After Action Review Synthesis: Common Challenges Seen in Program Support

Elizabeth Horinek
Rachel Gordon-Roberts
Emergency Humanitarian Assistance Team, CARE USA
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CARE continually evaluates our humanitarian responses by implementing After Action Reviews (AARs). This analysis of the reports from those reviews found that the same problems are seen again and again. The analysis focused on Program Support issues, and found similar challenges across regions, types of crises, and lead members. The challenges that were commonly seen include:

❖ **Staffing challenges**
- o Delayed deployment and/or recruitment (both requests for and fulfillment of requests), inadequate numbers of new staff brought in, or both, during early stages of response led to staffing shortages
- o CO staff focused on both development and emergency tasks, leading to burnout
- o New staff were not properly oriented to the CO and emergency policies and procedures

❖ **Gaps in procurement and logistical procedures**
- o Insufficient coordination with the logistics team led to delays in procurement and distribution
- o Challenges in setting up warehousing, organizing transport, tracking commodities
- o Inadequate pre-positioning, few or low-quality commodities available in local markets, bottlenecks at customs, and rapidly depleted stocks affected outreach capacity
- o Lack of understanding of emergency procurement policies led to poor protocol implementation and delays in procurement
- o Purchase requests were occasionally incomplete or contained inaccurate specifications
- o No contingency plans for procurement when funds were not immediately in place

❖ **Challenges in information management**
- o Information management process is not well understood or clearly defined in EPP
- o Information management systems were overly complicated and lack reliability for data management and reporting; sharing information in an emergency can be chaotic
- o Delays in information sharing between field and country offices, stakeholders, partners, donors, communities, etc.
- o Lack of visibility and interaction with media, relationship with media not well defined

❖ **Finance and grant management challenges**
- o Delays in decision by Country Office to use ERF led to delays in emergency response initiation
- o Vendors occasionally required payment in cash up front, and some COs were not able to do this

❖ **Lack of planning and preparedness**
- o Key staff (from units including Finance, Human Resources, IT, Safety and Security, Logistics, Procurement, etc.) were not included in planning meetings
- o Emergency Preparedness Plan not finalized or fully developed
- o Necessary response tools and templates were not readily available

The regularity of these common challenges strongly conveys some systemic problems in CARE. Some of these may be addressed by individual offices, but others require confederation-wide action to remedy.

1 INTRODUCTION

This synthesis aims to gain a better understanding of the challenges and gaps commonly seen in Program Support functions during emergency response, so that this information may be used to determine why these issues continue to occur. This knowledge will allow us to better inform planning and preparedness for future emergencies, and can be used revitalize CARE's humanitarian DNA and restore our standing as a first-tier responder.

To evaluate individual responses, AARs are conducted three to four months after the onset of response to a major disaster (generally types 2, 3, or 4). The outcomes of these reviews rely upon the participation of representatives of the major players in the response, including CARE CO staff, CARE response support (whether CARE USA, CARE International, or another delegation leader), representatives of the host country response, and other key partners, stakeholders and donors. Participants convene in a central location, and meet for two days to discuss all aspects of the response, focusing on best practices, challenges, lessons learned and recommendations that can be applied in the future. Once the highlights have been compiled, a formal report is composed and disseminated.

In total, thirty-three AARs were considered for use in this synthesis, and included responses to slow and rapid onset disasters covering natural disasters, conflict and refugee movement, and disease responses. This list was narrowed to 18 AARs, which included information regarding Program Support functions (covering, Procurement, Logistics, Human Resources, administration, and/or Finance units, and Information Management [1] and Preparedness). The list to the right shows each AAR that was included in this analysis, and covers mainly natural disasters, though does include a few responses complicated by refugee movement due to conflict avoidance [2]. Reviews used in this synthesis cover rapid and slow onset disasters evenly, with nine AARs from both categories.

