



BEST PRACTICES: INFORMATION SHARING

Challenges and Issues

As stated in the HAP Standard, its critical organisation ensures that the people it aims to assist and other stakeholders have access to timely, relevant and clear information about the organisation and its activities. Numerous agencies faced challenges in sharing information with their stakeholders during the floods response. For IOM, dissemination of information in a timely and coordinated fashion was a challenge. This was further exacerbated by the difficulty of identifying the information required thus creating gaps in filling the information required.

Reaching to female members of the community and government authorities was also a challenge especially in rural areas. In some cases, INGOs/NGOs were unaware of the type of information and services that was available from IOM that they can tap into. Information and response from the UN agencies was too slow. This led to perceptions that information was not disseminated in a transparent way. Clusters do not allocate funds for information sharing and there is no culture of collective sharing. Phone messages for instance did not work well in areas where there is no electricity to charge the phones.

What worked well?

Having human network and strong field presence with competent field staff worked well in addressing some of the challenges above. High quality Information Education Material (IEC) and FAQs were also found to be highly useful in disseminating required information promptly.

Other best practices include provision of awareness sessions especially in the health and hygiene field. The awareness session delivered 'verbally' worked well in cases of low literacy level and sensitized people they have right to information. Working with implementing partners was also helpful in meeting the standard of information sharing. More NGOs are becoming aware how to be part of IOM services.

Lessons Learned

- Timely delivery of information is critical to ensure informed consent.
- Human networks are the best mode of communication with the masses.
- Partnership with the grass root level organizations is necessary to enhance outreach of information.
- People need tangible information products they can use for dissemination.
- Increased channels to disseminate the information in a transparent way will gain greater confidence of organizations and communities.
- Outreach in the community (through traditional birth attendants) will ensure quicker information sharing.
- There is a need for a balance between modern technology & local communication tools to share & receive information.
- Have 5-6 bullet points of what your organization would like to share with military.