PROMOTING AND IMPLEMENTING QUALITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY (Q&A) IN ASIA-PACIFIC SINCE 2005

CHURCH WORLD SERVICE
Pakistan / Afghanistan

August 2013

A Review by
Church World Service - Pakistan/Afghanistan (CWS-P/A)

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September 2013

Promoting and Implementing Quality and Accountability (Q&A) in Asia-Pacific since 2005

A Review

by

CHURCH WORLD SERVICE
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About Church World Service - Pakistan/Afghanistan

Church World Service-Pakistan/Afghanistan (CWS-P/A) is an international nongovernmental organization which implements humanitarian and development activities across Pakistan and Afghanistan. Since 1954, CWS-P/A has worked for the development and relief of marginalized communities on the basis that all individuals irrespective of race, faith, color, sex, economic status, or political opinion have the right to choose how to live. The organization assists communities to achieve economic prosperity and improve human and social capital through participatory endeavors, which liberate families and enhance their capacities to take control over their lives. Committed to quality performance, human rights, right to access information, and right to complain, CWS-P/A ensures that its humanitarian and development initiatives provide communities with their pertinent right and authority over resources.

Projects are organized out of its four programs: Capacity Building Program, Disaster Management Program, Social Development Program, and Advocacy and Research. CWS-P/A's thematic priorities include: disaster management; water, sanitation, and the environment; health; education; livelihoods; peace and governance; and quality and accountability.

Globally, CWS-P/A is part of CWS, Inc. and is registered with both the governments of Pakistan and Afghanistan. Locally, it has a distinct identity through its advisory board, diverse national staff, and strong linkages with local/regional networks and partnerships. It has offices across Pakistan and Afghanistan and a network of close to four hundred partners.

INTRODUCTION

The impact of humanitarian work on communities depends greatly upon the quality of services and accountability of actions both during emergency and non-emergency times. With millions of people affected by disasters and conflicts in Asia, the importance of Q&A is undeniable.

CWS-P/A aims to ensure that all relevant agencies including INGOs, NGOs, UN, donors, universities and government agencies, playing an active role in the disaster response and rehabilitation in Asia-Pacific are given the opportunity to implement quality and accountability approaches and tools in their work.

What Does Q&A Mean In Asia-Pacific?

Historically, the Asia-Pacific region is very disaster prone. Within the last decade alone, major disasters have hit the region such as the earthquake in South Asia in 2005, the Asian Tsunami in 2004, the earthquake and resultant Tsunami in Japan in 2011, frequent earthquakes in China and floods in Bangladesh and other countries as well as displacements, just to name a few.

All these recurrent disasters are a huge setback for the development of these countries. It places a high responsibility on humanitarian organizations and other actors carrying out emergency response and development initiatives in these countries to ensure adherence to Q&A standards. Therefore, there is a crucial need and opportunity for sharing and learning from best practices as well as challenges linked to the implementation of Q&A.

Cultivating opportunities for practitioners to come together for sharing and learning is of vital importance, since there is a rich presence of experience but a dearth of resources and opportunities for getting together so that a wider community of practitioners can benefit and develop linkages. The roles of focal agencies of various standards, Sphere country focal points, Sphere regional partners, and self-initiated promoters of Q&A including committed donors add value and assist in meeting needs across the Asia-Pacific region.

Church World Service - Pakistan/Afghanistan and Quality and Accountability

CWS-P/A is ISO 9001:2008 accredited and certified in USAID management standards. It is a member of the Humanitarian Accountability Partnership (HAP), People In Aid, the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA), and the ACT Alliance and is an associate member of Asian Disaster Reduction and Response Network (ADRRN). It achieved HAP certification in 2011 and the first internationally recognized Quality Mark from People In Aid in 2013.

CWS-P/A is both the Country Focal Point in Pakistan and the Regional Partner in Asia for Sphere and lead agency for HAP in Pakistan. CWS-P/A is a signatory to the Red Cross/Red Crescent Code of Conduct for NGOs in Disaster Relief and also adheres to other policies including a Code of Conduct for Child Protection.

CWS-P/A aims to promote and implement Quality and Accountability (Q&A) principles, standards, and tools for disaster management interventions in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and the Asia-Pacific region through advocacy, awareness-raising, capacity building and training, technical assistance, and lessons learning. These all contribute to ensuring enhanced quality of projects and programs and help in ensuring accountability to relevant stakeholders, particularly disaster-affected populations.

- ISO 9001:2008
- USAID management standards
- HAP - certification
- People In Aid - Quality Mark
- ICVA
- ACT Alliance
- ADRRN
- Sphere
- Red Cross/Red Crescent Code of Conduct for NGOs in Disaster Relief
- Code of Conduct for Child Protection

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TEN THEMATIC AREAS TO PROMOTE AND IMPLEMENT Q&A

The following ten thematic areas supporting the promotion and the implementation of Q&A were selected because they represent key areas which enable a global approach to Q&A instead of a partial, punctual set of one-shot activities.

This hierarchy of thematic areas allows viewing the global picture and reflecting at a strategic level instead of having an activity perspective. This attitude is future oriented and enables linking what is being done to the vision.

