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RAPID Operational Guidelines- Capacity Building Component for NGOs and DMAs

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This document briefly explains the RAPID capacity enhancement component including the strategy, key objectives, and potential capacity building activities, process for selection and engagement with local NGOs and selected Disaster Management Authorities (DMAs).



Local NGOs from Baluchistan province attend Program Effective Humanitarian Training, organized by Concern RAPID through USAID-BHA funding.

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1. RAPID FUND- An Overview

Concern Worldwide is a non-governmental, international, humanitarian organization dedicated to the reduction of suffering and working towards the ultimate elimination of extreme poverty in the world's poorest countries. Concern is implementing the RAPID program in Pakistan with the support of the United States Agency for International Development's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID-BHA). Established under a cooperative agreement between Concern Worldwide and USAID-BHA, RAPID is a mechanism that seeks to address the urgent relief and early recovery needs of natural and human-induced disaster-affected populations in Pakistan by sub-grants to international and local non-governmental organizations (I/NGOs) operational in the affected area in collaboration with relevant disaster management authorities (DMAs), UN-cluster system target communities. RAPID aims to complement the efforts of the Government of Pakistan towards relief and recovery assistance to disaster-affected populations. In addition to sub-grants for disaster response, RAPID also includes targeted capacity building support activities for both national NGOs and DMAs to contribute in their disaster management capabilities.

RAPID III will benefit estimated 8 million disaster-affected people, support the capacity building of 105 local NGOs and select DMAs (Provincial and District level) in disaster prone districts across the country. The total estimated budget of RAPID III is \$ 7.5 million for five years (October 1, 2018, to September 30, 2023).

2. Strategy for Capacity Building of Local NGOs and DMAs

Local NGOs and the Disaster Management Authorities (DMAs) are most often the first responders to a disaster. However, they struggle to cope with the regular, multiple disasters due to both institutional as well as staff capacity constraints. Therefore, in addition to relief and recovery response through sub-grants, the second component of the RAPID provide capacity building support to local/national NGOs and Disaster Management Authorities. The basic objective is to invest on the local capacity as the country has a considerable national NGO base with strong potential to contribute toward timely and effective humanitarian preparedness and response. Similarly, with the established of National and Provincial Disaster Management Authorities (DMAs) the country now has an institutional structure to prepare for and respond to natural disasters.

The capacity building strategy has been developed focusing on the second objective of RAPID III i.e. Humanitarian Capacity Building (CB) given the prevailing humanitarian situation in the country. The overall objective of the capacity building component will remain the same; however, Concern propose changes in the implementation strategy and approaches to implementing the CB activities due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the experience of performing CB activities. The RAPID team in consultation with USAID/BHA field representative has developed two prong strategy for its capacity building component.

- ❖ **Staff Capacity Strengthening:** Capacity building trainings will be focused on individuals and teams of both NGOs and DMAs, enhancing or developing new knowledge, skills and attitudes so people or teams function more effectively to respond to disasters
- ❖ **Institutional Capacity Strengthening:** Institutional strengthening support activities will be focused on NGOs and DMAs. These will enhance or develop the specific guidelines, tools, procedures or manuals needed to function effectively and achieve goals for disaster responses.



To implement the above strategy, RAPID will select around 50 local/national NGOs from KP (including newly merged tribal districts) and Gilgit-Baltistan. The selected NGOs will be divided into Batches/Groups and each Batch/group will consist of around eight to nine NGOs. In this strategy, RAPID has also envisaged the risk of COVID-19 infection that may affect the smooth implementation of capacity enhancement activities.

Concern RAPID will conduct online/virtual trainings on Program (proposal development, M&E and MIRA) and Systems (Finance, Logistics, HR and security) for 50 selected NGOs from KP and Gilgit-Baltistan.

