# AFGHANISTAN
# Earthquake Response

Lessons Learnt Exercise
**Final Report**
January 2023

## Executive Summary

In the early hours of 22 June 2022, a 5.9 magnitude earthquake struck, affecting Paktika and Khost Provinces, over 1,000 people were killed (including 230 children) and over 2,900 injured (including 591 children). The earthquake destroyed critical infrastructure – including homes, facilities, schools and water networks – leaving areas that were already highly vulnerable before the earthquake, vulnerable to additional risks. Following assessments by Humanitarian partners over 100,000 people were identified to need of humanitarian assistance, of which 18 per cent were considered vulnerable, including female-headed households, people with disabilities, those chronically ill, unaccompanied minors and elderly people, and families with more than eight people in the household. Khost and Paktika provinces highly vulnerable prior to the crisis, facing crisis levels of food insecurity and malnutrition as well as an AWD outbreak.

First responders on the ground, including the authorities, affected communities and humanitarian partners, launched an immediate response to the Earthquake with available supplies. Within 24 hours following the earthquake UN and NGO partners mobilised response efforts, with trucks of supplies on the roads headed to communities.

By 30 June, just eight days after the Earthquake, the Emergency Earthquake Response Plan was launched requesting US$ 110 million to cover the emergency needs from July to September 2022. Initially, the plan targeted 362,000 people, based on available data at the time, this was later revised to reflect the on-ground information from joint assessments teams to 100,000 people assessed to be in need. Thanks to the generosity of the donor community, by 31 October 2022 the emergency response effort had received US$ 44 million.  By the end of the emergency phase, September 2022, over 515,000 people had been reached with one form of Humanitarian assistance in Earthquake affected areas. Recovery initiatives and sectoral-specific interventions have continued in the second phase of the response effort.

Following the emergency response phase, the HCT requested a Lessons Learnt Review. In light of the change in Afghanistan's context over the past year, the evaluation team was tasked to look at the system's ability to scale up to sudden-onset emergency events and the preparedness planning in place to support future emergencies.

Afghanistan remains highly vulnerable to natural disasters, including seasonal flooding, landslides and earthquakes. Due to the country's pre-existing vulnerabilities, the review aims to look at the systems currently in place to respond to these sudden events and proposed recommendations for future sudden-onset emergencies in Afghanistan.

A task team was formed at the beginning of November made up of representatives from UN Agencies, NGOs and Assessment and Analysis team members. The task team provided technical support to the Earthquake Lessons Learnt Review, helping to review the data coming from various sources and generating key recommendations for the HCTs' consideration to help the system to be better prepared for future sudden onset emergencies.

The following report outlines the review process, key findings and recommendations presented to the HCT.

## Scope of the Earthquake Lessons Learnt Review

The lessons learnt review looked at the following key aspects from the Earthquake Response: 1) Preparedness; 2) Response Capacity; 3) Leadership and Coordination; 4) Logistics and enabling factors; 5) Cross-cutting issues of protection, gender, accountability to affected people and prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse.

# Methodology and process for the review

The task team adopted a mixed methods approach, to collect and analyse information in line with the Terms of Reference (ToR). Participatory and qualitative data collection methods were utilised including:

*1) a desk review of documents for the earthquake response;*

*2) Key Informant Interviews (KIs) with stakeholders chosen across the response;*

*3) Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with earthquake-affected communities (2 male, 1 female FGD in Gayan and 1 male and 1 female FGD in Barmal);*

*4) and a Kobo questionnaire survey was sent to all stakeholders apart of the earthquake response.*

Between 11 November – 2 December interviews were led by OCHA. UNICEF extenders in Gayan and Barmal supported the Focus Group Discussions. The Assessment and Analysis cell working group members, REACH, ACAPs and OCHA reviewed the survey data results, analyse results and consolidation of the data. A collation of all data collection methodologies was presented to the task team on 4 December at a workshop session. Task team members validated the key findings from the review and generated the recommendations to be presented to the HCT on 8 December.