Ten thematic areas:
1. Tools for Q&A
2. Technical support to enhance Q&A
3. Capacity building on Q&A
4. Information, communication and coordination on Q&A
5. Advocacy to promote and implement Q&A
6. Action-Learning for Q&A
7. Mainstreaming Q&A
8. Compliance to and verification of the use of standards for enhanced Q&A
9. A global blended approach toward Q&A
10. Innovations to promote and implement Q&A
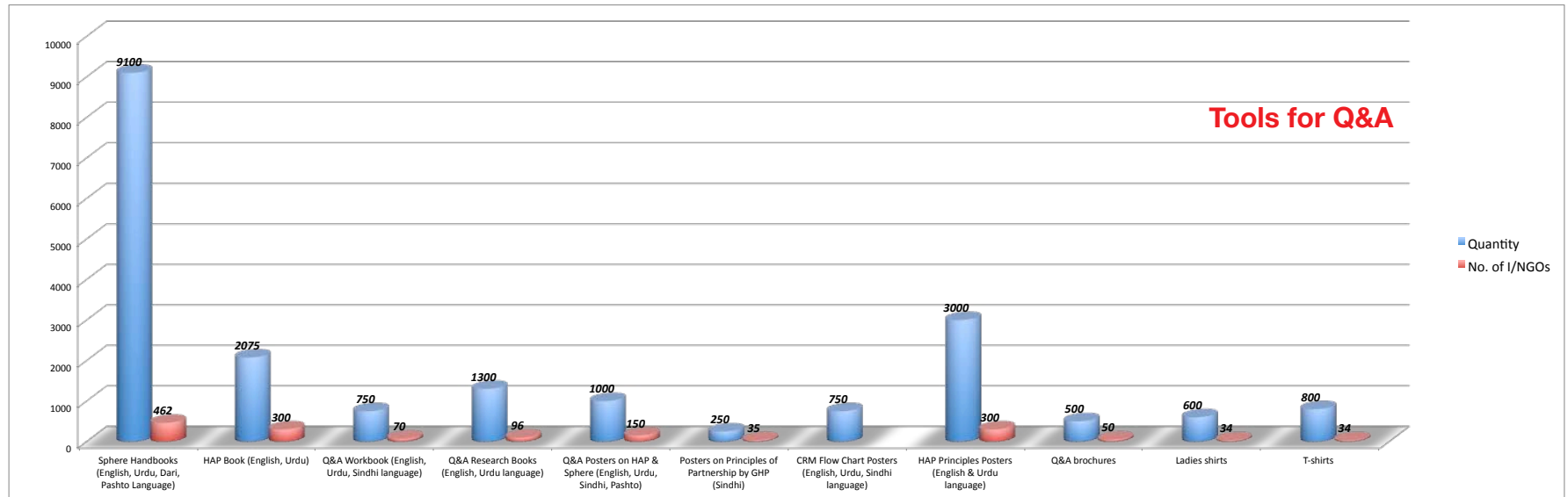
2

ACHIEVEMENTS

The following ten sections provide an overview of some of the key work done by CWS-P/A since 2005 and its achievements.

More is available from the ten case studies which also provide detailed examples of achievements and practices for each of the ten thematic areas.

Detailed information and data for all those thematic areas is available upon request.

Tools for Q&A

Legend: ■ Quantity ■ No. of I/NGOs

Chart data:
- Sphere Handbooks (English, Urdu, Dari, Pashto Language): 9100 / 462
- HAP Book (English, Urdu): 2075 / 300
- Q&A Workbook (English, Urdu, Sindhi language): 750 / 70
- Q&A Research Books (English, Urdu language): 1300 / 96
- Q&A Posters on HAP & Sphere (English, Urdu, Sindhi, Pashto): 1000 / 150
- Posters on Principles of Partnership by GHP (Sindhi): 250 / 35
- CRM Flow Chart Posters (English, Urdu, Sindhi language): 750
- HAP Principles Posters (English & Urdu language): 3000 / 300
- Q&A brochures: 500 / 50
- Ladies shirts: 600 / 34
- T-shirts: 800 / 34

1. Tools for Q&A

KEY WORDS: DESIGN, PUBLICATION, PRINTING, REVIEW, TRANSLATION, QUALITY CONTROL, DISTRIBUTION, SHARING

Printing of Materials and Distribution

CWS-P/A printed 3,000 copies of the Sphere handbook 2011 edition and other promotional materials such as posters, stands, bags, t-shirts, and USB keys. CWS-P/A also published a catalog of the publications made available in various languages, with their prices.

CWS Japan printed 1,000 copies of the Sphere handbook 2011 (Japanese version) which was translated by the Japan Association for Refugees and also 500 copies of the 2010 HAP Standard in Accountability and Quality Management (Japanese version).

HAP Standard 2010, Sphere handbook (2011 edition), and Q&A workbook (combining HAP, People in Aid, and Sphere)

CWS-P/A completed a competitor analysis, and the handbooks are available at the cheapest rates.

Translation of Materials

CWS-P/A led and financed the intensive translation of the Sphere handbook 2011 edition in Urdu. Taking into account recommendations from the past on the need to improve the quality of translations and to test translations before large-scale diffusion, CWS-P/A and the Accountability and Learning Working Group (ALWG) is currently reviewing the translation.

CWS-P/A translated other Q&A resources in various languages, including the HAP benchmarks and the People in Aid code of good practice.

CWS Japan translated *The 2010 HAP Standard in Accountability and Quality Management* in Japanese.

The Q&A workbook containing HAP Standard, People in Aid code of good practice, and other tools was translated into Urdu, Sindhi and Dari languages.

Review of the Sphere Handbook

In 2009, CWS-P/A organized and led three consultative meetings on the Sphere handbook revision in Bangkok, Islamabad, and Kabul with a total of 36 participants and produced a paper summarizing challenges and recommendations for the Sphere review.

