication with the tsunami-affected beneficiaries, advocated on behalf of affected communities with stakeholders involved within the rehabilitation and reconstruction process, and captured feedback from beneficiaries regarding the programmes provided by various organizations<sup>2</sup>. Palang Merah Indonesia took over the ongoing management and development of a licensed FM radio station and its programme responsibilities following the exit of IRCS from Indonesia in 2009.

Communication channel	Output	Dissemination
Tabloid	16 page newspaper (monthly)	60,000 copies
Radio	8 hour live broadcasts, on a 24 hour service (daily)	40 communities
Television	18 live 1 hour broadcasts (weekly)	Regionally
SMS – Advocacy	6000 concluded cases	Regionally
Notice boards	Information managed by communities	30 communities
Community meetings and field radio broadcasts	Ongoing	Regionally
Mentorship programme	12 trainees trained in COP methodologies	National Society volunteers

Table summarizing Community Outreach Programme in Indonesia, 2006-2009

<sup>2</sup> The main objectives of the programme were to facilitate and advocate on behalf of Tsunami and earthquake affected communities on issues, concerns, and problems regarding the reconstruction and rehabilitation projects in Aceh and Nias; to support an environment of transparency and dialogue between earthquake and Tsunami affected communities and stakeholders through the provision of information, education and communication services, using community based dialogue and multimedia approaches; demand creation of IRCS information and communication services through enhancing existing community structures through organisational and technical assistance relevant to the reconstruction and rehabilitation process; to sustainably improve PMI capacity in conducting advocacy and beneficiary communication within the framework of community outreach management efforts.

The success of this programme set a precedent for BCA responses in the Sumatra earthquake in 2009 and in the Haiti earthquake in 2010. The IRCS, responding in Padang, Indonesia, set up a remote SMS system (from Aceh) and used radio and television to gather and discuss issues with beneficiaries.

In the emergency stages of the Haiti operation, IFRC/IRCS partnered with a local telecommunication provider and radio stations to disseminate information to beneficiaries.<sup>3</sup> The Haiti disaster, affecting a high number of mobile phone users within the affected zone, saw the emergence of two new information conduits: one from disaster affected communities, and one from mobilized swarms of local and international volunteers.<sup>4</sup> The response demonstrated that SMS technology could support more involvement by communities as part of the humanitarian effort. For the first time, Red Cross Red Crescent trialed SMS based communication to beneficiaries by partnering with local telecommunications provider in Haiti and Trilogy International. During the initial months of the response the IFRC blasted 16 million SMSs to over one million people providing information on vaccination and sanitation. In collaboration with the IFRC, Voila and Trilogy International developed a cutting edge SMS system, Trilogy Emergency Response Application (TERA). To date, the TERA has broadcast over 56 million SMSs covering everything from cholera prevention to first aid tips. Recent innovations by the IFRC in Haiti have also included an Interactive Voice Response system (IVR) that will give better access to people who cannot read and further build on the tools already in use. The IVR system will provide people with access to recorded information on a huge range of topics, as well as the opportunity to take part in surveys and assessments by pressing buttons on their phones.



<sup>3</sup> International Federation of Red Cross Red Crescent Societies, *Beneficiary Communication Evaluation, Haiti Earthquake Operation*, 2011.  
<sup>4</sup> Harvard Humanitarian Initiative, *Disaster Relief 2.0 The future of information sharing in humanitarian emergencies*, Washington D.C., UN Foundation & Vodafone Foundation Technology Partnership, 2011.

The British Red Cross (BRC) and Canadian Red Cross (CRC) also initiated BCA programmes in Haiti. For the first time, a dedicated delegate oversees the BCA programming within their respective operations. While both programmes have not yet been reviewed or evaluated, the BCA work in their respective operations have revealed early successes.

Communication channel	Output	Dissemination
SMS blasts	1.2 million people	Nationally (16 million SMSs)
TERA	1.2 million people	Nationally (Over 50 Million SMSs)
Television	2 hour live debate	Port au Prince (1 off)
Radio – IFRC	2 one-hour live radio broadcasts, weekly	Nationally: 2 stations
Radio – Canadian Red Cross	Weekly show	Léogâne and Jacmel
Notice boards	Ongoing	Communities
Noula <sup>5</sup>	Ongoing	Communities
Sound truck	Daily	Communities
BCA engagement in programmes		BRC/ CRC/ IFRC programmes

Table summarizing Beneficiary Communication Programme in Haiti, 2010-ongoing<sup>6</sup>

The response to the Pakistan floods in 2010 included the deployment of the BCA tools during the early stages of the emergency. The response provided the opportunity to develop a rollout plan for the TERA system and to integrate it into IFRC policies and the accompanying legal frameworks.

Communication channel	Output	Dissemination
Television	9 prerecorded, 1 hour broadcasts- (1 hour)	National provider
TRadio	Weekly 1 hour broadcasts	National provider
Radio training	3 provinces	3 language groups – (Sindhi, Punjabi and Urdu)
Print training	Workshops on photography and Photoshop	Nationally – 2 stations
TERA	Installation incomplete Shortcode issued	Potential 25 million subscribers
Community meetings	Ongoing	Regionally

Table summarizing the Beneficiary Communication and Accountability Programme in Pakistan, 2010 – ongoing

Other significant initiatives currently underway by the IFRC include the development of a plan to rollout the TERA to 10 of the most disaster affected countries in the Asia Pacific zone and 40 other countries globally.

<sup>5</sup> Noula is the external company managing the complaints and feedback line for the IFRC in Haiti. The Noula website can be viewed at <http://www.noula.ht/>.

<sup>6</sup> Table reflects primarily the IFRC BCA programme in Haiti.

## Importance of beneficiary communication and accountability

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Information is a key prerequisite for communities to participate in their own recovery. One and two-way communication systems deliver effective aid in the form of information, that facilitates the recovery of communities affected by disasters. This communication also facilitates important social bonding processes between individuals, groups and communities.

When establishing communication channels with disaster-affected populations and communities in general, BCA should prioritize the most vulnerable; women, men, children and the elderly, those who often face difficulty accessing information and humanitarian services. Information can assist in the appropriate delivery

### **The Code of Conduct**

Principles of Conduct for The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Response Programmes 9. We hold ourselves accountable to both those we seek to assist and those from whom we accept resources

We often act as an institutional link in the partnership between those who wish to assist and those who need assistance during disasters. We therefore hold ourselves accountable to both constituencies. All our dealings with donors and beneficiaries shall reflect an attitude of openness and transparency. We recognize the need to report on our activities, both from a financial perspective and the perspective of effectiveness. We recognize the obligation to ensure appropriate monitoring of aid distributions and to carry out regular assessments of the impact of disaster assistance. We will also seek to report, in an open fashion, upon the impact of our work, and the factors limiting or enhancing that impact. Our programmes will be based upon high standards of professionalism and expertise in order to minimize the wasting of valuable resources.

#### **SPHERE:** Core Standard 1: People-centered humanitarian response

People's capacity and strategies to survive with dignity are integral to the design and approach of humanitarian response.

**Key Action:** Establish systematic and transparent mechanisms through which people affected by disaster or conflict can provide regular feedback and influence programmes (see guidance note 2).

**Key Action:** Enable people to lodge complaints about the programme easily and safely and establish transparent, timely procedures for response and remedial actions (see guidance note 6).

of emergency relief and health services. Effective two-way dialogue with disaster-affected populations has the same priority as the delivery of aid.<sup>7</sup> Without communication systems, inefficiency can threaten aid delivery. Disempowered communities can deny aid providers the perspective essential for improving the delivery of services. Building safe and resilient communities depends on empowering people with information to access services and resources, allowing them to participate in their own recovery.<sup>8</sup>

Additionally, BCA programmes and the tools employed can assist in meeting accountability standards as set down in such documents as the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief<sup>9</sup> and Sphere,<sup>10</sup> which outline the minimum standards in disaster response. Those documents state that access to information is a human right and that people affected by a disaster should have access to an ongoing, reliable flow of credible information on the disaster and associated relief effort.<sup>11</sup>



<sup>7</sup> Strategy 2020 of the IFRC emphasizes developing a culture of active engagement, and transparent accountability with the communities served. Developing a more systematic and coordinated approach towards communicating with all 'at-risk' and 'disaster-affected' communities improves the effectiveness of programming.

<sup>8</sup> Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction Study 'Characteristics of a Safe and Resilient Community', International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, 2011.

<sup>9</sup> International Federation of Red Cross Red Crescent Societies, Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief, 1995.

<sup>10</sup> The Sphere Project: Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response 2004.

<sup>11</sup> The Sphere Project: Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response 2004.

## Role of BCA in increasing accountability to beneficiaries

BCA programming is integral to supporting an environment of accountability. Accountability has multiple meanings and implications. The BCA workshop in Haiti considered the following definitions:

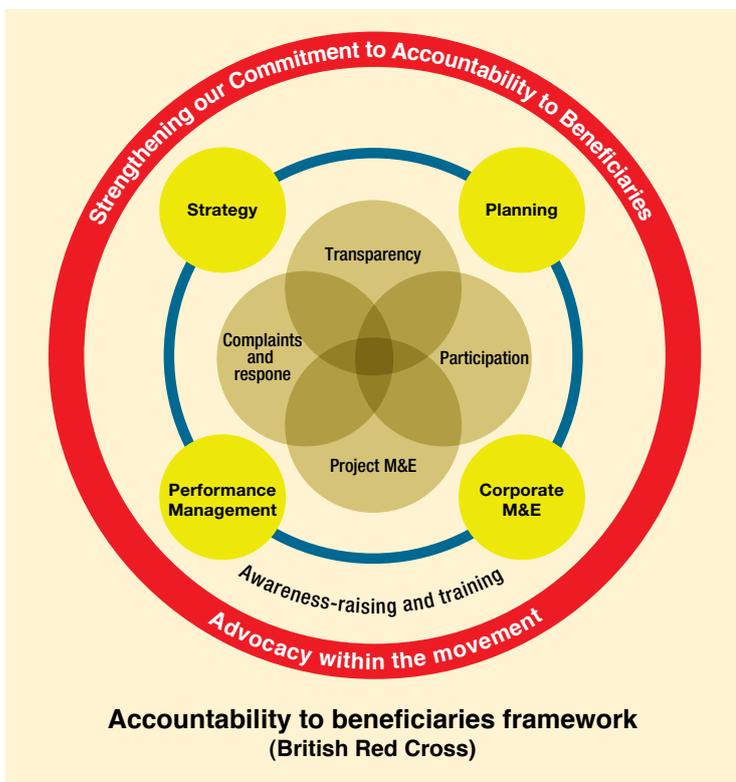
**ACCOUNTABILITY** is the means by which individuals and organizations report to a recognized authority, or authorities, and are held responsible for their actions.<sup>12</sup>

**ACCOUNTABILITY:** Making sure the men, women and children affected really do have a say in planning, implementing and judging our response to their emergency.<sup>13</sup>

**ACCOUNTABILITY:** The processes through which an organization makes a commitment to respond to and balance the needs of stakeholders in its decision-making processes and activities.<sup>14</sup>

**ACCOUNTABILITY** is the means for using power responsibly.<sup>15</sup>

**ACCOUNTABILITY** means explaining what you have done and taking responsibility for the results of your actions. This includes explaining how you have used funds.<sup>16</sup>



The respective programmes reviewed applied the following four principles:<sup>17</sup>

1. **Transparency:** The provision of accessible and timely information to beneficiaries and the opening of organizational procedures, structures and processes to their assessment.
2. **Participation:** The processes through which an organization enables beneficiaries to play an active role in the decision-making process and the activities that affect them.
3. **Monitoring and evaluation:** The processes through which an organization, with involvement from beneficiaries, monitors and reviews its progress and results against goals and objectives, feeds learning back into the organization on an ongoing basis, and reports on the results of the process.
4. **Complaints and response mechanisms:** Mechanisms through which an organization enables its beneficiaries to address complaints against its decisions and actions and through which it ensures that these complaints are properly reviewed and acted upon.

<sup>12</sup> Edwards and Hulme 1995, quoted in ALNAP, 16.

<sup>13</sup> The Emergency Capacity Building Project at <http://www.ecbproject.org/>.

<sup>14</sup> One World Trust, *Pathways to Accountability: The GAP Framework*, 2005.

<sup>15</sup> Humanitarian Accountability Partnership, *The 2010 Humanitarian Accountability Report* at <http://www.hapinternational.org/pool/files/hap-accountability-report-2010.pdf>.

<sup>16</sup> MANGO see <http://www.mango.org.uk/>.

<sup>17</sup> One World Trust, *Global Accountability Framework Project Principles of Accountability* at <http://oneworldtrust.org/>.

A key finding of the review found that programme success depends on having a clear framework, articulating the understanding of and commitment to accountability, and the role of BCA in meeting commitments. The frameworks reviewed underscored that BCA programming helps determine the means and channels for communication, an important part of meeting accountability commitments. A Federation-Wide Strategic Framework (FWSF-H) was developed by the IFRC in Haiti, which clearly articulates and sets out the links to the BCA programme. Similarly the BRC and CRC have established accountability frameworks that act as operational guidance. The BRC and CRC have established these under the title of a BCA programme, but in reality act as an oversight point for the Accountability to Beneficiaries (AtB) programme within their respective operations.