## *Limitations to the Methodology*

There are several limitations to the methodology for the review. Key informants' own experience and role during the earthquake response may have resulted in KIs not having complete knowledge of all aspects of the earthquake response. The limited scope of KI knowledge can result in lower accuracy when presenting the situation, reducing the overall quality of the analysis of the data. Due to the limited time to conduct interviews the survey was meant to capture a diverse range of views from across the system. The survey questionnaire and key interviews should not be viewed in absolute terms but as indicative. All information was collated from all respondents culminating in a set of key recommendations.

The evaluation team attempted to overcome bias by targeting a broad reach of key stakeholders in the earthquake response. For key informant interviews, people requested for interviews were people responding across all areas of the response including those responding on the ground the first days/weeks of the crisis to people overseeing the response in Kabul. Key informants were selected from HCT members, Clusters, Donors, and responding partners, including international NGOs and National NGOs.

# Key Findings
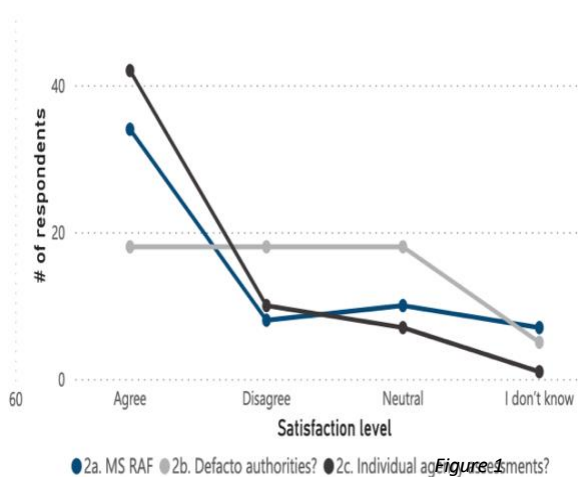
## *Assessments, Data and Information Sharing*

### *Assessments*

Data in a sudden onset emergency becomes an important tool for collecting information on the scope of the crisis, geographical prioritisation of resources and determining what resources are necessary to conduct immediate life-saving response. The Multi-Sectoral Rapid Assessment for Afghanistan (MSRAF) was the inter-agency tool endorsed for sudden-onset emergencies in Afghanistan. While the Assessment and Analysis Working Group was in the process of reviewing the inter-agency tool prior to the Earthquake, it had not yet been rolled out across the country. Following the earthquake, the HCT endorsed the MSRAF for use by rapid assessment teams.

Respondents noted that assessment teams were deployed immediately to support data collection following the Earthquake. However, initial assessment information lacked GPS (such as water sources), gender lens, protection and disability information, this was rectified in later assessments. It was also noted that assessment teams often didn't distinguish the protracted needs of populations from the emergency needs as a result of the earthquake. The lack of female staff in the first couple of weeks of the crisis meant that the needs of women and girls were missed in early assessments.

Despite the rapid deployment of assessment teams, in all key informant interviews, it was expressed that data was received too late and was not useful in supporting decision-making for the response. There were several reasons noted for the delay in data collection including a lack of communication equipment to transmit data from mobile collection devices. Assessment teams also had to balance conducting assessments and doing distributions. Many of the teams collected beneficiary lists and facilitated distributions the following day, which slowed down the assessment process. By the time that data was disseminated weeks later it was noted that it was no longer relevant and useful to inform response priorities.

Over 58 per cent of 62 respondents from the survey noted that they used the MSRAF tool to inform programming but 70 per cent also noted that they used individual agency assessments to inform programming (see figure 1). Many agencies noted in interviews that in order to access funding mechanisms, both AHF and bilateral funding, assessment information was required. With the lack of available MSRAF data many agencies had to conduct their own assessments. This likely meant that there was a duplication in assessments being conducted on the ground with several agencies accessing the same communities.


