



Thematic Review of Human Security in Conflict & Emergencies

South Asia Earthquake Evaluation

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Acronyms

AAI	Action Aid International
ALPS	Accountability, Learning and Planning System
AWARE	Badara Dala (regional NGO in Pakistan)
CBO	Community Based Organisation
DA	Development Areas
DAC	Development Advisory Committee (of the OECD)
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
ERP	Earthquake Response Programme
ERRA	Earth Quake Reconstruction
EVRAM	Earthquake Victims Rights Movement (regional NGO in Pakistan)
FGD	Focus group Discussion
HH	Household
INGO	International NGO
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MSC	Most Significant Change
Naizzams	Elected local government officials
NFI	Non Food Items
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NWFP	North West Frontier Province
RBA	Rights Based Approach
RTEP	Rights to End Poverty
SO	Social Organisers
VDC	Village Development Committee

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Executive Summary

Mid Term Review Human Security Strategy

Introduction

Action Aid international (AAI), as part of a midterm review of the Human Security Strategy (2005-2010), commissioned a ‘forward looking’ evaluation to provide an opportunity to critically review the work carried out, in order to ‘Work differently and better for the future’.

This evaluation examines the South Asia Earthquake response. The key questions in this evaluation were:

1. Whether the assumptions underlying AAI’s programming are valid and whether the approaches are appropriate within Action Aid’s overall strategy, the *Rights to End Poverty*.
2. Whether AAI’s implementation of these approaches made the difference intended at all levels (local, national, international).
3. The effectiveness of AAI systems for programming, management, accountability and learning.

Human Security Strategy

Human Security in conflict and emergencies was adopted as a core theme of AAI’s work through the international strategy *Rights to End Poverty*¹. The Human Security Strategy plan (2005-1010)² sets out the strategic framework of how AAI works to mitigate the causes and effects of emergencies and conflict.

It identifies the overarching goal and five interrelated objectives. The overall goal is to enable people to continue to exercise their rights and maintain a sense of security during conflict and emergencies. The five strategic objectives are:

- To reduce the hazards that threaten poor people;
- To alleviate and address the causes of conflict;
- To build people’s resistance to conflict and emergencies;

¹ Right to End Poverty Action Aids International Strategy

² Action Aid International Human Security in Conflict and Emergencies Strategic Plan 2005-2010

- To generate pressure on governments, armed opposition groups and institutions to uphold their responsibility to protect people during conflict and emergencies;
- To assure poor people's access to appropriate assistance and basic services in conflict and emergency situations.

AAI takes a consistent approach to all Human Security strategies and how it works in conflict and emergencies, as set out in brief below³:

- Taking a rights-based approach;
- Providing emergency relief and development work;
- Linking relief, rehabilitation and development;
- Supporting poor and excluded people in particular as these people are the most affected by disasters;
- Working collaboratively and in genuine partnership;
- Integrating with work on conflict
- Emphasizing effective participation;
- Emphasizing transparency, accountability, learning;
- Linking practice and policy, from local to global.

Methodology

The assessment methodology adopted took onboard the forward-looking nature of this evaluation to enable staff and community members to build upon their strengths and successes. For this reason, the methods employed were participatory and qualitative, while, at the same time, triangulated from different sources and referenced against the quantitative reports that were available. The following assessment methods were employed:

- Pre-assessment desk study of the available field reports, proposal documents etc.;
- Pre-planning and debriefing sessions with the evaluation team;
- Appreciative inquiry;
- FGD;
- Key stakeholder interviews;
- MSC (most significant change);
- Pictures of change coming from community members;
- Focus group discussions (FGD) with beneficiaries;
- Site visits;
- Feedback and debriefing session with Action Aid staff;
- Informal, ad hoc interviews.

The field visit in total lasted 16 days, with the vast majority of the time spent in Pakistan (12 days) and the remaining in India (4 days). This was due to the relative

³ See AAI HSS for more detailed information and other key documents such as Participatory Vulnerability Analysis: A step by Step guide for field Staff and Alps Accountability Learning and Planning System.

scale of the response in Pakistan compared with India and secondly, because access to the community in India was not possible for a foreign national.

Findings

Although AAI brought no clear technical added value to the emergency response programmes, the skills and the value of its approaches and the assumptions under which it operated, coupled with its skilled and dedicated staff made it an important and valuable contributor to the South Asia earthquake response.

The Earthquake response's clear strengths in relation to its **assumptions and approach** was taking the side of the poor and excluded. The community felt that targeting was transparent, equitable and fair. In addition, effective participation was ensured through establishing CBOs, with one representative for every ten households. Coupled with this the establishment of women's community groups was a new structure within the communities and a new positive experience for women. Finally, transparency, accountability and learning in planning, monitoring and reviewing was strong and an added strength and value of Action Aid's Programming in Pakistan. Numerous examples exist of community groups being involved in the identification of beneficiaries, the monitoring of distribution, and decision-making in the development of the planning programme. Communities reported feeling consulted by AAI and also felt that AAI were open to being questioned about their actions.

Other assumptions and approaches outlined in the Human Security strategy brought a number of issues to light for further discussion in the IECT. Firstly, in the acute emergency phase, AA Pakistan staff felt it was difficult to operate on a RBA in the initial response period. In emergency settings, governments are often not able to provide all the assistance needed. It was only after three months that field office staff felt that they had started to work from a rights-based platform.

Secondly, integrating conflict response more into emergency work revisited a number of dilemmas recognised by AAI. Working with the most vulnerable, although they are disenfranchised, does have wider political implications. Lack of clarity within AAI on how RBA should be carried out within an environment of conflict, what this really means on the ground and how practical it is given the constraints - the nature of human rights is potentially inflammatory - requires reflection and reconsideration.

Links between the **Implementation of Interventions** in country programmes and Action Aid Human Security priority areas were situated around Objective five: 'To ensure poor people have access to appropriate assistance and basic services in conflict and emergencies' and Objective four 'To generate pressure on governments, armed opposition groups and institutions to uphold their responsibility to protect people in conflict and emergencies'. Also within objective five, the provision of shelter, NFI's and health services were a major component of both the Indian and Pakistan interventions.

The gap between Programme Interventions and the Human Security Strategies related to the objective of 'reducing the hazards that threaten the poor'. No clear link

emerged in the Pakistan programme. Objective three: ‘To alleviate and address the causes of conflict’ was not clearly evidenced in either India or Pakistan’s country programme of interventions. Sensitivity to the conflict in India was crucial and a necessary aspect of all programme operations due to the nature of the environment, as mentioned in the assumptions and approach section.

The assistance that AA Pakistan and India provided in the initial response period was suitable and relevant to the needs of the community immediately after the earthquake, i.e. the shelters, NFI’s, food and medical assistance. Communities reported at the time of the earthquake that their most important need was shelter and AA Pakistan and India provided them with shelters, which they installed themselves. It was only later on in the Pakistan programme that some issues of suitability arose, for example about the breed of goats provided. In Pakistan there was also the question of the adequacy of some levels of assistance - the type and number of shelter kits and the cash grants adequacy in meeting livelihood objectives.

Issues that arose in relation to the **effectiveness of the systems**, in particular, to the management system, related to those between the ERP and the existing country programme and were not internal to the ERP structures. The main question that now faces AA Pakistan is how to incorporate the success and learning that occurred within the ERP into the existing country programme in 2008.

In regard to the monitoring, reviewing and learning process, a number of issues came up:

- The indicators at the outcome level in the log frame were not present in the strategic framework;
- Field reports did not relate to the programme’s work plan;
- Outputs outlined in the reports from the field office were difficult to subsequently link back to different donor grant obligations;
- Community led monitoring was highlighted by the staff and in FGD but tended to be informal in nature and often not present in written form;
- Targets changed as the programme developed, however, a way of incorporating these changes into the monitoring system was not developed in a timely fashion;
- Outcome level monitoring was missing;
- The capacity to complete the related paperwork and forms varied across the different field offices;
- Some of the statements within the objectives level column of the strategic log frame were inappropriate.

Recommendations

Bringing added value to AAI service delivery

AAI should focus its sectoral interventions in areas where effective participation and working with the poor, vulnerable and excluded are intrinsic to its success, as this will bring AAI added value into its service delivery component. For example, its collective livelihood programmes, such as the saw mills.

Women's Empowerment

Stronger lateral links should be created between different women's community-based groups, which will bolster confidence, learning and linkages between more traditional areas and more open communities.

Critical review and Reflection from ERP programme Pakistan

The learning that has taken place within the ERP should be incorporated back into the country programme, through critical learning, review and reflection events in the first half of 2008.

Monitoring and reporting to external donors

In response to larger emergencies, does AAI need to consider hiring a dedicated M&E person, where there are requirements to report to external funders? If there is no one person to whom these duties are clearly assigned, an individual is needed who can set up the reporting structures and train staff on donor requirements.

PART I: BACKGROUND

1. Introduction

Action Aid international (AAI), as part of a midterm review of the Human Security Strategy (2005-2010), commissioned a ‘forward looking’ evaluation to provide an opportunity to critically review the work carried out so far and draw out lessons learnt and recommendation to enable them to ‘Work differently and better for the future’.

The thematic review of Human Security in conflict and emergencies⁴ aimed to:

- Check if AAI thinking and the assumptions underpinning the Human Security strategy (and the way it is implemented) are still valid and relevant.
- Take stock of the work to date.
- Assess how AAI strategy ‘sits’ within the wider emergencies and conflict sector and within Action Aid.
- Provide an overall analysis of the current processes and approaches used for monitoring progress and learning.
- Check on and deepen accountability,

This evaluation examines the South Asia Earthquake response. It is one of the four strands making up the thematic review of AAI Human Security Strategy. The wider process includes evaluations of AAI responses to the Tsunami, a review of how AAI international Human Security works fits into the broader emergencies/conflict context, and a review of AAI’s Human Security work from an organisational perspective.