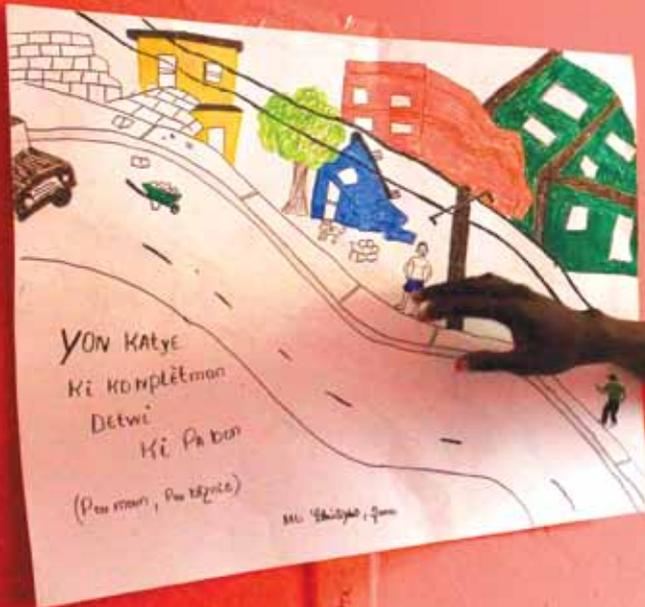
The examples and experiences of all BCA programmes in this review would suggest that BCA could add value:

1. Advising how to develop a context specific communication plan that delivers information in a timely and effective manner;
2. Providing technical advice or training on accountability,
3. Providing and supplementing accountability requirements with additional innovative communication options;
4. Providing solutions about the delivery and management of information within programmes; and
5. Technical advice how to facilitate the development of mechanisms for capturing feedback.<sup>18</sup>

Annex 2 and 4 provide practical examples of how this could be done with the current tools.



<sup>18</sup> HAP, *The 2010 HAP Standard in Accountability and Quality Management*, 2010.



## Lessons learned, recommendations and emerging guidelines

The lessons learned differ in each emergency. Many of the lessons learned from this exercise relate to awareness about BCA tools and approaches. Consequently, the recommendations below reflect this fact.

The lessons learned and recommendations are grouped across the following categories:

- Programme Delivery
- Strategy and leadership
- Organizational structure and programme title
- Resources (technical, financial and human)
- Skill sharing processes and internal networks

During the Haiti workshop staff formulated an action list of points for completion based on early lessons learned and recommendations. This included the development of guidelines for disaster response and the TERA system, and establishing internal and external platforms for information sharing. These activities will be completed in 2012. These are incorporated into the recommendations below.

## Programme delivery recommendations

The following represent emerging guidelines on communicating with beneficiaries collected across these programmes:<sup>19</sup> These guidelines should be the foundation of the programme delivery in future operations.

**Emerging guideline 1:** BCA programming should go beyond sending one-way information, and instead form a two-way dialogue with communities, as it can lead to well-informed and better quality programming and advocacy on their behalf.

**Lessons informing this guideline:** The Indonesian COP programme formed a strong two-way dialogue with tsunami-affected communities in Indonesia, increasing the transparency, relevance and effectiveness of their work with communities.<sup>20</sup> This programme had an effective beneficiary feedback system at its core, supplemented by communication tools such as radio, print, television and SMS. This model was seen as an effective two-way communication and advocacy model that could be considered in future programming.

One recent example of a two-way communication model in radio programming in Haiti and Pakistan was the live call back segments (preferably through a toll-free number) allowing callers a question and answer session on issues related to Red Cross Red Crescent programmes (and other broader issues). Having a free service makes it more attractive for communities to respond.

However, the systematic and widespread collection, channeling and acting (if necessary) on information between communities and operational programmes require strengthening in all operations. The majority of information sent to communities was reported to be one-way communication. BCA staff suggested a stepped approach to communication with, and participation of, communities of asking, receiving and acting (ARA) that would highlight the need for two-way communication using a simple acronym. Likewise outsourcing this collection and channeling of information could be considered as in the example of Noula in Haiti.

**Emerging guideline 2:** Two-way communication should become a priority in the recovery phase of a disaster programme (post 3-months) if not before.

**Lessons informing this guideline:** People have the right to know about the relief and recovery processes after a disaster.

The need for information is often acute.<sup>21</sup> BCA programming can assist in developing strong two-way communication to communities, as well as, linking up existing communication approaches within programming.

The need to act quickly, particularly with respect to two-way communication was reinforced by respondents who reported that it required too much time to implement programme tools at times. Independent evaluation research has also confirmed the need to act quickly. The act of communicating trumps waiting for the 'perfect' mechanism or tool.<sup>22</sup> Ideally it is good practice to look at the establishing the information flow to get things moving then work on the longer-term models

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The Humanitarian Accountability Partnership (HAP) 2010 report confirms this continuing trend in the humanitarian community stating that “the majority of information dissemination was predominantly used to move operational information to beneficiaries, rather than actually listening to affected populations.”

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Communication is more than sending information. It should be forming a dialogue with communities.

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<sup>19</sup> These guidelines could be incorporated within the manual in development by IFRC and IRCs.

<sup>20</sup> Evaluation of COP programme, Irish Red Cross Society.

<sup>21</sup> Working with the Media in Conflicts and other Emergencies: DfID policy paper 2000, Produced by DfID's Conflict and Humanitarian Affairs Department and Social Development Department.

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### Differing needs of our beneficiaries should influence communication

What works with adults, does not necessarily work with children. Creativity is the key when disseminating health messages in schools if one hopes to keep the attention of the children. Besides making it fun to wash their hands, volunteers of the Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) drew health messages on balloons, sang songs that focused on health messages, and handed out candy. It made learning proper hygiene fun, and facilitated a higher probability of the messages being remembered and changing behaviour. Ashal, aged nine, recalls some of the messages. "I learned that I should wash my hands before I eat or drink, and to not throw trash on the floor but in a dust bin." In villages where there are no schools, PRCS volunteers often went from house to house, and involved village elders, religious leaders and parents to help spread the word".

or tools, particularly aimed at integrating these into development or preparedness programmes.

To quickly achieve this strong two-way communication process in the immediate aftermath of a disaster prepositioning BCA approaches or programming in a pre-disaster setting to National Societies is needed. Some suggested steps to pre-position could include: Integration into disaster tools and planning of the National Society, mobilizing National Society networks to map and understand communication channels in at risk or disaster prone communities, awareness raising and training in this area and building on the communication approaches that already exist in established tools or programmes (i.e. DRR or CBHFA) to link up these approaches into a comprehensive two-way communication mechanism that can respond in the aftermath. This will assist with response times, build an understanding of the objective of the programme and build two-way communication approaches across the programme cycle.

**Emerging guideline 3:** Communication with beneficiaries is more effective when the information is relevant, accessible, clear and timely.

**Lessons informing this guideline:** Effective and accessible communication should consider literacy rates, endorsements or delivery by community leaders to enhance credibility, formal and informal channels.

Publishing calendars of community meetings or committee forums eased pressure, and made information more accessible as it increased awareness of the scheduling for the next open forum.

Holding a community meeting was especially helpful in generating feedback to develop targeted communication strategies. This was most helpful at the beginning of the programme to ensure effective, relevant and localized communication with beneficiaries throughout the programme.

Repeating key messages in order to reach receptive community members in an effective and timely manner as after emergencies people often have trouble remembering information. This takes into consideration situations where communities receive information from more than one source in a post-disaster environment. In a post-disaster environment, staff reported that successful information campaigns capitalized on simple, practical messaging that linked beneficiaries with access to available resources. The use of local networks and infrastructure served as a valuable and trusted information conduit to disseminate these messages.

Publishing information in pamphlets had some measurable success as 'take away' messages, particularly with all members of disaster-affected families, which in some places with a joint family system, could number into the hundreds. Take away pamphlets that beneficiaries might show other family members increase awareness and transparency.

Communities value personal interactions with an identifiable person in the organization. However, building trust posed a clear challenge when volunteers and

staff left the organization. This was countered by regular visits by key individuals over time that built relationships and increased the trust in the information provided. Active and empathic listening to people's concerns reminded beneficiaries that providers do not have all of the answers.



**Emerging guideline 4:** Use multiple channels and methods to communicate and link these together.

**Lessons informing this guideline:** Respondents reported that using a variety of channels and methods to communicate with beneficiaries contributed to programme success across the three operations.

Communication through multiple channels and methods targets all social and socioeconomic groups, including the disabled, elderly, and other special-needs groups. In most instances this will mean relying on more traditional methods, such as face to face. In Pakistan for example, where men control access to all the information, community volunteers provide the key to reaching women.<sup>23</sup> In the Indonesian COP programme multiple communication mediums were utilized (television, tabloid, radio) and this increased programme coverage across the province. The importance of recognizing shortfalls communication channels or tools in reaching all beneficiaries with information was recognized. The use of multiple tools enhanced communication with beneficiaries in these contexts. In Haiti, the linking up of multiple localized channels to communicate with beneficiaries, such as the use of notice boards in each BRC operational zone combined with other communication approaches, proved highly effective. The notice boards contained information on radio broadcasts, telephone numbers and contact details to increase feedback channels for communities. This resonated with communities because the socially diverse nature of the community meant people have different ways of absorbing and communicating information. However, boards had mixed acceptance in some communities. There were reports that images published on boards led to mixed and misconceived perceptions, unless designed with the inputs and participation of beneficiaries. In many places, face-to-face communication worked more effectively.

<sup>23</sup> IFRC Annual Report 2010 at <http://www.ifrc.org/publications-and-reports/ifrc-annual-report-2010>.

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**Traditional methods of communication can access those that are hard to reach.**

*PRCS volunteer Asma Saabzari uses a Red Crescent basic health unit to talk to women about relevant health issues like scabies, good hygiene practices and how to prepare oral rehydration salts at home.*

*Asma explains that most women get information by talking to other women. "They talk and talk and tell me stories and generally like to communicate."*

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**Emerging guideline 5:** Sharing all information, both positive and negative news, builds community trust in the organization.

**Lessons informing this guideline:** The majority of programme staff reported strong reservations in sharing programme news that could raise expectations or of the communication that might encourage complaints or a focus on monetary issues, instead of the recovery objective of the programme. However, overall staff reported that clear and transparent communication lowered frustrations, which in turn had many benefits including lowering of frustrations, combating corruption, identifying who had been missed and improving the overall security situation in the communities in which they worked.

One example of clear and transparent communication in the Indonesian COP was radio sessions that broadcast on-air live discussions, bi-weekly dramas and daily public service announcements. In one such broadcast, a group representing the community of Aceh Barat district travelled to Banda Aceh to convey to the government their disappointment with the programme. The COP convened an on-line discussion across the province which allowed beneficiaries to ask questions of the government, which culminated in a satisfactory outcome for the beneficiaries.<sup>24</sup>

**Emerging guideline 6:** Develop a beneficiary communication and accountability plan that involves your stakeholders and clearly defines roles and responsibilities.

The participation of beneficiaries in programme design remains crucial. Inclusive communication depends on stakeholder and context driven programme design, in particular when setting up feedback systems.

Some suggested steps and lessons learned for building effective beneficiary communication and accountability plans follow:

**1. Involve beneficiaries, sector programmes and the host National Society in designing the plan. Assess information needs, channels and requirements of communities.**

- a. Firstly, ask people how they want to receive information. Access and familiarity with technology underlies the ability of beneficiaries to act on information.
- b. National Societies and sector operations staff must also understand their role in two-way communication systems. Significant preparatory work is needed to establish these mechanisms and communication tools, particularly in ensuring a sustainable programme, which engages the National Society. Therefore, it is important to include the community, National Society and programme teams in design, in particular when setting up feedback/complaints systems. Where staff were not involved they tended to focus on the negative i.e. establishment of a feedback system could lead to finding negative aspects about the programme. Staff expressed surprise when beneficiaries expressed positive sentiments in feedback collected in Haiti. Over time, staff saw the value added. Beneficiaries reported the value in having systems to communicate with the organization.
- c. Focus should be given to including questions in assessment tools, such as a VCA, to determine communication channels or mediums, the most trusted

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<sup>24</sup> Tsunami Operations Fact Sheet, No 36 Tsunami Operation Beneficiary Communication, Irish Red Cross, 2008.

sources of information, what information beneficiaries wanted and how they wanted it, community capabilities in this area (i.e. through one central area or person for delivering information).

- d. Build on local assets in your plan. Consider traditional and non-traditional information conduits and ensure that these approaches are linked up.

**2. Document your plan. Consider how information and feedback systems will be managed in the existing context. Disseminate this to sector programme staff and external agencies.**

- a. Suggestions for feedback systems varied, but shortcomings were noted where the feedback system was managed solely by BCA, and in effect policing and responding to feedback and complaints from beneficiaries, without the technical skills to respond. Positive outcomes were noted when operation teams and communities were involved in the design or planning stages of the feedback system.
- b. The importance of analyzing power relations and hierarchy was also highlighted when working with affected populations. It was felt that the emphasis on the initiation of complaints mechanisms failed to recognize the degree of self-efficacy required in lodging complaints.
- c. The Indonesian COP programme evaluation noted some confusion about its role by external agencies and recommended that more external promotion to external agencies at the beginning of the programme could have negated some of this confusion.