Concern's RAPID also signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Community World Services-Asia (CWS-A), who have expertise and lead in Pakistan on humanitarian standards, to conduct online/virtual trainings for selected NGOs on core humanitarian standards, sphere, code of conduct, complaint response mechanism, and also provide guidelines for institutional strengthening support to selected NGOs and provide coaching and mentoring support in developing the Quality and Accountability related guidelines/manuals /SOPs for their respective organizations. In addition, CWS-A will also imparting this training for PDMA KP and GBDMA to enhance their understanding on Quality and Accountability

RAPID will also provide institutional strengthening support (via online mode with necessary physical visits) to selected NGOs through coaching and mentoring support in developing or updating their Program, System and Quality and Accountability related guidelines/tools/manuals /SOPs for their respective organizations. These will help NGOs in the effective humanitarian response planning and implementation, ensuring quality work and accountability to peoples in need.

In addition, Concern RAPID signed MoU with National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) to impart trainings for District Disaster Management Authorities (DDMAs) through its training wing [National Institute of Disaster management (NIDM)] in selected disaster prone districts of KP and GB identified by NDMA. NIDM is a lead government capacity building and training institute which offer variety of training courses to government officials, humanitarian workers and other stakeholders across the country.

RAPID will apply thoughtfully and consistent *coaching and mentoring* after specific trainings to help NGO staff to develop or refine their program and systems related guidelines, tools, procedures and manuals. It will further successful when it will include other methods of continuous learning such as sharing of external on-line trainings courses, learning materials project and management quality assurance.

3. Capacity Building Operational/Implementation Plan

Keeping in view the unpredictable COVID-19 situation and encouraging feedback from the participants about the virtual trainings, the implementation strategy for conducting the trainings and institutional strengthening activities for the selected NGOs of KP and GB will be done through the remote/virtual mode. RAPID will continue to monitor the COVID-19 situation, Government advisory and COVID-19 vaccination status and in case the overall situation improves, then RAPID may plan face to face trainings and other activities with the remaining NGOs otherwise the virtual training and institutional strengthening support modality will continue.