Innovative Tools

CWS-P/A developed an innovative Sphere musical DVD.

2. Technical Support to Enhance Q&A

KEY WORDS: SPHERE NATIONAL FOCAL POINT AND REGIONAL PARTNER, Q&A NEEDS ANALYSIS

Sphere TOT in the Philippines

A Regional Scope

CWS-P/A is the regional partner for the Sphere Project in Asia. It aims to promote Q&A through capacity building and advocacy. Its approach is to provide technical support to the Sphere country focal points in Asia-Pacific so that their role as focal points is enhanced. It has worked closely with LWR in Sri Lanka and the Philippines, DanChurchAid in Cambodia, Disaster Forum in Bangladesh, Oxfam in Vietnam, Norwegian Church Aid in Myanmar, Korea NGO Council for Overseas Development Cooperation in South Korea, ACBAR in Afghanistan, JANIC in Japan, etc.

A Service Guide for Technical Support

The "Strengthening Humanitarian Accountability" (SHA) unit proposes its services to other agencies, and activities are presented in a service guide as possible trainings and their costs for specific audiences.

Supporting Promoters of Q&A: the example of the technical support provided to Lutheran World Relief (LWR)

A Q&A needs analysis: In 2011, the SHA unit led a research for the Lutheran World Relief (LWR) in 13 countries involving 129 organizations. The research provides a snapshot on the status of Q&A in Asia, and provides key recommendations such as the analysis of the type of support needed to enhance Q&A.

Technical support to LWR headquarters: In 2011, the SHA unit provided LWR in Baltimore an orientation on HAP and Sphere for 64 LWR staff followed by an in-depth training for 20 staff.

CWS-P/A seconded two team members to LWR after the Asian Tsunami and did some follow-up work with them, including several ToTs in the Philippines, besides the aforementioned study. Finally, support is provided to the country focal points.

Training on Sphere conducted by CWS-P/A for the staff and implementing partners of World Vision International-Pakistan.

3. Capacity building on Q&A

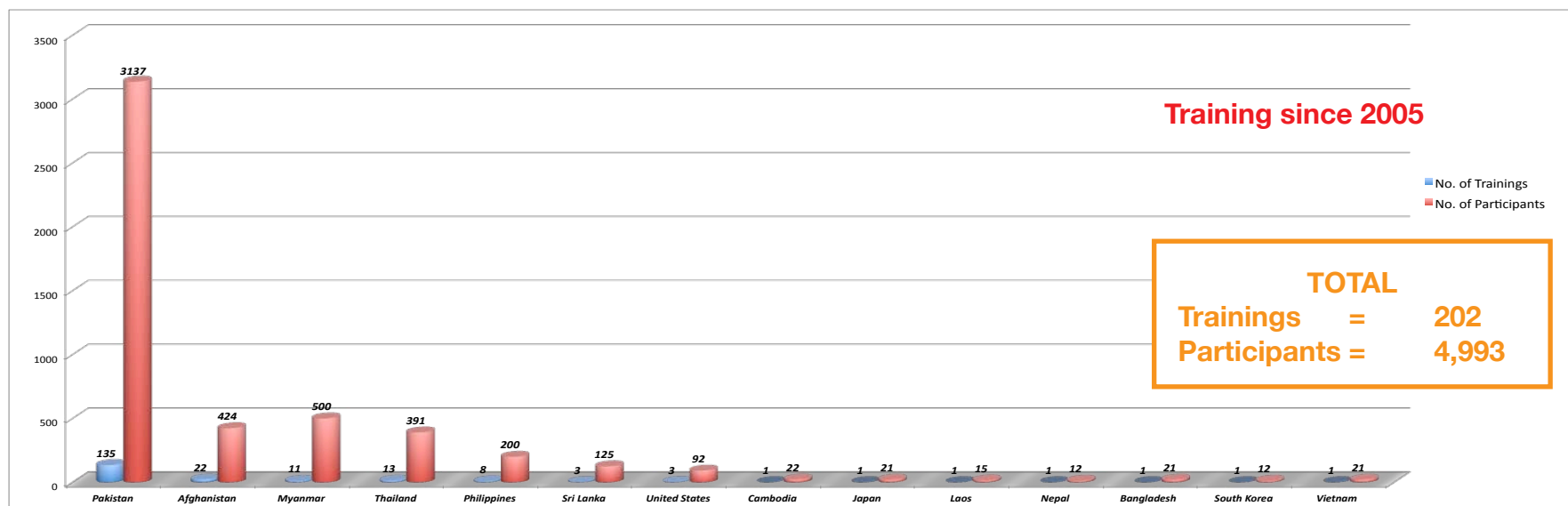*KEY WORDS: AWARENESS RAISING, TRAINING, TRAINING OF TRAINERS, FOLLOW UP, COACHING, LEARNING CYCLE*

> **Building capacity since 2005**
>
> 157 Q&A events have been organized, building the capacity of 3,137 humanitarian workers in Pakistan and Afghanistan;
> 45 other training event reached 1,856 individuals in the rest of the Asia-Pacific region.

Organization of Q&A Events: Awareness Raising and Training

The trainings are mostly tailor-made to enable meeting the needs of specific target audiences and, thus, moving away from conventional classroom trainings. For instance, CWS-P/A proposes short sessions for leadership audiences and more in-depth sessions for program staff.

In 2011, CWS-P/A organized and led awareness raising sessions on Sphere and trainings for 733 people (see Annex 1: Results charts, where information extracted from the Sphere annual report 2011 is made available).