**3. Train communicators /volunteers/ community mobilizers about methods and approaches in BCA.**

- a. Training volunteers in communication methods with guidance and support from BCA teams. Training could include how to build a feedback loop, information management, using common communications tools, mapping communication channels and interview skills.

#### **4. Prepare messages, in particular for emergency response**

- a. Work with sector programme teams to prepare messages in appropriate formats. i.e. SMS formats have 140 characters. In a lot of cases messages will exist within sector programme teams and will need alteration or adaptation to fit newer technologies.
- b. Consider external agencies have pre-prepared messaging available that could be used.

#### **5. Identify channels and deliver messages through those channels.**

- a. Take into consideration technologies such as SMS, Crisis Mapping, Ushahidi, Freedom Fones and Frontline SMS to facilitate rapid communication with large populations. Consider traditional methods, such as face to face or radio. Keep in mind cultural context when delivering information and consider appropriateness of these tools and systems, in particular ones that capture feedback. Consider how you target and use technologies to ensure the responses from beneficiaries can be utilized and responded to in a timely manner.
- b. Consider utilizing sector experts to deliver your messages as opposed to sending out static one-way messaging. This is especially useful on radio or television mediums where forums can be established and experts invited to discuss issues with communities.
- c. Tools with greater coverage become more appropriate for rural settings than in an urban setting. This needs careful consideration and validation in baselines. In some contexts, tools reaching large numbers of people, i.e. SMS, seem more appropriate in countries with greater coverage, i.e. Haiti.
- d. Some respondents reported that two parallel streams have emerged in the consideration of specialized tools earmarked for urban and rural contexts. Urban areas, generally more geographically compressed but more socially diverse, need many different formats, repeated messages at many different times via different channels. Rural areas, more geographically disparate but more socially uniform, allow for delivering messages in fewer different channels. The treatment of the programme in Haiti in camps and communities also differed significantly. Although messaging into camps proved more uniform, it tended not to spread as much as in communities with higher social cohesion. The message was distorted. Staff felt that messaging passed on through communities using meetings and reinforced by posters or other literature had more meaning for beneficiaries than large-scale message distribution. Agencies encouraged repetition and follow up. Within the camp setting, given its compressed nature, sound trucks, house-to-house visits and SMS seem to work more effectively.

#### **6. Monitoring programme impact.**

- a. A suggested starting point is the indicators and activities that have been built into the IFRC and PNS Plans of Action and logframes in Indonesia, Haiti and Pakistan. These could be used as a starting point to monitor and evaluate programming. The development of global indicators for BCA to monitor progress would be of use to measure impact of future programmes.

Annex 2 contains further recommendations on tools and management of information in one and two-way contexts.

## Tools: a special mention for SMS

Recommendations based on the Pakistan and Haiti experience have included:

- Prepositioning SMS shortcodes in disaster-affected countries shortens response time. Negotiation with telecommunications providers should happen prior to the disaster and engage staff at all levels of the organization to motivate them to the work of Red Cross Red Crescent and the impact of the TERA system.
- Likewise, regulations covering country level requirements take time to navigate and this should be anticipated and discussed in programme design. In Pakistan this process spanned a six-month period and required lengthy reviews of country level regulations. Therefore, pre-positioning with the National Society and country level providers remains critical. The system rollout has been hampered while negotiations take place between the providers, IFRC and National Society regarding roles and responsibilities and indemnities.



## Strategy and leadership recommendation:

**Develop a BCA policy that explains the programme. Integrate into existing key policy and guidelines BCA processes. Articulate the link between BCA and accountability to beneficiaries.**

**Strategy:** Having a strategy or accountability framework of which BCA is a part of, as well as, support by management was seen as elements that supported and facilitated communication with beneficiaries.

Beneficiary communicators in both the Haiti and Pakistan operations pointed to the importance of having foundational documents such as Strategy 2020 which voices specific programme objectives aimed at promoting a culture of accountability and active engagement with communities, as well as, an AtB plan to compliment and support the recovery programming. The integration of accountability principles and BCA programming into planning, policies and procedures contributed to the growth and understanding of programme objectives.<sup>25</sup>

**Micheline, Marchand  
 Dessaline, Artibonite.**

*“Many people died here from cholera because of lack of information. In communes with no access to radio community leaders received information via SMS from the 400 (Red Cross) number which they shared with the population regarding precautions for avoiding cholera and what to do if you caught cholera.”*

<sup>25</sup> See as examples of integration into strategic, policies and procedures the following documents: Federation-wide Strategic Framework – Haiti 2011, Pakistan Accountability Framework Floods 2010 (Draft), Cash Programming Pakistan Floods 2011, PMI NAD Strategic Plan.



In Indonesia, the IRCS built capacity and provided resources within the National Society and worked hand-in-hand to ensure the integration of BCA programming into the Palang Merah Indonesia (PMI) strategic plan. This cooperation secured the continuing sustainability of the programme activities within the PMI Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam (NAD) provincial branch and communications with beneficiaries continues today in the form of a province-wide radio service.

However, gaps exist within existing policies and procedures on how BCA should be integrated into the deployment of resources within major disasters or how to integrate effectively with operations teams on the ground.

At present, the lack of an accountability framework for the IFRC globally or an overarching BCA policy to clearly outline the objectives of the programme and links to AtB can cause confusion amongst some programme staff. It was apparent that a clear and well documented commitment to AtB contributed to programme success. This link should be clearly documented within the AtB framework in development by the IFRC.

Some respondents suggest that the programme emphasized the tools rather than the concept of accountability and life saving information to beneficiaries. Likewise, gaps in strategy and understanding by National Society partners and staff presented challenges when integrating BCA and AtB. It is necessary to establish a clear understanding of the difference between BC and BI is so that the basis of communication can be developed.

The programme would benefit from the development and widespread dissemination both internally and externally of a Movement wide BCA policy or guideline that explains what the programme is and does.

This could potentially outline:

1. Objective and goals
2. Definition/meaning
3. Scope
4. Responsibilities
5. Use of information/data
6. Measurement against these goals.

Preferably, it would record the links that BCA programming has to accountability commitments and outline where BCA would assist/facilitate a larger AtB framework, without diminishing one-way information provision that the programme currently undertakes in an early warning capacity.

Likewise, reviewing and mapping relevant existing policies and procedures with the aim of integrating and mainstreaming BCA should occur in conjunction with training and experimentation, innovation and testing of new approaches and tools currently underway in related projects (Asia Pacific Zone, Haiti and Pakistan). A suggested starting point could be the development of guidelines within the Asia Pacific Standard Operating Procedure for Disaster Response and Early Recovery that pre-positions BCA within the standard procedures for disasters in the Asia Pacific zone.

**Leadership:** Respondents talked about the important role that governance and leadership play in emphasizing the organizational commitment to accountability and communication to communities. For example, field based managers play a key role in promoting a culture of transparency and accountability within the

teams they manage and can support and encourage a commitment to accountability and communication with beneficiaries among programme staff. Previous operations have provided examples on how to achieve this including the development of systems and processes to share information within teams and different levels of the organization, such as information on programme design, how budgets were formulated or what feedback was received from evaluations or monitoring in the field. Without systems and processes within teams to share information this hampered efforts to communicate transparently.<sup>26</sup>



## **Organizational structure and programme title recommendation:**

**Embed the BCA programme within sector programme teams when possible and consider changing the title of the programme to reflect links to accountability.**

**Organizational structure:** Mainstreaming or embedding BCA within a programme area demonstrated that the programme is operated as a programmatic tool instead of a public relations function and reinforced that the programme was not a stand-alone.

Embedding Complaints and Response Mechanism (CRM) within programming allowed rapid response time, built understanding of the programme and the CRM. The BRC programme embedded the CRM into its Livelihoods component of the Integrated Neighbourhood Approach programme. These learnings indicate that it is important that the BCA programme integrates itself closely with operations teams (Disaster Risk Reduction, Shelter, Water and Sanitation, Health, etc.) to realize programme objectives more fully. Embedding BCA within an operational programme area such as Disaster Management and Health is recommended in future operations to achieve this purpose. Embedding the BCA programme built understanding and assisted integration with operations teams. Likewise, embedding BCA within a programme area helps build understanding of the multidimensional nature of the BCA programme.

<sup>26</sup> Accountability to Beneficiaries, Basic Guidelines and Lessons learned, American Red Cross.



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**André, La Piste Camp,  
Port au Prince**

Red Cross messages are good to use, I think that I have received about 5 or 6 already and they helped me a lot to get myself prepared for either hurricane or flood. Even before this hurricane Red Cross warned me about what to do in a hurricane.

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While embedding is a preferred model to integrate the programme closely, a standalone programme, such as the one that operated in the Indonesian COP, should not be discounted. Embedding requires careful planning and consideration of context, particularly the size of an operation and skills within operations teams. Embedding was successful in the operations in Haiti where technical support was present to support the embedded team.

**Programme title:** Including the word ‘accountability’ into the title demonstrated the links the programme has to accountability commitments within the Code of Conduct. The British Red Cross Programme delegate reported the recognition by the organization of the programme links with accountability assisted with understanding of her role. Consideration needs to be given to a name change of the programme to reflect programme intent. Early suggestions pointed to including accountability in the programme title. The inclusion of ‘accountability’ into the title of the programme would highlight the role that BCA plays in supporting the delivery of accountability commitments.

However, in some cultural contexts volunteers and staff reported that meanings associated with the word accountability proved problematic for programme delivery because they suggested negative connotations of corruption or fraud. Contextualizing programme terminology within programme documents is needed. For example, staff reported a dislike of the word complaint. Feedback was seen as more culturally appropriate and less threatening by volunteers, staff and beneficiaries. Development of multiple terminologies for use by programme staff within different contexts would be of use.

## Resources (technical and financial) recommendation:

### Invest in capacity building of BCA volunteers and staff and the technology to support programming

Some examples of factors supporting this recommendation include:

**Local volunteers and staff:** Using volunteers and local staff greatly assisted with programme delivery given the cultural and contextual nature of communication. In the Pakistan operation, female volunteers played an important role in communicating with female members of communities, where access to information was restricted for women. Training and using volunteers to deliver the programme built a countrywide network and a sustainable programme within the National Society. In Haiti, the IFRC was able to build a skilled, dedicated local team and this contributed to programme success. Having a dedicated and independently resourced IFRC BCA team in Haiti helped the programme to achieve quick success and proved the value of this work to operational teams, without the need to first seek budget from other departments.

The COP team in Aceh was built with a mix of National Society staff and volunteers. The volunteers participated in a 3-month mentorship programme, allowing them to work side by side with trained National Society staff on a daily basis giving them hands on experience. At the end of each 3-month programme, one of the trainees were picked as an employee of the COP.

Further efforts to train volunteers within BCA programmes must span current and future programmes. This could include orientation and training of National Society volunteers and staff in communicating with affected populations, using BCA tools and in information management. A training package and train-the-trainer module directed at volunteers and staff should be developed and rolled-out in selected sites.

**Information Management:** In operations cited in this review, information sent to communities flowed very soon after the disaster (or at least was established very quickly afterwards) via mobile or other electronic medium. Red Cross Red Crescent began transmitting information in Haiti in SMS form in the weeks following the disaster, the SMS system able to send large amounts of data via a blast system. The development of capabilities for two-way messaging within the SMS system was developed as the operation progressed. It was then that the management of this information became an issue with BCA programme staff in some cases reporting that they felt ill-prepared to manage data flows, to verify and act, or to pass information onto front line responders or operations staff. Similarly, operations staff reported that they would have benefited from information about the programme and with tools that would allow them to communicate more effectively with communities, as well as feed information back to the BCA teams on the ground. That would have helped to create a better awareness of the situation and a common operating picture, as well as, allowing communities to connect with the organization. This was solved in some way by outsourcing of information collection in Haiti to a call centre (Noula) which was a successful aspect to the programme. The BCA team in Haiti managed the information, in collaboration with the call centre, using a web-based portal. The customized database and processes developed in Indonesia (Community Advocacy Unit Database) also provide another example how information is managed, assisting teams by acting as a reference and case management tool for all teams. Training of teams using the database and the processes of information flow remains essential.



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#### André, La Piste Camp, Port au Prince

*Red Cross messages are good to use, I think that I have received about 5 or 6 already and they helped me a lot to get myself prepared for either hurricane or flood. Even before this hurricane Red Cross warned me about what to do in a hurricane.*

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These lessons learned call for the investigation, investment and training in information management technology that will collect, analyze and allow for the flow of information between volunteers and staff in order to allow them to use this information in an emergency response. Preferably, other organizations should have access to any system developed or utilized (if possible) to allow for data flow and exchange within the Cluster system. This is reinforced in the recent UN study Disaster Relief 2.0 The Future of Information Sharing in Humanitarian Emergencies, 2011.<sup>27</sup>

It would also be of use would be to conduct a forum involving front line staff, technology staff and programme staff to discuss issues and innovate programme tools with the aim of improving the effective and efficient response to information management and consolidation with other initiatives planned with the Movement. There are various external initiatives planned or proposed in the coming twelve months that Red Cross Red Crescent staff could be involved in (UN, CDAC). Internal initiatives include forums with the Asia Pacific zone to link up technology in development between various programme stakeholders.



