Pakistan Resilience Partnership (PRP)

Partner's Criteria for Participation in Cluster & Coordination Mechanism

Increased locally led actions to prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters in selected high risk countries of Asia

The flagship regional platform of Asian Preparedness Partnership (APP), was founded by six countries of Asia including Pakistan for improving the preparedness and emergency response to disasters by strengthening the capacity of local humanitarian actors. The initiative is being implemented by Asian Disaster Preparedness Center with support from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. In line with the regional initiative, Pakistan Resilience Partnership (PRP) was established in 2018, under the umbrella of NDMA. The objective of the PRP is to improve the interface and partnership between PRP partners namely government, local humanitarian organizations, private sector, media and academia for enhancing their capacities through partnerships, knowledge resources, training, and networking opportunities. The Pakistan Resilience Partnership is contributing towards strengthening the disaster preparedness and emergency response capacity at national and local levels in disaster-prone areas within the country. The PRP strategy aims to develop the local humanitarian networks comprising of National Governments, Local Humanitarian Organizations, Private sector, media and academia, which will result in enhanced coordination and information exchange, during the period of emergencies caused due to disasters.

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Acronyms

APP	Asian Preparedness Partnership
CCCM	Camp Coordination and Camp Management
CLA	Cluster Lead Agency
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
HCT	Humanitarian Country Team
HRR	Humanitarian Response Review
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross
INGOs	International non-governmental organizations
IOM	International Organization for Migration
NDMA	National Disaster Management Authority
NGO	Non-governmental organizations
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
PRP	Pakistan Resilience Partnership
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	The United Nations Children's Fund
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

Background

The Christmas Day Tsunami of 2004 can be termed, in many ways a watershed moment in the history of institutionalized response to disasters. The anecdotal and statistical evidence about the successes and failures in response to that mega disaster triggered the formation of a High Level Committee by the then United Nations Under Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs, to conduct a Humanitarian Response Review (HRR)[1]. This action was prompted under the perception that humanitarian response does not always meet the basic requirements of affected populations in a timely fashion and that the response provided can vary considerably from crisis to crisis. The Review recommended a reform of the humanitarian coordination system to make it more predictable with fixed responsibilities of the humanitarian actors in various thematic and sectoral areas, and to formulate performance benchmarks for humanitarian action.

Prior to the Review, an Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) had been mandated by the UN General Assembly since 1992 to coordinate humanitarian activities at the global level. It comprises of the relevant UN agencies and international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), including the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movements. The recommendations of the HRR were to be applied to a reform of IASC-led humanitarian response coordination system and, operationally, its most salient and significant manifestation was the formation of the Humanitarian Architecture, popularly known as the Humanitarian Cluster System.

One of the findings of the HRR was about massive duplications in aid distribution, as well as significant gaps in the coverage. It also noted the undesirable variations in the quality and quantity of response items, services and packages across the spectrum of actors. The institutional reform prescription to overcome some of these issues was the Humanitarian Cluster System. The Humanitarian Clusters are supposed to be open-door, multi-stakeholder forums, established at the national, sub-regional and local levels where the stakeholders would: -

- Agree upon common approaches to needs assessment
- Regularly share the assessment data with a centralized Information Management entity
- Discuss and formulate the context-specific minimum standards for humanitarian goods and services
- Evolve consensus around geographical, sectoral, demographic priorities
- Share the regular response updates on a common format with the Information management entity

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[1]https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/legacy_files/Humanitarian%20Response%20Review%202005.pdf

- Use the consolidated Need vs. Response figures to adjust the direction, focus and quantum of the response

Clearly, all the above functions require an appropriately empowered, staffed and equipped secretariat and designated leadership. The Humanitarian Architecture therefore comprises of eleven Clusters with dedicated leadership. Each of the Clusters is lead by a UN agency, INGO or Red Cross/ Red Crescent, called Cluster Lead Agency (CLA) and is responsible for providing leadership, coordination and technical support to its secretariat. To ensure the objectivity of the Clusters, the IASC has put in place a firewall between the Programming and Cluster Coordination functions of the CLAs, implying that the personnel involved in the Cluster Coordination will not have any Programming or Implementation function on behalf of their employer agency. The IASC has established a Global Clusters' forum represented by the CLAs at the corporate level to discuss the universal policies and tools for crisis preparedness and response.