Between 2005 and 2012, the "Strengthening Humanitarian Assistance" (SHA) unit from CWS-P/A organized 202 trainings on Q&A in 14 countries, therefore, training 4,993 persons. This figure is *per se* a demonstration of the unmatched commitment of CWS-P/A for Q&A.

Training since 2005

No. of Trainings
No. of Participants

TOTAL		
Trainings	**=**	**202**
Participants	**=**	**4,993**

Chart values: Pakistan 135 / 3137, Afghanistan 22 / 424, Myanmar 11 / 500, Thailand 13 / 391, Philippines 8 / 200, Sri Lanka 3 / 125, United States 3 / 92, Cambodia 1 / 22, Japan 1 / 21, Laos 1 / 15, Nepal 1 / 12, Bangladesh 1 / 21, South Korea 1 / 12, Vietnam 1 / 21

Training Materials

CWS-P/A provided the Sphere Project office in Geneva with suggestions to improve the Sphere training materials throughout the various revision processes as well as on a continuous basis.

Coaching/ Follow up

CWS-P/A provides technical advice following training through e-mails, telephone, or visits. The SHA unit charges a nominal fee to ensure its sustainability. CWS-P/A also set up an online training impact survey, where 100% of the respondents declared they were satisfied with the quality of the training and 77% stated they had applied the learning and concepts in their organizations for improving the quality.

Community coordination meeting (photo credit CWS-P/A)

4. Information, Communication and Coordination on Q&A

KEY WORDS: SHARING, WORKING TOGETHER, COMPETING, LEARNING

A Website

CWS-P/A's website is a key medium to communicate and disseminate information, updates, and monthly bulletins as well as specific monthly regional updates on Q&A.

Launch of the Q&A Initiatives Handbooks

As part of the global launch of the Sphere handbook 2011 edition, CWS-P/A organized a specific launch of the handbook in Islamabad and Kabul, demonstrating the commitment to promote and apply Q&A in Pakistan, and triggering impetus for greater demand for technical assistance from the SHA unit in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Support to the Development of Communication Materials and Messages with the Q&A Initiatives

In 2012, CWS-P/A hosted the Sphere Project team working on the design of a video showing the use of Sphere in context. CWS-P/A also contributed to the development process through sharing feedback and translation support and issued joint statements with the Sphere Project office.

Coordination

The key SHA staff and CWS-P/A managers are well-informed and sensitized about Q&A. When representing CWS-P/A at forums such as clusters' meetings and Pakistan Humanitarian Forum (PHF), they spread awareness on Q&A and share information about the services available through CWS-P/A.

5.   Advocacy to Promote and Implement Q&A

KEY WORDS: FOCAL POINT, REGIONAL PARTNER, AWARENESS RAISING, DISSEMINATION, PROMOTION

ALWG meeting at Care International Office in Pakistan

Advocacy through the Sphere Focal Point and through the Role of Sphere Regional Partner

Since 2005, CWS-P/A promotes the Sphere Project in Pakistan and has the role of Sphere focal point. CWS-P/A still takes its role as a Sphere country focal point and as regional partner very seriously. From a regional perspective, CWS-P/A organized a Sphere focal point forum in 2011 in Bangkok, to gather inputs on how CWS-P/A could add value to the agencies that are new to Sphere and to those which are already promoting Sphere.

Awareness-Raising

In 2011, CWS-P/A organized an awareness-raising session on the Sphere handbook during the conference "Responsibilities and Response: a discussion on policy and standards," which was held in Bangkok, and distributed the handbook to 50 persons.
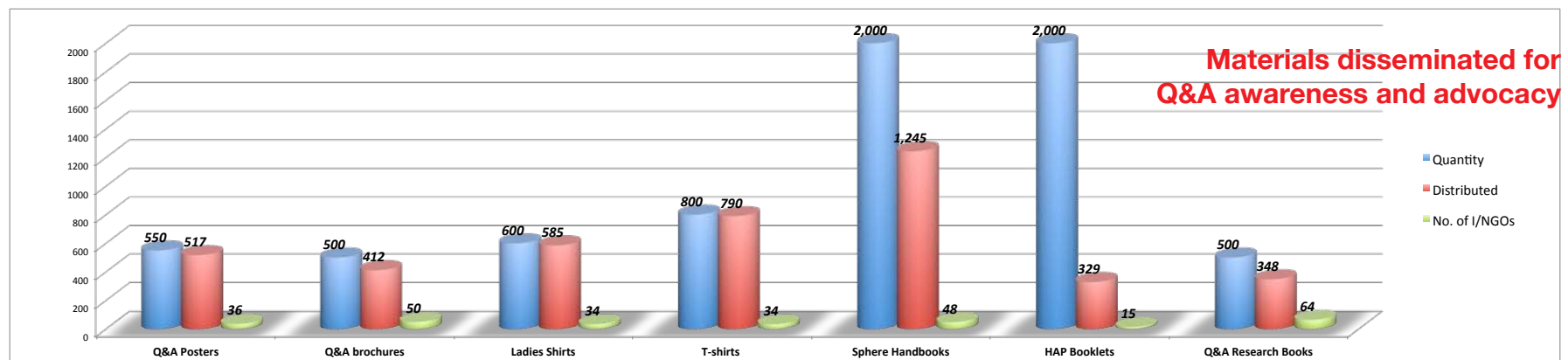
Promotion of the Q&A Agenda

In 2011, CWS-P/A launched publicly in Islamabad the findings of the research, *Observance of Q&A principles in humanitarian action in Pakistan*.