The key questions, with particular focus on number one, in the Terms of Reference for this evaluation were:

4. Whether the assumptions underlying our programming are valid and whether the approaches are appropriate within Action Aid’s overall strategy, the *Rights to End Poverty*.
5. Whether AAI’s implementation of these approaches made the difference intended at all levels (local, national, international).
6. The effectiveness of AAI systems for programming, management, accountability and learning.

The report has been sub-divided to respond to these questions in turn. Section three examines the assumptions and approaches of the Human Security strategy alongside Action Aid Pakistan and India operations. Section four looks at the countries programme outcomes at the local, national and international levels. Section five reviews the effectiveness of the programming and management system in meeting the programme’s objectives. Learning and recommendations are then summarised in

⁴ Refer to Terms of Reference for the Human Security in Conflict and Emergencies Thematic review for Background and wider discussion and purposes of the thematic review.

section six. For an overview of the methodology and approach of this evaluation, section two sets out the main issues.

This report is one of the numerous methods that have been used to feedback findings to the various stakeholders, in addition to feedback workshops, presentations, video films and one to one debriefings.

1.1 Human Security Strategy

Human Security in conflict and emergencies was adopted as a core theme of AAI international work in the international strategy *Rights to End Poverty*. The Human Security Strategy plan (2005-2010)⁵ sets out the strategic framework of how AAI works to mitigate the causes and effects of emergencies and conflict.

It identifies the overarching goal and five interrelated objectives. The overall goal is to enable people to continue to exercise their rights and maintains a sense of security during conflict and emergencies. The five strategic objectives are:

- To reduce the hazards that threaten poor people;
- To alleviate and address the causes of conflict;
- To build people's resistance to conflict and emergencies;
- To generate pressure on governments, armed opposition groups and institutions to uphold their responsibility to protect people during conflict and emergencies;
- To assure poor people's access to appropriate assistance and basic services in conflict and emergency situations.

AAI takes a consistent approach to all Human Security strategies and how it will work in conflict and emergencies, as set out in brief below⁶:

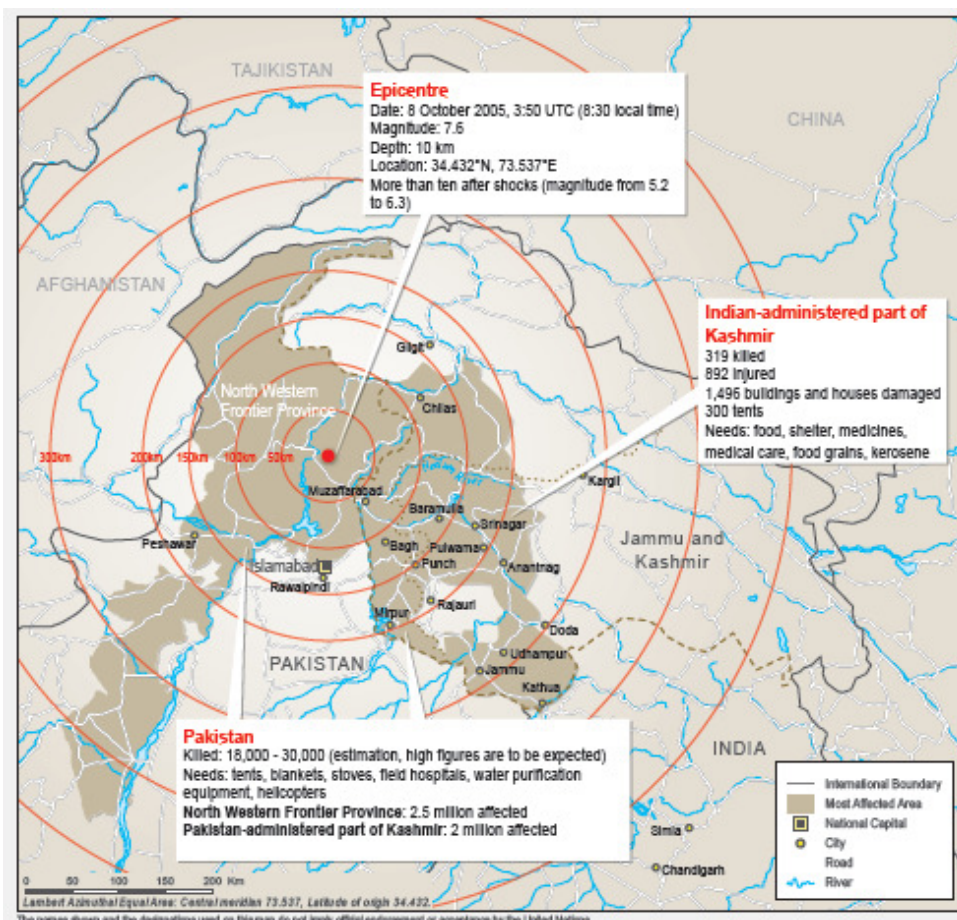
- Rights-based approach;
- Emergency relief in development work;
- Linking relief, rehabilitation and development;
- Supporting poor and excluded people in particular as these people are the most affected by disasters;
- Working collaboratively and in genuine partnership;
- Integrating with work on conflict
- Emphasizing effective participation;
- Emphasizing transparency, accountability, learning;
- Linking practice and policy, from local to global.

1.2 Action Aid's Operations

The earthquake occurred on the 8th October 2005 measuring 7.6 in magnitude. The diagram below shows the scope and the scale of the disaster.

⁵ Action Aid International Human Security in Conflict and Emergencies Strategic Plan 2005-2010

⁶ See AAI HSS for more detailed information and other key documents such as Participatory Vulnerability Analysis: A step by Step guide for field Staff and Alps Accountability Learning and Planning System.



Tables 1 South Asia (Pakistan and India: Earthquake OCHA Situation Report No4; Issued 9th Oct 2005

The earthquake response programmes across Pakistan and India operated as independently of each other. In both India and Pakistan the earthquake affected areas resulted in AAI moving into new locations. In Pakistan, a separate office was established to manage the Emergency and Reconstruction projects and four field offices⁷, out of which the field teams worked. In India AA India already had a field office in AJK but moved into new area, close to the line of control and set up related field offices.

The emergency response strategic plans developed after the earthquake covered up to December 2007.

In Pakistan, the programme's goal was that

Families affected by the October 2005 Earthquake in the ERP Project area should have a significantly improved quality of life than before the Earthquake.

⁷ Mansera, Bagh, Battagram and Muzaffargarh

And four key objectives:

- To enhance the capacity of staff and local communities;
- To advocate for people's rights and influence the government's reconstruction and rehabilitation policy
- To facilitate family protection through addressing immediate and strategic Needs
- To assist in rehabilitation of destroyed livelihood and improve access to alternative lively hoods opportunities

In India the programmes

The program was broken into three phases. First phase was supported by DEC, ECHO, this was mainly the relief phase with the distribution of shelter and NFI. The second phase, ERP1, was extended response phase, supported by DEC. Main interventions were cash for work, focusing on reconstruction of infrastructure such as footpaths. The final phase issues covered are

- water and sanitation
- livelihood (building skills),
- children's transition care centre,
- work on advocacy was around access and some issues of right,
- climate change and the impact on livelihood,
- the DRR program in schools,
- and psychosocial care and primary healthcare.

PART II METHODS

2 Objective of assessment.

The specific objective of the South Asia evaluation was to:

Conduct a critical midterm evaluation of the South Asia Earthquake response to draw out lessons, learning and recommendations on the way forward as part of a wider review of Human Security Strategy.

The South Asia midterm evaluation looked at the ongoing operations in Pakistan and India to provide Action Aid staff with feedback on:

1. How far the assumptions underlying the programming are valid and whether the approaches are appropriate within Action Aid's (AA) overall strategy, *Rights to End Poverty* and within the broader humanitarian context.
2. Whether the implementation of these approaches made the difference intended at all levels (local, national, international).
3. The effectiveness of Action Aid's systems of programming, management and accountability.

2.1 Methodology

The assessment methodology adopted took onboard the forward looking nature of this evaluation to enable staff and community members to build upon their strengths and success. For this reason, the methods employed were participatory and qualitative, while, at the same time, triangulated from different sources and referenced against the quantitative reports that were available. The following assessment methods were employed:

- Pre-assessment desk study of the available field reports, proposal documents etc.;
- Pre-planning and debriefing sessions with the evaluation team;
- Appreciative inquiry;
- FGD;
- Key stakeholder interviews;
- MSC;
- Pictures of change coming from community members;
- Focus group discussions with beneficiaries;
- Site visits;
- Feedback and debriefing session with Action Aid staff;
- Informal ad hoc interviews.

In Pakistan, there were:

- 32 MSC documents (Domains of Livelihood and Power and Change),
- 189 Photos taken by community members

- 45 Key Stakeholder interviews;
- Observations in 7 villages;
- 14 FGD's covering four districts⁸ - Battagram, Mansehra, Bagh & Muzafarabad, Union Councils 7.
- Interviews with the District Reconstruction Unit (DRU), Deputy Commissioner Bagh, District Police Officer, District Administrator Officer, Nazims, NGOs – Battagram; Teachers and medical staff in the Health Centre;
- AAI Pakistan staff: Field Co-ordinators, Programme Manager, Country programme Staff and Social Organisers.

In India, there were:

- 2 FGD (mixed) held with community members from two enclaves in the controlled zone.
- Interviews with a Livelihood focal person and Livestock person;
- AAI India staff including the Field Co-ordinator, Social Organisers, Partner staff.

The field visit in total lasted 16 days, with the vast majority of the time spent in Pakistan (12 days) and the remaining in India (4 days). This was due to the relative scale of the response in Pakistan and India and secondly because access to the community in India was not possible for a foreign national.