Figure 1

*Data and Information Sharing*

On information management and data sharing protocols, many partners bot in the field and Kabul reported that there were unclear reporting channels at the beginning of the crisis. Partners reported that it was not clear at the beginning of the crisis where to report with some reporting their activities to the cluster focal point in Khost and others reporting to the cluster in Kabul. Many expressed that after the coordination mechanisms for the response were better established where to share information became better understood. Clusters and Cluster Lead Agencies in interviews highlighted that all clusters require adequate Information Management Capacity, especially in the first weeks of a sudden-onset response.

## Response

The task team reviewed the response to the Earthquake in two phases, the first two weeks and the first 1–3-month period, looking at the speed, quality and effectiveness of the response within each phase. Response in sudden onset emergencies often improves in quality over time. As coordination improves there is a better understanding of the needs and geographic priorities in affected areas.

**Key findings first 2 weeks of the Earthquake Response**

As with any natural disaster emergency response, local communities were the responders. Local communities, including defacto authorities, the red crescent and local partners began immediate search and rescue efforts on the ground and supported communities with whatever supplies they had available. The defacto authorities organised search and rescue operations, with those injured airlifted through helicopters to Gardez, Khost and Kabul. Defacto authorities completed the search and rescue operation within a 96-hour period. Across different stakeholders, it was highlighted that health agencies that were in Paktika and Khost as well as surrounding provinces and Kabul mobilised quickly to support those injured, and the health response was particularly appreciated by affected communities.

Following an earthquake, every minute counts in the race to save lives in the immediate aftermath of the crisis. While health partners deployed immediately, triage and mass casualty planning could be strengthened for future emergencies, especially in remote rural areas. One opportunity could be to utilise helicopter security recce flights to bring in urgent medical health cargo and trauma kits. Many UN agencies and NGO partners have also reflected on their own

organisation's ability to deploy rapidly and having the necessary equipment pre-positioned for rapid response deployable teams. Pre-positioning of kits with communications equipment and supplies that can self-sustain teams for a couple of weeks in the field would allow for the humanitarian system to be more agile and have the ability to respond to urgent immediate needs across the country.

All respondents highlighted that humanitarians mobilised quickly. Given that the earthquake occurred within the larger emergency response scale-up across Afghanistan. There was a no-regrets approach employed by partners, supplies were available with trucks on the road from Kabul immediately within 24 hours following the response. Blanket distributions were conducted in the initial phase of the response. Teams from Kabul organised and deployed to support the scale-up effort.

In addition to the blanket distributions, CASH was also provided in the first phase of the response. In the first few weeks of the response, many respondents noted duplication, including full Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA) while communities were also provided with in-kind assistance. Further, it was noted that there was a lack of coordination amongst partners and a lack of technical guidance issued on how to have a reduced MPCA when in-kind was provided. It was highlighted by partners that the cash coordination and response improved as the CASH and voucher working group deployed a coordination focal point in Khost.

Respondents noted that there was confusion about the results produced from the market analysis and a lack of contextual awareness of the bereavement period. Many local shop owners closed during a mourning period but vendors reopened after the bereavement period. There were different tools utilised and different analysis from partners on the functionality of market. The CASH and voucher working group have already done a lesson learnt exercise and adopted technical guidance for future sudden onset emergency CASH response.

***Key findings first 1-3 months of the Earthquake Response***

Partners highlighted that over 100,000 people received assistance in the first few months of the crisis. While the response was noted to be fairly adaptive to the needs, respondents also highlighted that a lack of preparedness meant that clusters were reactive, spending a lot of time developing technical guidance in the midst of the response.

Following the initial phase, clusters launched sector-specific responses to the earthquake. All partners noted the supportive work of cluster coordinators. WASH and Health clusters were highlighted as having a strong coordination and response in the field, with an ongoing AWD response in affected areas they were able to build on this response with partners. In focus group discussions communities highlighted hygiene promotion, health promotion and Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Services (MHPSS) as important interventions. However, it was noted that the specific needs of women and girls could be strengthened in response implementation.