Reviews not included in the synthesis did not include a section regarding Program Support, but rather

After Action Reviews included in synthesis, listed in chronological order of disaster occurrence

- *Pakistan, Flood Response, AAR May 2011*
- *Kenya, Drought and Refugee Response, AAR March 2012*
- *Somalia, Drought and Displacement Response, AAR March 2012*
- *Philippines, Typhoon Bopha Response, AAR June 2012*
- *Niger, Food Insecurity Response, AAR September 2012*
- *Mali, Drought and Displacement Response, AAR November 2012*
- *Lesotho, Food Crisis Response, AAR August 2013*
- *India, Cyclone Phailin Response, AAR February 2014*
- *Philippines, Typhoon Haiyan Response, AAR April 2014*
- *Uganda, South Sudanese Refugee Response, AAR June 2014*
- *South Sudan, Conflict Response, AAR July 2014*
- *Bangladesh, Flood Response, AAR January 2015*
- *Vanuatu, Cyclone Pam Response, AAR July 2015*
- *Myanmar, Cyclone Komen Response, AAR September 2015*
- *Nepal, Earthquake Response, AAR September 2015 [1]*
- *Nepal, Flood Response, AAR January 2015*
- *Papua New Guinea, El Niño Drought Response, AAR August 2016*
- *Zimbabwe, Food Crisis Response, September 2016*

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[1] Three of the 18 AARs encompassed Information Management but no other PS information

[2] Interesting to note that no Type 4 AARs met the eligibility criteria for this review as they mainly focused on leadership and gender and made no mention of Program Support functions.

focused largely on aspects of response Leadership, Management, Gender and Partnerships, Program Quality and Accountability, and alignment of the response with CARE's Humanitarian DNA. The full list of AARs found that matched the 2011 – 2016 timeframe can be found in Annex 1.

1.1 Methodology

An extensive search of CARE Canada's Minerva Workspace was performed to collect AARs written from 2011 to 2016. In this step, each country in the 'CARE Humanitarian Performance' folder was searched, and from 71 possible countries and regions, 33 completed AARs written since 2011 were saved. These AARs were then checked against the Response Reviews Tracking Sheet (last updated 2/28/2017), to ensure that all possible AARs were captured. These were then searched for content, and all reviews that were written in English that covered challenges regarding Program Support functions during the emergency response were kept for inclusion in this synthesis. In total, 18 AARs were used in this synthesis. These reviews were then read thoroughly, and pertinent information (including disaster and CO notes, AAR date, noted best practices/challenges/lessons learned/recommendations, and additional notes) was abstracted from each and entered in an Excel spreadsheet. Once all information was entered, analysis of common challenges and composition of this synthesis began.

2 UNDERSTANDING THE COMMON CHALLENGES

Overall, staffing, procurement and logistics, information management, and finance and grant management, and preparedness were identified as the leading challenges faced in the reviews identified for this synthesis, and will be discussed in the following sections.

2.1 Staffing challenges

Of the 18 AARs used in this synthesis, only two did not mention staffing as a challenge (Nepal – Flood and India). Those that did include both slow onset (Lesotho, Kenya, Niger, Papua New Guinea, Somalia, South Sudan, Zimbabwe) and rapid onset (Bangladesh, Myanmar, Nepal – Earthquake, Pakistan, Philippines, Vanuatu).

ISSUE	OUTCOME
Both request for recruitment support and fulfillment of recruited roles was delayed at all stages of response, from onset to surge	▪ Insufficient coverage of all program support positions ▪ All phases of response were delayed and occasionally inefficient ▪ As CARE was competing with peer organizations, by the time recruitment began, the pool of potential candidates was reduced ▪ Reduced staff welfare and motivation
Emergency rosters were not utilized properly	
Staffing shortages left CO field staff overworked, as they were completing regular and emergency duties	Program support strength was not always proportionate to emergency scope

Shortage of specific staff (i.e.: procurement, logistics, grant management, info management, etc.)	Limited capacity before disaster, CO contributions in these fields were then limited during response
Rapid turnover of field staff	Insufficient time for orientation, often leads to staff being unaware of CO and emergency policies and procedures
Temporary staff were unaware of existing policies and did not use/follow them as they should have	Delays in program implementation
Job descriptions were unclear regarding duties and responsibilities	Barriers were created between program and program support staff

Table 1. Summary of staffing challenges (challenges described in each AAR can be seen in Annex 4)

Though each country reported specific gaps and challenges, the constant themes included understaffing, quick turn-over of deployed staff, and difficulties associated with understaffing and rapid turn-over. In regard to the emergency roster, Country Offices stated they either did not have access to the roster or waited too long to use it for backup. Once they did try to use it, the people on the roster were already engaged with other organizations.