**Technical resources:** In Haiti, staff are developing sector based messaging for future use within programming. Having pre-prepared messaging greatly assisted in response times. Building on this knowledge to date this messaging should be formalized into a comprehensive resource kit for BCA teams which could prefer-

<sup>27</sup> Harvard Humanitarian Initiative, Disaster Relief 2.0 The future of information sharing in humanitarian emergencies, Washington D.C., UN Foundation & Vodafone Foundation Technology Partnership, 2011.

ably include: Off the shelf messages and graphics for BC teams and staff. Translate and test these in English, Spanish, French and Arabic. Pre-position radio stocks for rapid distribution once a disaster strikes and other communications infrastructure (could potentially include loudspeakers, portable phones, VHF devices).

**Resource mobilization:** This critical element of good programming was lacking in several operations. For example, the financial sustainability of the BCA programme outside an emergency response is anticipated to become an issue in the Pakistan and Haiti programmes. In Indonesia, the resource mobilization plans for the Aceh operation included the use of programme tools for communicating with affected people within the province.

Consideration of resource mobilization within the current tools should be carefully considered as part of the exit and handover planning in Haiti and Pakistan operations. Discussions about the continuation of programming tools should be based on National Society priorities and country context, with a priority on sustaining approaches and tools that allow for two-way communication between the community and respective National Societies.

## **Resources (human) recommendation:**

### **Modify BCA volunteer and staff terms of reference to reflect expanded functions of the beneficiary communication role**

**BCA team function:** BCA, a multi-dimensional programming approach, requires a variety of skills, and lends itself to a small team set-up. Respondents reported that human resources did not match programme size. A need existed for a multidimensional team of communicators, information managers, and programme management, with planning, monitoring, evaluation and community mobilization skills. Graphic design skills often proved a human resource deficiency because of the need to quickly produce print materials to communicate with those affected by disasters when print materials were the most appropriate communication channels available.

BCA team and delegate functions require revision to reflect the nature of the role, particularly links to accountability. Suggested revisions are recommended to position descriptions of BCA team members were to include other competencies and functions such as:

- Knowledge and experience in sound programming and accountability principles;
- Knowledge and experience in information management, in particular management of two-way communication models;
- Community development focus;
- Knowledge and experience in project management;
- Coaching and capacity building/mentoring experience;
- Good communication and promotional skills to promote BCA both internally and externally;
- Focus on innovation, resourceful, with a positive attitude.
- Understanding of technology and community media;
- Understanding of capacity building and organization Development;
- Relationship-building and negotiation skills;
- Graphic or design skills;
- Advice/facilitation on complaints and response mechanisms and their establishment.

## **Skill sharing and internal networks recommendation:**

### **Raise awareness of the importance of BCA approaches to stakeholders through training and internal and external communication**

Across the programmes reviewed, most BCA teams have made inroads into operational programmes and raised awareness of the programme. Across the Indonesia, Haiti and Pakistan operations, programme staff had worked on building understanding through BCA and AtB through trainings, briefings and demonstrations of programme tools. In Pakistan and Haiti, a concerted effort to include staff in live radio and television broadcasts lead to understanding of core programme tools.

Initiating a pilot programme within contexts that are new to the approaches and programme tools proved successful in terms of building capacity, creating greater buy-in by stakeholders, and created opportunities for trialing two-way communication approaches.

In Indonesia, training allowed national society staff to delivered programming on a 24 hour Radio service, giving the Aceh COP team the ability and skill base to support ongoing programming in radio after the exit of the IRCS. Additionally in Pakistan, trained programme staff and volunteers worked with new volunteers in Pakistan to encourage skill transfer. Further efforts are needed to build awareness among operational staff and volunteers and for the BCA programme to better understand the needs of users.

In particular, many respondents reported the need to improve the orientation and induction of all staff so that:

1. They had a clear idea of accountability commitments that underscored programme objectives;
2. They had a clear idea of the programme resources available to them; and
3. They had a better understanding of how they might measure their communication with beneficiaries.

Scaling up of the capacity of BCA programme staff is also required in information management particularly in the:

1. Development, use and deployment of BCA tools and management of information flows, including classification, prioritizing and verification of data from these tools.
2. Management of information and tools available from external actors.

Likewise, the production of internal and external promotional materials explaining the programme is essential. The establishment of an information sharing portal that can be easily accessed by volunteers and staff is also necessary.

Finally, because of the implied and actual power disparities at play in any humanitarian operation between the organization giving the aid and the group receiving the aid, respondents felt that further education was needed to facilitate understanding why and how complaints and feedback mechanisms empower the beneficiary.

Conducting simulations or pilots would be an effective way to bridge some of these issues, raise awareness of the importance of this approach and practice and orient the use of the tools with BCA programme staff, technology teams and front line staff. <sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Currently planned over two years in the APZ Beneficiary Communication Project in three pilot countries; Indonesia, Bangladesh, Philippines.

Furthermore, Red Cross Red Crescent front line responders<sup>29</sup> and staff within zones can be oriented to BCA through the current programmes on offer (FACT, TPAT, ERU, WORC).<sup>30</sup> It is also essential to preposition and orient the senior management of National Societies.

**Global coordination and humanitarian diplomacy:** There has been a vacuum in the coordination globally without the operation of groups such as the global BCA working group and no dedicated resources. This has hampered efforts to share best practice and resources globally. This has been dealt with in part by the employment of a BC manager in the Asia Pacific Zone and the recently revitalized BC Working Group. Having this resource would ensure global issues, are moved forward. Much of the work to develop policy, practice and training cannot be led by field staff, who are mainly focused on the daily running of a programme.

Links to humanitarian diplomacy should also be explored. Humanitarian diplomacy persuades decision makers and opinion leaders to act, at all times, in the interests of vulnerable people and with full respect for Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.<sup>31</sup> The decision to engage in humanitarian diplomacy exists not as a choice, but as a responsibility. Adhering to an evidence based approach enables National Societies and the IFRC to build their humanitarian diplomacy base from a position of strength. The information and communication with beneficiaries will, and can, add to this evidence based approach. Information collection will, by necessity, precede information management thereby allowing key stakeholders to utilize information. Suggested points that could be explored:

- a. How public-policy makers can be enabled by the BCA programme to tap into community experience to inform policy making process;
- b. How citizens and communities can be mobilized to advocate their needs and move beyond lobbying as special interest groups to becoming engaged as partners with government officials and policy makers in meaningful dialogue and problem solving;
- c. The management and use of information from the BCA programme to inform public policy processes to help build capacity and to influence more credible and inclusive policymaking and governance processes.

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**Naomi Fils-Aimé, 27 years old, resident Annexe de la Mairie camp in Cite Soleil, Port au Prince:**

*“I received two SMS around the end of October. The first was about cholera and the second was about the hurricane. The message about cholera was very good. It explained how to prevent cholera by washing hands. It was very useful for me because I didn’t know what precautions to take to avoid getting cholera. Now I know! I shared the message with my sister. She has a baby so I told her she must wash her hands before breast-feeding to prevent cholera. She was happy to learn this. I think it’s a great idea to send these SMS because they really help us to protect ourselves. I would like Red Cross to continue sending me more information.”*

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<sup>29</sup> Refers to staff or volunteers working directly with communities.

<sup>30</sup> Training materials have been developed and will be incorporated within the Beneficiary Communication Manual currently being finalized by the Irish Red Cross Society. Pilot trainings are planned in South Asia and Haiti.

<sup>31</sup> International Federation of Red Cross Red Crescent, Humanitarian Diplomacy Policy at [http://www.ifrc.org/Global/Governance/Policies/Humanitarian\\_Diplomacy\\_Policy.pdf](http://www.ifrc.org/Global/Governance/Policies/Humanitarian_Diplomacy_Policy.pdf)

## Conclusion

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The process of gathering lessons learned and recommendations has taken into account the varied perspectives from people involved across all areas of the programme. Importantly, it is an attempt to capture details and contributions from the volunteers and staff who have had hands on experience in delivering BCA activities across the different phases of Red Cross Red Crescent operations, as well as, contributions from Red Cross Red Crescent programme staff outside the programme.

With the limited time available to perform interviews and analysis it is not intended to provide an exhaustive set of recommendations for all of the scenarios and issues that may arise. Instead, its intention is to provoke thought and dialogue on how the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement should be interacting and engaging with beneficiaries in its daily operations. The question was never should we do it, but how this important function should be mainstreamed within our work. Communication with those we work with can, and should, permeate all aspects of our work and not be an after thought of programme development. Providing information is a first step; providing platforms to communicate and advocate will lead to real empowerment.

Communication with beneficiaries is not a choice, but a responsibility. Communities can be empowered by providing information to aid agencies, which in turn can be used to advocate and deliver solutions to genuine problems. The right information and advocacy, at the right time, and to the right people can bring about lasting impact and support effective and accountable aid delivery.





## Case Study: Community outreach programme, Aceh

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### Background

The earthquake and subsequent tsunami that struck North Sumatra on 26 December 2004 affected all aspects of life in Aceh Province. The tsunami claimed an estimated 150,000 lives and left 500,000 people displaced in the region. Families were torn apart, and homes, livelihoods and basic infrastructure suffered substantial damage in the urban and rural coastal regions of Aceh Province.

Approximately 12 months after the tsunami, following an extensive consultation by the Irish Red Cross (IRCS) and the Palang Merah Indonesia (PMI) with communities, it became clear that the overall humanitarian response wasn't serving the needs of all the affected population; as usual, the people who were falling through the gaps were generally the poorest of the poor. In particular, the consultation showed that the needs of the communities were primarily to do with lack of information and as well as assistance to navigate the maze of services being provided by humanitarian actors. The IRCS in collaboration with the PMI launched an innovative community media development project called the Community Outreach Programme (COP) in response to these needs.

The COP was developed to support and implement outreach and advocacy initiatives and to encourage two-way dialogue between individuals affected by the tsunami, communities, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement partners, NGOs, and government entities. The COP worked with communities to

identify resources and negotiate access to aid provided by humanitarian actors, which communities were not receiving for different reasons.

The programme was executed by two departments: the media department (comprised of print, radio and television media programming services), and the community advocacy unit (responsible for case management and face to face interventions). The departments worked in collaboration to ensure that there were platforms available for communities to voice the issues they were facing, and for those issues to be heard by humanitarian actors.

## **Objectives of the COP**

The overall goal of the COP in Aceh and Nias was to empower people affected by the tsunami to act on their own behalf. The COP enabled people affected by the crisis to develop the confidence they needed to identify the resources and appropriate solutions to the challenges they encountered, and to take action to solve these challenges. In a post-disaster environment, information that communities ask for is simple, practical and mostly related to what is being done to assist them as well as how they can access available resources. In its advocacy approach, the COP stressed confidentiality when communicating with beneficiaries to ensure transparency and the development of an atmosphere of trust and confidence.

The COP reached its goal of enabling tsunami and earthquake affected communities in Aceh and Nias to work together with stakeholders to access resources and develop solutions for affected people in the reconstruction and rehabilitation process by producing the following objectives:

*Objective 1:* Advocate and facilitate solutions on behalf of tsunami and earthquake affected communities on issues, concerns, and problems regarding the reconstruction and rehabilitation programmes in Aceh and Nias.

*Objective 2:* Support an environment of transparency and dialogue between earthquake and tsunami affected communities and stakeholders, through the provision of information, education, and communication services, using community based dialogue and multimedia approaches.

*Objective 3:* Create demand for Irish Red Cross Society (IRCS) information and communication services through enhancing existing community structures through organizational and technical assistance relevant to the reconstruction and rehabilitation process.

## **COP Programme Components**

### **Community advocacy unit (CAU)**

The CAU assisted with the facilitation, resolution and advocacy for both individual and community cases in the reconstruction and rehabilitation process for tsunami and earthquake affected population throughout the Aceh Province. Within the CAU, communication between the IRCS and beneficiaries was facilitated through SMS, telephone, e-mail, office and field visits.

The CAU established a casework information system to track, monitor and evaluate each case on a timely, consistent and results-oriented basis. It utilized an SMS gateway system from November 2006 and a database for accurate case management from March 2007. The standard operating procedure for each eligible case consisted of:

- a) responding to a client within 72 hours;
- b) issue verification by phone within 5 days;
- c) issue verification in the field within 10 days; and
- d) follow up and monitoring activities within 27 days.



From November 2006, the CAU received 16,250 SMS requests, of which 6,000 eligible cases were facilitated by the team. SMS communication from beneficiaries made up approximately 95 per cent of initial contact, with walk-in and email contact making up the remainder.

## Community media

The IRCS media department served to develop, implement, monitor and evaluate media tools and other mechanisms to fill the information gap, and advocate on behalf of tsunami and earthquake affected communities in Aceh. The department carried out three main activities: the production of the *Rumoh* PMI newspaper, *Rumoh* PMI radio service, and a live TV programme.