The earthquake caused significant damage and destruction of household property, more than 4,500 homes were assessed to be destroyed. Many of those interviewed highlighted that it took a long time for the shelter cluster to agree on a design for reconstruction. Outside technical guidance was sought to come up with a design that would be resilient in future earthquake emergencies, with a technical report that was published in August 2022.

In the midst of the technical process some partners moved forward with reconstruction utilizing different technical designs within communities, many respondents noted that this was problematic as it increased community tensions on the ground. Communities struggled to understand why certain households were receiving different shelter assistance and why similar assistance wasn't being provided to their community. Also contributing to delays in the midst of the technical phase authorities wanted to move communities in Giayan, which required high-level engagement with authorities before shelter reconstruction could continue. As a result of the delays shelter recovery assistance was unable to be completed before winter set in. Households had to receive winter shelter cash assistance, with the plans to rebuild the shelters in spring 2023.

Early sectoral responses lacked an understanding of women's needs, including in the provision of shelter and WASH facilities. It was only at later stages of the response, when female humanitarian aid workers were able to be deployed

(supported by the humanitarian hubs) that there was active engagement with women in communities to better understand their specific needs. This meant that at the beginning of the emergency, we missed women's voices and specific needs. The Disability and Inclusion working group also highlighted that there was a lack of inclusion of persons with disabilities and planning for vulnerable groups at the beginning of the response. While a focal point from the working group supported the regional coordination team in Khost, early deployment of working group focal points to field locations would ensure that key priorities including gender and disability considerations would be prioritized at the onset of the crisis.

## Monitoring

A stock-taking exercise was conducted by the Inter-Cluster Coordination Team (ICCT) at the one-month phase of the response. However, the stock-taking exercise was largely conducted based on 3w data and reporting from partners but lacked field monitoring. Further, much of the stock-taking and monitoring did not consider the needs of women and girls or reflective their specific needs.

Respondents across key informant interviews highlighted the need to have better onsite monitoring of the response including from Cluster-Lead Agencies, Cluster Coordinators, UN Agencies and NGO partners. Field monitoring would allow for a better oversite of the key challenges facing the scale-up of the emergency, implementation challenges and how key priorities of the humanitarian community are at the forefront of the response including gender considerations, Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) and Accountability to Affected people.

Partners reported that there was a lack of support and understanding of the issues facing implementing agencies on the ground, often referred to as the Kabul bubble, where there was a disconnect between field implementation and decisions being made in Kabul. Regular monitoring visits are necessary to feed up key challenges and gaps systematically to the ICCT and for HCT discussion to support those implementing on ground.

## Coordination

### HCT

Respondents appreciated the HCT's quick and timely decision-making at the beginning of the response. This was also reflected in the survey results, 60 per cent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the HCT made regular and strategic decisions that were followed through concerning the collective humanitarian response. When asked if the HCT decisions were timely to establish the Humanitarian Hubs and support the onsite deployment of humanitarian teams, 70 per cent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed.

While respondents highlighted appreciation for the quick decisions made by the HCT over time HCT decisions would have benefitted from technical and operational inputs. Structured technical inputs feed up from monitoring visits to the ICCT and onward communication to the HCT to facilitate strategic decision-making. Following the immediate emergency phase over time, the earthquake response detracted from other emergencies across Afghanistan, especially given those impacted by the earthquake versus the over 22 million in need across the country.

Many interviewed stressed that there were too many high-level visits. It created a logistics burden for those facilitating visits. While it was stressed that actors appreciated initial attention toward the response by senior leadership it would be better to have the HCT prioritize Cluster Lead Agency or ICCT monitoring missions to support implementation challenges.

