

# PAKISTAN FLOODS 2010

## **Evaluation of Concern Pakistan's Emergency Response to 2010 Floods**

Final Report

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## Executive Summary

**Targeting:** Thirteen of the 15 districts Concern is working in are on NDMA's severely affected districts list. The villages visited by the evaluation team are comparable with the most vulnerable seen by them. However, the criteria for selecting vulnerable families are culturally inappropriate in some villages as they focus on individual family vulnerability alone and ignore extended family vulnerability.

**Timeliness:** Overall, Concern had made grants of around Euro 1.6 million targeting around 200,000 people (20% of people ultimately served) by August 19, 2010 or within the first three weeks of the floods which are generally the most crucial with respect to mortality and morbidity. The first major grant occurred on Aug 19 for Euro 5 million targeting 0.5 million people. It is not clear from the data available how much longer it took to reach communities.

**Participation of communities:** People are involved in the implementation of projects through village committees, frequent meetings and cash for work modalities for construction work. However, a genuinely participatory process which places people's perceptions over those of cluster recommendations is advisable

**Relevance of sectors:** High degree of satisfaction with shelter, water and livelihoods interventions among communities. However, fewer latrines would have been built if people had genuine participation in sectoral identification.

**Collaboration with local partners:** Concern feels that partners have strong local knowledge, but that some partners did not have emergency background and capacity. Concern is found by partners to be respectful, collaborative and flexible and allows a true partnership. However, new Concern staff must be inducted better and Concern's centralized purchasing has both positives and negatives.

**Pre-flood knowledge and capacity:** Concern was already present in 3 provinces and had local knowledge. The selection of partners and suppliers and other emergency preparedness measures in 2008 were excellent moves. Concern also has a very strong, skilled, low turn-over and highly motivated team which mainly consists of national staff. However, emergency preparedness does not extend to all program and program support functions currently.

**International standards:** Sphere standards on per capita provision of water, latrine etc were not met by any agency, including Concern, due to large number of affected people. However, Concern has met some of the other standards, e.g., those related to distance between latrines and water points and shelter sizes. Red Cross codes have

largely been met. However, the focus on “humanitarian imperative comes first” code may have been reduced in a few cases by centralized pre-stocking and purchasing, which in turn were based on security, financial and logistical imperatives.

**Accountability:** Transparency and complaint mechanisms present but vary significantly. More consistency of approach would be helpful.

**Cost: effectiveness:** Concern’s administrative expenses ratio is among the lowest seen in this emergency and the best value for money among all those INGOs.

**Mainstreaming:** DRR was mainstreamed through stronger, elevated construction work which can withstand at least medium floods and through hygiene promotion. Environment was mainstreamed through vector control and hygiene promotion and by avoiding pesticides. HIV/AIDs given less attention perhaps due to low prevalence rates.

**M&E systems:** Very thorough evaluation system being developed consisting of baselines and impact surveys. However, it seems a bit overambitious for emergencies.

**Connectedness/long-term issues:** Sturdy construction, village committees, livelihoods work and hygiene promotion will benefit people in the long-run. More DRR, advocacy, long-term development and village-level capacity-building will be helpful

**Program support functions:** Generally worked well. However, some quality of supplies issues persisted and centralization of pre-stocks and purchasing caused some delays. HR expansion should have occurred earlier.

**Lessons/Recommendations for future:** Expand emergency preparedness to all program and program support functions; Set up more effective participation and complaint-handling mechanisms; Pay more attention to cultural aspects in selecting families; Set up an MIS system, starting with an evaluation TOR developed before emergency; Invest more on local capacity-building of committees; Revisit current prestocking and purchasing systems, starting with pilots of more decentralized systems; Set up some DRR system for coming flood season, especially community-level communication tree, and continue to expand for future with community-level EP; Aim to develop long-term development programs in these areas as they are also very poor; Aim for a more manageable evaluation system