### **Rumoh PMI newspaper**

The *Rumoh* PMI newspaper was initially published as an eight-page newsletter. Starting in June 2007, *Rumoh* PMI switched to producing a sixteen page newspaper and was published as a tabloid and issued in 12, one-monthly editions. .

During the life of the project, the newspaper distribution peaked at 52,000 copies per month. The tabloid was distributed in Banda Aceh, Aceh Besar, Sabang, Aceh Jaya, Aceh Barat, Pulo Aceh, Lhokseumawe/Aceh Utara, Simeleu, Nias, Sigli, Pidie, Bireun. Newspapers were distributed to beneficiaries' homes, PMI branches (rural, semi rural and urban), community radio stations which broadcast *Rumoh* PMI radio programmes and public places such as hospitals, supermarkets, coffee-shops etc.

### **Rumoh PMI radio programming**

The *Rumoh* PMI radio programming was initiated in July 2006. *Rumoh* PMI programmes were broadcast in Aceh Besar, Aceh Utara, Aceh Jeumpa, Aceh Jaya, Aceh Sigkil, Aceh Pidie, Aceh Barat, Sabang, Lhokseumawe, Langsa, Abdaya, and Nias. Initially the service was run for one hour per week.

In February 2009, the radio department started broadcasting information through an extensive satellite network for a period of eight hours per day. The eight hour programming was then looped for another two times per day to provide a 24-hour service. Radio *Rumoh* PMI broadcast information to 38 stations and hundreds of communities throughout Aceh and Nias. The radio service continues to operate today under the management of PMI Aceh.

### **Warung Kupu Rumoh PMI (Television programming)**

The television section of the COP was developed in April 2009 following the results of the mid-term evaluation. The weekly variety show was run live for one hour a week, and was received by approximately 90 per cent of Acehnese homes as well as other areas outside of Aceh in Indonesia.

The show delivered information on a weekly topic based on the reconstruction and rehabilitation phase of the tsunami operations. The service also had segments that included talent shows and quizzes. In total the project aired 18 epi-

sodes. It was a very significant development for the National Red Cross Society to run, operate and produce its own live television show on a weekly basis with a local commercial television channel. The 18 episodes generated interest and engagement amongst the NGO community and within the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement in Aceh and Nias.



## What worked – and why

Putting advocacy at the core of the programme allowed the COP to measure outputs that related directly to people's needs by actively having in place a system of case management and recording of all information on a database. The mix of media used also allowed communication loops to be developed across the programme, so feedback was constantly being updated and utilized. One of the main benefits in managing the programme was the flexibility of all participants both in country and from the head office to let the programme evolve as it tested and found new ways to deliver services.

**Staff development:** As the programme had not been tested by the Red Cross previously, there was not any precedent on what skills staff would need to effectively execute the programme. As mentioned below in the lessons learned section of this document, allowing people to develop skills relevant to the needs of the programme should not be overlooked.

Utilizing expert external staff can blow out budgets and reduce the amount of deliverables. All staff had specific tasks but also worked across the different departments enabling them to further develop their skills (responsibilities were team-based as opposed to individual). The programme staff were able to try their skills at a range of different activities; this was highlighted when a senior programme officer became the presenter of a TV programme along with an IT officer from a different National Society.

Both individuals had extrovert personalities and were comfortable being in front of the camera and a crowd. This allowed the programme to evolve by employing local staff who understood the programme's needs without having to source for external professionals who had less understanding of the objectives of the programme. Different staff members took on the role of announcing information on the radio about the respective aspects of the project. The mentorship programme allowed other volunteers and staff to participate in the programme and learn while working on the job.

## Challenges

**Relationships:** One of the biggest challenges of the programme was that some of the service providers took offence at being held accountable to the tsunami affected population and the IRCS was perceived to have taken the role of an auditor. This happened with a number of NGOs and donors who were, with the best of intention, delivering services, but in reality delivering services that were sub-standard. This became relevant in a case where the team received 40 individual requests for assistance relating to houses being built by one particular NGO. The roofs of the houses were not stable and a number fell into ill-repair within months of being built. The team followed this up with the NGO and shared the information that they had gathered.

Following discussions with the NGO, the team was informed that the NGO was aware of the issue and was working on a solution to rectify the problem. One of the suggestions the IRCS team made to the NGO was to run a radio campaign so people were aware that the NGO was keen to deal with the complaints. The NGO delivered a campaign on radio with talk-back, and subsequently repaired the defective houses.

**Information and case management:** With a large amount of requests coming in, the team had to look at the most effective way of maintaining the expectations and dealing with a vast array of issues. It found that categorizing issues based on what could be dealt with over the phone by providing information, and what needed face-to-face interventions made the operation more efficient. The team also worked out that pooling community issues allowed it to manage larger amounts of cases. Managing a large community issue that dealt with the needs of 100 people was more effective than managing 100 individual cases.

## Lessons learned

When delivering an information/ communication related programme that uses media and technology solutions, the following can be summarized:

The COP did not empower communities by giving them information, it was the communities who empowered themselves by providing the COP and aid actors with information that could be turned into outcomes. Communities are the only ones who can empower themselves.

**Recommendation:** When setting up media based development programmes, it is vital to understand that community empowerment is a process and that information is only part of the equation.

Turning data into knowledge and wisdom requires exchanging and analyzing information. This can be achieved through dialogue and utilizing multiple channels



of communication. The COP model was particularly effective in doing this because it used a mix of both media and face-to-face interventions involving all stakeholders in this process.

**Recommendation:** NGOs, governments and international aid organizations should all participate in the exchange of information process to allow them a clear understanding of what the needs of communities are and then act on that information to provide outcomes.

Using a mix of communication channels offers large amounts of data. Information management can take up a lot of time and resources.

**Recommendation:** The development of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) early on in the programme on how to manage cases and information is useful. More thought in the programme development stage is crucial.



Affected populations do not always have access to multiple mediums of communication. Some mediums were more effective in certain areas than others, this was also evident with demographics - more mature people read newspapers and the younger audience preferred radio and TV.

**Recommendation:** when planning a media development or advocacy programme, it is essential to utilize multiple channels, and to not rely on only one communication medium.

Carrying out extensive consultation with communities during the design process helped to develop a programme that was able to deliver on specific community needs. Participatory development models in the initial consultation process allowed the programme to be tailored to specific needs.

**Recommendation:** Include community members and affected people in the planning process.

By building the capacity of national staff, the COP was able to utilize existing skills

as well as develop skills that were relevant to the programme and maintain an effective number of staff working on the programme. This kept the cost of the programme low.

**Recommendation:** Understanding that people have a broad range of skills and supporting them to deliver outside of their usual boundaries can make for stronger programme outputs, especially if an intentional staff capacity building approach is adopted.

**Snapshot of Findings from COP Final Evaluation- Carried out for the IRCS by Risang Rimbatmaja, Evaluation Consultant**

The information below was taken from the final evaluation of the COP. The objectives of the evaluation were to assess the effectiveness of the programme, efficiency of the programme delivery, impacts, access and the relevance and appropriateness of the programme for communities.

The tables below present information on the mediums used, the appropriateness of the advocacy component of the programme, access to the mediums by communities and some key performance indicators associated with the COP.

Community Media and effectiveness of communication with communities	Overall COP %	Radio %	Tabloid %	TV %
Relevant/very relevant Information	74.6	70.2	72.5	64.3
Mediocre Information	18.1	19.3	23.8	27.8
Less relevant Information	2.2	7.0	2.2	0
Appropriateness of Advocacy – CAU department	Appropriate	Inappropriate	Don't know	
Programs appropriateness	85.0	12.0	3.0	
Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	Overall COP %	Radio %	Tabloid %	TV %
KPI achieved	85 % – 244,451 beneficiaries have access to Multimedia	85% listener satisfaction	85% satisfaction with publication	85% viewer satisfaction
KPI achieved	73.0	75.2	82.5	75.2
Advocacy-CAU- KPI	85% cases facilitated	85% cases facilitated to schedule	70% of community members participated in resolution	
KPI achieved	75	80	80	

Access to media by targeted populations	At least one media %	Tabloid %	Radio %	TV %
Accessed	73	40	37	32
Audience reached	Overall	Radio	Tabloid	TV
	178,449	90,447	98,392	78,835



## Case Study: Questions and complaints in Haiti

**A comparative case study on questions and complaints mechanisms/Haiti/ December 2011**

### **Introduction**

The following case studies outline two options for Complaints and Response Mechanisms used during the Haiti Earthquake Operation by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and British Red Cross (BRC).

### **A semi-formal complaints and response mechanism by IFRC**

#### **Background**

The provision of shelter to earthquake survivors is a complex and emotive issue. In Haiti, communities can be quick to react to rumors and the perceived mishandling of projects. This can lead to tensions, demonstrations and even violence, which slows project implementation, creating even more unrest. Allowing survivors to ask questions and raise complaints can ease this tension and tackle rumors before they spread.

It was recognized that this would be critical in the case of Annexe de la Mairie camp in Port au Prince, where the IFRC was building 350 transitional shelters for a community of approximately 900 families. The selection of some families over others could problems within the camp and put the vulnerable families who did receive a shelter at risk of retaliation and resentment by those who were not selected.

In a bid to relieve this tension, the IFRC beneficiary communication department piloted a questions and complaints line, capable of answering common questions, explaining the beneficiary selection criteria and alternative shelter options and logging complaints for the Red Cross to follow up and respond to. After a successful first three months, the system was gradually expanded to cover more shelter sites and communities where the IFRC was stopping free water trucking.

### **The set up**

The questions and complaints line was one element of an overall communications campaign in the camp, aimed at making sure people clearly understood the shelter project and their options. Alongside the questions and complaints line, posters, a sound truck and community mobilizers were used. The system was set up in agreement with the shelter department, but was largely led by the Beneficiary Communication team.

It was decided that an external company would be used to handle calls, rather than establish an internal call centre. There were several key reasons for this:

- A lack of capacity within the beneficiary communication team.
- The existence of a skilled external partner in Haiti, who was already running a public call centre, with an established web site and infrastructure. As a local, qualified organization, Noula understood the sensitive nature of complaints and had already incorporated beneficiary feedback into their system.
- The benefits for beneficiaries in allowing them to complain through a third party, rather than directly to the Red Cross provided distance between the person making the complaint and the organization they were complaining about, making it less intimidating for beneficiaries to raise questions and complaints.

The Noula website (<http://www.noula.ht/>) was set up by Haitian technology company, Solutions, to log calls and SMS from Haitians on an online map with the aim that Government and NGOs could see where the areas of need are. Noula took over from experienced global crowd sourcing experts Ushahidi (<http://www.ushahidi.com/>) when they finished their Haiti project in August 2010.

### **How does the system work?**

Annexe residents can SMS or call the Noula call centre for free and ask a question or log a complaint about the Red Cross shelter projects. Call centre staff are provided with a detailed Q&A of standard questions they might be asked. The Q&A is based on common questions asked of the community mobilization team and on the issues beneficiaries will most need answers to. For example 'how are families chosen for the shelters?' and 'what happens if I don't get a shelter?' Any questions or complaints Noula can't answer are logged and followed-up by the Beneficiary Communication and shelter community mobilization team.

The calls are logged on a private page within the Noula website, which only the Red Cross has access to. This maintains the privacy of callers and eases concerns of operational colleagues that issues with their project would be aired on a public website.

Once a week, the beneficiary communication team run a report from the Noula website, categorize all calls and then identify the follow-up needed with the shelter community mobilization team. Follow-up can include finding out when a rental grant will be available to re-checking a person has been assessed correctly. The final outcome of each query is recorded and the length of time it took from the person first calling Noula to their issue being resolved. A weekly report

is provided to shelter community and construction teams, outlining call statistics and follow-up, as well as key issues and recommendations. The Noula report has regularly influenced beneficiary communication activities. For example, following an increase in calls asking about livelihoods support more information was supplied to the camps via leaflets, posters and sound truck.

Since its launch in October 2010, Noula has been expanded to cover all sites where the Red Cross shelter department is working and was advertised in communities where the Red Cross was stopping its free water trucking. The Noula system is advertised via posters, leaflets, SMS and sound truck in the communities where it is available. In the initial stages, Noula was only free to call for Voila mobile customers and so a free-phone Voila phone was available each day in the camp to beneficiaries using other mobile providers. The number is now free call for all networks.

For each issue, call centre staff are provided with a detailed Q&A in the local language. This Q&A is updated regularly to take account of developments in projects, or issues being raised repeatedly by callers. The Noula call centre staff are also provided with regular briefings and updates on Red Cross projects and have visited Annexe de la Mairie camp to speak to people using the service.

In its first year the Noula call centre handled 1400 calls from communities throughout Port au Prince – 100% of these calls were resolved.



## Lessons learned

### What works well?

- In two evaluations of the service, 85% of callers reported being satisfied the Noula system, with beneficiaries reporting they appreciate being able to feedback and make complaints to Red Cross.
- In the first evaluation only 45% of callers were satisfied with the Red Cross. This highlights that even if beneficiaries are not satisfied with a project or organization or don't get the answer they want, they still value the opportunity to ask questions and raise complaints.