Staffing challenges were also seen in every type of disaster response, with no one theme being common to a specific disaster type, region, or country. Delays and shortages in recruitment of additional staff were seen in both rapid- and slow-onset responses, leading to overwork of existing CO staff, who were stretched to take on response-related tasks, in addition to their regular duties. Additionally, reports from both response types mentioned that staff new to the CO occasionally received an unsatisfactory orientation, and were not aware of time-saving policies and procedures, leading to gaps in productivity.

2.2 Procurement and logistics

Challenges related to these functions were addressed in six AARs, with similar challenges across each. One notable difference was the concentration of challenges for responses related to rapid and slow onset disasters, as there were twice as many responses for rapid onset disasters (India, Myanmar, Nepal – Earthquake, and Nepal – Flood) as there were for slow (Kenya and Somalia).

ISSUE	OUTCOME
Emergency policies and protocol not enacted at onset of response (timing of use)	Delayed procurement of commodities, distribution of items, and overall diminished response capacity
Policies not clearly communicated with partners	
Staff fixated on compliance, were not flexible enough to adjust systems for emergency response	
Lack of understanding of emergency procurement policies and procedures	
No contingency plans for procurement when funds were not immediately in place/Unclear procurement process when funding was not in place	
Emergency procurement policies were not initiated at onset of response	
Purchase requests not fully completed, or with incorrect specifications	
Tools and templates were not easily accessible	
Necessary commodities (in quantity and quality) are not available in local markets	Delayed implementation of emergency/humanitarian response
Bottlenecks and high import taxes at customs	
Stockpiles rapidly depleted	
Weak partnerships with delays in contracts	
Delay in identifying team of logisticians	
Challenges in setting up warehousing	
Delays in procuring transport, with few pre-negotiated vehicles or partners	
No commodity tracking system	Items unaccounted for while in transit, difficult to know what was sent where (Knock on effects: Higher time burden to back track documentation and complete reports; high donor risk) with potential reporting of misinformation

Table 2. Summary of procurement, distribution, and logistics challenges (full list of challenges described in each AAR can be seen in Annex 5)

Challenges in procurement and logistics are especially crucial because these units directly affect how quickly beneficiaries receive essential nutritional support and commodities. As seen in the response to flooding in Nepal, delays in funding can add to the challenges procurement and logistics teams face. Another factor adding to the potential challenges that procurement and logistics units face includes their heavy reliance upon preparedness and planning, initiation of emergency procedures, and funding, for success. This can be seen in the fact that, while four AARs recommended direct improvements to procurement or logistics, an additional five mentioned them in association with other cross cutting

actions such as communication, coordination, and preparedness (for example, in regards to planning to improve coordination of commodity procurement and distribution by pre-qualifying vendors).

In general, challenges dealing with emergency policy and protocol were due to staff not being familiar enough with the program support policies and protocols of a given country office. In addition to this lack of familiarity and understanding with the policies themselves, CO staff were oftentimes unsure of when to enact them, and occasionally fixated on protocol compliance, rather than adopting the flexibility that is necessary for maintaining an efficient response. Communication issues also compounded policy and protocol challenges, when the necessary policies or protocol were not shared with partners.

2.3   Information Management

After Action Reviews noting the challenges seen in Information management include Bangladesh, Mali, Nepal (Earthquake), Pakistan, Philippines (both Typhoons Bopha and Haiyan), and Uganda. Given this, it seems that responses to rapid onset disasters are more prone to challenges regarding this operational unit, as only two of these seven AARs dealt with slow onset responses.

ISSUE	OUTCOME
Mechanisms for sharing info among CARE staff or with partners and stakeholders is either undefined or insufficient	Breakdown in sharing of key information
	Proposals are less effective, because they contain estimations, rather than targeted info
	Coherent analysis of information is difficult
Role of Info Management is unclear, or gets lost within other units	Distinct needs of Info Management are not addressed, leading to delays in fund mobilization and response initiation and capacity

Overall, the most common challenge regarding Information Management stems from a lack of clarity in the definition of what it is and its role in emergency response. Too often, this unit is absorbed into Communications, Monitoring and Evaluation, or another unit. Six of the seven reviews addressing this issue focused on a lack of a standardized knowledge management tool or system for sharing information as a main challenge. This often led to a chaotic atmosphere, where staff were unsure of where or how to share information, or where to look for it in the chaos of an emergency. The breakdown in information sharing then led to incomplete reporting for proposals, delayed sitrep submission, and ultimately meant a delayed response initiation, or a reduction in response capacity, due to delays in fund mobilization.