*ICCT*

The ICCT published a response plan within days after the crisis, which increased mobilization efforts and outlined the response priorities. Many clusters activated early, establishing focal points early in the response to support coordination efforts. When the area coordination team was established in Khost many clusters moved their focal points from Kabul to Khost to support in the coordination of partners. However, it was noted that there could be better coordination between the Area Coordination team and ICCT on AHF allocations and oversight of gaps.

Clusters noted that they should have had more of a role in core technical guidance to support implementation. It was also noted that clusters needed better IM capacity to support this type of emergency response.

*Field Coordination & Area Coordination Team*

Partners operating in Khost and Paktika noted a good level of coordination including sharing supplies and conducting daily meetings to coordinate the response. Some partners also said they hoped field cluster coordination meetings would continue even after the emergency phase.

Some clusters highlighted that they needed to move to a village-based response planning, rather than just at the district level to effectively know that there was full coverage of services in all affected areas. Clusters need to define minimum response packages, either by geographic allocation or by the response. As was highlighted in previous section of monitoring, the field could provide better feedback to Kabul Cluster Coordinators on the issues and gaps in the response. Providing more structured feedback would allow for clusters to better support implementation challenges in the field.

*Defacto Authorities*

Defacto Authorities airlifted those that were injured to Gardez, Khost and Kabul. The survey found that 61 per cent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that there was effective coordination with defacto authorities and Provincial Disaster Management Committees (PDMCs). NGO partners noted with appreciation the lifting of restrictions of authorities to operate and scale up quickly to assist communities. It was noted that National NGO partners that while authorities lifted restrictions in the first phase of the response, they continued to encounter issues implementing longer (6-month projects). National NGOs reported similar issues to elsewhere in Afghanistan including with MoUs and beneficiary lists/targeting criteria with authorities. Many national NGOs highlighted that INGO and UN agencies needed to engage with authorities on their behalf.

There was a joint technical meeting held at the beginning of the response between Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authorities (ANDMA), line ministries and humanitarian partners and clusters. The defacto noted with appreciation the work and coordination of humanitarian partners. It was highlighted that there is a gap in how the humanitarian community are engaging with ANDMA systematically on disaster preparedness.

## Logistics and Enabling Factors

*Hubs*

Across the response, it was highlighted that hubs facilitated the deployment of staff to stay and implement emergency response in affected areas. Prior to the establishment of the hubs agencies were having to travel many hours each way from Khost, Urugun or Gardez to affected areas on day trips. After the establishment the of hubs humanitarians were able better go to scale for the emergency phase of the response. It was noted by all agencies that the hubs also allowed for the deployment of female aid workers along with their Maharam, to scale up the emergency across sectors, increasing partners' ability to engage with affected women and to ensure their needs were met.

### Hub management

This is the first time in Afghanistan that humanitarian hubs were deployed for a sudden onset emergency response. There are several learnings from this emergency that can support future hub deployments. Several areas need significant improvement for the future including the sanitary conditions within the hubs. It should be noted that there were different challenges with the different hubs. In Giayan the site and certain facilities already existed prior to IOM supporting the scale-up of common services. This added additional challenges making it hard to change certain facilities that were pre-existing and elements had to be adapted to accommodate existing structures. Whereas in Barmal this was not the case and the hub was designed and built with no existing infrastructure. It was noted that for future hubs a better system should be in place to improve the sanitary conditions of hubs as well as ensure that users are respecting the hub rules. Gender considerations must be considered when constructing the hubs, ensuring female-friendly aspects toward living conditions that is safe and constructed in consultation with female staff input.

Security costs also had to be factored in to operationalize hubs. To ensure hubs were moss compliant there were many things that had to be considered, including temporary perimeter fencing and lighting as well as deployment of defacto static and quick reaction forces. It took time for these discussions and who would bear the operational costs for such measures. There was a lot of confusion on what could be included in funding proposals for costs, especially on security and what could not be included. Future responses where hubs are deployed should ensure technical people guide the operationalization of the hubs – including funding proposal development.  Preparedness planning would go a long way in helping to ensure that these considerations are discussed and agreed on ahead of an emergency response where hubs may need to be deployed.