- Using an outside company means the service is impartial, as Red Cross staff does not answer calls. Although callers are encouraged to leave contact details so the Red Cross can respond personally to their query, the option to raise issues anonymously is available, although so far no caller has chosen to do this.
- An outside company is also more sustainable than hiring an in-house team, which would leave the burden of salary costs and infrastructure for the National Society. The current model can be scaled up or scaled down depending on need.
- Using the call centre to manage questions on a specific topic allows Red Cross to provide a Q&A that is detailed enough for call centre staff to manage the majority of callers' questions. On average, Noula answers 60-70% of questions without requiring the Red Cross to follow up removing considerable burden from the organization and providing community mobilization staff with a referral system for beneficiaries that have questions or complaints that cannot be answered at the time in the camp.
- Simply having a questions and complaints service encourages programmes to be more accountable to their beneficiaries and face up to problems in the programme because there is a regular weekly report highlighting any issues clearly
- The Noula system can act as an early warning indicator of problems in the community and can also be used as a tool to negotiate a solution. For example, an increase in complaints about the late payment of rental grants led to more communication with camp residents to explain the delays, provide assurance that grants would be paid and so mitigate frustrations. Additionally, the number of Noula complaints on this issue was used as a negotiating tool to encourage the finance department to speed up the payment process
- The evaluation showed that a questions and complaints line can build trust in an organization. To the beneficiary, it suggests the organization cares enough to listen to their concerns
- The service is well advertised and explained in camps and communities and is free to call
- Having a questions and complaints line worked well, but as part of an overall package of communications activities rather than a stand-alone service.

#### **What didn't work well?**

- In the initial stages, there was not a clear enough process for responding to calls and many callers' questions went unanswered for several weeks.
- Working with an outside company was less responsive than having an in-house team and it meant problems around how calls were logged by Noula in the early stages took longer to be resolved.
- Ensuring that programmes are willing to take on board complaints and actually make changes to their projects is difficult and it can be hard for communications to enforce this, while still maintaining good working relationships with their colleagues.
- In one camp where Noula is offered, it is rarely used. This is because the camp residents are not interested in the shelter options IFRC has to offer them. The system will only work when people have an interest in what the organization has to offer and a belief that something will be done about their complaint.

#### **What could be done better next time?**

- It is critical to plan a questions and complaints service closely with the pro-

gramme involved. They need to be a part of the planning process so they can understand and agree exactly what their role is in responding to the information that comes in and also what information they can feasibly respond to and act on. It is also important to involve PMER in the planning process because a questions and complaints service should form part of monitoring plans.

- A lot of preparatory work is needed to determine exactly how a questions and complaints system will function. How will the calls be answered? How will you check this? Who will follow up the calls? How will the company or team you use record their information? What path will a caller follow through the system? What is a complaint and how should it be managed?
- Proper training needs to be provided to everyone using the system before it launches, including communications and programme staff.
- The organizational culture must be open to making changes based on complaints. There needs to be a willingness by programmes to adapt their work based on the feedback or complaints being received from beneficiaries.

## **British Red Cross Complaints and Responses Mechanism**

### **Background & Rationale**

The British Red Cross (BRC) set up a free in-house beneficiary phone hotline complaints and response mechanism (CRM) as part of their Delmas 19 Integrated Neighborhood Approach (INA), a community regeneration programme in post-earthquake urban Haiti. The establishment of the CRM is part of BRC's commitment of accountability to beneficiaries, to provide a feedback channel and ensure two-way communication, as well as improving programme quality and functionality. A phone line was decided on as an appropriate CRM given the low levels of literacy and widespread mobile phone ownership in the area. It was also considered the most cost-effective and confidential way to manage feedback and response. The CRM is imbedded into the programme and is an essential part of programme delivery.

### **Establishment and running of CRM**

BRC set up the CRM before the first phase of programme implementation in Delmas 19 – the distribution of 950 cash grants as the first step of the livelihoods component of the INA project. The call centre consists of one or two staff manning two free phone lines. The call centre staff are jointly managed by the beneficiary communication delegate and the beneficiary accountability supervisor – part of the livelihoods programme team.

The establishment of the call centre was preceded by the design and implementation of a training session for all field staff in accountability and the importance of complaints and response mechanisms. This included role-play scenarios of receiving and handling complaints in the field, when to refer beneficiaries to the call centre, and communications skills related to complaints handling.

Call centre procedures were established and two call centre staff hired and trained. BRC tried to anticipate as many problems as possible and designed flow charts of responses to these complaints / questions. A question and answers document produced, that is updated on a regular basis to reflect programme developments and feedback from the community. Finally, a call log template was designed in Excel.

Before the launch of the hotline on 5 April 2011, the CRM was discussed with the community and the Committee – a group of 20 individuals who represent the



community in the programme implementation area – in meetings and then advertised via posters.

Looking to the future, the call centre will continue to function as a central part of the INA. As the INA team reorganises to create one community mobilisation team in the centre of the structure, as the face of the programme to the community, the CRM will sit alongside beneficiary communication within this central team.

## Lessons learned

### What worked well?

Setting up the CRM as an in-house system has meant full integration into the programme and rapid response to complaints. It is critical to programme delivery and development and has improved the quality and efficiency of the programme, including identifying potential cases of fraud and influencing the programme design. A phone hotline is an appropriate choice of CRM in an urban context where there are a large number of people involved and where almost everyone has a phone. Working in such a confined space such as an informal urban settlement like Delmas 19 means that BRC field officers are constantly in touch with beneficiaries and it is impossible for them to answer every question or complaint; the hotline has taken the pressure off field staff who can refer certain queries to the call centre directly. It has also been supportive to the programme teams to have beneficiary communication involvement in the setting up and running of the CRM.

The call centre has allowed BRC to improve the quality of the INA programme by catching issues early on, particularly helpful in a livelihoods programme with



cash grants distributed via SMS and prone to technical hitches. The process allows for automatic logging of complaints, which itself is often a laborious process to put in place. Beneficiaries value being given the opportunity to raise concerns and ask questions, even among those who have never used the hotline.

## Challenges

The BRC CRM was set up in a very short time frame – approximately two weeks. Ideally more time would be allowed for set up. It would be more accountable to precede the set up by a participatory process to determine the best channel for a complaints mechanism and it is recommended that time be planned for this.

The hotline was not well publicized at the beginning, due to operational staff's hesitation that this would lead to the excessive use of the hotline for complaints not relevant to the programme. However this turned out not to be the case, and therefore the CRM was publicized more actively later in the programme. The more publicity it gets, the better.

The small size of the CRM makes it feasible to be integrated into the programme – an essential part of its success in this context. However those looking to set up a hotline across multiple programmes would have to consider the potential for this model to scale up.

## Conclusion

Obviously there are differences in type and scope in the questions, complaints and feedback systems profiled in this case study and one solution from one operation cannot necessarily be copied into other contexts. However, there is no question that the CRM's in Haiti are appreciated by beneficiaries and provides valuable information to the programme departments. Maintaining a safe working environment for both shelter and WATSAN teams and counteracting tensions and rumors around programme delivery has worked well.

When planned and set up properly and in partnership with operational programmes, a questions and complaints line can play a key role in building trust in an organization, flagging up potential issues early and maintaining a safe working environment for staff.

# Case Study: Integrated neighborhood approach beneficiary communication

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## **Learning from the British Red Cross Integrated Neighborhood Programme in Delmas 19/Haiti/December 2011**

### **Background**

The British Red Cross (BRC) Haiti Earthquake Recovery Programme is pioneering an approach to urban recovery in Delmas 19 ‘The integrated neighborhood approach’ (INA).<sup>32</sup> The aim of this urban regeneration project is to improve the quality of life for Delmas 19 residents, helping the community to recover from the earthquake in an integrated and sustainable way with coordinated livelihoods, shelter and WASH support. The programme also goes beyond typical disaster recovery, as most of the vulnerabilities of this informal urban settlement existed before the earthquake.

Beneficiary communication as a form of delivering accountability to beneficiaries is a critical part of the INA and the key to working with the community: without good communication, a successful programme is impossible.

Ensuring two-way communication among a heterogeneous population with different ways of absorbing information and low levels of trust and with the backdrop of the complex and insecure environment is constantly challenging. Real programme integration is similarly challenging. Some of the learning from the BRC INA is presented below.

### **Facilitating integration**

The Delmas 19 recovery programme, that later became known as INA, was planned as a fully integrated programme, bringing together livelihoods, shelter and watsan elements to regenerate the community holistically. However BRC struggled with recruitment, creating HR gaps in the planned integrated team that resulted in the programme slipping back into a more siloed approach with each team engaging in separate conversations with the community. Setting all parts of the programme up simultaneously is critical to making integration a reality, particularly when working in the humanitarian sector where there is a tendency towards siloed approaches.

Beneficiary communication has a particularly important part to play in the ‘I’ – integrated – part of the INA approach, and can be a welding force connecting different sectoral elements of the programme, ideally working alongside a central team of community mobilizers as one united face of the Red Cross to the community. BRC began with different sectoral teams often working disjointedly and recognized this as an issue and is now restructuring to have a centralized community mobilization team. Beneficiary communication should be embedded in this centralized function and not seen as a stand-alone service or an add-on, as community mobilization is completely reliant on two-way communication.

### **Clear presentation of timelines**

In order to present an integrated approach to the community, combined communi-

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<sup>32</sup> Running from approximately November 2010 – October 2012.

cations messages make sense. However this can be problematic because of different sectoral timelines if different programme components develop at different paces. If they can be foreseen, differences in timelines should be communicated from the beginning. This lessens frustration with slow progress. For example, the BRC livelihoods cash grant work began much sooner than the non-livelihoods components of the programme, including housing and urban planning. These take longer to get off the ground because understanding the community's needs and priorities, overcoming issues around land tenure and working with local government are more complicated and solutions more time consuming.



## Participatory foundations

A community programme needs to be developed via a participatory process. The Red Cross has a number of tools to use dependent on the most appropriately identified entry point, for example PRA, PASSA, PHAST. Beneficiary communication, as well as the programme in general, will struggle to function if the INA is not started off on a participatory foot. This builds levels of acceptance and facilitates good relations with the community from day one. Initial surveys should also be maximized as an opportunity to include questions on beneficiary communication, for example: How do you want to communicate with us? How do you get your information? Including some basic indicators for monitoring programme accountability would also help to measure the impact of beneficiary communication.

## Clarification of limitations and roles and responsibilities

Being transparent about the limitation of the Red Cross programme is key, including being realistic about not being able to solve all the neighborhood's problems because a) it's not our job to do alone and b) because we have limited funds. From BRC's experience, people understand this and appreciate the honesty. This also helps to inspire community participation in finding their own solutions that can be challenging if there is an expectancy that the Red Cross will provide solutions on a plate.



Tied to this is the importance of clarifying and communicating the roles of the local Government and the Red Cross; there can be more confusion on this in an urban setting. For example, BRC and IFRC are rebuilding the main drainage canal of Delmas 19, but are not responsible for land right issues that may result in some illegally built houses being torn down in the process.

## **Committee & community relationships**

Central to the success of the programme is the relationship with the local committee representing the community, and the relationship directly with the community. Beneficiary communication would be greatly aided by meeting with the committee and the wider community to discuss and investigate communications channels and the importance of good communication at the very beginning of the programme. Collectively designing and agreeing a Terms of Reference should also happen at the outset. Publicizing a calendar of community & committee meetings also eases pressure, as everyone is aware of next forum for participation and feedback. It is time consuming and not always possible to have a beneficiary communication presence at all committee and community meetings, but it does help to get first hand feedback from community in order to adapt communications strategies.

## **Examples of communication channels**

### **Posters and creative workshops**

A key element of BRC beneficiary communication in Delmas 19 is using posters to communicate key stages in the programme, but not as a stand-alone form of communication. Posters are always preceded by meeting with the committee of community representatives and followed up by alternative forms of messaging to cater for different ways of accessing information. BRC's initial text-heavy posters were replaced by pictorial representations of the text to cater for the illiterate. However images are also culturally sensitive and can be misconceived, so participatory activities with community members to design communications materials can help to communicate the programme in a locally intelligible way, as well as informing programme design. BRC is currently holding workshops in Delmas 19 to get young people to draw key concepts such as 'vulnerability' or 'regenerated neighbourhood' and then turn them into posters to depict the programme.

### **Complaints and response mechanism**

BRC set up a free in-house beneficiary phone hotline as a complaints mechanism, to give beneficiaries and other residents a forum for queries, complaints and to ensure a channel for two-way communication. A hotline works well in an urban context where there are a large number of people involved and where almost everyone has a phone. Working in such a confined space such as an informal urban settlement like Delmas 19 means that BRC field officers are constantly in touch with beneficiaries and it is impossible for them to answer every question or complaint without holding up their work. The call centre has allowed BRC to improve the quality of the INA programme by catching issues early on, particularly helpful in a cash grant livelihoods programme; it has helped catch and resolve a case of fraud; it has flagged up security incidents; it has taken pressure off field staff; and importantly, the hotline has greatly increased beneficiary satisfaction by giving people a voice.