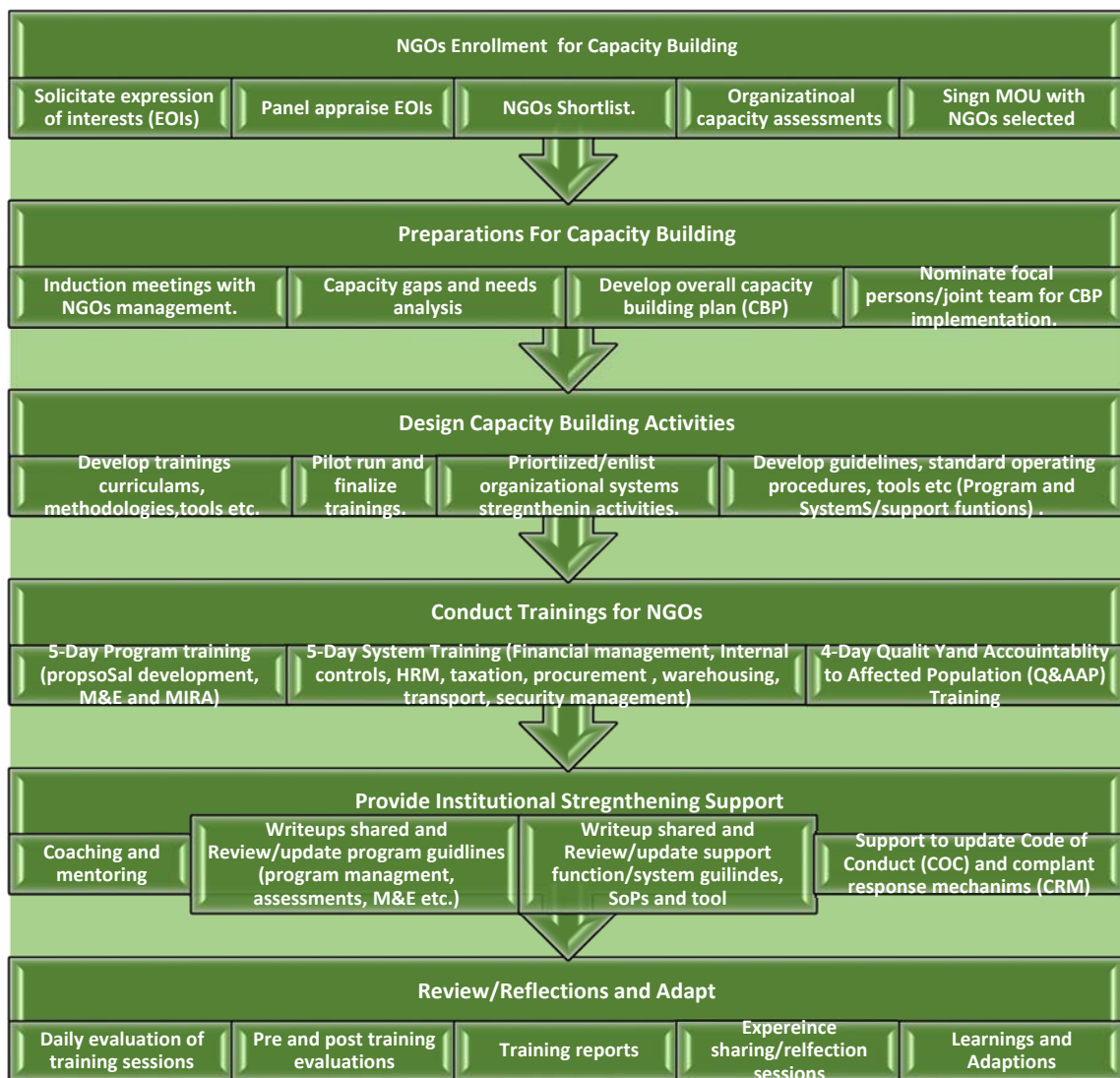
3.1 Capacity Strengthening of NGOs

The Capacity strengthening framework includes an integrated and reinforcing set of capacity building activities that address both individual/workforce and organizational/institutional levels of capacity to enhance national emergency response capacities of local NGOs. Based on assessed needs and agreed broader action plan, the RAPID's team/project board will convene meetings with selected NGOs management staff in different Batches/Groups to further clarify and design a capacity building strategy adapting adult learning approaches. The meeting minutes will be

prepared and shared with respective NGOs management for record. Activities will be tailored to each organization, but meant to support two key areas of capacity: (1) institutional systems, tools, and processes; and (2) human resources, especially staff knowledge, skills, and abilities.

The capacity strengthening activities aim to strengthen local NGOs capacity to conduct needs assessments, M&E procedures/tools, develop proposals to secure funding from RAPID and other donors, and also to put in place adequate quality management procedures/systems to ensure the partner NGOs not only secure humanitarian funds from international donors, but also manage the funds/projects effectively, ensure compliance with the humanitarian standards and donors' compliances.

Concern/RAPID has developed detailed process oriented approach for NGOs selection, developing their capacity building plans and then accordingly imparting the trainings and institutional strengthening support. The approach is presented here in the diagram, while further details are narrated below:



i. Identification/Selection of NGOs

The process for identification and selection of the local and national NGOs begin with a call for proposals or expressions of interest (EOIs) posted on the webpage and circulated through Pakistan Humanitarian Form (PHF), National Humanitarian Forum (NHN) and coordinated with UNOCHA and PDMA, and select local NGOs (identified from our database of 1,000+ local NGOs fulling eligibility criteria mentioned below). The interested/committed NGOs

submit their interest on standard RAPID Expression of Interest Template. RAPID conduct a review of applications/expression of interest and the key eligibility criterion/ consideration for selection of NGO to receive capacity-building support include:

- Organization must be registered as a legal entity with proof of registration in Pakistan only and having local presence in KP or GB, The registration certificate must be valid for at least 6 months from the date of the application submission
- Organizations must have been operational for a minimum of three years with available human resource, functional governance body (BoGs) and program management structure, and established office in disaster prone districts in KP or GB.
- Demonstrated previous experience in implementing projects in any area like humanitarian response, disaster risk reduction, community resilience building, community based rural development, capacity building in last 3-5 years' projects and have working experience with INGOs, UN or any other institutional donor in disaster/conflict prone districts.
- Organizations must demonstrate that they have dedicated staff (part-time or full-time) covering the core organizational areas (HR, Finance, Procurement, Administration, Program and M&E)
- Organization demonstrates sufficient justifications (in Expression of Interest -EOI/Proposal) that RAPID capacity building will support in organizational goals and improved humanitarian response.
- Organizations are able to commit human resources time for participation in trainings and mentorship program for institutional strengthening. Organizations must assign a senior-level staff member as focal point of contact and must be available to actively participate in meetings, mentorship process for institutional strengthening and training activities.
- Applicant organizations will be encouraged to nominate at least two female staff members to participate in the training activities and mentorship/institutional strengthening program.
- Newly registered or non-functional NGOs may not be considered however the newly registered, non-functional/ NGOs with limited humanitarian response capacity may be considered, if there are limited experienced local NGOs in target area, while the area is vulnerable and susceptible to disasters.
- Organizations with development experience and looking to strengthen their capacity to work in emergencies may be considered however the organizations with prior experience in emergency response will be prioritized.
- The commitment to performance improvement is a key consideration while selecting NGOs for capacity building support. This can be assessed by analyzing how well the organization has identified its own challenges, weaknesses, strengths in humanitarian response and demonstrated a commitment for working on its areas of improvement, its own performance challenges and commitment to provide any resources or support such as staff time, office space and senior management time.

ii. Conduct NGOs Capacity strengthening Need Assessment

RAPID will form a project board including representation from potential/selected NGOs. The project board will constitute an assessment team including program and system staff from RAPID and selected NGO. Using our tested CILPAT¹ capacity assessment tools (applied to hundreds of NGOs worldwide) tailored to RAPID capacity building objectives, the assessment team will conduct capacity and training needs assessment, to identify the gaps and areas for potential performance improvement in close collaboration with the local NGO. During assessment, the assessment panel will evaluate existing institutional and individual capacity; identify the gaps, barriers and prospects for improvements and opportunities to unleash.

¹ Concern Integrated Local Partner Assessment Tool

The assessment process will focus on both institutional and staff capacity building gaps and needs. The assessment team will use wide array of information gathering activities to identify the capacity enhancement needs including self-assessment tool and one-on-one interviews with the key personnel in target NGOs. In addition to assessment of capacity gaps and needs, the assessment exercise also include determination on possible solutions for performance improvement and the required actions to address gaps and meet capacity development needs.

iii. Develop Capacity Plans/Solutions/Activities

Concern will sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the selected NGOs to get their commitment on capacity enhancement deliverables. The RAPID team or project board including team member from NGOs conduct an analyses of the self-assessment submitted by applicant NGOs, identify key performance/capacity gaps in line with RAPID capacity building objectives. Once the capacity enhancement gaps, needs and commitments identified and agreed upon, the RAPID Team or project board define capacity buildings activities, develop broader action plans with the timeline and appropriate measures for completing and monitoring of agreed action plans.

iv. Trainings Implementation for NGOs staff

The trainings for NGOs mainly focus on various essential themes i.e. humanitarian rapid needs assessment, funding proposal development, program implementation methodologies, monitoring and evaluation, procurement, financial and human resource management, warehousing, transportation management, security management etc. and Quality and Accountability to Affected Population. After necessary trainings, practical exercises, simulation (if possible), the Rapid team/ project board will engage the trained staff of NGOs to develop/refine their program, financial, HR, M&E, security , transport and procurement manuals/SoPs/guidelines/tools. The relevant team members in RAPID will provide mentoring support in design and review of the organization procedures/tools/guidelines, manuals.

The core staff of selected NGOs will also be encouraged to complete the already available online courses on developed web portals such as Kaya, DisasterReady and Harvard University that includes courses related to humanitarian architecture such as sphere, CHS, Code of conduct, humanitarian aid governance etc. The NGOs staff will also be guided to access the free online courses offered by UN and INGOs like the BHA-supported Building a Better Response and National NGO Program for Humanitarian Leadership.