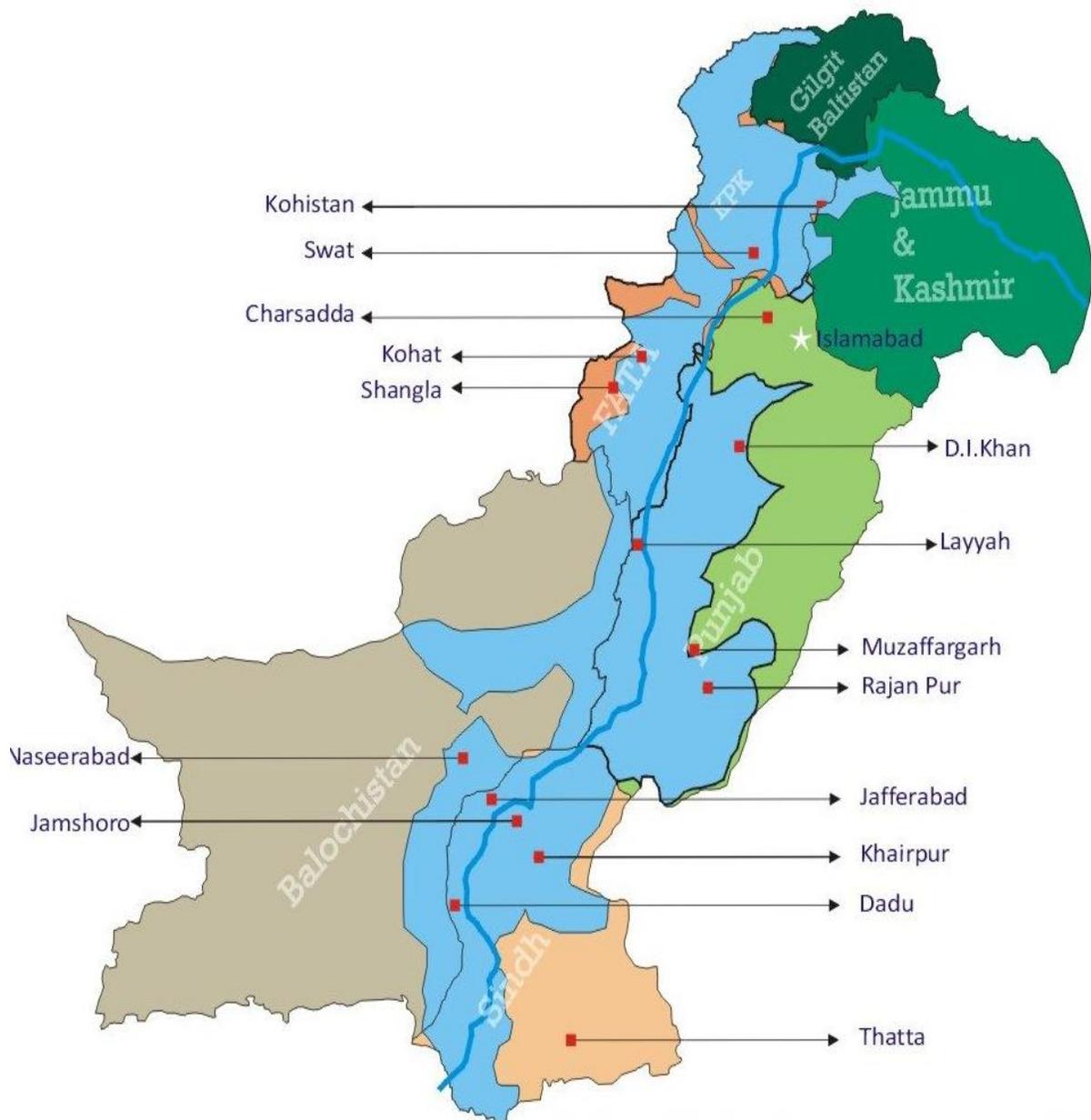
# INTRODUCTION

## OVERVIEW OF THE FLOOD

The Pakistan floods crisis 2010 began in July 2010 following heavy monsoon rains in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sindh, Punjab and Balochistan provinces. UNOCHA estimates indicate that almost 2000 people were killed, over 1.7 million homes were destroyed and almost 18 million people were seriously affected, exceeding the combined total of individuals affected by the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, the 2005 Kashmir earthquake and the 2010 Haiti earthquake. At the worst point, approximately 20% of Pakistan's total area was underwater, an area bigger than England.

The country suffered extensive damage to health, educational, transportation and communication infrastructure and crops. The total economic impact is estimated to be as much as 10 billion USD. Floods submerged 17 million acres (69,000 km<sup>2</sup>) of Pakistan's most fertile crop land, killed 200,000 heads of livestock and washed away massive amounts of grain. Flood waters soon receded from the north enabling livelihoods & reconstruction etc to take place, whereas large areas in Sindh province remained submerged under flood waters for several months. Therefore, many farmers were unable to meet the autumn deadline for planting new seeds in 2010, which implies a massive loss of food production in 2011, potential long term food shortages and price increases in staple goods. Sindh province had the highest number of people affected (7.2 million) followed by Punjab with 6 million people and KP with 3.8 million people. Sindh was also the most badly affected area in terms of the percentage of area covered at the sub-district level with 12 of the 17 sub-districts that had more than 50% of their areas affected being in Sindh.

Outbreaks of diseases, such as gastroenteritis, diarrhea, and skin diseases, due to lack of clean drinking water and sanitation soon posed a serious risk to flood victims. The elderly, disabled, women and children were especially made vulnerable due to a lack of aid and the threat of exploitation by traffickers. Relief work was also hampered by the difficult logistical terrain, the destruction of infrastructure and the threat of terrorist attacks against aid agencies. All these factors made this emergency response one of the most difficult ones in recent times. The needs covered almost all immediate relief sectors. All emergency work had to be done in an insecure and challenging operating environment. The Pakistani government was blamed for sluggish and disorganized response to the flood which led to instances of riots, with attacks and looting of aid convoys by hunger-stricken people. The UN initially appealed for \$460 million to provide immediate help, including food, shelter and clean water and later increased it to \$2 billion for longer-term work. While camps have largely been dismantled and the overwhelming percentage of people has returned to their villages, huge recovery needs persist in the areas of shelter, water, sanitation, infrastructure and livelihoods in villages.



## OVERVIEW OF CONCERN RESPONSE

Concern started working in Pakistan in 2001 after 9/11, with a focus on Afghan refugees in Balochistan. At the time of the 2010 floods, Concern was working with conflict-displaced IDPs in Swat, D.I. Khan and Kohat districts in KPK province and on long-term development projects in Mansehra (KPK province), Muzaffargarh (Punjab province) and Quetta, Qila Saifullah and Pishin (Balochistan province).

After the floods, Concern started immediate relief activities in KPK and subsequently expanded its operations to Punjab, Sindh and Balochistan provinces as the flood spread throughout the country. Concern has focused on the provision of food, NFIs, water, sanitation, shelter, health, and livelihoods services. Concern's response has so far supported 1.4 million of the around 18 million people affected by the 2010 floods in Pakistan and has covered 14 of the worst-affected of the 78 flood-affected districts. These districts include Kohat, Swat, Shangla, D.I. Khan and Charsaddah in KPK, Muzaffargarh, Layyah and Rajanpur in Punjab, and Jamshoro, Dadu, Khairpur and Thatta in Sindh and Jaffarabad and Naseerabad in Balochistan. The response has consisted of two phases to-date: the relief phase from July 2010 to January 2011 (in the most severely affected districts, the relief phase ended only in March 2011) when people were still displaced and the early recovery phase from January 2011 onwards once people returned to their villages. Concern's total emergency budget for these two phases is approximately Euro 20 million which has been funded by DFID, DEC, CBHA, OFDA, ECHO, Irish Aid and several other smaller donors.

During the relief phase, Concern provided the following services:

<b>Services</b>	<b>Number of persons</b>
73,000 NFI kits	513,000
35,000 temporary shelters	395,000
60,000 blankets	
3700 debris kits	
5100 tents	
11,300 packets of food	79,000
48 medical camps	8,800
30 million litres of clean water	265,000
1,790 latrines	
850 hand pumps	

During the early recovery phase, Concern is focusing on permanent shelter (construction of one room), water (hand-pumps), sanitation (latrines), hygiene promotion (awareness-raising and vector control), livelihoods (cash-for-work and distribution of agricultural inputs and livestock) and community-level infrastructure repair (roads,

culverts, etc). Both phases were implemented through a network of local NGOs who in turn work with community-based organizations.