6.   Action – Learning for Q&A

KEY WORDS: PRODUCING CASE STUDIES, RESEARCHING, IDENTIFYING AND SHARING BEST PRACTICES, DRAWING LESSONS LEARNED, LEARNING CYCLE

Presentation of a Case Study at the World Conference on Humanitarian Studies (WCHS), Boston 2011

The case study reaffirms CWS-P/A's long-term commitment to Q&A (while the industry suffers from short-term emergency related commitment) and confirms CWS-P/A's leadership, demonstrated by the inclusion of Q&A as a strategic priority for the organization.

Materials disseminated for Q&A awareness and advocacy

Category	Quantity	Distributed	No. of I/NGOs
Q&A Posters	550	517	36
Q&A brochures	500	412	50
Ladies Shirts	600	585	34
T-shirts	800	790	34
Sphere Handbooks	2,000	1,245	48
HAP Booklets	2,000	329	15
Q&A Research Books	500	348	64

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1   Ten Thematic Areas

2   Achievements

3   Analysis

4   Recommendations

A   Annexes

Research on Observance of Q&A Principles in Humanitarian Action in Pakistan

Taking the floods 2011 as a case study, the research collected the views of 150 respondents from 51 organizations, including donors, implementing partners, and community members. The research final report was launched in Islamabad with 48 attendants from 29 organizations where the key findings of the research were shared. The launch was a platform to advocate for areas that need strengthening in terms of Q&A during humanitarian response in disaster. The research was also translated in Urdu, printed, and distributed.

Lessons Learned Exercise Post-Floods Emergency Response

In 2011, CWS-P/A organized a lessons learned exercise with 48 participants from 28 organizations. Several positive outputs came from the workshop such as the production of six best practices sheets addressing various themes linked with accountability, increased exchange and networking, and increased coordination of agencies through increased commitment to the ALWG at national or district level.

The six best practices sheets are available from: www.cwspa.org/resources/publications.

7.   Mainstreaming Q&A

KEY WORDS: SHA UNIT, POLICIES, PROGRAMMING, INSTITUTIONALISING, POLITICAL WILL, LEADERSHIP, COMMITMENT

Institutionalizing Q&A within CWS-P/A: a specific unit within CWS-P/A, "Strengthening Humanitarian Assistance" (SHA)

CWS-P/A has created a dedicated unit titled "Strengthening Humanitarian Accountability" (SHA), whose goal is to improve service delivery during emergencies. The unit carries out activities such as: training, coaching, field level advice, networking and awareness-raising. It works with a long-term development perspective to equip humanitarian relief and development practitioners with the knowledge, skills, and capacities required to meet specific standards. The SHA unit encompasses both internal and external mainstreaming of Q&A (to partners). The SHA team also attends key Q&A training to build its capacities, increase networking, and ensure the highest quality of the services it proposes.

Ensuring community participation at project designing.
Photo Credits: CWS-P/A

There is a supportive environment in CWS-P/A for Q&A. The SHA unit carries out staff capacity building to update the knowledge on Q&A. Quality assurance mechanisms are in place such as internal audits, ISO audits, SHA unit's monitoring visits, project reviews, and strengthened procurement processes.

Staff Commitment to Q&A

CWS-P/A worked to link staff responsibilities to make them accountable to organizational commitments. CWS-P/A has a 360°C performance management which includes a Q&A component as well as seeks feedback from partners.

Development of Concrete Tools for Internal use

To support the mainstreaming process CWS-P/A and the SHA unit developed forms, systems, formats, and tools that led to a shift of mindset and an improved acceptance of Q&A within the staff itself. The CWS-P/A internal complaints mechanism familiarizes the staff with a key Q&A tool, letting them experience what it means to have a voice.

i Introduction

1 Ten Thematic Areas

2 Achievements

3 Analysis

4 Recommendations

A Annexes

8. Compliance and Verification of the Use of Standards for Enhanced Q&A

KEY WORDS: AUDITS, EVALUATIONS, COMPLAINTS MECHANISMS, VERIFICATION, CERTIFICATION

Community awareness (photo credit CWS-P/A)

CWS-P/A Certification and Internal Verification Mechanism

CWS-P/A has an "Organizational Development" (OD) department in place, and through its three units, it oversees and implements the following activities and strategies for internal controls and accountability:

Under "Human Resource Development" (HRD), regular internal audits are conducted for all departments to ensure system compliance with the ISO -9001:2008 standards. Staff is prepared to meet the requirements for the annual external audit. In addition, HRD reviews and updates the CWS-P/A

operations manual in coordination with programs and support units, assisting them in developing new policies and procedures and in revision of the existing ones, in line with the growth and expansion of the organization.

Under the "Internal Controls and Accountability" (IC&A) mechanism, regular internal audits and reviews are conducted of projects in all CWS-P/A programs, mainly encompassing the operational, financial, programmatic, and accountability aspects. The internal compliance of HAP 2010 benchmarks is also included in the scope of the internal audit function. The IC&A also assists the Q&A activities related to overall internal mainstreaming of standards, complementing the work of SHA. Overall risk management strategies are also designed and implemented with help of this unit.

Sphere Compliance Exercise

In 2007, CWS-P/A hosted in Pakistan the review of a project's compliance based on Sphere by other agencies. The methodology had been used by Care to fix the gap between the theory on Sphere and its actual practical application. CWS-P/A implemented most of the recommendations from the exercise.