2.4   Finance and Grant Management

Challenges regarding finance and grant management were seen in eight AARs, including five rapid onset (Bangladesh, India, Nepal – Floods, Pakistan, and Philippines – Haiyan) and three slow onset responses (Lesotho, Kenya, and Somalia). Interestingly, even though ignoring challenges in finance and grant management can have serious implications on response capacity, only four of the AARs used in this synthesis addressed recommendations regarding this unit.

ISSUE	OUTCOME
Fund mobilization: implement use of ERF in a timely manner, access to grant awards, bank account setup, etc.	Delays in procurement, staffing, office setup; decreased response capacity
Insufficient grant management: units slow to setup, grant tracking not implemented early enough, etc.	
Policies and protocol dealing with funding in emergencies were not fully understood or utilized	

Given the fact that very little can be done in the way of emergency response without funding, the Finance and Grants Management unit has a substantial impact on all aspects of the response. This was evident in the fact that many of the AARs mentioned one or the other, in some way. Several AARs written earlier in the five-year timeframe noted that transitions in SCALA and Pamodzi systems caused difficulties, and resulted in slow disbursal of funds (though this was not mentioned in more recent AARs). Additional earlier challenges included the repayment of ERF funds.

More current challenges include the effects of financing on other unit functions, and vice versa. For instance, fund mobilization may be affected by a shortfall in Information Management that results from a delay in reporting to donors, or a poor relationship with the media, that causes CARE's response to fall out of the new cycle. Additionally, delays in funding have significant impacts on response capacity. An example of this can be seen in the 2014 Nepal floods, where funding delays caused a delay in procurement of commodities, because there was not a clear plan for procurement when funding was not in place. Still other reviews noted that financing and a lack of planning regarding vendor contracts was a challenge. In this case, the challenge resulted from dealing with new vendors, who required cash payment up front. Delays in funds in these instances translated in delays in procurement, which ultimately had negative effects on response capacity.

2.5 Planning and Preparedness

Gaps in planning and preparedness presented a challenge for nearly half of the AARs used in this synthesis, with a nearly even split between rapid-onset (Bangladesh, Nepal – Earthquake, and Pakistan) and slow-onset disasters (Lesotho, PNG, Somalia, and South Sudan)[3]. Despite type of disaster, these gaps were seen in all stages of response, within a variety of units, and all impacted response capacity.

The most common challenge seen in planning and preparedness dealt with a lack of involvement of key program support stakeholders in planning, budgeting, and creating program implementation plans. With gaps caused as a result of either poor communication or not realizing the need for a united effort from all team members, the outcome of this problem was the same in all AARs reporting

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[3] Full list of challenges described in each AAR can be seen in Annex 4.

it: an uncoordinated response, with development of silos, and a reduction in capacity. Additional challenges existed regarding EPP finalization. In the AARs that mentioned this (or similar) challenges, responses were noted to be chaotic, due to a lack of plan and coordination. One specific shortfall of EPP formalization included a lack of access to tools and templates that were needed for procurement and distribution functions. These issues were seen across the board, without regard to disaster type, region, or country.

One point that must be mentioned is that improving at least some aspect of planning and preparedness was the most-mentioned recommendation, with ten AARs citing this as a necessity for stronger future responses. The Somalia Drought and Displacement AAR, for example, referred to a lack of emergency preparedness going into the response as a particular weakness, with many others echoing this sentiment.

3   CONCLUSION

Though the AARs used in this review covered disasters that varied in nature and response needs, there are many common themes that were seen in each. In working to return CARE to consideration as a first-tier responder, it is important to continue to learn from these challenges, and apply lessons learned to future responses. It is especially important to address the challenges and gaps that we see reoccurring in responses. Improving staffing abilities, ensuring definition of and clarity in roles and responsibilities of units and individuals, and building procurement and logistics capacity are all steps that can be applied to improve efficiency in response procedures. Perhaps most importantly, the challenges seen in communication among and between teams and key stakeholders and those seen in planning and preparedness must be addressed, as these are two key areas that can have a considerable impact on each of the other Program Support functions. In addition to improving efficiency, strengthening these factors will allow CARE to have a greater impact in disaster response, will increase the number of beneficiaries reached, and will improve CARE's overall capacity to respond.

4   ANNEX

Annex 1: Full list of all AARs
Found during search of Minerva, for reviews written from 2011 to 2016

AARs marked with an asterisk included information regarding Program Support functions (i.e. procurement, logistics, human resources, and administrative duties), and were thus included in this synthesis.