## Case Study: Beneficiary communication through television in Pakistan

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### Background and rationale

The 2010 Pakistan floods began in late July, resulting from heavy monsoon rains in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), Sindh, Punjab and Baluchistan regions. Approximately one-fifth of Pakistan's total land area was underwater, destroying the property, livelihoods and infrastructure of an already developing country.

The floods affected 20 million people (more than 10 per cent of the population), more than three-quarters of them in Sindh and Punjab provinces. Almost 2,000 people lost their lives and more than 1.7 million homes were damaged or destroyed.<sup>33</sup>

When the floods hit Pakistan in July 2010 organizations including Pakistan Red Crescent (PRCS) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), carried out initiatives to deliver important information regarding humanitarian assistance. Other groups involved in this critical information dissemination were infoasaid, Internews, International Organization for Migration (IOM), and the Communicating with Disaster-Affected Communities (CDAC) working group.

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<sup>33</sup> National Disaster Management Authority, Pakistan, 2011

The IFRC/PRCS programme completed the pilot phase of the Beneficiary Communication Programme with a focus on KPK province between November and April 2011 with radio programmes and television shows, which covered different topics related to disaster management, relief, and the recovery and rehabilitation process. An SMS system was developed during the pilot phase following the establishment of a working relationship with a local mobile network provider, Telenor (provides service to over 25 million people including rural districts affected by the floods).



## **Establishment of television**

Seven episodes of pre-recorded television were broadcast in Urdu via the Pakistan National Television (PTV) news channel. PTV has tower stations in the three flood-affected districts where IFRC/PRCS is focusing its recovery efforts, allowing a further avenue to communicate with affected communities. Experts from the National Society together with external agencies were involved in development and delivery of the show. Based on a review on costing completed at the end of the first phase of this project, together with information garnered from the infoasaid baseline study referred to previously which identified other mediums as more effective, this initiative was discontinued. The infoasaid study reported that “mass media access is extremely limited in all locations surveyed, with television reaching the highest at just over 30% overall; radio access reached over 20%. As an indication of the limitations in access, in no locations nor for any of the target groups did television access reach 50%...” with the author making the finding that TV has much greater reach than other mass media, but its utility is restricted by many factors, including:

1. TV formats are typically quite restricted for programme needs, making it harder to place specialist programming;
2. Targeting humanitarian needs; production and broadcast costs are far higher than other formats.

Additional factors observed by the BCA team are the limited access to TV in the project target areas with one reason being frequent and long power outages. Another possible reason is the high cost of buying a television set.

## Facts and figures

The following represents the topics covered and format for the BCA TV programme.

Episode	Topics
1	Introduction to Pakistan Red Crescent Society and IFRC activities in flood-affected districts and their response
2	Shelter and psychosocial support for beneficiaries
3	Community based disaster risk reduction and youth and volunteer theme
4	Gender in disaster
5	Watsan, hygiene, and related diseases
6	Livelihoods and rehabilitation
7	Communication and community development

The shows included various segments such as news updates, questions and answers, and public service announcements, etc.

## Format and programme

Episode	Topics
1	Introduction to the programme, topic and guest speakers
2	Relevant PSAs were broadcast dependant on community issues arising announcements from information collected through field visits, research and sector leads (shelter, watsan, health).
3	Information updates from the community about Red Cross Red Crescent programming in flood-affected areas
4	Quiz focusing on a question of an historical nature. For example, "When was Pakistan last affected by flooding on the same scale as the 2010 floods?"
5	Health news and tips
6	Community voices on how communities are recovering from the disaster
7	Closing

## What worked well?

- Beneficiaries and volunteers from the affected areas where invited to participate in the programme as audience members. Audience members where given a chance to respond to questioning and interact with the experts giving limited two-way feedback on the programme. Pre-recorded field footage provided another avenue of feedback from beneficiaries and a level of transparency to the programming.
- Different segments as such (public service announcements, health news, first aid tips survival kit tips and general information related to organization) added value to the programming.
- The programme demonstrated to key stakeholders the value of communicating with beneficiaries using mass media such as television.

## Challenges

- TV shows were not continued because it was not cost effective due to the limited target audience size in affected areas. Nonetheless it served its purpose to spread awareness and sensitivity among general mass population about the situation of beneficiaries.

Initial findings from the PMER baseline survey show that while some of the population have access to TV to get information, it is not rated as a useful tool to feedback information and for beneficiaries to engage in the conversation. Other mediums were seen as being more appropriate.

- Scripting was undertaken for each show which was a lengthy process that required approvals from senior management of the National Society.
- Procurement rules dictate that tendering for the production of each programme was undertaken making the process very time consuming. Anecdotal information gathered from field visits to flood affected communities established that many people in these areas don't have access to the TV sets due to frequent and long power outages. Another possible reason is the high cost of buying a television set.
- In some areas such as KPK it is not cultural appropriate for women to watch TV.
- PTV news was selected because of its substantial viewership as a national broadcasting channel but it has limited resources which impacted on the production and broadcasting of quality programmes.
- As the national broadcaster and a news channel, PTV may interrupt or stop broadcasts to cover breaking news or other special events. This happened many times during the pilot programme.

## Lessons learned

- Access to information in Pakistan appears almost like a few oases in the desert, with some areas having much better access and others encountering extreme information deprivation. However, this is relative; no area can be described as having 'good' information access, as in all locations a majority of the population lacked access to much of the information, communication and feedback mechanisms to enable the effectiveness in aid provision, transparency and empowerment of communities in crisis<sup>34</sup>. This meant that the use of multiple channels to communicate to all was most effective.
- During disasters, particularly when communication infrastructure is not working, direct communication is the best way to interact with affected families in Pakistan. It is critical, especially for women, who may not have any other source of information. Ensuring that there are enough female volunteers involved in aid delivery is also vital, particularly in areas where society is conservative and women are not permitted to interact with men outside their family. The baseline study done in October 2011 by IFRC, PMER confirms this medium as effective, along with radio and SMS in reaching affected populations. However there are significant differences depending on the target area.
- Prepositioning of the programming, in particular establishing framework agreements with media providers, could reduce the time for suppliers to be engaged to launch tools in the immediate aftermath of a disaster.

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<sup>34</sup> Infoasaid Baseline Survey 2010 in Sindh and Punjab



## Annex 1: Key documents

The table below represents all document provided by respondents during the lessons learned process. A selection of the documents listed below can be accessed at <https://fednet.ifrc.org/en/resources-and-services/external-relations/beneficiary-communication/>

Document	Origin
<b>INDONESIA</b>	
Irish Red Cross Society, Final Evaluation of Community Outreach Programme, Final Report 2005-2009.	Irish Red Cross International Division
Irish Red Cross Society, Tsunami Relief and Recovery Programme Indonesia, 2005-2010, Compilation of Final Project Evaluations, Aug 2010.	Irish Red Cross International Division
COP Background Documents, Various	Former Delegate, Irish Red Cross
Community of Practice Log Frame	Former Delegate, Irish Red Cross
<b>HAITI</b>	
IFRC Beneficiary Communication, Haiti Earthquake Evaluation, 2011	IFRC
AtB & Beneficiary Communication training Haiti March 2011	British Red Cross
Beneficiary Communication Plan – FINAL	British Red Cross
AtB activity Gantt Haiti – August 2011	British Red Cross
Beneficiary Communication Plan – FINALv2	British Red Cross
BRC ERU ATB session presentation – MSM March 2011	British Red Cross
D19 complaints hotline training Haiti March 2011	British Red Cross
Training – call centre procedures	British Red Cross
Ann Kite Yo Pale	Infoasaid
IFRC Plan of Action Haiti (Draft) 2011	IFRC
Federation Wide Strategic Framework Haiti	IFRC
Cholera SMS	IFRC / Haitian Red Cross
Cholera Beneficiary Communication plan	IFRC
Cholera SMS south	IFRC
Example radio running order – emergency cholera	IFRC
MSPP (Govt. health dept.) cholera poster	MSPP
Radio Advert cholera	IFRC / Haitian Red Cross
DP communications plan	IFRC
IFRC DP key messages	IFRC
DP SMS June 2011 (same as 2010)	IFRC / Haitian Red Cross
Emergency SMS pre-prepared	IFRC
Hurricane Tomas (similar SMS for all storms)	IFRC
GBV BCA plan 2010	IFRC
GBV BCA plan 2011	IFRC
GBV SMS messages 2011	IFRC
Gender policy for community radio	IFRC
Guideline for GBV interventions	IASC
BCA 2010 overview	IFRC
BCA 2011 plan	IFRC
Accountability made easy pamphlet	IFRC
Exit strategy guidelines	IFRC
BCA tools presentation Sept 2011	IFRC
BCA September 2011 overview	IFRC

Document	Origin
Final BCA proposal 2010	IFRC
BCA Logframe 2010	IFRC
BCA Budget 2010	IFRC
Health communications plan	IFRC
First aid SMS	IFRC
Job descriptions various	IFRC
Livelihoods SMS survey	IFRC
6 case studies written as part of the Info as aid research	IFRC
Beneficiary communication monthly monitoring sheet	IFRC
Violence prevention campaign overview	IFRC
Concept note for BCA evaluation	IFRC
HIF M&E document	IFRC
Afiche – Siklon poster	IFRC
BCA inventory poster	IFRC
Red cross support is free pamphlet	IFRC
Noula poster (CRM)	IFRC
What is a notice board	IFRC
Who is the red cross	IFRC
Radio running order sample - DP	IFRC
Radio review sample	IFRC
Answering questions guide	IFRC
Radio show equipment quote	IFRC
Beneficiary Communication Annexe plan 2010	IFRC
BCA annexe plan 2011 October	IFRC
Shelter SMS plan	IFRC
Cholera Beneficiary Communication plan V4	IFRC
BCA Case Study (Global)	IFRC
Malaria SMS	IFRC
Free aid SMS	IFRC
Leogane SMS	IFRC
Relief SMS plan	IFRC
SMS guidelines	IFRC
How to send an SMS concept note	IFRC
Set of campaign overviews for DP, malaria, cholera, GBV, weather alerts	IFRC
Watsan SMS tank	IFRC
Q&A for Noula WatSAN	IFRC
Water trucking ending poster	IFRC
Water point closing poster	IFRC
Shelter Noula Q&A	IFRC
Noula one pager	IFRC
Noula procedures flow chart	IFRC
Noula process with shelter	IFRC

Document	Origin
<b>PAKISTAN</b>	
Logframe Pakistan BCA	IFRC
Case study/lessons learned draft	IFRC
Providing Humanitarian Information to Flood-Affected People in Pakistan Baseline Study, Sindh & Punjab, November to December 2010	Infoasaid
Integrated Recovery Logframe (BCA)	IFRC
Case Study IFRC BCA	IFRC
Plan of Action PAKISTAN 13 October 2010	IFRC
Accountability framework/compliance committee TOR	IFRC
Pakistan Operations Updates (Various)	IFRC
Pakistan Appeal (Various) 2011	IFRC
<b>OTHER</b>	
Peer Review on Accountability	SCHR Peer Review on Accountability to Disaster-Affected Populations
Asia Pacific Zone, Proposal BCA	IFRC
HES Framework – key questions AtB	British Red Cross
Accountability to Beneficiaries: Basic Guidelines and Lessons Learned	American Red Cross
Disaster Relief 2.0 The future of information sharing in humanitarian emergencies, Washington D.C.	Harvard Humanitarian Initiative, UN Foundation & Vodafone Foundation Technology Partnership, 2011.
Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction Study 'Characteristics of a Safe and Resilient Community', (not released), 2011.	IFRC
International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Strategy 2020.	IFRC
International Federation of Red Cross Red Crescent Societies, Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief, 1995.	IFRC
The Sphere Project: Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response 2004	
The 2010 Humanitarian Accountability Report at <a href="http://www.hapinternational.org/pool/files/hap-accountability-report-2010.pdf">www.hapinternational.org/pool/files/hap-accountability-report-2010.pdf</a>	Humanitarian Accountability Partnership
The 2010 HAP Standard in Accountability and Quality Management, 2010.	Humanitarian Accountability Partnership
International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies Humanitarian Targeting Study	IFRC

## Annex 2: Comparative table: beneficiary communication and beneficiary information and accessibility of commonly used tools

TOOL	Beneficiary Communication	Beneficiary Information	Accessibility (1 indicating excellent – 10 indicating poor) <sup>35</sup>
Radio (FM, AM, UHF, HF)	Allows two-way communication, talkback, outside broadcast (OB).	Allows one-way communication, early warning, preparedness information, behavioural change	<b>Accessibility: 1</b> High access in most parts of the world and if the listener has a radio the cost are nil. People need access to a phone to provide feedback.
Television i.e. News or Variety Show.	Live programming allows participant feedback, mixing mediums with TV like SMS allows people to feedback.	Using a community or Public Service Announcement (PSA) format the medium allows early warning, preparedness and behavioural change information to be broadcast.	<b>Accessibility: 5</b> Access varies throughout the world. Generally people have access but not necessarily on an individual basis. TVs can often be shared amongst communities.
SMS i.e. TERA or blast SMS	SMS allows mass communication and feedback two-way communication. SMS is widely accessible globally.	SMS –TERA can be used extensively in early warning, preparedness and behavioural change messaging.	<b>Accessibility: 3</b> Mobile phone access is growing more in underdeveloped countries as telecommunication providers look for new untapped markets. New tools are constantly being developed using SMS technology.
Print	Newspapers can be used for community feedback by encouraging to response to editorial comment and discussion boards.	Good to use as a pictorial medium can print a lot of information on posters and flyers. Information can be delivered using a series of pictures for people with low literacy levels.	<b>Accessibility: 6</b> Poster and flyers can be distributed widely with in communities. Newspapers are cheap to purchase and can be read a number of times by different community members. Testing of images to ensure clarity in print materials should preferably happen.
Noticeboards	Can be used to advertise numbers and services that allow feedback.	Good to use as a pictorial medium can print a lot of information on posters and flyers. Information can be delivered using a series of pictures for people with low literacy levels.	<b>Accessibility: 6</b> Can be used in most public areas.
Face to Face	A strong two way medium as people are in the same location and able to voice issues concerns.	Also possible to deliver one-way messaging.	<b>Accessibility: 2</b> Access depends on number of people available to carry out the process.