### Hub closure

The review took place in the midst of conversations at the HCT on the hub closure. While there were differing opinions from all actors on whether the hubs should have remained open versus closing them, it was clear that in the future there needs to be better management of the communication process and how the conversation was facilitated. Both UN & NGO agencies were put into difficult positions during the closure with the authorities and communities, who bore the brunt of communicating decisions. Messaging should be clear at all levels that it was a collective decision taken by the HCT.

### UNHAS

Respondents share that It took time for UNHAS to be operational in the response. UNHAS had to find landing sites, conduct security assessments and then repair some of the heli landing sites all of which delayed operationalizing flights to earthquake-affected areas. It was clear in some discussions with humanitarians that they lacked an understanding of the technical requirements for air operations, including before every flight. Flights were not fully utilised by humanitarian partners to affected areas and most agencies travelled by road, which was possible from Kabul and surrounding provinces.  There could be better sensitization of the technical requirements by users for air operations – including safety and security requirements on the ground for flights. Air operations may play a bigger role in future operations that might be cut off due to location and emergency and it's important to understand the logistics and security perimeters necessary to operationalize flights quickly to affected areas.

### Security

Given the new operational area and the use of humanitarian hubs for the first time in Afghanistan, there were several measures UNDSS put in place that helped the operation to scale up rapidly. It was noted by UN partners in reflections with DSS that there were several things that would help to scale up operations quickly in the next sudden onset emergency response.

UNDSS deployed field DSS colleagues, with a UNDSS officer deployed from Kandahar to support partners on ground. Having a DSS officer onsite during the construction of the humanitarian hubs was helpful to find solutions to ensure the hubs were MOSS compliant while considering the temporary nature of the hubs. UN colleagues also helped to establish

an operational zone, with security measures that allowed for agencies to travel through the operational zone, between hubs, without armed escorts. This was highly appreciated by partners and supported agencies to scale up to communities affected by the earthquake, UN partners expressed in the next emergency if this could be implemented earlier in the first days of the crisis.

It was noted by partners that there was a lack of capacity of DSS staff to deploy to support the operation, many agency security officers were deployed on a rotational basis. DSS expressed that there were funding constraints for staff to deploy. DSS also requested better coordination between DSS and UN agencies on the scope of the response. To improve responsiveness in the next emergency UN members of the task team and DSS established a working group to look at preparedness planning ahead of sudden onset responses.

### *Resource Mobilisation*

Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund (AHF) and CERF were immediately activated to support the response scale-up. Partners noted that funding decisions were rapid and instrumental in supporting the scale-up of the response. Across both UN agencies and NGO partners a majority of respondents expressed that donors were flexible enabling crisis modifiers and stepping up to replenish utilized stocks. To enable the deployment of female colleagues, Maharam costs were also supported by donors.

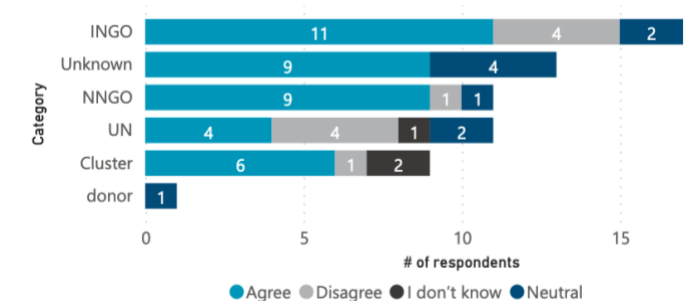Survey results reflected this – Rapid response funding mechanisms were effectively and timely:



*Figure 2*

It was noted that agencies may benefit from preparatory work with the AHF on proposals for sudden-onset events. For some agencies, there was a lack of understanding of what was possible to include in proposals, which resulted in delays. There was also a lack of understanding of the security for the hubs and what could be included within the proposals. This is being course corrected through preparedness work that is ongoing with DSS and UN Agencies.

