



The Sphere Project



CHURCH WORLD SERVICE
Pakistan / Afghanistan



Outputs of Lessons Learned
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BEST PRACTICES: MAINSTREAMING Q&A

Challenges and Issues

Main challenges in the process of institutionalization and mainstreaming of Quality and Accountability (Q&A) include the lack of funding and dedicated and competent staff to oversee the process. Although CWS-P/A has been using focal persons within each programme to oversee Q&A, however this is a challenge as this is not the focal person's primary role. Although many staff members were trained on Q&A during the earthquake operations, the downscaling of the operations in recent years led to staff turnover. New staff members are not altogether familiar with Sphere and HAP initiatives.

Due to pressure to deliver activities within constrained funding and timing, often documentation or knowledge management is compromised. Finally, funding agencies are usually more interested to fund and support Q&A initiatives during emergencies and not beyond. The lack of visible and tangible 'before and after' effects of the Q&A interventions is yet another reason for lack of support in this area.

What worked well?

Having a long term strategy to promote & apply Q&A internally and externally worked well. This strategy was complemented with an interim short term strategy in view of the emergency response. The strategy provided a framework to work in a systematic way, using the appropriate approaches required within the operating environment. An action plan of mainstreaming steps with indicators is being used as a guiding document for the mainstreaming process.

Placement of Q&A officer within the Disaster Management Programme (DMP) allowed quicker integration of Q&A within DMP. There was an increased ownership towards Q&A. DMP partners were the primary target of Q&A initiatives. Internal strengthening of Q&A was done in a parallel process. DMP monitoring & evaluation tools were reviewed for compliance of Sphere Standards. Effectiveness of the revised tools is being tested through monitoring and field visits.

Lessons Learned

- Leadership commitment is critical to promote & apply Q&A measures.
- Measure the "before & after" effects with clear quantitative & qualitative indicators.
- Engage & sensitize programme departments continuously using creative methods.
- Communicate regularly & in transparent manner on successes & gaps of Q&A initiatives to funding agencies.
- Include Q&A as a cross cutting component as part of all proposals; short term or long term.
- Review & revise all programme related M & E tools to incorporate Q&A components.
- Conduct Q&A orientation specifically for leadership & senior management.
- HAP certification process is a step forward towards mainstreaming at organizational level.
- Incorporate Q&A in job descriptions & appraisal system for gradual shift in mindsets towards internalization of Q&A.

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