## **OVERVIEW OF THE EVALUATION**

The evaluation took place during May 2011 while the field mission in Pakistan took place from May 9-24, 2011. The evaluation tools included:

- Review of key documents, including proposals and progress reports
- Meetings in Islamabad with Concern staff
- Field visits to emergency projects in Muzzafargarh and Rajanpur (Punjab) and Dadu and Thatta (Sindh) between May 12 and 18, 2011.
- Interviews with Concern field staff
- Interviews with Concern partner staff
  
- Participatory exercise with communities which included: a) focus group discussion to generate collective analysis, b) individual interview to collect personal experiences and c) key informant interview. Various social and vulnerability categories of the communities such as gender, generation (elderly), occupation, ability, mobility and wealth were equitably included in the exercises. The participatory exercises were held in the absence of agency staff to provide greater privacy to communities to freely air their perceptions about the agency's work. One day was spent in each district's project sites.
  
- Direct observation: Transect walks were undertaken in each field site along with the agency staff to observe the physical layout, condition of communities and nature of services provided

While the evaluation covers both the relief and early recovery phases, the evaluation of the relief phase is based only on the review of documents and staff testimonies as all relief activities had already ended by December 31, 2011. Thus, the evaluators' own direct observations were confined to early recovery projects. The evaluation was conducted by a two-member team consisting of one male and one female, both of whom spoke Urdu while the female evaluator also spoke Sindhi and Seraiki. This facilitated direct communication with communities.

# Findings

## 2.1 Relevance of the response:

### Targeting of the most vulnerable regions, communities and families

Concern's stated aim for its emergency response was to focus on the most vulnerable regions, communities and families in line with its global policies. It has largely succeeded in doing so by utilizing a thorough process for selecting the most vulnerable regions and families. At the district level, most of its selected districts are among the most severely affected districts identified by the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) of Pakistan. Thus, Thatta, Dadu and Jamshoro are characterized as severely affected and only Khairpur is characterized as moderately affected among the four districts that Concern is working in Sindh province. In Punjab, all three of Concern's operational districts—Muzaffargarh, Layyah and Rajanpur—are considered severely affected. In Balochistan, both Naseerabad and Jaffarabad are severely affected, while in KPK only Kohat is moderately affected while Swat, Shangla, D.I. Khan and Charsaddah are severely affected. Thus, 12 out of the 14 Concern districts are severely affected. According to Concern and partner staff, the sub-districts and Union Councils selected for the emergency response were also among the most severely affected ones within those districts. Their selection was based on information available from the Provincial Disaster Management Authorities and detailed field visits conducted by partners and Concern staff. However, this claim could not be independently verified.

The selection of specific locations within Union Councils for the relief phase is usually less complicated in situations of mass displacement as most people living in camps or by the road side are generally equally vulnerable and in need of life-saving services in the areas of food, shelter, water and health. Less vulnerable people with greater resources generally do not live in camps or by the road but with relatives. Thus, even though the evaluation team could not visit the sites for the relief phase of the Concern response, it seems highly likely that the Concern response focused on highly vulnerable people. Both Concern and partner staff also claim that they had gone beyond the main roads to more interior areas which are less visible and more likely to be missed by other agencies.

The accurate targeting of specific villages for the early recovery phase is more complicated than the relief phase since there can be significant differences in the availability of resources for recovery (or resilience) across villages based on their pre-flood economic status. In selecting specific villages for the early recovery phase, Concern and its partners essentially relied on field visits and PDMA information in Sindh. However in Punjab Concern partners arranged separate meetings in each Union Council which were attended by 2-3 representatives from each village within the Union council. Participants then identified the most badly-affected villages in the Union

councils through consensus. Even though independent information about the extent of vulnerability of the villages selected by Concern was not available, the eight villages that the evaluation team visited were comparable with the poorest villages that the lead evaluator had visited in evaluating the projects of 15 other INGOs responding to the Pakistan 2010 floods. Thus, overall, it can be said with a high degree of confidence that Concern has focused on the most vulnerable communities for both the relief and early recovery phase. Concern also responded in areas where there were very few other NGOs operating and has generally coordinated well with other NGOs to avoid duplication by mutually dividing villages and sectors.

The choice of specific families within each location also tends to be more complicated in the early recovery phase than in the relief phase. In the latter phase generally everyone in a camp is provided support and many of the services in any case are provided at the community level, for example common latrines and water points. However, in the early recovery phase, agencies generally do not provide all services to everyone in a village due to budget limitations. The focus here is on providing early recovery services to the most vulnerable individual families, for example individual shelters, latrines and water points, which tend to be more expensive. Concern and its partners adopted a very thorough and labor-intensive process for identifying the most vulnerable families in each village. It consisted of collecting detailed information about the demographic and economic situation of each family, e.g., number of family members, amount of land and livestock, marriage status etc. However, while the detailed process was impressive, the approach suffered from being somewhat culturally inappropriate in focusing primarily on the vulnerability and resilience status of the individual household. In the regions in both Sindh and Punjab where Concern is responding, people generally live in extended family courtyards with each courtyard consisting of two or more closely related families (e.g., brothers or fathers and sons). There is a high degree of resource sharing among these households. Certain items, such as water points and latrines are common within the courtyard. Kitchens, agricultural land and animal stocks tend to be individual though even here there is considerable sharing especially in times of distress. Thus, it would have been more accurate for Concern to focus not only on the status of individual households but also the overall vulnerability status of the whole courtyard. For example, widows were identified as high-vulnerability individuals. However, a widow living in an extended family courtyard with three grown-up sons may not be very vulnerable while a widow living on her own would be.

Focusing on the extended family courtyard would have also helped Concern reduce the enormous gap between the number of families that it could help and the number of families living in a village. Currently Concern is usually providing the more expensive items such as shelters, latrines and toilets to between 20- 50% of the families in a

village due to budget constraints. However, since the number of extended family courtyards is much lower than the total number of families in a village and since there is so much sharing within the extended family courtyards, Concern could have reached almost every family in the village by distributing its services proportionately across each extended family courtyard (unless a courtyard was way above the poverty level of other ones in the village). This would have also helped reduce conflicts within villages. The evaluators observed a high degree of conflict and dissatisfaction with the selection of beneficiaries in two of the eight villages visited. Both these villages were large compared to the other villages, had a number of castes and tribes living within them and consequently were less well-knit. Some of the courtyards had been given multiple items while others were given nothing even though their demographic and economic status did not seem to be much different. On the other hand, the smaller villages were well-knit, consisting mainly of close relatives. Additionally, the village committees and partners there had taken care to maintain equity across various extended family courtyards. Consequently, there was little conflict caused within them. Since doing no harm is a stated objective of NGOs, it is crucial to ensure that culturally inappropriate targeting does not end up causing conflict within communities. Concern and partners did spend considerable time in explaining the targeting criteria to communities and in most cases communities exhibited good understanding and acceptance of them. However, the failure to recognize the importance of the extended family courtyards undermined these efforts in some villages.