- Balkans, Floods (2014)
- Bangladesh, Floods (2014) *
- Chad, Drought (2012)
- Cuba, Hurricane Sandy (2013)
- Democratic Republic of the Congo, Conflict and Displacement (2013)
- Ethiopia, El Niño Drought (2016)
- Fiji, Tropical Cyclone Winston (2016)
- Haiti, Cholera Outbreak (2011)
- India, Cyclone Phailin (2013) *
- India, Jammu and Kashmir Floods (2015)
- Japan, Tohoku Earthquake and Tsunami (2011)
- Kenya, Drought and Refugee Crisis (2011) *
- Lesotho, Food Crisis (2013) *
- Mali, Drought and Displacement (2012)
- Myanmar, Cyclone Komen (2015) *
- Nepal, Earthquake (2015) *
- Nepal, Floods (2014) *
- Niger, Food Insecurity Response (2012) *
- Pakistan, Flooding (2011) *
- Pakistan, Internally Displaces Persons (2014)
- Philippines, Typhoon Bopha (2012)
- Philippines, Typhoon Haiyan (2013) *
- Papua New Guinea, El Niño Drought (2015) *
- Somalia, Drought and Displacement (2012) *
- South Sudan, Crisis (2014) *
- Syria, Rapid Response Mechanism (2016)
- Thailand, Floods (2011)
- Turkey, Syrian Refugees (2015)
- Uganda, South Sudanese Refugees (2014)
- Vanuatu, Cyclone Pam (2015) *
- West Africa, Ebola Virus (2015)
- West Bank and Gaza, Military Offensive (2014)
- Zimbabwe, Food Insecurity (2015) *

Annex 2: List of Acronyms

AAR	After Action Report
ARMU	Asia Regional Management Unit
CARE BD	CARE Bangladesh
CARE UK	CARE United Kingdom
CEG	CARE Emergency Group
CI	CARE International
CISSD	CARE India
CIV	CARE Vanuatu
CO	Country Office
ECARMU	East and Central Africa Regional Management Unit
ECHO	European Commission's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department
EPP	Emergency Preparedness Planning
ERF	Emergency Relief Funds
ERT	Emergency Response Team
FC	Fund Code
GAM	Global Acute Malnutrition
HAF	Humanitarian Accountability Framework
IPIA	Individual Project Implementation Agreement
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NFI	Non-Food Items
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OFDA	Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance
PID	Project Identification
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WHO	World Health Organization

Annex 3: Summary of Responses

One of the many possible variations in response deals with the disaster onset categorization, with the two possible distinctions being rapid or slow onset. In general, rapid onset disasters stem from a single event, such as an earthquake, cyclone, or typhoon. A slow-onset disaster, on the other hand, does not necessarily develop due to a single event, but rather from a series of events over time. This synthesis examined a total of 15 disaster responses: eight responses to rapid onset disasters and seven to slow onset disasters.

Rapid Onset Disaster Responses

In the case of this synthesis, AARs dealing with rapid onset disaster responses included Bangladesh, Nepal, and Pakistan, cyclones in India, Myanmar, and Vanuatu, an earthquake in Nepal, and a typhoon in the Philippines. Though there was some variation in the strengths and challenges seen by each CO, common themes are evident in each case.

Bangladesh

CARE Bangladesh is among the most active international NGOs in Bangladesh, and with seven field offices, it claims a strong capacity for response. In August of 2014, the country was hit by some of the worst flooding seen in the area since 2007. In total, more than three million people across 17 districts were affected, and $3 million in disaster funds were designated to assist the response efforts. A team of 32 people (including 26 CARE staff and six partners) attended the AAR workshop, which focused on good practices, challenges and recommended action plan for Information Management, Program Support, Coordination with Partners, Program Quality, Leadership and Management, and Field Office Coordination efforts.