In Pakistan there was an evaluation team⁹ of 5 divided into two mixed groups men and women. Action Aid staff involved in the data collection did not collect information from within their Areas of responsibility.

The areas were chosen to ensure that there was a range of geographical locations, programme interventions, field office responsibilities, and security concerns, with particular focus on Livelihood and Women's Empowerment.

In India access to the Indian occupied AJK was not possible for the consultant due to restrictions on non-Indians. Consequently, all initial meetings took place in the AAI India field office in Singer and then in field offices close to the respective enclaves. In India, all the information was collected by the consultant alone.

⁸ The villages where the FGD took place were Charankada, Malokra, Bazargay (Mansehra), Chalandrat, Killa Hoter, Sanitary workers (Bagh), Shahlabagh (Muzafarabad), Bazargay (Battagram)

PART III Human Security Assumptions and Approach

3. Overview

This section looks at the assumptions and approaches underpinning the Human Security strategic plan, which sets out how AAI will work in an emergency and how this manifested itself within an emergency setting - the South Asia Earthquake in Pakistan and India. The findings focus on successes and learning.

AAI Human Security Strategy takes a rights-based approach to emergencies and conflict, which emphasises respecting, promoting, protecting and fulfilling the rights of the poor and excluded people. Working with partners and in alliances, AAI will hold states, governments and institutions accountable for the enhancement of human security.

Poor and excluded people will be proactive in the design and implementation of programmes. Basic assistance will be provided on the basis of need, rather than, identity, gender or beliefs.

AAI interventions in emergencies and conflict promote long-term sustainable solutions through the integration of humanitarian work and ongoing development work. This approach also encompasses preparedness, response and recovery in the long-term struggle for poverty eradication, conflict prevention, ending violence, enhancing social and economic post conflict reconstruction and peace building.

3.1 Rights Based Approach

The Rights Based Approach (RBA) highlights that the protection of people's rights are equally as valid in an emergency as at other times and within this, the fight for women's rights is central because their rights are denied most extensively and systematically.

With this in mind, the evaluation focused on the following issues:

Q Was the protection, respect and promotion of people's rights equally valid in the emergencies program as in development programs?

Q Was there a fight for women's rights within the program?

Women Power and Change

“We were the most neglected part of the society. We have no say in any issue. Even we can’t speak for our own rights. But now the situation has changed. Now we are raising our issues at different levels and influencing the government. Now we are taking decisions at our community organization level also. Women Sanitary worker, FGD, Bagh, AJK, Pakistan

“We were not aware of how a women’s organisation can function, after AA intervention we got to know that CBO can contribute a lot to fight for our rights. We gather in meetings and share our problems and find solutions for them. We also have participated in the world social forum and raised our problems; we had never spoken in such a big forum before” *Women FGD Muzaffrabad, AJK, Pakistan*

“We cannot do anything, we joined the Village Development Committee to make our voices more vocal”-*Women from VDC from AJK India*

“More powerful is Government but we too are powerful if we can speak for our rights and fight for them. Now we can go to any forum to fight for our rights without any hesitation.” *Women FGD Muzaffrabad, AJK, Pakistan.*

The Success of the Rights Based Approach

A number of achievements in relation to RBA were evident.

Information during the **initial assessment data collected was disaggregated between** men and women in Pakistan, allowing women to be a distinct group in the targeting of assistance.

Community members consistently reported that the **assistance focused on the most needy, marginalized and excluded** rather than being linked to particularly influential groups. In the FGD, community members, both men and women, were involved and understood the process for selecting those who should receive assistance.

Since the earthquake in both Pakistan and India facilitated the establishment of community groups¹⁰, these **communities groups¹¹ were used as a platform to develop awareness around issues of rights.** They were subsequently used as a focus for lobbying their government and other influential individuals on key issues.

An example comes from Hill, Battagram; an area traditionally dominated economically and politically by landlords (khan) In Aug, 2006 a local Nazim (khan) of Hill had AAI Pakistan corrugated iron sheets (CGI) sheets confiscated by the police. He reported that Action Aid staff had informed them that he was going to sell them. Action Aid had intended the sheets to be distributed to the local community. The community were unhappy about the Nazim and visited the police station many times requesting this issue be solved. The CGI were held for over two months and the community arranged a Press conference about the Nazim/khan’s behaviour This was the first time in the history of Hill that people had stood up for their rights against traditional influential leaders.

Across the board in Pakistan and India, community members report a greater awareness of their rights and with that, a sense of empowerment, although in India, the ability then to exert those rights was greatly restricted by the ongoing conflict in AJK.

In some more traditional communities in Pakistan, such as Battagram, the **establishment of women’s groups** was a new concept. Initially, there was resistance to the idea but

¹⁰ Village development committees (VDC) in India and Community Development Committee CDC)

¹¹ In most villages in Pakistan there were separate male and female groups. In India, the community groups were mixed

in time, when the community could see how AAI Pakistan worked, trust was built up. In one group, a woman reported it was the first time that she had ever had the chance to meet other women and discuss their issues. These groups were still in their infancy and many of the women who attended were wives of men who were active in the male community group; other women still reported that their husbands would not let them attend such meetings.

AAI staff in Pakistan, when asked what helped them to achieving these successes reported:

- Having access to AAI materials, such as the RBA booklet;
- Training and workshops which grew up enabled them to develop social mobilization strategies and gave them a greater understanding of the causes of poverty and the role of the state;
- ALPs assisted them in focusing on marginalized groups;
- Ongoing meetings with people to discuss strategies.

Rights Based Approach Learning

A number of issues faced the Action Aid staff.

In an acute emergency phase, AAI staff felt that it was **difficult to operate on a RBA in the initial response period**. In emergency settings governments are often not able to provide all the assistance needed. It was only after three months that field office staff felt that they had started to work from a rights based platform.

After the Earthquake, a number of different organisations were operating in the same area as AAI. These organisations provided a number of different services to the community. This fostered a mentality in the community that NGO's are only there to provide services and grants, while AAI operated on a Right based platform providing 'softer' services in a gender sensitive framework within a wider environment where 'free handouts' were seen to be the norm. This made it more **difficult for AAI to promote community self reliance**. Although engagement with AAI might be more beneficial for them in the long run, in terms of sustainability and empowerment, in the short term, the community could perceive involvement with AAI as less rewarding. This is demonstrated in the quotations below quote from a Women's FGD in Muzaffrabad.

"When households are focused on reconstruction the feeling is ...if you will not give anything to me, then I can go to another organisation who will give me something"

The dilemma varied depending on the number of other organisation operating in the same geographical location as AAI and the scale of the disaster. For example India reported operating on a RBA after three/four months. By contrast in Pakistan where the geographical scale was greater, staff felt that it was only in the last six month that a RBA was being adopted.

3.2 Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development

Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development involves Disasters/emergencies being integrated into the development process and not stopping at the relief phase. As such, the emergency response should incorporate long-term development considerations from the early stages.

With this in mind, the evaluation focused on the following questions:

Q: In seeking to respond to people's emergency needs, were development principles maintained?

Q: What was the balance between life saving actions and focus on the long term impact?

Q: How was the mobilization of affected communities to claim their rights supported and incorporated into a longer-term approach though AA?

Q: What was the link between the emergency operations and existing country programmes?

Success in Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development.

A number of achievements in relation to linking relief and rehabilitation were evident.

In Pakistan, when the shelters were being developed, AAI engaged the services of a consultant engineer, who designed a number of sample houses that incorporated **minimum earthquake resistant standards**. These samples were then brought back to the community and the communities decided between the different plans. When these had been approved, AAI started work on them. Community groups were formed to aid in the construction, which raised the skills level of the local community members. Training was also provided on how to maintain houses in earthquake affected areas. Later on, when there was a shortage of skilled labour, AAI arranged a 30 day training course for community members to build their capacity in masonry, carpentry and plumbing.¹²

¹² This was for 30 people for 30 days

Rather than just supplying medical assistance, AAI Pakistan also provided **first aid training** to community members making them better equipped to deal with future disasters.

In India, **work on DRR was multi faceted:** there was training in first aid, a DRR school programme and tree planting programme, and research into climate change, with a subsequent publication.

Learning in Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development.

A number of issues faced the Action Aid staff in integrating the development operations into the relief and rehabilitation operations.

Firstly, although stated in the Human Security strategy that **longer term commitment** is part of AAI's overall approach, communities in India in October 2007 were still not sure whether the programme would be continued past the end of the year, creating a degree of uncertainty within the community. Although a number of options were being discussed at the management level, such as requesting an extension of the coverage of an existing Echo programme to cover 'new earthquake areas', or diverting funds from the existing funding pot.

In Pakistan, Emergency Earthquake areas were being transferred across to Development Areas at the end of the year. A final decision had not been made at the time of the review whether all of the Earthquake areas would be transferred across. For example, in Battagram district the security risk was a consideration and it was possible that the programme could be closed after two years in this area. If this is the case, a two year programme is not compatible with the Human Security Strategy for 'longer term commitment'.

Work directly on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) in Pakistan was limited It had only been piloted in two communities nearly two years after the emergency. Consequently, the level of understanding in communities of DRR was more focused on what they would do if an emergency happened again rather than on being proactive in reducing their future risk to disaster.

The balance between life-saving actions and focusing on long term impacts in Pakistan weighed in favour of the provision of NFI, Shelter and medical assistance. The advocacy programme focused on the compensation issue and the livelihood programme cash grant scheme was use by the majority of households for reconstructing their houses.

3.3 Taking sides with the poor and excluded

AAI Emergency work must take the side of poor and excluded people, ensuring equity and justice. Operationalising this RBA should result in changes in the status/power relationships in favour of poor and excluded people within the timeframe of the emergency response projects.

With this in mind, the evaluation focused on the following questions:

Q: Were there shifts in power between the poor and excluded and AA and its partners?