The list of Clusters and the CLAs is as follows: -

Sector	Cluster Lead
Technical Areas	
• Agriculture	FAO
• Education	UNICEF and Save the Children
• Shelter	
➢ Disasters	IFRC (Convener)[2]
➢ Complex emergencies	UNHCR
• Food Security	WFP and FAO
• Health	WHO
• Nutrition	UNICEF
• Water, Sanitation and Hygiene	UNICEF
Cross-cutting Areas	
• CCCM	
➢ Disasters	IOM
➢ Complex emergencies	UNHCR
• Early Recovery	UNDP
• Protection	UNHCR
Common Service Areas	
• Logistics	WFP
• Emergency Telecommunications	WFP
• Inter-cluster Coordination	OCHA

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[2] IFRC has made a commitment to provide leadership to the broader humanitarian community in emergency shelter in disaster situations, to consolidate best practice, map capacity and gaps, and lead coordinated response. IFRC has committed to being a 'convener' rather than a 'cluster lead'. In a MoU between IFRC and OCHA it was agreed that IFRC would not accept accountability obligations beyond those defined in its constitutions and own policies and that its responsibilities would leave no room for open-ended or unlimited obligations. It has therefore not committed to being 'provider of last resort' nor is it accountable to any part of the UN system.

Among these, UNDP has now closed down the Global Early Recovery Cluster and it has been left to the discretion of the respective Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) to roll it out where needed. In some countries, the relevant governmental authorities are invited to co-chair the Clusters and in some cases, I/NGOs too are invited to share the responsibility of leadership.

The Clusters were originally designed as a Crisis Response mechanism but it was soon realized that there is a need to keep the personnel, tools and protocols ready for rolling out when needed. Consequently, the Global Clusters are permanent, standing entities that keep the preparedness systems updated, train the Cluster Coordinators and Information Management Officers and observe the horizon to respond when asked for. In a similar fashion, certain countries have also adopted Clusters as standing, preparedness forums in "normal" times, ready to be rolled out in case a risk turns into an event.

Typically, the Cluster secretariat comprises of a Cluster Coordinator, Information Management Officer and support staff and the CLA is required to bear the costs. Theoretically, the CLA is also the "provider of the last resort", implying that if the assessment identifies a critical gap in the response and no other partner is responding to it, the CLA is mandated to fill that gap from internal or external funds.

The Clusters are coordinated by an Inter Cluster Coordination body that has been given various names in different countries. This forum has the upwards answerability to the HCT and is supposed to be accountable to the Cluster members and through them to the affected population. Another function that the Clusters discharge is to allocate resources to the members through an open and transparent process, on the basis of agreed upon technical standards, priorities and needs. The Clusters also often constitute ad-hoc technical committees from within its members to work on an emerging technical issue, present the proposed solution to the entire Cluster and eventually make it a part of the overall response design.

Humanitarian Architecture in Pakistan

As mentioned above, the recommendations of the Humanitarian Response Review were at an abstract stage and detailed Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) were still to be worked till October 2005 when Pakistan was hit by a devastating earthquake, measuring 7.6 on the Richter Scale, killing around 76,000 people and rendering another half million homeless. As a response, the UN decided to roll out the Clusters without waiting for all the technical pre-requisites to be in place. Pakistan thus is the world's first country to have pioneered the new humanitarian architecture.

Without going into great details about that experience, its achievements, lessons learnt and evaluations, the global humanitarian community declared it one of the most successful disaster response in terms of coverage, efficiency and coordination. The demonstrated efficacy of the Cluster system in Pakistan and its ownership by the government and the civil society paved the way for it to become a permanent preparedness mechanism in the country. The Cluster system was therefore employed for virtually all the subsequent disasters in the country at the national and sub-national levels for a range of disasters from conflicts, internal displacement, floods, cyclones and earthquakes.

