

## **DFID Management Response to ITAD Evaluation of the UK's Humanitarian Response to Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda)**

### **Section 1 – Context**

1. The purpose of the evaluation was to better understand the effect of the UK's Humanitarian Response and programme in the Philippines following Typhoon Haiyan as well as understand lessons for similar future programming.
2. The evaluation has two purposes: primarily, to present evidence-based findings and recommendations to assist lesson learning for DFID's policy and response teams with a view to improving future responses; and secondly, to address issues of accountability to taxpayers and recipients of humanitarian assistance.
3. The evaluation served its purpose in articulating critical lessons learned for future humanitarian programming with which we are in broad agreement. The lessons and analysis generated by the evaluation will prove very useful in both designing and delivering future humanitarian and related programmes in Philippines and elsewhere.
4. As the programme period was time and context specific, the evaluation was not requested to articulate specific recommendations to be implemented by the programme. Instead the evaluation examined both the extent to which the programme delivered its objectives but more importantly articulate lessons for future humanitarian programming. The management response broadly follows the structure of the evaluation, addressing the findings (Section 3).
5. Prior to the Itad Evaluation, the Independent Commission for Aid Impact (ICAI) reviewed the response in February 2014, and rated the response highly ("green"), signifying that the programme was meeting almost all criteria for effectiveness and Value for Money (VfM) and performing strongly.
6. The Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC)<sup>1</sup> also undertook an evaluation; they noted that the response effectively contributed to emergency needs being met through a timely and relevant immediate response. Initial assistance was appropriately prioritised with a focus on key risks such as communicable disease outbreaks, food insecurity, lack of clean water, emergency shelter and protection.

### **Section 2 – Evaluation Objectives**

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<sup>1</sup> IASC Inter-agency Humanitarian Evaluation of the Typhoon Haiyan Response Prepared on behalf of the Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation Steering Group October 2014

The Terms of Reference outlined three evaluation objectives:

1. To what extent did DFID response mechanisms function effectively to achieve priority outcomes? How can funding and support be made more effective in future rapid responses?
2. To what extent was the humanitarian system more effective using Level 3 Transformative Agenda protocols in saving lives, reducing suffering and maintaining the dignity of those affected by the crisis in the initial 3-4 months of the crisis and in the transition to recovery. To what extent did DFID contribute to this effectiveness?
3. To what extent did DFID and partners demonstrate effective accountability to beneficiaries/end users? How can DFID and partners improve performance and share and strengthen best practice?

### **Section 3 – Findings and DFID response**

Itad formulated eight findings (recommendations) relating to how DFID can improve its strategy and approach to response, its support and influence on the humanitarian system, and its accountability, Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG), protection and Value for Money (VfM) programming:

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**Finding 1** The DFID team, especially in Middle Income Countries (MICs), should place greater emphasis on more collaborative and advisory roles in addition to monitoring. These should be located throughout at a strategic (national) level to influence issues in the response, complemented initially by a team of advisers in the disaster zone to support fast and flexible decision making.

**Response** *DFID partially agrees with this finding. DFID invested appropriately in its team deployed to the Philippines to monitor, advocate and influence on specific issues such as accountability, VAWG and VfM. The UK's early deployment of a team focused on VAWG for example, was useful in ensuring this issue was adequately reflected in the UK response, identifying key areas for advocacy, and reinforcing the message that this is a central issue of concern for the UK. It will also inform future responses, through the development of the UK's commitment to ensure that all of its humanitarian responses include an assessment of issues impacting VAWG. DFID can influence policies and structures of both the middle-income context as well as the international system in key issues as a major Donor with respected reputation, however we recognise there are practical limitation on DFID's direct influence in Countries where DFID does not maintain a substantial presence.*

**Finding 2** DFID should develop a clear strategy on whether to focus only on response within a relatively short timeframe, with a clear exit strategy, or adopt a longer-term strategy supporting partners to focus and plan for recovery, investing both time and resources, and taking into account national, sub-national and community priorities.

**Response** *We agree with this finding. Depending on context, focussing on early recovery at the same time as emergency relief may represent better value for money than protracted relief. Where possible, identifying implementing partners earlier for longer term activities to support households to immediately restart livelihoods, alongside emergency food or cash relief packages.*

**Finding 3** DFID should invest more in sustaining a link between London-based advisers and individual action to drive agendas in accountability, VAWG and VfM.