How did AA in its programming and targeting ensure that the poor and excluded were the primary targets of the program?

Taking the side of the poor and excluded; Women's voices

“Action Aid mainly focused on the deprived and poor, it involved women in the processes whereas other organizations mainly work with the male community groups only”,

“Before the Earthquake we were not involved in decision - making at family or at community level. Our Community Organization is newly formed and now we are making some decisions independently. Hopefully in future, we will be able to work with men”

“The change is that we have started to take decisions at community organization level, to some extent. Now we are feeling ourselves more, powerful and confident”

Bagh Village, Khilla Hotter, Women FGD

Success in Taking the side of the poor and excluded

Taking sides with the poor and excluded was a clear strength and added value AAI brought to the emergency response. A number of achievements emerged in relation to taking the side of the poor and excluded.

Firstly, **Targeting came out as a strength of AAI work**, communities in Pakistan and India consistently communicated what the targeting criteria was; and were also involved in the identification of targeted individuals in their community. **The community felt that the targeting was transparent, equitable and fair**, as shown in the quotation below from a FGD.

“The distribution was fair as people were involved in all the processes of need assessment and distribution and in meetings, everything was being shared. The criteria for deserving each item were shared with the community”

Criteria were developed in community groups with AAI staff e.g. shelter for those living in tents. Lists were developed and then verified by AAI staff and community members.

In the initial response period, the village CBOs were responsible for taking the poor and the widows' materials to their homes as they might not be able to come to the distribution point. They also were tasked with the construction of temporary shelters for HH who were unable to do this by themselves. In Mansera, for example, there were nine reported cases of this.

Some Government offices and Nazim local government officials were dissatisfied with Action Aid's targeting as they felt that they had not been involved. When these cases were investigated further by AAI, there was no evidence to support the claims.

Social Organisers¹³ informed the community that the Community centres were owned by the women- AAI Pakistan stated that if women were not going to use the centres, then they would not be constructed. Women made the decision about where the centre was to be located. Due to examples of the above, **women reported, in some FGD, being engaged, included and consulted in the AAI Pakistan relief programme.**

Learning in Taking the side of the poor and excluded.

Women's participation was difficult in some more culturally conservative areas in Pakistan. In these areas, particularly where AAI Pakistan was new, it took time to build trust with the community and the level of involvement was more limited. In these areas, women's groups had only been established in the last six months.

Furthermore, where no female social organisers were available access to women was very limited, which made targeting them, as an excluded group, difficult.

3.4 Working in Partnership

AAI working in emergency and conflict areas aims to work collaboratively and cooperatively with other stakeholders to ensure that work is not duplicated, and that each part contributes to the overall response.

With this in mind, the evaluation focused on the following questions:

Q: How did AA manifest in its day to day work its core principles of 'partnerships', in particular, by holding shared values and perspectives with each partner and adding value to the process?

How far were the methodologies adopted appropriate, that is participatory community-led and transparent?

How far were community and partner organisations involved in the planning, budgeting, monitoring and reviewing of programs?

¹³ Social organiser are field staff working directly with the community supporting them in getting their needs addressed.

Success in Partnerships

Members of **CBO in Pakistan and VDC in India reported being involved in programme development and its subsequent monitoring.** For example, in India, the VDC decided what community infrastructure projects were to be carried out under the Cash for Work (CFW) programme. They also determined who would be employed on the CFW programme, and the lists of people were then checked by AAI India¹⁴ staff. In Pakistan examples exist of the identification of targeted families, type of livelihood training provided, and the location of Health Centres.

Community groups felt consulted and listened to. During the FGDs the community, comparing AAI to other organisation working in their villages, saw AAI as transparent in their dealings with them. This was evidenced, for example, in Mansera by the monthly feedback session SO had with their villages.

In Pakistan, the Sphere standards book and CD were distributed to field offices and basic orientation provided. However, there was confusion in the practical implementation on the ground. In both India and Pakistan, guidelines such as the size per person of shelter construction were not possible to follow due to the size of the physical space available.

Learning in Partnership

A number of learning's that emerged from working in partnership within an emergency context have been set out below.

Q: How to work in partnership in emergency if all the partners are new?

Since setting up the field offices, the staff have been working with the community on the establishment of community based organisations and regional representative bodies. Two regional community based organisations were established: one in NWFP, called 'Aware' and one in AJK called 'EVRM' (Earthquake Victims Rights Movement). AAI Pakistan consulted these groups during the development of programming and the monitoring thereof. In India, some of the partners had been working with AAI previously and some were new for the earthquake response. These organisations were mostly working on a 'welfare'¹⁵ platform. In both Pakistan and India, the partners were not directly responsible for managing funds. Where the partners were new, AAI had to build a relationship with them and support their capacity to manage the funds. There were plans in Pakistan in the transition to the DA area for the partners to then manage the funds directly - the size of the funds would be much smaller than the emergency funds and reporting requirements would be 'easier' in the sense that they would be more likely to be private AAI funds. In India, where there were existing partners, the speed in which goods and services needed to be delivered coupled with the high reporting requirement of the donor agencies resulted in funds being managed by Action Aid.

This raises a number of interesting questions. Firstly the AAI ethos of partnership is one of equity and transparency; **if money equates with power, how then does**

¹⁴ When a Household was unable to be involved, due to disability or age for example, they were support through other programs such as the livelihood initiative

¹⁵ Assistance focused on targeting 'goods' to vulnerable Households such as widows and the elderly

this transpose in partnerships where AAI ultimately holds the purse strings?

Secondly, in the initial response period after an emergency there is a need to purchase and distribute sizable quantity of shelters and NFI materials. The logistics, reporting and financial management shifts to a higher level than 'normal' DA operations for the partners. Therefore **unless a partner has spare capacity in finance and logistics, AAI will by default manage the funds, at least in the initial response period.** If this is the case, the IECT team and in country programmes need to look at ways within this context that partners can engage in financial decision-making and/or reporting.

AAI Pakistan worked in partnership with the needy and vulnerable members of the community but **consultation did not extend to local elected officials or to government officials.** In this situation, the relationship in its most developed state was one of 'informing' them. This brings up an interesting question. AAI Pakistan's relationship with government officials in a development context tends to focus around advocating that the government meet its obligations in terms of people's rights, while in an emergency, service delivery is also part of AAI's remit. On one level this gives AAI 'a seat at the table', as both they and the government provide services to community members. On another level, starting from the 'traditional' role of helping communities to advocate for their rights, opportunities to ensure more sustainable service delivery might be missed. For example, other INGOs and NGOs providing health centres consulted government ministries and agreed that the services would be taken over by the government once the organisation had left. In the AAI Pakistan case, at the time of the evaluation, of the twenty four community health posts set up by AAI, the government said it would take responsibility for only four.

In Pakistan, as there were no existing partners to work with, the people who were initially involved in the emergency were existing community activists. Working with these individuals in the initial response was efficient and effective for getting assistance out to the community. However, such **existing community activists might not necessarily be representative of the most excluded and vulnerable members of society.** Once the initial chaos was over in some areas, 'alternative community groups' that were more representative and inclusive of the whole community were set up. It is worth noting that the most efficient distribution of resources and doing this in partnership with the most vulnerable and excluded are not necessarily mutually inclusive. This is further verified when examining gender issues. In the initial response phase in the more culturally conservative areas, it was difficult to get women involved in the programme.

3.5 Integrating conflict

AAI places Emergencies and Conflict within one category of strategic response and so emergency work can demand political sensitivity and conflict sensitivity.

With this in mind, the evaluation focused on the following questions:

Q: How was conflict incorporated into project planning and day to day operations?

Q: Was there evidence of political awareness, conflict sensitivity among AA staff and operational workers?

Success in integrating conflict

The Indian programme integrated political and conflict sensitivity into its operations. The India programme operated in enclaves within the Indian military designated line of control, requiring daily sensitivity and considerations of security and of how actions might reduce or enhance tension. Furthermore, the field co-ordinator of the AJK programme had a comprehensive understanding of all the actors and the interrelationships between them and the possible spaces available for AAI to work. This further contributed to a conflict sensitive programme. This conflict sensitive planning did not translate into a dedicated objective, but was more of a way of working within this environment.

Learning around the integration of conflict in emergency work.

In AAI Pakistan, the Earthquake response and conflict was not an intrinsic part of the programme's operations. The understanding of conflict of AAI field staff centred around possible tensions between different households, for example, tensions arising from the different distribution methods of INGO's and NGO's. Other examples cited are summed up well in a quote from one of the social organisers "Most of the conflict came from the influential and not from the community". One such case was a local landlord (Hahn) who thought that he would receive shelter material immediately and when he realised that this was not the case, he encouraged community members not to attend AAI meetings. This understanding of conflict did not translate into the wider programme operations.

AAI recognises **that working with the most vulnerable, although they are disenfranchised, does have wider political consequences.** This was evident in one district in Pakistan, Oghi, between the Chajjar Group and Waji group. AAI's work focused mainly on the Waji group. Working with this marginalised and vulnerable group by raising their awareness of their rights and giving them a voice resulted in other segments of society feeling that their power base was under threat.

Another issue around conflict and emergency was where one **district in NWFP, Battagram, due to ongoing security concerns, might not be transferred across to a DA area.** If this is the case, the programme will stop after two years. If AAI intends to work in areas of conflict, security issues require serious consideration in terms of the feasibility of running the programme, particularly if AAI simultaneously wishes to uphold the approach of moving from emergencies into development.

In India, one issue raised was the **lack of clarity within AAI on how RBA should be raised within a conflict environment**, what it really means on the ground and how practical it is given the constraints, **as the nature of human rights could be potentially inflammatory**. In the earthquake affected areas of Indian AJK, there were certain limitations on how an INGO could operate within this context.