The original idea of the Clusters was of that of an open-door forum where the UN, the government, the donors, the INGOs, the national civil society representatives, the media, the academia and the affected people can be present to adopt a collective and accurate view of the challenges and the responses. In reality however, the Clusters in Pakistan (and most other countries) have adopted the form of an exclusive club, where mostly the UN, INGOs and national NGOs attend, with occasional representation of the government and rarely the donors.

During the Malakand crises 2007 and super Flood of 2010, cluster system in Pakistan was further refined in term of its efficacy and coordination aspect. Government decided and earmarked the following organizations/departments to act as cluster co-lead.

Sector	Cluster Co-Lead
Technical Areas	
• Agriculture	Ministry of National Food Security and Research
• Education	Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training
• Shelter	
➢ Disasters	National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)
➢ Complex emergencies	National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)
• Food Security	Ministry of National Food Security and Research
• Health	Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination
• Nutrition	
• Water, Sanitation and Hygiene	National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)
Cross-cutting Areas	
• CCCM	
➢ Disasters	National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)
➢ Complex emergencies	National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)
• Early Recovery	National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)
• Protection	National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)
Common Service Areas	
• Logistics	National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)
• Emergency Telecommunications	National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)
• Inter-cluster Coordination	National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)

However, the representation remained restricted to UN, INGOs, NGOs and Government/NDMA. As a consequence, the interests and thinking of the de facto membership dominate the agenda and the discussion in the Cluster and these turn into operational bodies discussing the figures, funds and administrative challenges, rather than strategic issues such as the policy and strategy options for reducing the likelihood and impact of the future disasters, the position of the civil society and the think tanks on the response options and the opportunities for productive collaboration among various stakeholders.

In addition to the lost opportunities to make a difference at the strategic level, this often translates into a number of practical problems. The media coverage of the humanitarian work in Pakistan is less than optimal, often ignorant of the achievements and challenges and the criticism is often uninformed. This is partially rooted in the fact that the Clusters have not formally encouraged the participation of the media personnel in the humanitarian deliberations and the media has to thus rely on the anecdotal, sometimes third hand and inaccurate information about the humanitarian work. There have been some efforts by some humanitarian organizations to formally train the media personnel in reporting on humanitarian matters, but this has not happened at the level of the Clusters and the training is not followed up with the active involvement of the media personnel in the Cluster discussions.

Academic institutions and individuals have an important potential role to play in informing the technical, strategic, governance and sociological aspects of disaster management. The areas of engineering, architecture, hydrology, geology, food security, gender studies, public health, and anthropology are particularly relevant for positively influencing the policies and practices in terms of risk reduction, preparedness and response. On the other hand, the humanitarian forums and their members are in possession of enormous amounts of data that can be beneficial to the academics for research purposes. It can be stated, based on anecdotal evidence and a review of the proceedings of the humanitarian forums, that the academia is neither aware of their potential role in the Clusters nor has any concerted effort been made by the humanitarian community to engage them.

Another segment of the society whose involvement in the Cluster systems is constant but indirect and non-structured. The Private Sector is the main supplier of the humanitarian goods and sometimes services, but they are treated as vendors in bilateral transactional relationship with the individual Cluster members, rather than participants in the humanitarian deliberations in the relevant forums such as the Clusters. The mutual benefits of the participation of the private sector in the Clusters can be at various levels and in a variety of manners. As vendors, the private sector can remain abreast of the types, magnitude and expected standards of the potentially needed humanitarian goods and

services. Under the imperative of enlightened self-interest, it can help the private sector make timely procurement decisions to ensure that the needed materials and services are available and even pre-positioned when needed. Also, it provides information to the private sector philanthropy and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) actors to decide where and with which partners they wish to participate in humanitarian activities.

Precedents for such activities exist from the response to 2005 earthquake, wherein the academia, media and private sector would attend some Cluster meetings and quite a few incidents of bilateral or CLA facilitated partnerships were observed, particularly in the Shelter Cluster.