NGO partners noted that they had little or no reserve funding for sudden-onset emergencies. Pre-positioning some flexible funding mechanism to support sudden on-set events would be beneficial in a context such as Afghanistan which frequently suffers from flash flooding, landslides and earthquakes. As highlighted in the previous assessments sesion, delays in the assessment data impacted partners funding proposals. UN & NGO partners didn't have available data on the needs for proposals which meant that partners had to spend time in the initial weeks of the response conducting their own assessments. As highlighted previously assessment teams are closing the gap in assessment data collection and disbursement of data but donors also need to buy into rapid assessment tools and align their information requirements for proposals with inter-agency tools.

## Overarching: Protection, Gender, AAP, PSEA

Challenges emerged in cross-cutting issues of protection, gender, AAP and PSEA that were evident in the Earthquake response but not just specific to the earthquake and representative across the humanitarian response in Afghanistan. The task team sought to highlight the challenges reflected during the earthquake emergency response at the same time

recognizing that fully addressing these challenges extends beyond just preparedness work for a future sudden onset event.

### Protection

Many respondents noted a slow response from protection actors to scale up in the emergency. In the first phase of the response protection analysis and monitoring were missing. Once protection actors arrived on the ground it was noted that there was a lack of protection services and referral mechanisms. When asked if protection actors supported the Humanitarian partners in mainstreaming protection across the response, only 35 per cent of survey respondents agreed with the statement (see figure 3 below). In key informant interviews partners did note the positive support received by the GBV and Child-Protection cluster coordinators. Partners felt supported by the cluster to scale up and respond to GBV and child protection needs.
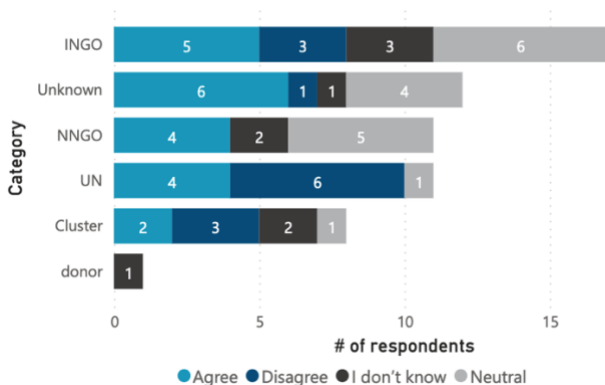


*Figure 3*

### Gender

Across all respondents noted that in the first few weeks of the response we missed female beneficiaries. While this improved over time when we were able to deploy female staff, supported by the opening of the humanitarian hubs, there is still a lot more that can be done by the humanitarian community to better understand the needs of women and girls and prioritise their specific needs in the first weeks of a sudden onset response. There was no gender expert deployed to hubs or the area coordination hub, while there were regular monitoring visits by UN Women and/or clusters. The HCT/ICCT should ensure a gender expert(s) are deployed in the first days of the crisis to ensure that all voices are heard and their specific needs prioritized across the response.

Survey respondents asked if agencies had the necessary procedures in place to deploy female staff to support the response. Figure 4 highlights that in the first two weeks, only 33 per cent agreed (black line in figure 4), when asked about the first two months those that agreed increased to almost 64 per cent (red line in figure 4).