For example, AAI had to have permission from the Government to operate within the line of control. If the government thought that AAI supports groups were ‘causing agitation’ then they could remove AAI’s permission to work in that area. Consequently, there was an ongoing situation, which needed carefully negotiation as AAI could neither be seen as pro-government or anti-government. Being seen as pro government made AAI India a target of certain groups which supported pro independence. Being seen as anti government could result in AAI India being denied access to the earthquake affected areas. The Field Co-ordinator struck a balance by engaging with government officials, not on a political platform but on one that enabled services to be delivered. With other segments of society which were against any engagement with government officials, engagement was on tactical level basis, keeping up the dialogue and ensuring that AAI’s impartial nature was made clear.

One example of the sensitive nature of programmes was when AAI India was given an award by the government district authority. To accept it might make them look pro government, to reject the award might affect their ability to work with different communities. AAI India accepted the award but dedicated it to the people affected by the earthquake and stated that as there was still a lot of work that needed to be done, it was not the time to talk of awards. The community groups took this well but the government were unhappy.

Another example was the Indian Government’s policy to only provide assistance to families that had no link with political groups. If someone was killed through military violence, their family would be eligible for compensation. However, if someone was killed due to being involved in a militant act, their family would not receive any assistance.

In contrast AAI India adopted a policy that everyone was eligible to receive assistance as a result of damage caused by the earthquake. AAI India’s criterion for giving assistance was based on vulnerability. AAI India subsequently communicated with the AJK ministry to explain the code of conduct in humanitarian interventions. In turn, the AJK federal government suggested that they adopt the same policy in relation to the earthquake. Unfortunately, the government of India rejected this view.

Lessons that arose from the India’s Earthquake programme included finding opportunities and spaces within the fluid environment to enable issues of rights to be raised.

3.6 Effective Participation

Effective Participation means the promotion of the rights of poor and excluded people to participate in and influence the decisions that affect them in the planning as well as the implementation of the emergency response. This means the support

process should be one which will empower the individuals and vulnerable groups with whom AAI works so that they can ensure that all actions - such as those of the state and other duty bearers - are transparent, effective and accountable. This involves using rigorous and participatory methodologies for conflict analysis and vulnerability analysis within the programming to ensure that all the responses are appropriate and community led.

In light of this, the following question were used in guiding the evaluation

Effective Participation

The difference between Action Aid and other NGOs is that AA works closely with the community and involved the communities in the project activities whereas the other organizations did not follow this approach: *Men's FGD, Charankada Village, UC Khatai Manshera, NWFP, Pakistan*

“Action Aid walks with us”

“Action Aid has awakened and mobilized us (community)”
Sanitary workers, Bagh, Pakistan.

To what degree was the methodology adopted participatory appropriate, community-led and transparent.

Success in Effective Participation

Effective participation was clearly an additional value AAI brought to the emergency response. The strengths in effective participation are outlined below

Firstly, AAI Pakistan acknowledged the importance of effective participation through having a dedicated objective in their strategic emergency plan. The objective was ‘To advocate for people’s rights and influence the government’s reconstruction and rehabilitation policy’. It focused on holding duty bearers to account in an effective and transparent manner through the effective participation of community members.

Secondly in Pakistan, effective participation was ensured through **establishing CBO by having one representative per ten households**. Also, if attendance at the meetings was less than 70%, the decisions were not valid.

Thirdly, **the establishment of women’s community groups was a new structure in the community and a new experience for women**. Some women in a FGD in Battagram reported that it was the first time that they had met up with other women to discuss their mutual concerns. AAI Pakistan also supported and provides them with opportunities to be actively involved in decisions, such as the location of health centres.

The diagram below sets out some of the other findings, linking them to the Participatory Vulnerability Assessment framework.

Learning in Effective Participation

A power structure analysis was not formally carried out in Pakistan, but through the formation of CBOs and regular meetings. Training in methodologies to help understand vulnerability analysis took place in the middle half of 2007 and lasted between one and two days.

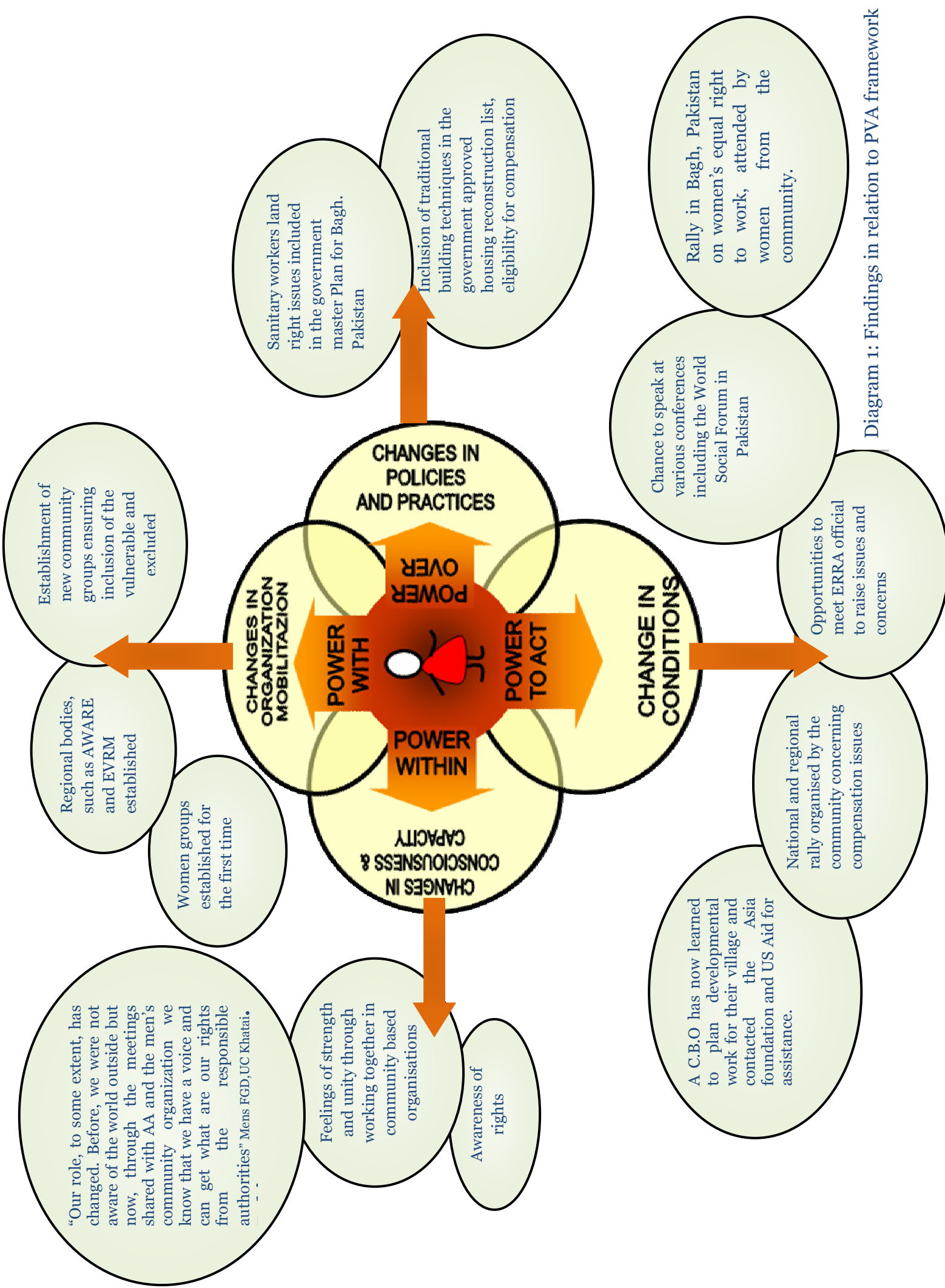


Diagram 1: Findings in relation to PVA framework

3.7 Transparency, Accountability and Learning

At the centre of AAI work on transparency, accountability and learning is the inclusion and participation of all relevant stakeholders, especially the poor and excluded. This is done through improving the quality of the planning and analysis of change using the Accountability, Learning and Planning System (ALPS). Emphasis in this area should ensure a framework is in place for the involvement of community members in planning, budgeting, monitoring and reviewing

With this in mind the following question was asked

How were the communities and partner organisations involved in the planning, budgeting, monitoring and reviewing of program?

Success in Transparency, Accountability and Learning

Transparency, Accountability and Learning in planning, monitoring and reviewing was strong and an added strength and value of Action Aid's Programming in Pakistan. Numerous examples exist of community groups being involved in the identification of beneficiaries, the monitoring of distribution, and decision-making in the development of the planning programme, such as about training courses, and the running of the health and community centre (Pakistan). Communities reported feeling consulted by AAI and also felt that they were open to being questioned about their actions.

AAI Pakistan SOs held **review and reflection meetings at community level on a regular basis**. The benefit felt by the community is summed up well in the quote below from a men's FGD in Charankada Village, Manshera, NWFP, Pakistan.

"The quarterly planning with the community is helpful because it provides opportunity to reflect on the previous work and plan in a better way for the future."

Staff reported that building trust with the community, training and awareness raising in the community on the RBA, having men and women's groups, the flexible attitude of both the community and AAI and the ongoing review and reflection events all contributed to the success in transparency, accountability and learning

Learning in Transparency, Accountability and Learning.

Transparency of budgeting was not as visible or strong as planning and monitoring, in Pakistan.

Although **women** had there their own Community Organization where they discussed different issues and problems, some **still felt dependent on men's community organizations and felt that they were not as involved in the process as men** (mostly in the more traditional NWFP). This must be viewed

within the wider context of women's involvement in more traditional areas being less at the beginning and the establishment of separate women groups being an achievement in itself. It was more likely that the men involved in the groups had more experience of interacting with officials and making decisions in relation to the community. Alternatively women's involvement in AJK was, by comparison more active and has increased. Some men now feel women are more active than men.