#### Strengths

- Almost all Concern districts are severely affected ones
- Thorough process adopted for identifying most vulnerable sub-districts, Union Councils, villages and families, especially in Punjab, and villages selected are comparable with the most vulnerable seen by the evaluation team with other agencies

#### Areas for further improvements

- Identification of families was based on a culturally inappropriate criteria since it ignored the importance of extended family patterns within villages

#### Timeliness

According to Concern and partner staff, the relief distribution started within 2-3 days of the flood in each province. This ability was based on the existence of relief items stocks that Concern maintains in 3-4 locations throughout Pakistan as part of its emergency preparedness. Concern's ability to respond immediately was also facilitated by a grant of Euros 0.5 million from Concern's global CEO emergency fund. Finally, Concern's

ability to respond immediately was also facilitated by the fact that as a result of experience during the 2005 Pakistan earthquake, it had identified a network of partners throughout Pakistan for emergency response purposes, signed MOUs with them and provided them training in emergency response well before the flood.

<b>Project</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Start Date</b>	<b>Budget in Euros</b>	<b>Beneficiaries</b>
Emergency	Kohat, DIK, Layyah & Muzaffargarh	8/01/2010	925,000	139,118
	Swat, Shangla & Kohistan	8/1/2010	300,000	38,500
	Charsadda & Swat	8/4/2010	174,772	22,000
	Charsadda	8/4/2010	114,262	8,000
	Kohistan	8/9/2010	88,500	11,720
	Dadu, Thatta, Jamshoro	8/19/2010	5,605,000	533,999
	Muzaffargarh	8/24/2010	236,000	71,400
	Khairpur & Jaffarabad	9/1/2010	1,700,000	
	Khairpur, Dadu, Jamshoro & Naseerabad	9/1/2010	885,530	105,000
Early recovery	Kohistan & Swat	11/1/2010	500,000	61,866
	Layyah, Ranjapur & Jafferabad	12/1/2010	1,971,920	
	Dadu & Jaffarabad	12/15/2010	2,478,000	195,762
	Muzafargarh & Jamshoro	2/1/2011	1,497,126	112,000
	Dadu, Jamshoro, Rajanpur	3/15/2011	3,540,000	269,063

The dates of some of the assessment reports provided by Concern and its first emergency grants confirm that it had started responding by early August. According to the UNOCHA website, the floods started around July 27, 2010 in KPK and reached Punjab and northern Sindh by the first week of August and Southern Sindh by the end of August. The lack of complete information does not allow an analysis of the percentage of total relief phase beneficiaries who were covered immediately. The above table shows that around Euro 1.6 million were allocated within the first two weeks of the emergency, the most critical period in terms of mortality and morbidity, which targeted around 220,000 people, i.e., around 20% of the 1 million people supported by Concern ultimately for the relief phase. This figure had reached 90% of the people by December

2010. In addition around 11,000 people were provided support through pre-stocks. The pace picked up significantly after August 19, 2010 when a grant of more than Euro 5 million and benefitting half a million people was allocated. However, this is the grant date and it is not immediately clear how soon thereafter help reached communities. This pattern of grants suggests a scale-up roughly in line with the expansion of the flood's scale across Pakistan during July and August. Shortage of funds was the main obstacle to a faster scale-up. In terms of the villages we visited, about half received help from Concern immediately while half did not. The relief response in Rajanpur was only started in October almost two months after the floods there due to shortage of funds. It would be useful for Concern to collate such information during future emergencies to allow a more rigorous analysis of its timeliness. The evaluation team was also able to get a sense of the relative timeliness of Concern's response given that four out of its five partners that we met also received support from other INGOs. For the two Punjab-based partners, Concern was the second or third INGO in terms of timeliness out of 5-6 INGO donors while in the case of Sindh partners, Concern was their first donor after the floods. This is all the more surprising given that Concern already had a presence in Multan before the floods but was totally absent from Sindh. The two agencies that responded faster than Concern were able to do because they had more concrete contracts with local partners compared with Concern's MOUs and also had relief pre-stocks based with the partners. Project reports for projects in KP reflect a timely response there.

#### Strengths

- Emergency preparedness measures within Concern Pakistan and globally contributed to the capacity to respond immediately
- Clear evidence of at least some immediate response in 3 of the four districts visited

#### Areas for further improvements

- Clear evidence of late response in one district, likely due to shortage of funds
- Information available does not allow more rigorous analysis of timeliness across all the relief beneficiaries
- Lack of concrete contracts and local stockpiles slowed response in comparison with 1-2 other INGOs

#### Participation of communities in needs assessments, project design and implementation

As with other program functions, Concern has invested significant effort in developing detailed approaches and tools for ensuring the participation of communities in needs assessments, project design and implementation. These details obviously differed for the relief and early recovery phases. For the relief phase, given the urgency of the

situation, detailed and thorough data collection was not possible. At this stage, the assessments consisted of visits to affected communities and information collection from relevant government departments in the immediate aftermath of the floods. Concern did share the reports of several such rapid assessments which highlighted the needs of communities in various life-saving sectors.

For the early recovery phase, Concern developed more indepth survey instruments and spent much more collecting information within communities to identify their needs and develop project designs accordingly. However, the assessment survey instrument appears to be largely an information extraction rather than preference identification tool. So while there are numerous questions on the status of communities and families on various socio-economic and demographic dimensions, there is only a single question/exercise focused on asking people what their main needs are and how they rank order them. As such, the methodology does not ensure the full participation of beneficiaries in needs assessments and project design. Unsurprisingly, in some villages, people reported that the items provided to them were selected by the agency rather than the people. Women felt that while the men may have been consulted, they were not. The impact of this weakness on the suitability of the programs implemented by Concern will be discussed below. Finally, the involvement of people in the implementation of the projects seems to be adequate. Concern partners have set up village committees to manage the project within each village. Additionally, people have also been involved in the construction work on cash for work basis. Finally, Concern partners are also holding frequent meetings within the villages to monitor the project implementation with the help of the communities. The progress reports from KP also reflect a similar in-depth approach.