**Response** *DFID agrees with this finding. DFID finances a broad portfolio of actors and actions for Preparedness and Resilience activities but could have a greater influence on the approaches and agendas of the humanitarian sector and its actors. DFID and some partners support and invest in agendas such as accountability, VAWG, VfM and the wider Transformative Agenda. A natural disaster in an enabling context like the Philippines is an opportunity to engage and further that agenda. If a Donor is to have greater influence on outcomes of investments in these areas it needs to invest in, clearly communicate and sustain a link between field advisers and Headquarter-based leadership and institutional expertise.*

**Finding 4** DFID should clearly articulate a strategy to engage and better influence the international humanitarian architecture. The strategy should invest in three levels:

- a. DFID should outline what change it wants to see in the international humanitarian architecture and robustly engage with that process;
- b. DFID should outline its own internal position of working in different contexts;
- c. DFID should ensure its maximum influence by linking its approach to specific RRF requirements for partners, thus aligning strategy and operational impact.

**Response** *DFID concurs on this finding. This was the first major natural disaster since the UN introduced several reforms under the 'Transformative Agenda'. This reform agenda created three levels of disaster, with a 'Level 3' being the most serious. When a Level 3 occurs, the UN system can draw on extra resources diverted from normal operations, but also must meet certain deadline targets to staff the response and complete needs assessments. Typhoon Haiyan was the first Level 3 natural disaster since these reforms were agreed (although there were conflict-related Level 3s before, e.g. the Syria crisis). The UN response therefore provided a test bed for UN working at Level 3 in a natural disaster and number of lessons have been recognised. DFID is well placed to further influence improvements to the system through the World Humanitarian Summit (May 2016) with particular strategy on ensuring adequate capacity and funding, and a more effective system which responds appropriately depending on the nature of crisis. However while gaps in the international system remain, there is a continuing need for a strong UK response mechanisms that underscores DFID's leadership by example.*

*DFID is also setting out its own position of working in different contexts. This is in response to the new commitments to UK work on conflict and fragility in the UK's Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR; released Nov 2015), the Multilateral Aid Review and the outcome of the Humanitarian policy consultation. Once DFID has concluded its Policy Paper, it will ensure it maximises influence by linking that approach to specific requirements for partners, thus aligning strategy and operational impact.*

**Finding 5** DFID should strengthen strategies, technical capacities and funding modalities for promoting AAP/VAWG practices within the global humanitarian community. In particular:

- a. DFID should strengthen the pool of specialist technical advisers for AAP and VAWG for rapid deployment in L3 responses;

- b. DFID should introduce incentives and conditionalities for promoting AAP and encouraging collective AAP response;**
- c. DFID should prioritise the development of a comprehensive strategy which aligns and harmonises AAP advocacy and implementation within CHASE.**

**Response** *DFID agrees with this finding. The response to Typhoon Haiyan was the first L3 emergency to have a major focus on accountability. The early and continued deployment of an advisor for Accountability to Affected Population (AAP)-Protection led to the establishment of the AAP- Communication with Community (CwC) working group (AAP-WG), which from January 2014 onwards coordinated an evolving process of developing common approaches to communicating with communities, targeting and mechanisms for gathering feedback from communities. These initiatives took place within a highly receptive context for promoting stronger AAP. However, there is limited evidence to suggest that AAP/CwC mechanisms substantially closed the feedback loop between agencies and communities.*

*The IASC evaluation outlined a number of features of the Haiyan response that highlight the value of inter-cluster coordination beyond the conventional cluster system. In particular these included the extensive use of cash by several clusters, and the success of CwC and AAP mechanisms at gathering community-wide (rather than sector or agency-specific) feedback. A range of inter-agency, thematic advisors were deployed on gender, CwC, private sector, cash transfer programming, and AAP. The CDAC CwC post was funded initially by DFID.*

*The protection cluster, which DFID supported, was credited as playing a proactive role in helping international responders to be more accountable to affected people. Frequent field visits and focus group interviews by this cluster helped to point out gaps in the response and issues with aid delivery, and to channel feedback from affected people to other clusters.*