3.8 Policy in Practice: Local to Global

Policy and practice within the Human Security strategy aims to help experience at the community level influence policy locally, nationally and internationally. Policy areas that have been highlighted include disaster risk reduction, adaption to climate change, conflict and peace building, food aid and UN humanitarian reforms.

Within this context, the evaluation used the following questions as a guide.

How have these practices been put in place at the local national and international level?

How have experiences in the community been drawn upon in policy analysis?

Success in linking practice and policy, from local to global

There were clear successes from the policy and advocacy work in Pakistan, and opportunities in India to bring rights issues into community discussions with government officials that had not happened before. Policy issues that AAI Pakistan adopted came directly from immediate concerns in the community. These issues came from the local level and were fed into the national arena.

Some of the main activities of Pakistan's policy advocacy work were the:

- Formation of Badara Dala (Aware group) and EVRM (Bodies for looking after policy issues) at Regional Level.
- Dialogues on Reconstruction and Rehabilitation at District Level.
- Rallies against ERRA's Policies at national level.
- Meetings with bodies working on policy issues.
- Exposure Visit of Badara Dala to EVRM.
- Raised sanitary workers settlement issue in Bagh master plan.

“By highlighting the issues in the Bagh master plan AA has opened the eyes of the people and made them rethink about the future of Bagh city. It will have a long lasting impact on the lives of the people of Bagh” FGD

Examples of policy initiatives

AA Pakistan translated the compensation document into Urdu and distributed them to the community and got feedback. The feedback and information gaps were then used as a platform for dialogue with ERRA.

AA Pakistan organised a meeting with the ERRA chairman and brought community activists to the meeting. Community members discussed their issues and concerns face to face with the authorities.

“We highlighted our issues regarding housing and compensation through Baidara Dala (regional advocacy forum called ‘Aware’). The outcome of the rally and meetings was that the pace of providing compensation to affected families has increased through the work of the ERRA team. There was a positive change in the behaviour and attitude of the army and other men responsible for monitoring and assessment on the ERRA side; to some extent, they became more cooperative” *Village Charan Gada, U/C Kathai Mansehra, Pakistan*

From these a number of successes, it emerged firstly that AAI Pakistan was one of the only organisations that organised a national demonstration after one year.

Firstly lobbying and advocacy to the ERRA resulted in traditional houses being an acceptable type of construction for ERRA, allowing an additional tranche of compensation to be realised. Originally, the Housing structures that were eligible to receive compensation were more expensive and so excluded the poorer and vulnerable families as they did not have the funds to meet the standards

Secondly, the rally of 5th Oct 2006, resulted in the second tranche of compensation.

Thirdly, mobilising sanitary workers in Bagh, resulted in a commitment to provide land being made by the district authority.

Fourthly, AAI Pakistan supported a number of community groups attendance at the world social forum. The attendees included women.

Fifthly, AAI Pakistan adopted DRR as an advocacy issue after the earthquake. AAI Pakistan is taking the government to court over the 7,000 schools that collapsed and the 24,000 children who died in the schools. AAI Pakistan’s stance was that the children did not die because of the earthquake; they died because of the poor quality of the school buildings.

Learning in linking practice and policy, form local to global

Generally, the policy issues adopted by the national office were ‘bigger’ – for instance, compensation – than those in the immediate emergency context. The publication and related advocacy work on cluster groups, was not highlighted by the community as an issue of concern for them. This issue was of concern at national level and also fed into the international arena **From the Pakistan experience, advocacy issues identified in the community had links at the national level, such as compensation.**

Links with national office policy priorities and the emergency programmes initiatives did not always go hand in glove. For example Pakistan national office general policy stance on IFI, was that IFI should not be operating within Pakistan.

However, during the emergency, some of these IFI were providing funds to support the relief programme.

Another issue was devolution. The AAI national office was making a critical review of the effects of devolution in Pakistan. However, during the emergency, devolution was seen as beneficial for managing the earthquake response.

PART IV Implementation of Intervention

4. Introduction

This section examines the implementation of the programme in Pakistan and, to a limited degree, in India. It examines the links between the Human Security Strategy programme focus and the responses in Pakistan and India. Secondly, the suitability, relevance, effectiveness and impact of the interventions are considered.

4.1 Interventions

This table compares the interventions within the India and Pakistan programmes with the aims of the Human Security strategy.

Links Across Emergency Strategic Plans			
Goal	Human Security Strategy	Earth Quake Response Pakistan	Earthquake Response India
	People continue to exercise their rights and maintain a sense of security during conflict and emergencies	Families affected by the October 2005 Earthquake in the ERP Project area have a significantly improved quality of life compared with what it was before the Earthquake	
Objective	To reduce the hazards that threaten the poor		Activity: Tree planting programme 40,000 trees planted
Objective	To alleviate and address the causes of conflict		
Objective	To build people's resilience to conflict and emergencies	To enhance the capacity of staff and local communities	Activity: DRR training programme through schools took place
Objective	To generate pressure on governments, armed opposition groups and institutions to maintain their responsibility to protect people during conflicts and emergencies	To advocate for peoples rights and influence government 'reconstruction and rehabilitation policies.	To influence government rehabilitation policies

Objective	To ensure poor people have access to appropriate assistance and basic services in conflict and emergencies	To facilitate family protection through addressing immediate and strategic needs	To meet basic needs
		To assist in the rehabilitation of destroyed livelihoods and improve access to alternative livelihood opportunities	Support livelihood recovery
			To address the psycho-social situations and prevent disability arising out of disaster
			Provide support for the rehabilitation of water and sanitation and housing facilities in the 30 selected villages.

Table two: Links between Human Security strategy and India and Pakistan's Emergency Programmes

Links across Programme Interventions

Objective Five: 'To ensure poor people have access to appropriate assistance and basic services in conflict and emergencies' and Objective four 'To generate pressure on governments, armed opposition groups and institutions to uphold their responsibility to protect people in conflict and emergencies' is clearly integrated into both intervention programmes. Specifically objective five, the provision of shelter, NFI's and a health service are a major component of both the Indian and Pakistan interventions.

Objective Three: To build people's resilience to conflict and emergencies with the Human Security strategy. In India, the DRR training programme through schools focused on building the communities' capacity to prepare for future emergencies. In Pakistan, the DRR programme was only being piloted in two communities. At the time of the evaluation, the communities were developing their action plans. Also, in the initial response period, engineers were brought in to make the shelters earthquake resistant. In the preceding two years, most of the interventions focused on enabling the community to deal with a disaster better if one should happen again, for instance, by giving first aid training.

Furthermore, both programmes had psycho-social components, to a greater or lesser degree, which was highlighted in the Human Security strategy. In Pakistan, three

types of training were given to CBO members and some AAI staff for recognising and treating trauma. In India, women in the community were trained in basic counselling skills; one of the enclaves in the Indian occupied AJK set up and ran a counselling centre linked to the local hospital.

Gap between Programme Interventions and the Human Security Strategies

In relation to the objective, ‘reducing the hazards that threaten the poor’, the India tree planting initiative sits well within this objective for the Human Security Strategy. No clear link came out of the Pakistan programme. Objective three: ‘To alleviate and address the causes of conflict’ is not clearly evident in either country’s programme of interventions. This being so, conflict sensitivity in India was intrinsic and necessary for all programme operations due to the nature of the environment, as mentioned in the assumptions and approach section.

4.2 Suitability and Relevance

This section considers the suitability and relevance and the degree to which the emergency operations and policy work focused on the topics and problems given priority by AAI (and its’ main partners) in terms of the needs of the most vulnerable in India, and Pakistan. Also the:

- relevance of the operation to individual country’s demands and needs;
- extent to which the emergency operations represent the most appropriate response from AAI

Assistance that AAI provided was suitable and relevant to the needs of the community after the earthquake, i.e. the shelter, NFI’s, food and medical assistance. Communities reported at the time of the earthquake that their most important need was shelter and AAI provided them with shelters, which they installed.

Learning concerning Suitability and Relevance

Issues of suitability and relevance that came up in some Pakistan FGD reports:

- Seeds were given to those people who had no land to cultivate.
- Goats were distributed as part of the livelihood programme, but some did not survive in the hilly terrain.
- Other goats gave three off-spring but could not produce enough milk to feed them, so some did not survive.
- Some goats were given to the disabled people who were not able to take care of them.
- Timing of the goat distribution in Bar was not appropriate; there was no shelter for them and many did not survive.

4.3 Adequacy

Issues of adequacy came up in the Pakistan programme. Communities reported that while the assistance they received was suitable and relevant, the level of assistance was not adequate to meet all of the community needs.

For example, in the **shelter programme, the shelter kits differed according to the different field offices**. In NWFP, the shelter kits contained more items than in AJK. In both of these areas, cash grants were also given to vulnerable families. Although the **cash grant was part of the livelihood programme, in the majority of cases, grants were either used for kitchen equipment or normal expenditure**, or, where the shelter kits were small, to purchase the additional material needed to construct their house.

Consequently, **within the livelihood programme, instances of HH having had their incomes restored or increased were small in number**. Even if the cash grants had been dedicated to livelihood rehabilitation, the total distributed in relation to the number of vulnerable and excluded families within the AAI Pakistan operational area would still have been limited.

4.4 Effectiveness

Effectiveness looks at the initial response period.

AAI India was the first organisation to respond after the emergency due to the fact that they were already operational in the area. After the first couple of days, they set up an operations cell in the district officer's office. To date, the AAI operation is the largest programme in terms of geographical coverage and well as funding support. Also, AAI India is the only international NGO working near the line of control, due to the fact they have permission to do so.