#### Strengths

- Detailed assessment tools and labor intensive data collection exercise done at the early recovery phase
- People involved in the implementation through village committees, frequent meetings and cash for work modalities for construction work

#### Areas for further improvements

- More genuinely participatory processes that prioritize people's perceptions over cluster suggestions would be helpful

#### Relevance of program sectors and satisfaction of people

In general, the program sectors selected for both the relief and early recovery phase seem appropriate given the needs of people. In the relief phase, Concern focused on food, non-food items, water, health, sanitation and shelter. Even though the evaluation

team could not visit the relief projects, these sectors seem appropriate in line with the needs highlighted by government and UN agencies in their overall assessments.

For the early recovery phase, Concern is focusing on individual level shelter, water, sanitation and livelihoods activities and some community infrastructure. These sectors are also mostly in line with the preferences expressed by communities in the villages visited. However, the weaknesses highlighted in the participation of communities in project design earlier did have some impact. Had Concern ensured a higher degree of community participation, it is the opinion of the evaluation team, based on opinions provided by people, that far fewer latrines would have been built. People in all eight villages visited were clear that their most important three needs were shelter, water and livelihoods. On being asked whether they would prefer to receive a latrine or one of the above three, people mostly preferred the other three sectors. This makes sense given that most people in these villages did not have concrete latrines before the floods and used makeshift arrangements. While common latrines are crucial in camps during the relief phase, individual latrines do not seem a high priority sector for the early recovery phase, which should essentially focus on providing people with the items that they lost during the floods. Self-reliance should be the key goal in the early recovery phase which can best be achieved by supporting livelihoods activities. Given that rural livelihoods in Pakistan are still essentially viable and reasonably high income-yielding, supporting people in resuming their livelihoods activities would have put people in a position to afford many other services on their own, such as latrines. The goal of self-reliance should only be abandoned where the absence of an item may threaten high morbidity and/or mortality, for example shelter and clean water. However, the absence of latrines is unlikely to do so, especially as Concern is also focusing on hygiene promotion. The team observed people who were still living in tents or did not have access to clean water but had been provided with a concrete latrine. This is not to say that people do not appreciate the latrines. They do, especially women, but it is also true that if they had genuine choice, they would have built far fewer latrines and used the money for one of the other three sectors. As Concern staff explained, some of this is related to the requirements of clusters, international standards and donors. However, most of Concern's donors are the flexible types who do not impose sectors on agencies while when it comes to a contradiction between the requirements of international standards and community preferences, in the opinion of the evaluation team, community preferences should take priority.

#### Collaboration with local partners

Concern had identified a network on possible emergency partners back in 2007, signed MOUs with them and provided them with emergency-related training before the floods. This investment paid high dividends for Concern and was instrumental in helping it to

respond immediately and effectively. Concern continued the process of training even after the floods and also provided hands-on support to partners in all program and program support functions. The relationship between Concern and the partners seems to have worked very well. From the point of view of Concern staff, the presence of these partners has provided it with in-depth insights into the local context which it may itself not have had in all response areas. The presence of partners is also seen to have helped Concern reduce its overhead expenses. The only negative point of view for Concern was the fact that some of the partners did not have the necessary capacity for a large-scale emergency response. This is why it invested significant effort in providing trainings to partners and deputed its own staff to work very closely in the field with partners.

Partners have also highly appreciated their relationship with Concern. They have generally found Concern to be open, flexible, respectful, and supportive. They also appreciate the extensive training and on the job support provided by Concern to them. Compared to the contractual relationship with other donors, they find the relationship with Concern to be a true partnership which strengthens their long-term capacity and effectiveness. The main areas of improvement identified by partners include better induction of new Concern staff on Concern's collaborative and respectful style as in some cases new staff has not behaved well with partners. Partners also feel that Concern's centralized purchasing policy sometimes leads to delays, supply of wrong specification goods and lack of capacity-building for partners. Several partners reported that they are undertaking large purchases from the funds provided by other donors. At the same time there is appreciation of the fact that this policy did allow them to concentrate on program implementation in the early phases. However, the partners generally recommend greater devolution of purchasing to partners in the later stages of programming. Even now, some of the partners in Northern Sindh and KPK whose procurement system was good enough, they have done the procurement on their own even in the relief phase. Concern feels that it takes time for a small-medium sized NGO to do large procurements and it is gradually involving partners in the procurements to build their capacity in this crucial area. This may be true and the report does not recommend an overnight change but continuing with capacity-building of partners and greater devolution over time.

#### Strengths

- Concern's collaborative and respectful approach towards partners
- Capacity-building activities undertaken

#### Areas for further improvements

- Inducting new staff to Concern's collaborative approach with partners
- Centralized purchasing issues

### Integration of pre-flood programme capacity and knowledge

Concern's response benefitted from pre-flood capacity and knowledge in a variety of ways. To begin with, Concern was already present in 3 out of the 4 provinces and thus had extensive local knowledge. Second, Concern had developed significant emergency program knowledge by working in previous conflict-related, earthquake and floods emergencies in Pakistan. Thus, it had previously developed approaches for needs assessments, project design, evaluation and program technical standards which were easily replicable to this emergency. Concern is also blessed with a very low turn-over among staff and thus has strong institutional memory. It is also blessed with an unusually strong, motivated and skilled team consisting mainly of national staff who are well versed with local realities. It had also developed contingency relationships with local NGOs as well as suppliers for emergency purposes. The partners selected obviously had in-depth knowledge of the areas they eventually worked in with Concern. The main weaknesses related to Sindh where Concern never had worked before. It also has less knowledge about local suppliers in some of the response areas who could have provided materials faster. Local suppliers may not be in a position to provide large quantities in the middle of a disaster. However, having greater knowledge about them would still be helpful. Finally, there is a shortage of local staff in the Multan office even though it had existed before the floods even though the Sindh office is fully localized even though it was set up after the floods. Concern has highlighted the lack of availability of adequate human resources in southern Punjab as the main reason for the lack of indigenization within the Multan office. However, it would still be helpful to keep greater indigenization as an aspiration for the future.

## **2.2 The quality, effectiveness, efficiency and impact of the response**

### Did the response achieve what it set out to do and impact on communities?

To-date, Concern has served almost 1.4 million of the around 2 million people it planned to reach for this emergency. Concern did not set any overall output and outcome-level objectives for the overall emergency response. Thus, this analysis can only be undertaken in terms of achievements on individual projects. Concern shared the final progress reports submitted to donors for four projects, a post-intervention KAP survey, human interest stories and the Quick Impact Report for one project. This section is based on the information contained in these documents and the qualitative information collected by the evaluation team within communities.