In order to get the desired objectives, Concern will use systematic way to implement Trainings. Below are the details of major process and activities which will be followed:

1. Finalize nominations/registration of relevant staff of NGOs for capacity strengthening trainings and an average number of training participants will be 24-30 per event.
2. 4-5 days Program, Systems and Q&AAP trainings will be conducted with a gap of two weeks as NGOs cannot spare staff without gap due to their other work commitments
3. All training material including presentation, Group work, relevant templates and reference material will be shared with training participants prior to the training event.
4. Preparation of each of trainings reports and submitting to BHA, Islamabad.
5. Link the trained NGOs staff to USAID Alumni forum.
6. Based on the feedbacks/learnings from previous delivered training, training modules/materials will be refined for next round of training.
7. Rapid will sharing free online relevant trainings details with trained staff to motivate them to attend the relevant trainings courses voluntarily.

8. RAPID will ensure registration of capacity building NGOs and their trained staff as volunteers with relevant PDMA's to support the government disaster response in their respective localities in case of any ensuing humanitarian emergencies.
9. RAPID will encourage participation of women staff in the training events.
10. RAPID will conduct pre and post knowledge and skills assessments of the trained staff in order to determine the learning outcomes of trainings imparted.
11. RAPID will also conduct training knowledge retention and utilization survey with trained participant on regular basis.

More details about trainings implementation will be shared later.

V. Institutional Strengthening Support to selected NGOs

As we know a one-time trainings are rarely enough for capacity strengthening efforts to be sustainable. Institution strengthening and coaching & mentoring is also necessary for sustainable effective capacity strengthening. RAPID follows these approaches and key steps/processes for NGOs system strengthening are illustrated as below:

1. RAPID develops/refines CB broader schedule/Action plan for Institutional Strengthening support in consultation with NGO senior management and conduct meetings to reassure their senior management buy in and ownership of the CB process.
2. RAPID appointed focal person (subject Specialist) conduct meetings with appointed focal person of each NGO for preparation of specific action plans for each NGO related to Program, Systems and CoC/CRM to clarify the specific areas of improvement related to broader areas agreed with their senior management (e.g. refinement of Needs assessment agreed with NGO management earlier and in this stage specific areas like TORs, Data collection tools, etc. agreed and if required specific sessions agreed to be conducted). The specific action plans are prepared and focal persons meeting minutes are documented and shared.
3. In addition, RAPID provides guidelines for institutional strengthening support to selected NGOs and provide coaching and mentoring support in developing the Program, System and Quality and Accountability related guidelines/manuals /SOPs for their respective organizations. These will help NGOs in the effective humanitarian response planning and implementation, ensuring quality and accountability
4. Rapid prepare refine Program and Systems related guidelines/standard operation procedures and share with selected NGOs appointed focal person to either adapt or incorporate in their organizational respective guidelines/SoPs or manuals i.e. rapid needs assessment, program planning and implementation guidelines, M&E, Finance, HR, security, Procurement, transport and HR policies and guidelines
5. Coaching and Mentoring session and their frequency agreed to support respective focal staff from relevant NGOs to develop or incorporate relevant write-ups provided by Concern RAPID team members in the respective NGOs guidelines/SoPs/manuals.
6. CWSA facilitate NGOs to develop or refine their respective Code of Conduct (CoC) and Complaint Response Mechanism (CRM) using CHS CoC tool kit for NGOs.
7. Concern RAPID appointed team members (Relevant Specialist and senior management) review the Program, M&E, Finance, Procurement and security related guidelines/SoPs/manual and provide feedback for refinement.
8. Concern RAPID appointed focal person will follow up with NGOs focal person for respective area of work (program, M&E, Finance, Logistics, Q&AAP etc) at agreed deadlines and in case of delay again sender reminder or extend deadline.

9. In case there is no response from respective NGO/s after above mention follow ups, Deputy Director (RAPID Fund) in case of Programs/CoC/CRM and Finance Manager (FM) in case of Systems will follow up with their senior management through email and phone call. In case of no response, the emails will be shared with Grants Coordinator for record and close of the process. Concern/RAPID can make all the possible efforts but in case, NGOs are not interested due to any reason or are not responsive, Concern/RAPID cannot impose or force the NGOs.
10. In case, there is no response to the first feedback on updated manual/SoPs mentioned in point no. 6, 7 and reminders explained in point 9 mentioned above, the institutional strengthening support will be considered to be closed.
11. In case, any NGOs explicitly share that they are not interested in certain area of work or the overall institutional support, their decision will be respected since CB is a two way process and cannot be enforced by one party.
12. Respective NGOs will be responsible to get the new/refine document (Guideline, Manuals/SoPs) approved by the respective management and/or Board of Directors.