In Pakistan their **initial response success** was built upon:

- **Community volunteers** who helped to cover larger areas in less time and with fewer resources.
- **Using local knowledge** to reach larger and more remote areas and identifying the most vulnerable
- **Commitment and dedication of existing staff**

The Community-led and run counselling support centres were noted in the FGD as beneficial in assisting the community to identify trauma and deal with it. In India, AAI staff saw the success of their programme in the establishment of a counselling support centre run by women in the community, located in the local hospital.

4.5 Impact

Impact looks at whether AAI achieved what it set out to achieve. This section will mainly focus on Pakistan and review the livelihood and work with women. Information and insights will be used from the field trip data gathered in India

Livelihood

AAI Pakistan set out ‘To assist in the rehabilitation of destroyed livelihoods and improve access to alternative livelihood opportunities’ The main activities were:

- Cash Grants
- Grocery Shops
- Communal Flour Machines
- Communal Saw Machines
- Technical Trainings (Vocational, Electrician, Plumber, Masson, Carpenter)
- Vocational Centre
- Goat Distribution
- Kitchen Gardening
- Extension Worker Training
- Seed Distribution
- Crush Machines
- Exhibitions

SUCCESS

Collective livelihood provision such as the saw machines, flour machines and water mills restoration was one of the strongest components of AAI Pakistan’s livelihood programme. It provided a viable livelihood alternative in the communities. This success was built upon AAI’s targeting and participatory approach which helped to ensure that the community’s management and ownership of the resources.

Examples of a positive shift in livelihood existed, but generally were small. Some of the women who received the cash grants utilized them for livelihood creation, for example, one woman bought a sewing machine and was reported by AAI staff to be now earning enough to support her family. Other women established a small shop and, over the years, the shop has grown and in terms of stock and turn over.

Establishment of vocational centres for women could not be evaluated in terms of the improvement of livelihood of the women that attended the training as in the centres visited; training was still ongoing or just completed. Women reported being able to sew their own clothes, which was a cash-saving. Most importantly, it **increased the skill level of women in the communities** and for some provided a way to earn a possible income in the future.

Men who attended the masonry, carpentry, electrician and plumbing training were reported as now earning 300-400 rupees a day. In total, 150-200 people were identified by the community as suitable to go on training courses. They received tool kits at the end of the course.

Cash for Work programme in India assisted 15,000 to 20,000 people. AAI India staff reported that the immediate access to cash enabled them to invest it back into restoring their livelihood. At the same time, the programme restored the

basic infrastructure of the community. HH on the cash for work programme were not eligible for the livestock programme.

Learning

Vocational training for women allowed them to save money from sewing clothes at home but did not enable them to buy a sewing machine if they were poor, so those who did not have sewing machines could not take the training further.

Questions arose over the viability of one goat per household as adequate to restore or rehabilitate HHs livelihoods. The distribution of animals was one goat per household and with one of the first-off spring being given to another family; it is questionable whether a household can earn a sustainable income from selling goat meat every 6 months or milk on a daily basis. By contrast, in India each targeted HH was given 4/5 goats or sheep, from which they could earn an income.

In attempting to reach the most needy HH, goats were given to the most vulnerable. One FGD reported that **goats were given to HH that were not able to look after the them** due to the nature of their disability; in these cases, the family sold the goat. In another case, the family did not have the resources to feed the goats. About 6 out of 150 families who received goats from a field office reported problems of unsuitability.

Cash grants in the vast majority of cases were not used to restore livelihood but to meet HH basic needs or shelter requirements

Emphasis on the Rights of women

Women and their rights are intrinsic to AAI operations. This section looks at how interventions in Pakistan affected women's lives

Success

Specific interventions focused on women, for example, the vocational training, establishing women's groups, and community centres run by women in the community. This was facilitated and supported by **AAI Pakistan SO, who had a good understanding of the importance of focusing on women in their work.** For example, in establishing a community centre, SO told the community that the centre needed to be used by women.

Women's Groups

“Before the Earthquake we were not involved in decision making at community level. Our Community Organization is newly formed and now we are making some decisions independently. We are hopeful that in future we will be able to work with men and will also make our decisions

Now the change is that we have started to take decisions at community organization level to some extent. Now we are feeling more powerful and confident.” *Women FGD Manshera, Malokra, UC Shamdara.*

“Now we feel that in future women will be involved more actively and independently” *Women's FGD Bazargaye Village.*

“Women were not involved before AA came in any sort of decisions at community level. Now we are holding our own meetings and making decisions independently. The selection of the site for water pumps was done by the woman's community organisation and the men's groups agreed with our decision. Now the men in the community are, to some extent, becoming flexible and women are taking part actively in the development process.” *Women FGD, Bagh, Village: Khilla Hotter*

‘Once something has come it is then difficult to take it away’ was the response from one male FGD when asked about the women's community groups

There is also evidence from asking community members who AAI works with and targets: ‘women and the elderly’ was consistently the response given. Another example is the development of the health centre in Shalaba, AJK. The health centre staff were recruited by the women's groups and were also responsible for the management of the health centre, and signatories of the health centre accounts.

Women were targeted for the shelter and NFI programme. Furthermore, specific assistance, such as HH kits, which address the needs of breast feeding women, were distributed in the initial response period, evidencing a gender sensitive programme.

The establishment of the women's groups was also a positive step in empowering women. Previously, women were not involved in the development process of their communities, and this was the first experience for many of working together within an organised structure.

Learning

In Pakistan, the shift in women's empowerment varied across the different field sites. In the more traditional areas, such as Battagram, women coming together to meet was a new experience for them and a new concept for men to understand. In other areas, around Muzzfradbabad, the women's starting point was better in the sense that they might already have experience of engaging in community life and the concept was understood by some of the male community members, so there was less resistance. Consequently, women in the less traditional area who had more interaction with life outside their immediate household had conceptually a better understanding of the emergency context and how they were placed within it. For example, women in Muzzfradbabad had an understanding of the cluster system. This raises the question of whether the same approach to gender empowerment in all communities would be the most effective and relevant when the cultural settings are different. Or, alternatively, is the same approach relevant but in more traditional communities, the process will take longer? This report's scope does not enable these questions to be answered. However, in each case, distinctions could be made in either the programme's objectives, or the targets in the different communities.

Women's involvement in programming in the initial period was not present in all the field sites. As mentioned above, in the more traditional areas it took

time to build trust between AAI Pakistan and the men in the community. In these areas, women became more involved in the operations after three months, but in the initial stages, for example, they were not present at the distribution point. By contrast, in AJK, and Bagh, women's involvement was possible earlier due to the cultural setting - in the immediate aftermath; distribution was taking place directly to the women. This raises the question of how to work in new communities where trust has not yet been established between AAI and the community, coupled with striking a balance between getting emergency assistance out quickly and efficiently and making sure that women participate effectively.

PART V: Effectiveness of Systems: Management and Coordination

5. Introduction

The Human Security Strategy states that its systems and procedures will allow for the rapid scale up of support in emergencies, including the deployment of staff, rapid recruitment and allocation of funds. This section looks at those systems and how they helped the country programmes work in the 'right' way to achieve their objectives.

5.1 Management Systems

Issues that arose in relation to management systems were between the ERP and the existing country programmes and not internal to the ERP structures. **The main question that now faces AAI Pakistan is how to incorporate the success and learning that has occurred within the ERP into the existing country programme in 2008.**

In Pakistan the challenge of addressing such a large scale response was to establish an independent self-sufficient ERP unit focusing purely on the emergency operation related to the earthquake. The unit had its own logistics officers, communication staff, finance officers, policy programme staff and training budget.

It is always necessary, when establishing separate operational units, to maintain good ongoing co-ordination and communication with the existing country programmes. This was the also the case in Pakistan. Feedback from the existing country programme staff was that the level of clarity and knowledge of the ERP programme varied but it was generally felt that communication and co-ordination could have been stronger. This was not the feedback that came from the emergency programme staff.

In India, the emergency operation was contained within the existing field office based in Singer, the capital of AJK, India and operated within the existing management system.

As part of an after action review workshop, AAI Pakistan emergency staff reviewed the management system at the community level through the country programme office. Some of the issue they noted are outlined below.

	Success	Existing strengths	Opportunities to build on success
Community Level	AAI Pakistan building trust with community, ownership of programmes by the community through their involvement and participation.	Community members willingness to spare their time,	Ensure AAI Pakistan staff are motivated and dedicated

Community Based Organisations	Continuing capacity, building of CBO's	Information and personal experience were shared Existing financial and human resources	Availability of resources to support capacity building (human + financial)
ERP/Field Offices	The staff felt positive about the management and effective utilization of resources; the sharing of information, and capacity building of staff led to an effective operation	Coordination between staff and their dedication, devotion	Increased flow of information, and motivation to staff,
IECT		Flow of information between the ERP and IECT, proper guidance, clear understanding of roles	Greater financial support to country programme

Table 3: Management System Successes and opportunities

5.2 Monitoring, Reviewing and Learning Process

This section looks at whether the system of internal and external reviews was appropriate and cost effective, and how far the monitoring and reviewing represented poor people's views, and how changes were made in the programme as a result of feedback. This review focuses on the Pakistan programme.

In the first month after the earthquake, the AAI Pakistan programme was working without proper documentation. At this time, volunteers were working in the team. After December, this changed with the recruitment of permanent staff and the deployment of AAI staff. The first three months centred around the formation of different systems and procedures. A log frame and budget was developed in January 2006. In April 2006, a work plan was developed with related targets for the field offices. Up to August 2006, there was a weekly report from the field. After this time, there were monthly reports with the same format as the weekly ones. The staff met as a group on a quarterly basis, and this was combined with a reflective review session in the community.

The ERP managed a number of different external donor grants.