Concern generally met or exceeded its targets for the two projects. For example, for a CBHA-funded relief project, Concern reached 71,400 persons as against the 33,600 people planned in the proposal and finished the project in time. For a DEC-funded relief

project, Concern succeeded in providing food and non-food item to the 17,800 persons originally planned while increasing the number of latrine target was increased from 200 to 322 in line with local needs.

A quick impact evaluation conducted internally by Concern for its relief activities in southern Sindh reveals that the project had high impact. The main findings of the survey were as follows:

- Around 97% of the people received their NFI package
- Around 95% of beneficiaries have been provided with shelter kits and/or permanent shelter by the project. The quality and quantity of the shelter kits and permanent shelters were adequate and the beneficiaries seemed quite satisfied.
- 98% of the beneficiaries in all the three districts (Dadu, Thatta and Jamshoro) reported that they received their hygiene kits on time which met their family needs.
- After Concern's intervention the source of water for 80% of families became the public hand pump – with the remaining households using private wells or the public water supply. Of the rehabilitated/reconstructed water points, 96% are being maintained; and 96% of beneficiaries reported that the points met their family needs. The time taken to fetch water for the family has fallen from between 11 minutes and 30 minutes after the flood, to between only 4 and 6 minutes after – lower than the 'pre-flood' level.
- Following Concern's intervention, 95% of beneficiaries now have access to either a communal or private pour flush latrine. 98% of beneficiaries reported that the rehabilitated/ reconstructed latrines are being maintained and are in use by their families and meets their family needs.
- Before Concern's intervention there was a low level of knowledge about the importance of clean water; water-related diseases; methods of water purification; proper hand washing and solid waste management; vector spreading, and the use of ORS. Since Concern's intervention, the vast majority of beneficiaries reported that they now have knowledge in all these areas.

Similar results were also achieved in KP under a project in the early recovery phase focused on agriculture inputs provision, restoration of non-farm livelihoods means, restoration of essential community infrastructure and repair of water and sanitation facilities. Originally, the project targeted 2 union councils in district Kohistan (Dubair Payan & Dubair Khas) and

2 union councils in district Swat (Bishagram & Tirat). However, in the light of the findings from the need assessments and based on the scale of the damages, the project subsequently targeted 3 union councils in Swat (Bishagram, Tirat & Madyan) and one union council in Kohistan (Dubair Payan). Originally, the project was supposed to target 9,200 vulnerable flood-affected families (64,400 people). Based on the need assessments, the project increased targets for certain activities and reached 12,755 flood affected vulnerable families (89,285 people).

Finally, Concern also achieved 100% targets in a project focused on distribution of food and non-food items (NFIs, hygiene promotion and distribution of hygiene kits, provision of safe drinking water, provision of latrines and vector control activities for 38,500 most vulnerable flood affected people (5,500 HHs) in Kohistan, Swat & Shangla districts in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province (KPK), Pakistan. The project was implemented through local NGO partners with local staff as frontline workers. In addition, active engagement with the local communities/elders, local government administration and adherence to security measures contributed to the successful implementation of the project.

KAP	Pre-floods	Post-floods	% Change
Knowledge about water cleaning	40	72.5	32.5
Importance of clean water	80	95	15
Awareness about water-related diseases	58.8	85	26.2
Importance of latrine	82.5	90	7.5
Importance Hand Washing	87.5	93.8	6.3
Importance of ORS	67.5	86.3	18.8
ORS preparation	33.8	73.8	40

The above summary results from a KAP survey also reveal that Concern's hygiene promotion activities have been successful in improving hygiene practices among people, especially with respect with ORS and clean water and its linkages with diseases

Human interest stories collected by Concern in all four provinces also reveal that people are genuinely happy with and have benefitted from Concern's interventions in the areas

of shelter, water, sanitation and livelihoods. These views were revalidated by people's responses to the evaluators during the field visits regarding the early recovery interventions. The main positive elements mentioned by people during the field visits were as follows:

- Access to clean water had increased significantly as Concern has built much deeper hand pumps compared to the shallow ones built by people before the floods which had become contaminated due to the floods
- Shelter provision had helped give people a sense of dignity and permanency after the traumatic displacement and also protected them from the elements of nature
- Livelihoods activities had increased people's self-reliance and resilience and also decreased the need for back breaking work for women through the provision of tools and kits
- The setting up of village committees had increased harmony within communities and their ability to negotiate and deal with external stakeholders
- The provision of solar lights was also highly appreciated
- The hygiene activities were highly appreciated, especially by women, who felt that it had helped reduce disease within the households
- People were generally also very happy with the respectful manner of engagement of staff
- Some of the people who had also received relief activities earlier on from Concern while they were displaced highlighted the fact that these services helped them at a time when they lacked all basic requirements of life.

Were humanitarian standards met? (Sphere, Codes of conduct)?

Concern staff at all level is well informed about the details and importance of Sphere standards and the RC code of conduct. The achievement of Sphere standards related to the amount of water, the number of latrines and shelter space per person were generally not met by agencies, including Concern, because of the shortage of funds and the large number of people affected, which was greater than the combined number of people affected during the tsunami, and Pakistan and Haiti earthquakes. Various clusters also agreed to lower technical standards during the relief phase in Pakistan.

According to Concern staff, partner agencies did keep in mind other Sphere standards, such as the distance between latrines and water points, a fact also observed by the evaluation team for the early recovery phase projects. In addition, Sphere standards were also met in the specification of the hygiene kits and temporary and core shelters.

Concern and partners have incorporated the codes of conduct principles well into their programs. The aid has generally been given on the basis of needs and there seems no evidence of distribution of aid due to ethnic, religious or race considerations. The response has maintained neutrality and has not been influenced by the pressures of any political force. Concern has also received funds from a wide variety of donors, thus minimizing the undue impact of any single donor. Concern and staff have respected local cultures and norms and communities were extremely positive about the respectful manner in which staff dealt with them. However, there were complaints about the attitudes of village committee members in some villages, both from men and women. Women also complained in one village that the VC did not allow them to provide critical feedback to the evaluation team. Some program staff expressed some degree of ambiguity about the value of community perceptions, arguing that they change very often. Local capacities have been built through the formation of village committees and through awareness-raising for communities on hygiene promotion activities. However, it would be helpful for Concern to invest more resources in building the capacity of village committees so that they become sustainable and self-reliant. The participation of communities in project activities has already been discussed earlier. The impact on future vulnerabilities and accountability to communities will be discussed in later sections. However, the centralized nature of Concern purchasing, dictated partly by the need to maintain financial controls and partly by lack of adequate capacity to undertake large-scale purchasing among partners, may have delayed response in some cases and undermined the RC principle about the humanitarian imperative coming first to some extent.