Information and Complaints Handling Centers

CWS-P/A introduced complaints handling mechanisms at district levels several times, the first time in the aftermath of the 2005 earthquake and the second time after the 2010 floods.

The Information and Complaints Handling Centers (ICHC) is one of the activities from the project "Strengthening Q&A of humanitarian action for flood affected communities" 2010-2012 funded by Christian Aid and Act for Peace. The Human Rights

Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) in collaboration with CWS-P/A set up four ICHCs from March 2011 to March 2012. They received over 18,000 complaints. The ICHCs were independent offices not directly involved with any relief activities; they received and logged complaints, passing them on to the relevant government authorities, UN, and NGOs.

9. A Global Blended Approach toward Q&A

KEY WORDS: JOINT STANDARDS, INTER-AGENCY WORK, REGIONAL APPROACH

CWS-P/A Role in the Region

CWS-P/A is a regional partner for Sphere and has a regional representation on the ACT Accountability Group, the HAP board, and JSI. The organization is contributing experiences from Asia as well as time and expertise.

A Joint Vision on Q&A

CWS-P/A has a practical vision of how the various Q&A initiatives are to be implemented jointly by field practitioners. Already in 2009, CWS-P/A not only continued the role as the Sphere focal point but also took over from a discontinued HAP office to promote the HAP benchmarks.

CWS-P/A started promoting Q&A together a few years ago before the JSI (Joint Standards Initiative) was even conceptualized. The first Q&A ToT focusing on both the Sphere Project and HAP was held in Japan in 2012.

Global training on Q&A, Bangkok, Thailand 2013, organised by CWS-P/A

CWS-P/A Support after the South Asia Earthquake in 2005

For the first time in response to an emergency, the Sphere board agreed to field a Sphere focal point for four weeks during the first three months of the response to the South Asia earthquake. Coordination with other Q&A and training projects such as HAP-I, INEE, and RedR-IHE happened in a smooth and innovative way through trainings, awareness sessions, and representation in coordination meetings.

Joint Standards in Local Language

CWS-P/A published a Q&A workbook presenting a joint standard approach in local languages for the field practitioners in order to build their understanding on the Sphere Project, HAP, People in Aid, and the Principles of Partnership translated into three languages. One hundred fifty workbooks were distributed to 50 organizations.

10.   Innovations to Promote and implement Q&A

KEY WORDS: REGIONAL APPROACH, LEADERSHIP, JOINT STANDARDS-TYPE APPROACH

Promoting Networks for Accountability

CWS-P/A launched the Accountability and Learning Working Group (ALWG) in 2010. The overall aim of the ALWG forum was to be a resource to strengthen Q&A during the flood response in 2010, with the promotion of information provision, participation, and setup of complaint mechanisms. Since then, CWS-P/A has provided continuous support especially in the format of capacity building to the ALWG and to the two sub-ALWG created at district levels in Swat and Sukkur.

CWS-P/A Support to the Thai Burma Consortium (TBC)

In 2011, CWS-P/A provided training to 84 staff from the Thai Burma Consortium which led to the development of action plans for areas requiring improvement.

Enhancing Quality & Accountability in Humanitariann Action and Non-Emergency
February 21 - 26, 2013, Bangkok

A Regional Global Training on Q&A in 2013 in Thailand

CWS-P/A hosted in February 2013 a global training on Q&A initiatives in Bangkok, Thailand. Twenty-eight participants from 19 organizations working in 10 countries joined the training. The main purpose of this training was to build the capacity of aid workers on the most widely used Q&A initiatives (about 20), approaches, and tools, focusing on joint standards.

A Training of Trainers (ToT) on Q&A in 2013 in Japan followed by a Refresher Course on Q&A for former ToT Trainees

This ToT covers JSI-HAP, Sphere, and People in Aid; the Sphere companions-LEGS, SEEP, INEE, Child Protection; and also the Good Enough Guide, ALNAP, the Code of Conduct, etc. The refresher course allows former ToT trainees to be updated on the new features and tools from these initiatives.

A Booklet for Field Practitioners: 'Q&A Tools for PCM'

CWS-P/A is launching the design of a booklet titled 'Q&A tools for PCM' in order to offer a roadmap all along the Project Cycle designed from the point of view of field project managers, highlighting which tools are available at each stage of the PC. The whole set is introduced with core/ common standards and cross-cutting issues applicable at all the PCM phases.

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ANALYSIS

A Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats (SWOT) analysis

A SWOT analysis of CWS-P/A's processes and services related to the Q&A agenda is available hereafter. It enables drawing the needs and, thus, some strategic recommendations to facilitate the mission of CWS-P/A in the future.

PROCESSES Initiated and Led by CWS-P/A to Forward the Q&A Agenda

INTERNAL	
Strengths	**Weaknesses**
• CWS-P/A demonstrates its commitment to internal accountability by keeping clear records on the users of its Q&A products, such as consolidated databases of persons trained by the organization. • CWS-P/A has mainstreamed Q&A through key core processes. Q&A is concretely integrated into all Disaster Management Program (DMP) documents or in project's specific checklists. • CWS-P/A is using key tools to ensure the best effect out of the services it delivers, such as trainee's action plans including personal commitment and planned actions to participate in advancing the Q&A agenda. • Significant investment is done by CWS-P/A to build capacity of Q&A teams through investing in providing expertise, time, and resources.	• It is a challenge to find people with Q&A expertise.