The Way Forward

The humanitarian professionals in the lead of humanitarian architecture in Pakistan may like to broaden the participation base of the Humanitarian Clusters by proactively inviting the relevant people from at least the private sector, media and the academia. Earlier all these segments (private sector, media and academic) have never been part of/included in humanitarian architecture/coordination mechanism in Pakistan. However, during 2018, in line with the regional initiative where six countries in Asia (Cambodia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, and Sri Lanka) have established the **Asian Preparedness Partnership (APP)** for strengthening the capacity on preparedness for emergency response in Asia, **Pakistan Resilience Partnership (PRP)** has been formed under the umbrella of NDMA. The objective of the PRP is to enhance the partnerships, collaboration and coordination among government, local humanitarian & civil society organizations, the private sector, media and academia at the country level. The partnership is also contributing towards strengthening the disaster preparedness and emergency response capacity at national and local levels in disaster-prone areas within the country. The PRP strategy aims to develop the local humanitarian networks comprising of national governments, local NGOs, private sector, media and academia, which will result in enhanced coordination and information exchange, during the period of emergencies caused due to disasters. The partnership has provided an opportunity to the partners especially the private sector, media and academia to be part of the humanitarian architecture in Pakistan and play their role in any emergency. Accordingly, their inclusion/ participation in the humanitarian clusters system may prove to be pivotal.

The CLAs may like to scan the horizon to identify which actors among the three categories have the knowledge, skills and resources and willingness to contribute to crisis preparedness and response and reach out to them. For instance, geography, social work, gender, civil engineering and architecture faculties from the public and private universities could be involved at least in the Shelter

and WASH Clusters to propose low cost, locally appropriate and sustainable technical options for provision of shelter and WASH facilities after a crisis. The faculties may like to assign technical research projects to their students in partnership with the responders from the UN, INGOs, national NGOs and even the private sector. The faculty members may also be involved in training and capacity building of the crisis responders before, during and after a crisis.

The CLAs may also like to involve both the working media personnel and the students from media studies departments in helping them design their outreach and communication strategies and also partner with the media to sensitize the vulnerable and affected people on issues of humanitarian significance. The media has been partnering with the NGOs and philanthropic actors in the past for resource mobilization, but mostly on bilateral or individual basis. The CLAs may like to make this partnership more broad based and structured for the Cluster as a whole.

The private sector involvement can be started initially through partnering with the organized trade bodies such the chambers of commerce at various levels. Subsequent to the initial contact, the CLAs may like to propose to the chambers the profiles of the relevant private sector entities to engage with the respective Clusters. In parallel, another segment of the private sector i.e., the legal community may also be engaged to explore options for tax exemptions for the amounts donated or earned through sales to the Cluster members, with a view to further encourage the participation of the corporate and smaller business entities.

The humanitarian leadership in Pakistan may like to conduct targeted and tailored training and sensitization sessions with the three segments of the society to keep their interest alive and to orient them about their respective roles in the humanitarian system.

Established in 1986, Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC) is an intergovernmental organization and supporting the advancement of safer communities and sustainable development, through implementing Partnerships that reduce the impact of disasters upon countries and communities in Asia and the Pacific. ADPC with support of Bill and Malinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) is implementing the program ''Increased locally led actions to prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters in selected high risk countries of Asia'' to strengthen the capacity of at risk-communities. This will be achieved through systematic capacity development of individuals, organizations and the systems at national, sub-national and local levels. The program utilizes a unique approach by creating APP, which promote and support the locally-led actions where all partners take a lead role, in a collaborative manner to plan and implement priority actions in disaster preparedness, humanitarian response and recovery through mobilizing internal resources and external humanitarian funding. With the creation of national partnership in the program countries and commencement of planned activities, it would be imperative to highlight the value addition of this collaborative approach in the overall humanitarian architecture of each project country.as part of this strategy, communication and outreach can play a critical role in the dissemination of work undertaken to improve and strengthen coordination mechanisms and emergency response capacity of our key stakeholders.