#### Humanitarian Accountability Partnership principles/benchmarks.

Concern Pakistan has made significant progress along the six main requirements of HAP. The agency has developed an accountability framework that sets out its commitments under HAP which states that Concern will be fully HAP compliant by 2015. Concern staff and its partners are generally clear about HAP requirements and are actively working to achieve them in their respective spheres of work. With respect to sharing of information, some partners have put transparency boards while others have shared information about their programs and budgets verbally. Thus, a more consistent and clearer approach for sharing information with communities would be useful. Concern has understandably not forced a single model on all partners in the spirit of partnership. However, convincing partners to adopt clearer and written formats for

sharing information would still be advisable. The issue of participation has already been discussed earlier. With respect to handling complaints, some partners have put out notices with their phone numbers within communities while others have given their phone numbers verbally to some people within the community. Again, a more consistent approach would be helpful. However, a bigger issue is that the complaint mechanisms seem to have become a bit ritualistic as Concern and partner staff report that not much useful feedback has come in that could have helped the agency to make suitable changes. One explanation for this could be that complaints get handled in time negating the need for people to use the formal complaint mechanisms. A more realistic explanation would be that there is a need to educate and empower people more so that they use the complaint mechanism more effectively. Finally, the learning and continual improvement processes to incorporate past lessons will be discussed later.

#### Was the response cost effective?

Cost-effectiveness was among the strongest aspects of the Concern response. Concern Dublin and in-country indirect and administrative expenses (including salaries, transport etc) were generally less than 15% of overall emergency proposals shared by Concern with the evaluation team. This is among the lowest that the team leader has seen across the 16 agencies that he has evaluated for the Pakistan 2010 flood response as well as across many other countries. Concern's cost-effectiveness becomes the best when compared with the much higher quality of its response compared with other NGOs with low overheads. Analysis by one of Concern's donor also shows that Concern's staff costs (GBP 2.3 per beneficiary) are a fraction of that of many other INGOs (as high as GBP 33 per beneficiary in some cases). The main reasons for this high cost-effectiveness is the low number of expatriates in the Concern Pakistan team (only the CD and a Program Support Officer). In addition, Concern logistics staff claims that the centralized purchasing system also leads to cost-efficiency. However, this claim must be documented better by analyzing whether the savings on bulk purchases exceed the higher transport cost of centralized purchasing or not.

#### Strengths

- Concern has the lowest ratio of administrative expenses among INGOs given the quality of work

#### Mainstreaming/integration of disaster risk reduction, HIV & AIDS, and the environment?

Concern did not invest much effort in mainstreaming HIV/AIDS issues in the emergency programs, perhaps due to low HIV prevalence rates. However, even so, it did keep the convenience of such people in mind in locating its services such as latrines and hand pumps. The agency did make significant efforts to mainstream DRR and environment issues. With respect to DRR, all construction undertaken by Concern was of a high

quality which can withstand at least medium intensity disasters. Shelter, hand pump and latrine sites have been elevated by 2-3 feet so as to withstand medium intensity floods in the future. Hygiene promotion classes will also likely reduce disease prevalence in future disasters as people's hygiene practices improve. Concern is also planning to start DRR-related community level emergency preparedness activities subject to availability of funding. However, there is an urgent need to set up at least a minimum level of community preparedness for the coming flood season, for example by setting up a communication tree for providing communities with reliable and up to date information about the likelihood of flooding. Concern has also contributed to a cleaner environment through its vector control and hygiene promotion programs. It has also ensured in many places that the water from hand pumps is channeled into vegetable gardening sites. Finally, it has also avoided the distribution of pesticides as part of its agricultural rehabilitation programs.

#### Strengths

- DRR mainstreamed into all construction and other program activities

#### Areas for further improvements

- Village-level emergency preparedness systems must be developed, especially for coming flood season

#### Monitoring, evaluation systems and indicators

Concern is developing an evaluation system under which all emergency projects will have baselines and subsequent impact evaluation surveys. The baselines and impact surveys focus on each of the output and impact indicators included in the proposal logframe. This seems to be a very thorough and ambitious plan for emergency projects. While partners did not raise any objections, according to Concern staff themselves, it has been difficult to get partners to complete the baselines and impact surveys due to shortage of time. It may be more practical for Concern to attempt to implement the evaluation system for a sample of projects rather than every project. Concern could then select those projects for evaluation where the donor requires it and which represent a cross-section of all projects. For the remaining projects, Concern could focus on reviewing them during its regular monitoring activities to see if the quality of their processes is the same as that in the evaluated projects. This would give a high degree of assurance that they will have similar impact. Since the M&E mechanisms are based on Concern Worldwide PM&E Guidelines, it would be advisable for Concern Dublin to look into the feasibility of this requirement during emergencies.

#### Strengths

- Thorough evaluation system developed consisting of baselines and impact surveys for all emergency projects

#### Areas for further improvements

- System may be too ambitious for emergency work and it may be better to apply it to a selection of rather than all projects

### **2.3 Connectedness and coherence;**

#### Did the responses reduce future vulnerabilities? Did the short-term emergency activities take longer-term issues into account?

Several aspects of Concern's emergency work have integrated long-term concerns and reduced future vulnerabilities. Construction quality is much better than the existing pre-flood standards in the villages and will likely be able to withstand future floods of at least medium intensity. The village committees being set up will also help in mobilizing and uniting communities for the future. Women were especially appreciative of these committees as they are represented in them in many cases, which is a novel experience of empowerment for them in the male-dominated environment. However, Concern must invest more resources in their organizational capacities to enhance their sustainability. The hygiene promotion programs will help reduce the incidence of morbidity in the future both during normal times and floods. Livelihoods activities will help enhance the long-term self-reliance of families. Women reported that the tools given to them have saved a lot of time and effort for them. However, Concern must look to work in the long-term in many of these communities given that they are both poor and vulnerable.