EXTERNAL	
Opportunities	**Challenges**
• CWS-P/A is recognized a spearheading for the Q&A agenda in Asia. • CWS-P/A is pushing for the development of complaint handling systems and played a central role in the Information and Complaints Handling Centers (ICHC) in Pakistan that collected over 18,000 complaints. Internally, SHA is coordinating mechanisms of complaints handling while leaving the duty to respond to the concerned project officer. • The SHA unit within CWS-P/A plays a leading role in pushing the Q&A agenda within national and local coordination platforms.	• The demand from partners for CWS-P/A services is increasing and outweighs the offer due to limited human resources, time, and money. • Changing the mindset takes time on prioritizing accountability. • Deteriorating security situations and hostile environment toward NGOs and for aid workers.

SERVICES Provided by CWS-P/A to Forward the Q&A Agenda

INTERNAL	
Strengths	**Weaknesses**
• The SHA unit within CWS-P/A is putting a real effort to design Q&A products and services that are contextualized and are often tailor-made both in terms of format and contents in order to meet the needs of the specific target audiences. • The SHA unit's strategy focuses on mainstreaming Q&A through voluntary approaches.	• The SHA unit offers a wide range of products and services but encounters difficulties in pinning down their concrete effects from the community perspective. While change is happening in terms of increased staff or organizational awareness, there is a need to document concrete changes further at organizational levels and above all communities' levels.

EXTERNAL	
Opportunities	**Challenges**
• The SHA unit offers a very wide range of products and services. It proves to be very flexible and has added services not originally planned, such as e-mails, phones calls, and visits for technical advice. The SHA unit is instrumental in the translation and diffusion of handbooks and other Q&A communication supports. • The SHA unit is active across a very wide geographical area and covers both internal needs and external requests from partners and other stakeholders. • CWS-P/A's sustained role as the Sphere focal point is exemplar and recognized internationally. • CWS-P/A has a lead on the Q&A agenda and developed a Q&A workbook well before the Q&A initiatives themselves had envisaged the possibility to collaborate together!	• CWS-P/A has commissioned or led several researches to understand the status and the effect of Q&A products and services. It appears complex to move away from assumptions and statements of change and to actually document concrete changes, despite the evident facts that concrete changes do occur. For example, organizations' self-evaluation on compliance to standards are often misleading and should be backed up by concrete examples from the communities they are working with, or from critical analysis of their organizational processes. • Proliferation of Q&A standards makes it difficult to contextualize the 'right ones for specific requirements and scope of work'. • Financial Resource allocations are often overlooked and considered least priority by the donors.

4

RECOMMENDATIONS TO MOVE FORWARD THE Q&A AGENDA

In a Nutshell…

CWS-P/A's organizational commitment to push Q&A both internally and externally is unprecedented. The senior management commitment to reach the stated goal is a key success factor. The innovative approach of the SHA unit to tackle needs both internally and externally has proven successful to face a growing demand for Q&A services.

The number and type of users for CWS-P/A Q&A approaches is increasing, and the range of CWS-P/A products and services offered is very large while at the same time flexible and tailored to best respond to users' needs. However, the complexity of the offer combined with the broad geographical scope put pressure on the limited resources of the SHA unit and CWS-P/A in terms of human resources, funds, and time.

Recommendations

The following sections highlight some strategic recommendations organized around:
- *Processes*
  drawn from the SWOT analysis
- *Services*
  drawn from the SWOT analysis
- *Thematic*
  compiled from the case studies

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Strategic Recommendations - PROCESSES Initiated and Led by CWS-P/A to Forward the Q&A Agenda

➔ CWS-P/A has used its comprehensive training database to carry out quantitative surveys on training impact. Qualitative interviews and focus groups would help complement this first analysis and understand concretely what changes the trainings attended have actually triggered beyond the appreciation of its quality. Questions should pinpoint concrete changes in learning and behavior of trainees.

➔ CWS-P/A should analyze how mainstreaming Q&A in the various processes and documents triggers concrete improvements in the quality of the response by field practitioners. CWS-P/A could also put this strategy in perspective with the training strategy and see how both approaches complement each other.

➔ CWS-P/A could even deepen the use of the action planning post training. Provided actions are not broad statements of intent but written in a SMART way, CWS-P/A could set up a system of post training systematic monitoring of change in participants learning, behavior, and results.

➔ CWS-P/A could capitalize on its reputation in the field of Q&A to pursue intense lobbying with donors to make technical and financial resources available for a global approach to Q&A. The fact that one of the 3 pillars of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) transformative agenda is accountability, the SHA unit could provide an additional opportunity to raise CWS-P/A profile.

➔ Pushing the Q&A agenda through national and local coordination platforms is a very strategic move. CWS-P/A should contribute to clarifying the activities of the Accountability and Learning Working Group (ALWG) and sub-ALWG to move away from the process and deepen into contents in order for the groups to reach the stated purpose.

Strategic Recommendations - SERVICES Provided by CWS-P/A to Forward the Q&A Agenda

➔ CWS-P/A moves from standardization to a tailor made offer of products and services is a key success factor depending on the quality of the needs assessment done with the different target audiences. Systematic tracking and learning from the effects produced by specific products and services with various audiences would enable to best tailor the offers to the set goals.

➔ CWS-P/A could lead a brainstorming with the wider humanitarian community and internally on a key set of SMART indicators that would help to measure the contribution of its products and services toward concrete change in Q&A from a community point of view. CWS-P/A should commission an expert to support the SHA unit in designing SMART indicators for measuring how far activities are contributing to realizing the goal of its strategic plan and to design the process by which the monitoring of the indicators will determine the areas of focus of the SHA unit.