*DFID funded first Internews in providing lifesaving information to affected communities, and later a plan/World Vision/IOM consortium to deepen and develop AAP good practice in the areas affected by Haiyan.*

*There was progress: common approaches to accountability were strengthened through the AAP-WG. The AAP working group was initiated by OCHA in November 2013 bringing together CwC and AAP personnel in order to coordinate and harmonise agency communication approaches. The group provided training and coordinated agency responses to targeting, feedback and messaging. An acknowledged strength of the AAP-WG was a growth in common understanding between agencies about the interdependence of CwC and AAP mechanisms in promoting better accountability outcomes.*

*The AAP-WG is widely seen as a success by the humanitarian community. It remains active in the Tacloban area and on Panay Island hubs. Unlike the clusters, the AAP-WG evolved to include the active participation of local NGOs and became an established community of practice. It has become a vehicle for both coordinating AAP mechanisms and embedding emerging lessons into Philippines structures for Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM). Evidence of its comparative strength is the significant role it is playing in disaster preparedness. The AAP-WG was widely praised for its rapid response to the onset of Typhoon Ruby (known locally as Hagupit). It is now providing a model for future disaster responses within the Philippines and globally.*

**Finding 6** DFID should upgrade institutional requirements for sex and age-disaggregated data and other diversity data, necessary to enable tracking of progress in socially-inclusive aid distribution.

More rigorous procedures, including penalties, are needed to hold partner agencies to account to UK and international commitments, under the TA, to equitable access to HA benefits and services.

**Response** *DFID agrees with this finding. All proposals and reports from partners are required to provide disaggregated data on disaster affected population, disaggregated by sex and age and outline any mitigating actions taken to reduce the vulnerability of the most vulnerable and marginalised groups such as the boys and girls, women, older women and men, and people with disabilities, dependent on the specific nature of the emergency. Sex and Age-disaggregated Data (SADD) and diversity data are fundamental to tracking all aspects of AAP including meeting needs and protection issues. Addressing Gender specific needs is now a legal requirement following the International Development (Gender Equality) Act 2014, to promote gender equality in the provision by the Government of development assistance and humanitarian assistance to countries outside the United Kingdom; and for connected purposes.*

**Finding 7** DFID should engage with partners strategically on VfM in non-crisis times when partners have time and resource to engage properly with the process.

**Response** *DFID agrees with this finding. We should continue to engage with partners on VfM outside of crisis as part of preparedness activities and funding. The evaluation highlights numerous ways that VfM could be enhanced by engaging with partners in the preparedness phase (e.g. pre-positioning stocks, building capacity for cash, designing longer-term recovery strategies, and designing cost-effective targeting protocols). DFID should continue to engage partners outside of humanitarian responses on what tools and indicators should be used in VfM monitoring and assessment.*

**Finding 8** DFID should strengthen the VfM of response and early recovery activities through the following:

- a. Greater investment in pre-positioning of stocks;
- b. Allowing partner agencies more time to develop quality proposals;
- c. Investigating the potential VfM of consortia approaches;
- d. Building capacity for a greater use of cash where appropriate.

**Response** *DFID agrees with this finding and is currently engaged with assessing and scaling up its own humanitarian response capability through prepositioned supplies of essential non-food items and also funding to partners for preparedness activities, some of which relate to prepositioned item and enhanced capabilities. In the Haiyan context, DFID supported the World Food Programme (WFP) in increasing the Government of Philippines national response and preparedness capacity by automating the emergency food response centre. The centre used to produce 10,000 family food packs per day but now produces 50,000 per day. The automated system was used for the first time during the recent Typhoon Koppu (Oct 2015) response.*

*During humanitarian emergencies DFID will apply discretion to agree funding in principle and is welcomes partner dialogue to consider amendments to programme proposals in*

*light of new or more accurate information to ensure a quality intervention, clearly however, this will be balanced with the need to act quickly and get funding to partners.*

*DFID also considers proposals from consortia; however the evidence showing potential of cost savings as a result of consortia is inconclusive. Consortia can also present challenges in terms of disputes and slower start-up times, due to finalizing initial arrangements between agencies. The characteristics and context in which consortia can bring VfM gains still need to be analysed to inform future programming.*

*In our findings, Cash programming worked well across all sectors in the Philippines Haiyan response. DFID will proactively consider the cash transfers response to crises in future programming.*