3.2 Capacity Strengthening of Disaster Management Authorities (DMAs)/Public Departments

During implementation of RAPID II's Humanitarian Coordination and Information management (HCIM) sector projects, RAPID has supported DMAs at provincial and district levels to strengthen their humanitarian coordination, information management, and response monitoring systems. Through this collaboration, Concern has developed an in-depth understanding of local disaster management structure, their strengths, constraints, and areas for improvement. Concern will use a two-pronged strategy with a *primary* focus on (1) institutional capacity; and a *secondary* focus on (2) the skills development of DMA staff. Concern will mainly work with Provincial DMAs,² and GDMA³ and, in consultation with relevant P/G/DMA, will select district level DMAs in disaster/conflict prone districts identified by NDMA. Concern has completed work with PDMA, Baluchistan and Sindh and now intends to move to KP and GB.

Concern will conduct participatory assessments of institutional strengthening needs of the target disaster management authorities (DAMs) and will develop mutually agreed capacity enhancement plans. Where possible MoUs will be signed otherwise activities will be agreed through formal letter correspondence to confirm and secure PDMA or GBDMA commitment on the action plans.

As per MOU signed National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), its training wing National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM) will conduct trainings (e.g. MIRA, SIMEX, and camp Management) for District Disaster Management authorities (DDMAs) in disaster prone districts in KP and GB. RAPID will also implemented targeted institutional strengthening activities for the DMAs.

i. Trainings Implementation for DMAs/Public Departments Staff

As far as trainings for DDMA staff are concerned, these will be conducted onsite (face-to-face) by NIDM in respective district headquarters using the office space of respective Deputy Commissioners (DCs) because most of the staff of DDMA and district level line departments don't have access to computers and internet. National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)/NIDM will coordinate with DCs of the respective districts who is also the head of DDMA, for the nomination of the training participant. A consolidated training reports for all trainings will be submitted by NDMA/NIDM.

² Baluchistan, Punjab, Sindh and KP –district level DMAs administered by PDMA.

³ Gilgit Baltistan DMA-Self-governing-administered by Pakistan.

Finally, there are trainings planned for the PDMA, KP and GBDMA i.e. Q&AAP and second training Multi-sectoral Initial Rapid Assessment (MIRA).

ii. Institutional Strengthening of Provincial and District Disaster Management Authorities

As part of institutional system strengthening, Concern will provide tangible resources supporting the development of inventory/Management Information System (MIS), and necessary communication tools to coordinate and monitor disaster response. Based on respective PDMA needs or advice there will be flexibility to change the above mentioned activities. The staff skill development module will include formal training on CHS, Sphere standards, humanitarian architecture, needs assessment, coordination, quality & accountability and monitoring of the disaster response.

3.3 Follow-ups/Monitor the Actions/Plans and Develop Linkages

Concern will continue to monitor the change in performance and capacity of NGOs and DMAs against the agreed capacity enhancement action plans and targets. NGOs will be linked with DMAs to assist them to conduct needs assessment in the immediate aftermath of any disaster and also support immediate rescue and relief efforts, the relevant team in project board (RAPID staff) will conduct monitoring and support visit on regular intervals to track progress on agreed action plans and recommend solutions for further improvements. The project board will conduct regular performance review meetings to evaluate progress on agreed plan, additional support required and progress toward desired results.

4. Assessing Performance Improvements

After completion of capacity building activities, both DMAs and NGOs will continue to implement the learnings and adopt the improved system developed. RAPID project board including team member from NGOs and DMAs, will conduct a post capacity assessments to analyze the improvements made during the course of capacity building initiatives. The assessment team will compare the result of post assessment with the pre-assessment findings to determine the success and recommend any improvement or further support if required. The outcomes of the capacity building initiatives will take time to yield, however the success can be assessed to review the improvement in internal system, implementation of learnings across the organization (such as NGOs started using improved procurement manual or the DMAs has developed emergency response SoPs).