➔ CWS-P/A could streamline its catalog of services and products by emphasizing the current cost-benefit analysis on all activities and ranking their contribution to the main goal. Focusing on the most effective activities would enable the SHA unit to also improve their outcome (if training is considered one of the champion activities, adding for instance coaching to post-training action planning would improve training effect).

➔ The ineluctable limited resources of CWS-P/A and the SHA unit should lead to a strategic focus of SHA on champions that are actually inducing positive change. Champions can be specific partners, specific geographical areas, or specific departments within CWS-P/A and stakeholders. CWS-P/A should measure systematically change according to an agreed baseline.

➔ CWS-P/A could request an analysis of its performance as a Sphere focal point compared to other Sphere focal points in other geographical areas, such as the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) in Myanmar. The analysis should focus on the "customer" feedback on services and products delivered as well as feedback from communities that have benefited from the changes triggered by the services.

➔ CWS-P/A has a bold role to play on the international scene, by speaking out the voice of field practitioners demanding streamlining and down to earth approaches to joint standards. CWS-P/A in its role of successful service provider of products and services to push the Q&A agenda should share the learning of years of experience with the Joint Standards Initiative (JSI) and others, to ensure that products are designed to fulfill the needs of field practitioners.

Strategic Recommendations- THEMATIC AREAS - CWS-P/A Promotion and Implementation of Q&A

The following **general recommendations to all stakeholders** have been extracted from the 10 case studies sharing experiences from the promotion and the implementation of Q&A in Asia-Pacific.

1. Tools for Q&A
- Continue developing, producing, and translating in local languages.
- Introduce locally contextualized Q&A tools and strategies based on technical sectors, programming phases.
- Identify local expert translators to facilitate the translation processes and ensure their availability.

2. Technical support to enhance Q&A
- Lobby with organizations for a strategically planned follow-up mechanism for measuring the effectiveness of the technical support they receive, which they will self-implement.
- In large organizations, introduce the capacity building programs through trainings and provision of literature specifically highlighting the Q&A standards for their staff.
- Identify more precisely the current needs of the humanitarian sector at organizational levels through training needs assessment in the form of questionnaires, face to face meetings, group discussions, etc.

3. Capacity building on Q&A
- Sensitize donors on the needs for more capacity building on Q&A.
  - Private sector organizations spend a lot on staff capacity building; therefore, donors should also give more importance to this aspect in the humanitarian/ development sector.
- Institutionalize the capacity building program on Q&A within the organizational mandate and provide specific opportunities to the staff involved in emergency response within government agencies, I/NGOs, and UN agencies.

4. Information, communication, and coordination on Q&A
- Collaborate and partner with key stakeholders to lobby messages further to the right stakeholders and authorities, including government agencies.
- Ensure visibility to bridge the gap between the humanitarian principles and the practice.

5. Advocacy to promote and implement Q&A
- Integrate Q&A in the clusters' mandate and make it a specific point in the agenda of each meeting; in Pakistan, most of the coordination and advocacy is done through the clusters.
- Run more awareness programs to develop and increase understanding on the importance of Q&A and ensure commitments at all levels.

6. Action - Learning for Q&A
- Promote an organization wide learning culture.
  - Lessons learned events shall be planned and conducted at the end of every project and periodically for regular programs.
  - Capture and document practices throughout general meetings as well as specific mechanisms set for this purpose.
- Share widely the outputs and outcomes of action-research-learning exercises with all stakeholders.

7. Mainstreaming Q&A
- Institutionalize the capacity building program on Q&A for staff involved in emergency response within government agencies, NGOs, and UN agencies.
- Identify further funding opportunities and support to mainstream Q&A in respective projects and programs.

8. Compliance to and verification of the use of standards for enhanced Q&A
- Establish a regional HAP certification body which would help minimize the cost of the certification.
- Have joint standards and processes in place and one initiative only for compliance and certification.

9. A global blended approach towards Q&A
- Promote a set of activities instead of focusing on trainings in order to ensure implementation of blended approaches at programming and strategic levels.
- Encourage partners to coordinate and utilize one integrated approach for Q&A.

10. Innovations to promote and implement Q&A
- Provide tools and guides in line with a joint approach and advocate for it.
- Make a Q&A toolkit based on a joint-type approach publicly available for other organizations to assist in using the tools in their context to ensure better quality and accountability.
- Lobby with donors on innovative approaches, their effects, and results and seek their support at initial levels.

ANNEXES

Annex 1:   Detailed achievements and analysis
You can access those working documents on the CWS-P/A website:
http://www.cwspa.org/resources/publications

Annex 2:   An annotated bibliography
You can access this annotated bibliography containing 57 documents with summaries on the CWS-P/A website:
http://www.cwspa.org/resources/publications

Annex 3:   Ten case studies: 'Testimonies from Q&A implementation'
Each case study illustrates good and poor programming and policies.

Few examples are drawn for each case study, based on CWS-P/A experiences and its work with partners.

There is one case study per thematic area, i.e. ten case studies in total:
1. Tools for Q&A
2. Technical support to enhance Q&A
3. Capacity building on Q&A
4. Information, communication, and coordination on Q&A
5. Advocacy to promote and implement Q&A
6. Action- Learning for Q&A
7. Mainstreaming Q&A
8. Compliance to and verification of the use of standards for enhanced Q&A
9. A global blended approach toward Q&A
10. Innovations to promote and implement Q&A

You can access the electronic version of those case studies on the CWS-P/A website: http://www.cwspa.org/resources/publications