

RECOMMENDATIONS

Lead Members for Emergencies (CARE France/CARE Canada & CARE USA)

- Lead Members should continue to ensure that senior staff visit affected areas on a regular basis. For future emergencies, all Lead Members should take necessary steps to make sure that early visits to the crisis-affected area by senior staff are treated as a priority.
- Lead members should take immediate steps to review and improve staff living conditions as necessary to a reasonable level and also ensure that counseling services are available for returning staff that have been exposed to stressful situations. It is already clear that CARE's engagement will continue for the foreseeable future and, if CARE does not want to experience high staff turnover, and expects staff to work efficiently and stay healthy, we need to ensure their well being. Examples are implementation of an R&R policy, adequate living accommodation for staff and visitors, electric generators for offices and living quarters, and air conditioning. Consider reinforcing field logistics capacity to devote time to managing living arrangements, allowing other staff to focus on their work (agencies such as MSF and ICRC provide models in this regard).
- CARE France should review and rationalize lines of communication for the Chad operation, together with their CARE colleagues in the N'djamena and Abeche offices. The intention should not be to make the operation unnecessarily less efficient by establishing "gatekeepers", but communications with the CARE Office in Abeche needs to take account of the limited capacity of that office, both in terms of staffing/workload and poor telecommunications infrastructure.
- While CARE Sudan is proceeding with diversifying funding sources, CARE Chad must similarly devote resources (time & personnel) to diversifying its funding base. The protracted negotiations to secure UNHCR funding and uncertain pipeline has already handicapped CARE operations and continued dependency on this funding source is unlikely to promote quality programming or timely response.
- The Darfur crisis has highlighted a global change in approach by UN agencies, specifically UNHCR and WFP, who are now demanding significantly greater contributions from international NGOs than in the past. CARE needs to recognize that this is an organization-wide policy within the UN system, rather than a local initiative, and approach this systematically in coordination/consultation with other INGOs. In some ways, this may create an opportunity since donors can also be made aware of this position and should in principle be more ready to channel funds to NGOs. A larger "match" will position CARE in more of an equal partnership vis a vis these UN agencies.
- CARE should make use of the experience in Sudan to develop a "good practice" guide to implementing humanitarian protection activities and develop relevant protection capacities to support future operations.
- Members should ensure consistency of corporate messaging to external partners in CAPs and other such information (the current agreement seems to be that Country Offices are designated as "CARE International").
- For future needs assessments, Lead Members should try and ensure that assessment teams are gender-balanced, particularly in situations where there are significant sexual abuse issues.

- COs need to ensure that up-to-date security and safety plans are in place from the earliest stage of an emergency response and that they are reviewed and updated at regular intervals to take account of changing operating environments.

CARE Country Offices (Chad & Sudan)

- Develop program strategy papers, which are reviewed and revised at suitable (quarterly?) intervals, to capture current thinking and inform membership to improve coordination and encourage more effective and appropriate support by the Membership. Such documents should illustrate likely scenarios and subsequent programmatic responses. Strategies should include contingency planning for worst (and best) case scenarios, something that appears increasingly urgent in Chad where it seems increasingly likely that a large population will remain on the border when the rains arrive.
- Incorporate environmental impact considerations in planning, referring to UNHCR environmental impact guidelines for refugees and IDP camps and using REA⁵-type methodologies for local populations and return/reintegration programs.
- Both COs should ensure gender sensitivity is incorporated into their programs. A particular example of this is the need to disseminate sexual exploitation guidelines in a meaningful way and establish monitoring systems. This would imply: a) translation of key principles and guidelines in such a way that they are easily understood by national staff, b) incorporation of principles into induction training for newly-recruited staff, c) ensure that managers fully understand their responsibilities for disseminating relevant information to staff under their supervision and their monitoring role, and d) ensure that appropriate reporting⁶, investigating, and disciplinary mechanisms are in place.
- Country Offices should not feel obliged to spend time and energy in CAP planning process, given their poor fund-raising track record for NGOs, unless the CAP process is well-facilitated so that it becomes a joint planning exercise with UN agencies and/or CARE is a potential significant implementing partner for one or more UN agencies participating in the CAP.
- Ensure that adequate resources for learning are built into project budgets to improve their timeliness and effectiveness of M&E events (e.g. RTE missions, evaluations, After Action Reviews).

CARE International Emergency Response Director

- Facilitate development of “inventory” and gaps analysis of emergency capacities amongst members with CERT focal point responsibilities, prioritizing key sectors and functions. Telecommunications is but one example where there is a need to compile an inventory and develop an effective support emergency operations. Other gaps that were highlighted during this crisis that should be considered for CERT deployments in future are humanitarian protection and environmental impact assessment.

⁵ Rapid Environmental Assessment in disasters (REA) methodology developed by CARE and partners.

⁶ Experience has shown that methods such as confidential “drop box” or verbal communication to a trusted member of staff are more effective than normal hierarchical reporting mechanisms.

- Information management should be reviewed and refined. Consider dedicating an Information Officer to help with assessing information needs and refining information management systems accordingly. Such an individual could also assist with the drafting of relevant materials.
- Facilitate membership consensus on a protocol (“decision tree”) that would help in rapidly determining management and coordination responsibilities when responding to emergencies, including CI’s own role.
- Following from the above point, the ERD should facilitate a decision by the CARE membership on how CARE operations in Chad can be reinforced to the required level. As described above, CARE France’s capacity is already stretched, it lacks experience in managing multi-donor funding, and indeed its “limited presence” mandate foresees a hand over of responsibilities for emergency response under the CI Code. At the same time, for obvious reasons, a parallel system should be avoided and potential tensions surrounding issues such as disparate salary scales be considered.
- Given CARE’s presence on both sides of the border, it is of the utmost importance that CARE addresses this as a single crisis, instead of two separate emergencies. Examples of areas where this is important are in the areas of advocacy, given easier accessibility to refugees in Chad, and also for facilitating any future voluntary repatriation operations.
- Review and revise the “Go-Kit” composition for setting up field offices. Include reference materials both on CD-ROM and, for key documents printed form for key documents (e.g. CARE sexual exploitation guidelines, UNHCR partnership manual, WFP Emergency Handbook, etc.).
- Given the shortfalls in UN leadership that has handicapped humanitarian operations on both sides of the border over the past few months, CARE International should develop strategies for providing constructive feedback at different levels (in-country, Geneva & New York). A recent approach by UNHCR to INGOs (including CARE) to gauge interest in conducting a joint RTE in Chad may be one promising avenue.
- Review the CERT database and update as necessary (notably pre-release agreements). Analyze the database to determine the “depth” of non-English language skills (French, Portuguese, Spanish, Arabic) and broaden the CERT roster appropriately by staff with the requisite language skills.
- The CI ERD, supported by the CI Emergencies Security Coordinator, should coordinate development of a common risk assessment framework that could be used for emergencies and crisis situations to facilitate decision-making (and reduce tension) between Country Offices and Lead Members regarding engagement in activities such as protection, media relations, and advocacy. It may be useful to associate this with a review of “lessons learned” by CARE and other agencies that have adopted a more high profile approaches (such as MSF) to understand how these have actually impacted operations.
- For future emergencies, every CO engaged in responding should be encouraged to develop a media strategy as early as possible, with clear guidelines for the CARE membership.