<sup>35</sup> Accessibility rankings are based on estimates from delegates working with the BCA programme area and are meant as a rough guide only for operational staff and volunteers.

## Annex 3: Consultation on lesson learned beneficiary communication and accountability<sup>36</sup>

No	Location	Title
<b>ZONES / HEADQUARTERS</b>		
1	Pierre Kremer	Director of Communications
2	Patrick Fuller	Communications Manager, Asia Pacific
3	Chris Staines	Senior Officer, Quality & Accountability, Tsunami Unit
4	John Gwynn	Asia Pacific Organizational Development Coordinator
5	Razmi Farook	External Relations and Humanitarian Diplomacy Coordinator
6	Benoit Matsha -Carpentier	Audio-Visual Senior Officer, Public Communications, Geneva/ BCA focal point
7	Nigel Ede	Asia Pacific Office Recovery Delegate
8	Enrique Jair Guevara	Communications Officer, Americas Zone Office
<b>NATIONAL SOCIETIES</b>		
9	Araceli Lloret	Programme Coordinator, Pakistan, Norwegian Red Cross Headquarters
10	Colm Byrne	Irish Red Cross Society, Head of International Department
11	Sharon Kane	Australian Red Cross, Emergencies Coordinator
12	Georgina Cooper	Communications Manager, British Red Cross
13	Libbi Lee	Performance and Accountability Advisor, International Division, British Red Cross
<b>PAKISTAN FLOODS 2010 BENEFICIARY COMMUNICATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY PROGRAMME</b>		
14	Katherine Gunn	Beneficiary Communication and Accountability Delegate, Pakistan
15	Jaap Timmer	Recovery Coordinator, Pakistan
16	Drew Strobel	Operations Coordinator Pakistan, Asia Pacific Zone
17	Dr Munis Said	Pakistan Red Crescent Society Counterpart, Beneficiary Communication and Accountability
18	Mr Amjad Pezez	Pakistan Red Crescent Society Counterpartt, Beneficiary Communication and Accountability
<b>INDONESIA COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAMME ASIAN QUAKE AND TSUNAMI</b>		
19	Muhammad Fauzan Azimsyah	Irish Red Cross Society, Community Outreach Programme Staff Member
20	Bustari Mansyur	Palang Merah Indonesia
21	Andri Irvan	Irish Red Cross Society, Community Outreach Programme Staff Member. Currently PMI Radio staff member
22	Safriyal SE	Irish Red Cross Society, Community Outreach Programme Staff Member
23	Will Rogers	Irish Red Cross Society, Community Outreach Programme Delegate

<sup>36</sup> The following represents a list of respondents contacted and asked for contributions to this Lessons Learned exercise. Not all respondents contacted provided responses but appear here as a historical record.

No	Location	Title
<b>HAITI EARTHQUAKE OPERATIONS BENEFICIARY COMMUNICATION PROGRAMME</b>		
24	Dr. Michaele Amedee Gedeon	President, Haitian Red Cross
25	Pericles Jean Baptiste	Haitian Red Cross, Communications/Beneficiary Communication focal point
26	Dr. Eglantine	Haitian Red Cross, Cholera Treatment Centre
27	Eduard Tschan	IFRC Haiti Country Representative
28	Margaret Stansberry	IFRC Technical Movement Coordinator
29	Xavier Genot	IFRC Shelter Movement Coordination Delegate
30	John Fleming	IFRC Health Coordinator
31	Robert Brooks	IFRC Security Delegate
32	Djimmy BRISSAULT	IFRC Beneficiary Communication Case Worker
33	Will Rogers	IVR Delegate, Haiti IFRC
34	Sharon Reader	Beneficiary Communication Delegate Haiti IFRC
35	Becky Webb	Communications Coordinator Haiti
36	James Bellamy	Emergency Shelter & Settlements Coordinator
37	Ascesion Martinez	Community Development Programme Coordinator
38	Omar Robinson	Watsan Coordinator IFRC
39	Marcel Goyeneche	Movement Coordinator
40	Enrique GUEVARA	IFRC Americas Zone Communications Officer
41	Florent Del Pinto	IFRC Haiti Operation Programme Advisor
42	Mathew Schrader	IFRC Cholera Coordinator
43	Paula Fitzgerald	IFRC Planning Monitoring and Evaluation
44	Diebou SOUMARE	Croix-Rouge française Reporting Officer
45	Amanda George	British Red Cross, Beneficiary Communication Delegate
46	Borry Jatta	British Red Cross Staff, La Piste
47	Dr Vieux Manoucheka	British Red Cross, La Piste CBHFA
48	Patrick Harmorin MO	British Red Cross Staff, La Piste, Cholera Treatment Centre
49	Lohuorre Charumene	British Red Cross Staff, La Piste, Cholera Treatment Centre
50	Louise Taylor	Canadian Red Cross, Beneficiary Communication Delegate

# Annex 4: Beneficiary communication and accountability tools table on Atb

POINTS / QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider what medium communities listen to/use/own i.e. radio, television, mobile phones, community meetings, newspaper, social media (Facebook, twitter)?</li> <li>• Consider the confidence in these communication mediums. Which one would communities trust more?</li> <li>• Consider what information communities wish to receive (Health, Shelter, Wat San, DRR, Employment, Security, Other)</li> <li>• Consider collection of literacy rates in your assessment. This information is useful to determine written vs. pictorial materials.</li> <li>• Consider the tools appropriate to the community. Camps are usually less socially cohesive so tools such as sound trucks or notice board to publish information.</li> <li>• Use local languages and dialects to communicate your message.</li> </ul>			
BC TOOLS	Transparency	Participation	M&E	Complaints and Response
<b>RADIO</b>	Radio is an excellent tool to utilise to provide beneficiaries communication and information that is accessible and timely because it is a well-known resource, usually low cost, has a potential wide coverage (depending on transmittal signal in your area) and time can be taken to explore programme issues in depth.	Radio can provide a platform for beneficiaries to participate. The medium lends it self towards public participation, particularly in instances where there is a talk back segments within the programme. It may also be possible to incorporate SMS feedback into radio programming to make it more responsive.  Consider the use of outside broadcasts. In Aceh an outside broadcast attracted 500 people across Aceh.	Radio could provide a platform for discussions and dissemination of evaluation or review findings or to gather information on the progress of your programme (monitoring your progress). It is public so it allows different people to hear others opinions.	Using radio with a call in talk shows with expert panels or programme staff can establish two way communication processes between beneficiaries and the organisation. Radio also can put all participants on a level playing field.
<b>TELEVISION</b>	Television is an excellent tool to make use of to provide beneficiaries information that is accessible and timely because it is a well-known resource, usually low cost depending on the country context, has a potential wide coverage (depending on transmittal signal) and time can be taken to explore programme issues in depth.	Using TV with live call in or beneficiaries participation can establish two way communication processes between beneficiaries and the organisation.	TV could provide a platform for discussions and dissemination of evaluation or review findings.	Using TV with live call in or beneficiaries participation can establish two way communication processes between beneficiaries and the organisation.

BC TOOLS	Transparency	Participation	M&E	Complaints and Response
<b>SMS</b>	<p>SMS is more suited to communicate short messaging (140 characters or under). Complex programmatic issues are not appropriate to address on the SMS system and this medium is best used to direct people to more detailed sources of information or meetings where this information can be discussed. This is important in this medium because it is difficult to validate that communities understood the message.</p> <p>It is excellent in reaching communities, as mobile phone ownership is usually high in most contexts (approximately adopted by an estimated 4.6 billion people globally by the end of 2009. (<a href="http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/facts/2011/material/ICTFactsFigures2009.pdf">http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/facts/2011/material/ICTFactsFigures2009.pdf</a>))</p> <p>It is a cost-effective (if partnerships exist with local telecommunications providers) way to reach a large number of people with simple, practical messages that they can remember, put into practice and share.</p> <p>It is important to brand the SMS with Red Cross to ensure that information is seen as credible and also to include a message to pass the SMS onto others to link this to your face to face efforts.</p>	<p>Can provide an excellent gateway to most communities as it gives direct access to people who have phones within communities, it is cost effective and high impact in some contexts, can be used to reach hard to reach places, can reach large youth audience who usually have this medium more readily than other audiences thus encouraging participation of this target group.</p>	<p>SMS can be used to provide short survey questions or invite communities to a meeting to explain evaluation results.</p>	<p>Two way communication processes between beneficiaries and the organisation can be established using the SMS system but remember that practical and simple messaging is best and include a phone number to call back to deal with more complex issues.</p>
<b>Face to Face/print/notice boards</b>	<p>Community meetings, print materials and notice boards are seen as more appropriate to communicate complex programmatic information such as exit, assessment and implementation plans.</p> <p>Notice boards and the displaying of print materials in a central place to display material can be an excellent way to communicate with beneficiaries transparently.</p>	<p>Likewise, face-to-face meetings and the use of notice boards can encourage participation within beneficiary groups.</p>	<p>Beneficiaries and key community stakeholders are informed about the findings of the reviews and evaluation via face-to-face community meetings.</p>	<p>Face to face meetings can be a value way to receive information and feedback from beneficiaries on programme issues.</p> <p>Notice boards can also have a suggestion box to allow community members to feedback ideas.</p>
<b>Informal / other</b>	<p>This could include promotional materials such as t-shirts, which promote key aspects of the programme, short films and photographs, which present progress or difficulties.</p> <p>Sound trucks can also be a good way to disseminate both practical information and more complex programme details as they cut through issues of literacy.</p>			<p>Sound trucks can also be a good way to disseminate both practical information and more complex programme details as they cut through issues of literacy.</p>

BC TOOLS	Transparency	Participation	M&E	Complaints and Response
<p><b>Content of Messaging</b></p>	<p>Messaging should include an explanation of the organisational commitment to Accountability to beneficiaries (AtB); Informing Beneficiaries and key community stakeholders about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RC/RC's mandate;</li> <li>• The objectives of your assessment;</li> <li>• Name and contact number of local RC counterpart.</li> <li>• Exit strategies: including Actual project end time, Reason for exit strategy, and Handover mechanisms</li> <li>• Name and contact number of RC project leader</li> <li>• Planned activities, timeframes, geographical scope</li> <li>• Beneficiary targeting and selection criteria</li> <li>• Roles and responsibilities</li> <li>• Exit strategy</li> </ul>	<p>Messaging should include an explanation of the organisational commitment to Accountability to beneficiaries (AtB); Informing Beneficiaries and key community stakeholders about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How they can participate and who to contact to do so.</li> </ul>	<p>Content of messages should preferably include the findings of the assessment team and whom to contact if they don't agree with the findings and monitoring timeframes and schedule.</p>	<p>Messaging should informed about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beneficiaries right to complain</li> <li>• How to complain</li> <li>• Who will handle/respond to their complaints</li> <li>• How long it will take to get feedback</li> <li>• The results of the complaints procedures, and learning from it, are captured through NS staff and volunteers.</li> <li>• Their right to question the evaluation findings</li> <li>• How and by whom these concerns will be dealt with</li> <li>• That the complainant will be dealt with fairly, confidentially and transparently.</li> </ul>

# The Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

**Humanity** The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, born of a desire to bring assistance without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield, endeavours, in its international and national capacity, to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. Its purpose is to protect life and health and to ensure respect for the human being. It promotes mutual understanding, friendship, cooperation and lasting peace amongst all peoples.

**Impartiality** It makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavours to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.

**Neutrality** In order to enjoy the confidence of all, the Movement may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

**Independence** The Movement is independent. The National Societies, while auxiliaries in the humanitarian services of their governments and subject to the laws of their respective countries, must always maintain their autonomy so that they may be able at all times to act in accordance with the principles of the Movement.

**Voluntary service** It is a voluntary relief movement not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.

**Unity** There can be only one Red Cross or Red Crescent Society in any one country. It must be open to all. It must carry on its humanitarian work throughout its territory.

**Universality** The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, in which all societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other, is worldwide.

For further information, please contact:

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