### **2.4 Relevance of Concern's systems to cope with a major emergency**

Concern's program support functions have coped well with the enormous scale-up that the agency went through, from a development program of around Euro 2.5 million to an emergency program of over Euro 20 million within a few months. Concern Pakistan obtained a waiver on the need for tendering for major purchases for the relief phase. This coupled with the list of suppliers that it had developed before the floods allowed for rapid purchases during the relief phase. Concern's centralized purchasing system, where Concern does all program purchases instead of the partners had positive as well as negative results. Several partners accepted the fact that this centralized purchasing allowed them to focus on program implementation during the early days as they may otherwise have been swamped. They also accepted that initially they did not have the purchasing systems to manage such large purchases. However, other partners stated that they were doing large purchases for other donors without problems and felt that the centralized purchasing and pre-stock locations with Concern resulted in delays and the supply of wrong specification goods in some cases. While Concern had established a list of national suppliers before the floods, it seems to have fewer contacts with local

suppliers. Thus, in a recent case, goats had to be supplied from Punjab for Sindh since none of the Sindh suppliers applied for the tender.

The HR planning also suffered from some weaknesses as the agency did not initially recognize the need to expand rapidly to cope with the additional work. This meant that existing staff had to work for up to 16 hours initially. It also meant that program quality sometimes suffered due to the lack of adequate program staff, especially technical ones. The HR systems did however reward the existing staff by offering them 33% bonus for the relief phase for the extra hours spent by officer-level staff.

## **2.5 The extent to which 'lessons' or recommendations from previous emergencies were incorporated into this response**

Concern possesses strong processes for transferring learning across different levels of the agency. So for this emergency, Dublin shared "lessons learnt" documents from other emergencies which were actively reviewed and incorporated in program planning. Similarly, "lessons learnt" guidelines were sent from Islamabad to field offices and onwards to partners. The agency has actively worked to make changes according to previous experience. For example, the following is the status on the lessons identified after the 2005 earthquake:

### **1) Develop systems to ensure quality control of supplies**

Systems developed but some problems still exist as some goods still had to be returned to suppliers. However, this seems more to be the exception rather than the rule and may be unavoidable when dozens of agencies are chasing the same supplier.

### **2) Ensure pre-positioning of suppliers & supplies**

This has been done at the national level. It would be useful to also develop similar linkages with regional suppliers.

### **3) Integrate emergency preparedness into programmes**

Done for some functions and systems. Would be useful to expand it to other program and program support functions

### **4) Improve coordination with all relevant stakeholders**

Please see below

### **5) Ensure clear communication**

Communication within agency seems clear and fast

### **6) Promote true partnerships**

Confirmed by partners that Concern treats them as true partners

#### 7) Enhance Concern's visibility in future emergencies

Concern has worked to enhance its visibility at the field level through logos, project boards etc.

Thus, Concern has done well to keep its eyes on past lessons to ensure continual learning. However, it would be helpful for the team to receive evaluation feedback non-defensively, maintain an open mind to new ideas and suggestions, recognize the importance of listening to and learning about the good practices of other agencies and be willing to discuss weaknesses confidently and maturely with evaluators.

#### Coordination with other agencies

In recognition of the importance of coordination and the lessons from previous emergencies, Concern Pakistan developed protocols to enhance coordination with other agencies for this emergency. The key points/decisions were as follows:

- RAPID team members will take the lead in attending the WASH, Shelter & Health cluster meetings. Regular Concern team members will attend the Agriculture, Nutrition and Community Restoration cluster meetings.
- Those who attend cluster meetings will update other relevant Concern staff members outlining the key issues/decisions and any contribution from Concern.
- Field offices will send a weekly update regarding district level coordination by Concern & partners to all relevant staff
- Coordination will be covered more comprehensively in the sit-reps and in particular in the sit-rep updates from the field

According to Concern staff, Concern has been one of the most committed agencies during this emergency when it comes to co-ordination through clusters, and the Pakistan Humanitarian forum. According to Concern senior staff, coordination meeting coordinators have recognized Concern as the most active participant in coordination meetings. Concern is represented at all the relevant humanitarian clusters (WASH, Shelter/NFI, Agriculture, community restoration, etc.). Designated senior technical staff regularly attends the cluster meetings at federal, provincial and district/hub level.

## **2.6 Identify lessons to inform the future emergency responses of Concern.**

The evaluation team found Concern's emergency response a very strong, well-managed, effective and systematic emergency program. It is among the best seen across the 16 agencies they have recently evaluated in terms of value for money. However, a few aspects do need to be tweaked. Fortunately, the suggestions that the evaluation team has fit in well with the proactive and systematic approach adopted already by Concern:

- Explore the possibility of expanding emergency preparedness to all program and program support functions, e.g., sectoral areas identification based on pre-emergency PRAs in communities, program designs and standards, funding planning, HR planning, communication strategy, and a variety of other possible areas. The more comprehensive contingency planning systems of other INGOs can serve as useful models for Concern.
- Discuss options with partners for setting up more effective and consistent community participation, transparency and complaint-handling mechanisms, using some culturally appropriate tools and strike a better balance between community preferences and cluster/donor/international standards requirements.
- Encourage all partners to pay more attention to cultural aspects in selecting families, e.g., the importance of extended family courtyards and vulnerability, as already being done by some partners
- Look into setting up an MIS system, starting with an evaluation TOR developed before emergency and then continuously collecting info for the benefit of SMT, field staff, partners and external evaluators
- Invest more on local capacity-building of committees to convert them into agents of change and capable of negotiating confidently with government and market agents
- Review prestocking and purchasing system in discussion with partners, and explore the possibility of more decentralized systems, starting with pilots, so as to strike a balance among the humanitarian imperative and logistical, security and financial imperatives

- Look into setting up some DRR system for coming flood season, especially community-level communication tree, and continue to expand for future with community-level emergency preparedness capacity-building (Concern recently received a grant from OFDA for this purpose).
- Aim to develop long-term development programs in these areas as they are also very poor
- In discussion with Concern Dublin, aim for a more manageable evaluation system that focuses on evaluating a sample of emergency projects rather than every project.
- Develop a constructive approach to evaluations, maintain an open mind to suggestions, be willing to listen to and learn about good practices from other agencies, recognize that even the best of programs will have some weaknesses and share information about and discuss shortcomings confidently and maturely with evaluation teams.