Issues that arose within the reporting structures:

1. One overall log frame was developed at the beginning of 2006, which specific project log frames were to evolve out of. This did not happen in practice. There was no reporting according to the strategic log frame.
2. **The indicators at the outcome level were not present in the strategic framework.** Consequently, the Monitoring system did not produce the appropriate information. The strategic log frame was used for planning and budgeting, but not on a day-to-day programming basis.
3. **Field reports did not relate to the work plan** (April 06) and related targets. The field reports' focus was at the activity level due to the high turnover of management at this time and subsequently lacked focus. In August 2007, a second work plan was developed.
4. **Outputs outlined in the reports from the field office were difficult to then attribute back to different donor grant obligations.** In the ECHO reports, information came from finance rather than the field. After April 06, there was only one donor source, which made it easier to link interventions to the donor grants.
5. **Community led monitoring was highlighted by the staff and in FGD, but tended to be informal in nature and often not present in a written form.**
6. **Targets changed as the programme developed; however, a system to incorporate these changes into the monitoring system was not developed in a timely fashion.**
7. The monitoring and reporting system was set at the output level, so **outcome level monitoring was missing.** Different field offices had different understandings of indicator definitions, such as the definition of completed houses. The distribution process was broken down between the completion of the foundations and the construction of walls, but this did not correspond with the reporting mechanism. The structure of the report format was such that it did not encapsulate the different processes that took place in the field. This resulted in different, non-comparable numbers coming back from the field offices.
8. **The capacity to complete the related forms varied across the different field offices.** As AAI staff themselves were not clear about how to carry out outcome level monitoring, no guidance was passed on to the community-based organisations.
9. A dedicated M&E reporting person was hired in September 2006. Prior to this, a donor liaison person was used to compile the reports for donors.
10. The strategic Log frame written in January 2006 was only useful as a planning document for a short period of time due to the continually changing operational context.

11. The **hierarchy of statements within the objective level column in the strategic log frame had some mismatches**, for example, where activities are documented as objectives.
12. **Gender issues were not highlighted in the reporting forms** and consequently SO did not document the amount of time spent on these or stories from the community.

5.3 Human Resources.

This section asks in relation to the AAI Pakistan programme:

- Were Human resources sufficient and were adequate systems in place?
- Were sufficient resources provided to build the capacity to deliver the programme?

In the initial phase, AAI used volunteers in the field and existing country office staff. The recruitment of new staff took place from the end of October and these were in place in December.

AAI Pakistan emergency programme had skilled and dedicated staff in adequate numbers committed to their work with an understanding of AAI's approach. These successes were built upon.

1. **Simplifying the recruitment process.** The HR department speeded up the recruitment process within the emergency context. They made some compromises in relation to the 'normal' recruitment process such as:
 - Shorter induction period for the majority of staff. A longer induction was given only to the Field co-ordinators, who were tasked with providing guidance to their staff. When the SO were questioned on how they felt about AAI's way of working, guidance from their field co-ordinator was mentioned.
 - Difficulty in some cases to get people from the local areas with the required skills, which is AAI Pakistan existing policy. This was relaxed in the emergency context, however, each person recruited had to speak the local language. AAI Pakistan HR staff felt that this worked well.
2. **Staff received numerous trainings**, which assisted them in their work in line with AAI Human Security approach. These trainings included:
 - Capacity Building initiatives;
 - Log frame training;
 - Gender training;
 - Social mobilization;
 - PRA training;
 - DRR ;
- 3 **Orientation gave the staff an understanding of women's empowerment**, visitors continued to reinforce the ethos of AAI.

- 4 **Locally recruited staff** were more aware of the local culture, and its values, had geographical knowledge and an awareness of the political and economic issues, including their strengths & weaknesses, all of which was useful in building relationships.

Issues around Human Resources.

Different benefits Packages were given to country programme staff compared to the staff recruited under the emergency programme. Staff recruited as part of the emergency programme received higher wages than the national staff. This was explained as hardship money, although it was not designated as such in their pay slips. When the country officer staff went to the emergency affected areas they received additional hardship funds on top of their normal wages. From December 2007, emergency staff will move onto 'normal' AAI Pakistan contracts and pay scales which are lower than their existing package. However, they will now receive a number of other benefits for which they were not eligible before.

5.4 Coordination and Collaboration.

Co-ordination and collaboration looks at the AAI Pakistan's emergency programme and the co-ordination that took place with other stakeholders, whether this co-ordination was sufficient and effective.

Co-ordination and collaboration between AAI Pakistan and the community members was comprehensive and effective. The availability of skilled human resources and ongoing trainings, workshops, seminars, coordination meetings with the community in a participatory approach resulted in strong co-ordination in the community. Community voices, in turn, were evident within AAI Pakistan.

Co-ordination with local government officials – Nazims, ERRAs - was not as comprehensive, as mentioned section III, and the officials were only informed of AAI's work, not consulted.

Attendance at regional cluster meetings was strongest in the initial period after the disaster. After this, the field staff felt that it was not very useful for them in their everyday work. In Islamabad, the policy and emergency directors attended the cluster meetings.

Co-ordination/contact with IECT from the point of view of the field staff was in the form of guidance and support in the first year for developing proposals, selecting interventions and real time evaluations. After this initial period, they were not really aware of any ongoing relationship with IECT.

PART VI CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6. Conclusion

Although AAI brought no clear technical added value to the emergency response programmes, its skills, approaches and assumptions within which it operated, coupled with a skilled and dedicated staff made it an important and valuable contributor to the South Asia earthquake response.

The Earthquake responses clear strengths in relation to its **assumptions and approach** was it taking the side of the poor and excluded. The community felt that targeting was transparent, equitable and fair. In addition, the community's effective participation was ensured through establishing CBOs and by having one representative per ten households. Coupled with this, the establishment of women's community groups was a new structure in the community and a new positive experience for women. Finally, transparency, accountability and learning in planning, monitoring and reviewing was strong and an added strength and value of Action Aid's Programming in Pakistan. Numerous examples exist of community groups being involved in the identification of beneficiaries, the monitoring of distribution, and decision-making in the development of the planning programme. Communities reported feeling consulted by AAI and also felt that AAI were open to being questioned about their actions.

Other assumptions and approaches outlined in the Human Security strategy brought a number of issues to light for further discussion in the IECT. Firstly, in the acute emergency phase, AAI staff felt that it was difficult to operate on a RBA in the initial response period. In emergency settings, governments are often not able to provide all the assistance needed. It was only after three months that field office staff felt that they had started to work on a rights-based platform.

Secondly, integrating conflict more into emergency work revisited a number of dilemmas recognised by AAI. Working with the most vulnerable, although they are disenfranchised, does have wider political consequences. The lack of clarity within AAI on how RBA should be raised within a conflict environment, what it really meant on the ground and how practical it was given the constraints, can create difficulties as the nature of human rights is potentially inflammatory.

Links between the **Implementation of Intervention** in the country programmes and Action Aid Human Security priority areas were located around Objective five: 'To ensure poor people have access to appropriate assistance and basic services in conflict and emergencies' and Objective four 'To generate pressure on governments, armed opposition groups and institutions to uphold their responsibility to protect people in conflict and emergencies'. In addition, within Objective five, the provision of shelter, NFI's and a health services were a major component of both the Indian and Pakistan interventions.

The gap between the Programme Interventions and the Human Security Strategies related to the objective of 'reducing the hazards that threaten the poor'. No clear link came out of the Pakistan programme. Objective three: 'To alleviate and address the causes of conflict' was not clearly evident in either India's or Pakistan's country

programme interventions. Conflict sensitivity in India was felt to be crucial and necessary for all programme operations due to the nature of the environment, as mentioned in the assumptions and approach section, above.

Assistance that AAI provided in the initial response period was suitable and relevant to the needs of the community after the earthquake, i.e. shelters, NFI's, food and medical assistance. Communities reported at the time of the earthquake that their most important need was shelter and AAI provided them with shelters, which they installed. It was only later on in the Pakistan programme that some issues of suitability arose, for example around the breed of goats provided. Coupled with this in Pakistan were questions of how adequate some levels of assistance concerning the type and number of shelter kits and the cash grants were to meet the livelihood objective.

Issues that rose in relation to the **effectiveness of systems**, in particular, to the management system, were those between the ERP and the existing country programme and not internal to ERP structures. The main question that now faces AAI Pakistan is how to incorporate the success and learning that has occurred within the ERP into the existing country programme in 2008.

In regard to monitoring, reviewing and the learning process, a number of issues arose:

- The indicators at the outcome level in the log frame were not present in the strategic framework.
- Field reports did not relate to the programme's work plan.
- Outputs outlined in the reports from the field office were difficult to then attribute back to different donor grant obligations.
- Community-led monitoring was highlighted by the staff and in FGD but tended to be informal in nature and often not present in written form.
- Targets changed as the programme developed; however, a way of incorporating these changes into the monitoring system was not developed in a timely fashion.
- Outcome level monitoring was missing.
- Capacity issues of completing the related forms varied across the different field offices.
- The hierarchy of statements within the objective level column in the strategic log frame had some mismatches.

6.1 Recommendations

Bringing added value to AAI service delivery

AAI should focus its sectoral interventions in areas where effective participation and working with the poor, vulnerable and excluded are intrinsic to its success, as this will bring AAI added value into its service delivery component - for example, collective livelihood programmes, such as the creation of saw mills.

Women's Empowerment

There is a need to create stronger lateral links between women's community-based groups (which bolster confidence and learning) and more traditional areas and open communities.

Critical Review and Reflection from the ERP Programme Pakistan

The learning that has taken place within the ERP should be incorporated back into the country programme, through critical learning, review and reflection events in the first half of 2008.

Monitoring and reporting to external donors

During larger emergency responses, does AAI need to consider hiring a dedicated M&E person where there are requirements to report to external funders? If there is not one person that these duties are clearly assigned to, an individual is needed to set up the reporting structures and train staff on donor requirements.