***Agencies had necessary procedures in place to deploy female staff to support response:***
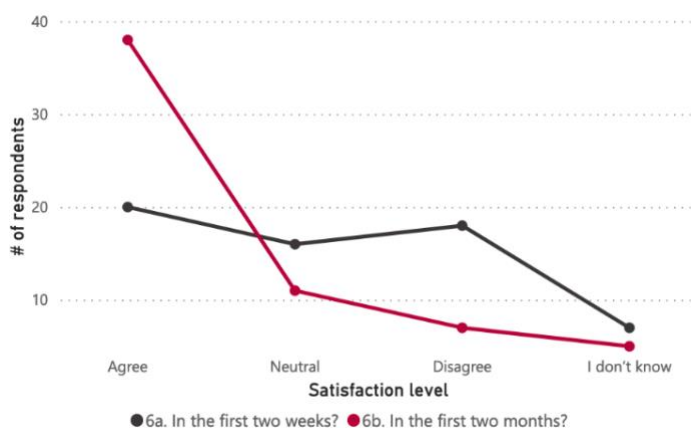


*Figure 4*

### *AAP*

While agencies reported that they had systems in place to support Accountability to Affected People (AAP) integration into programming, when asked about modalities used by partners there was a lack of clarity as to how AAP was implemented and how programming adjusted to the feedback received from communities. When asking partners how they collected feedback many partners shared that they used Awaaz hotlines. When asked what there was for backup systems in areas with no network coverage, which was the case in many earthquake-affected areas, there wasn't another system that partners reported using. There were no inter-agency mechanisms in place that supported the system in identifying trusted communication channels for communities and how they could be leveraged to share messages and enhance feedback and accountability to communities. Communities themselves reported that they established coordination committees made of community leaders and humanitarian organisations to regularly share information. However this would capture only male perspectives of the community, humanitarian organisations need to prioritise to ensure vulnerable voices, including women and girls are able to regularly feedback to humanitarian organisations their prioritization and needs.

### *PSEA*

There is no inter-agency reporting mechanism for PSEA in the earthquake affected areas, however, inter-agency training was planned for but never rolled out to partners on the ground. Like other cross-cutting issues such as AAP it was up to individual agencies to ensure PSEA was actioned by their organisation. For future sudden onset emergencies have joint training available would be important to ensure all staff, contractors and casual labourers are aware of their responsibilities in preventing and reporting SEA.

It was noted by several respondents that there is no external strategy to engage the defacto authorities and community leaders on their obligations against SEA. Many noted there seemed to be a reluctance in the Afghanistan context for fear of losing access to women. There must be a training package for defacto authorities developed that is context specific to Afghanistan.

## *System-Wide Preparedness Key Recommendations*

The matrix outlines the system-wide preparedness actions undertaken and presented by the HCT. Many of the recommendations have already been actioned by the task team and ICCT in ongoing preparedness work.

| PREPAREDNESS ACTION MATRIX | | |
|---|---|---|
| **ACTION** | **Responsible** | **Status** |
| **System-Wide Preparedness** | | |
| **Updated SOPs**<br>  1.1  Cluster Preparedness<br>  1.2  Logs & Enabling factors<br>  1.3  Information sharing protocols<br>  1.4  Security system update - SOPs | **HCT/ICCT** | **Planning In-progress** |
| **System-wide pre-positioning**<br>  1.1  Hubs and communications equipment<br>  1.2  Pre-positioning of items to support service delivery (ie tents) | **UN Agencies** | **Planning In-progress** |
| **Joint Inter-Agency Training and SIMEX for at risk Provinces** | **OCHA/Inter-Agency Team** | **Not yet started** |
| **Rapid Response Capacity – internally all agencies**<br>  1.1  Deployment Kits – equipped teams ready or deployment. Remote/access<br>      response – checklists of what we can prepare beforehand.<br>  1.2  Pre-position comms | **All Agencies** | **Ongoing/Planning In-progress** |
| **LEADERSHIP AND COORDINATION** | | |
| **On-going conversation with** defacto **for natural disaster preparedness** – sudden onset response, sensitisation of our response<br>1.1  What would be requested from defacto authorities, what are their thresholds, clear on<br>      our system-wide response and rapid response modalities and facilitating | **HC/DHC** | **Ongoing/in-progress** |

**Annexes**
Annex – Concept Note
Annex – TOR of Task Team
Annex – Overview of respondents
Annex – Survey Form
Annex – Survey Results