Summary of Good Practices:
- *Use of pre-positioned supplies, established supply chain, and pre-fixed vendors led to quick procurement and distribution of supplies*
- *Human resources management ensured the deployment of an experienced response team*
- *Quick setup of essential services, including transport and IT*

Summary of Challenges:
- *Procurement process was delayed due to teams not using emergency procurement processes and a lack of presence and equipment in some of the most vulnerable areas*
- *CARE BD did not go immediately into emergency mode, which led to field staff being over-worked*

Summary of recommendations:
- *Ensure that the procurement process is fast and efficient*
- *Strengthen and improve staff mobilization mechanism*

India

CARE India (CISSD) was asked by the Odisha Government in India to assist with the Type 1/2 disaster after Cyclone Phailin hit Odisha and Andhra Pradesh on October 12, 2013. An AAR workshop was convened on February 15, 2014, and was attended by 16 members of the CARE response team. This AAR focused largely on Finance, IT, HR, Procurement and Administration unit protocols, with a goal of identifying the successes, challenges and recommendations for the on-going response to the storm.

Summary of Good Practices:
- *Skilled staff were in place during response*
- *Early approval and creation of budget codes helped overcome difficulties with institutional funding procurement, and allowed aid to reach more beneficiaries than originally planned*

Summary of Challenges:
- *Issues with coordination of logistics led to a delay in commodity procurement*

Summary of recommendations:
- ▪ *Development of process and guidelines for deployment of staff during various phases of response will help alleviate stress to CO teams*
- ▪ *Pre-positioning of stock and use of master contracts with vendors, warehousing, and transportation*

Myanmar

Not only is Myanmar one of the least developed Asian countries, and is one of the most vulnerable to disasters that can de-rail development efforts. As such, already poor and vulnerable communities are affected severely by disasters and rely heavily on support to recover. On July 30, 2015, Cyclone Komen made landfall, affecting 1.6 million people across 12 states and regions in Myanmar, killing 110 and displacing over 333,000 households. Overall, CARE Myanmar has strong program support capacity at Yangon, but capacity of more remote field offices is much more limited. Despite that, decision making and communication were noted as factors that played critical roles in the overall success of the response. The AAR workshop took place during the last week of September, 2015, and included program support and implementation staff from the two main field offices in country, and Yangon-based ERT staff. The review focused on Coordination, Management and Leadership, Program Quality, Program Support, and Operations, and served as a reflection on the key events, decisions, and successes of the Cyclone Komen response.

Summary of Good Practices:
- ▪ *Staffing arrangements were made to ensure adequate coverage for response, despite team members being on leave the time*
- ▪ *Staff were further supported early in the response process with food and Safety and Security provisions*
- ▪ *Quick release of ERF funds and timely accountability of funds early in the response allowed for quick distribution of materials in a quickly-changing environment, though there was not access to pre-positioned stock*

Summary of Challenges:
- ▪ *Transportation difficulties and a shortage of quality of goods needed for distribution led to delays in the delivery of commodities to beneficiaries*
- ▪ *HR support for procurement, transportation and communications was not sufficient to meet response needs*

Summary of recommendations:
- ▪ *Improve preparedness, emergency transportation, and communications networks*
- ▪ *Improve logistics management process and information sharing system*

Nepal (Earthquake)

On April 25 and May 5, 2015, two separate earthquakes hit Nepal, registering magnitudes of 7.8 and 7.3, respectively. As a result of these earthquakes, nearly 9,000 people were killed and 22,000 were injured, over half a million homes and other structures were destroyed, and approximately 700,000 people were pushed into poverty. CARE Nepal and teams of experienced responders were working in the Kathmandu valley within hours of the first earthquake, where the initial surge focused on shelter, WASH, food security and livelihoods, sexual and reproductive health, and gender and accountability. The AAR workshop, held September 2-4, 2015, determined to investigate what was planned, what happened and why, and how CARE should correct its course moving forward from the response phase. Participants included CARE Nepal response team, partners, CARE Emergency Group, and other CARE International staff that participated in the first and second waves of response.

Summary of Good Practices:
- ▪ *Support from CARE India facilitated mobilization of non-food items (NFIs) and other pre-positioned stock*
- ▪ *Open border with India allowed for easier access to disaster areas, and made for easier movement of commodities*

Summary of Challenges:

- *Bottlenecks at customs, import taxes, rapid depletion of stockpiles, gaps in commodity tracking and distribution management, and lack of clarity in specifications for items for kit development all led to delays in procurement and distribution, thereby decreasing outreach capacity*
- *Critical gaps in procurement and logistics staffing reduced capacity in the CO prior to the earthquake, therefore contributions by the CO staff in early phases of response were limited*
- *CI tools and templates were not widely available, which slowed procurement and distribution processes*

Summary of recommendations:

- *Strengthen supply chain management capacity across all levels of CARE (especially by strengthening regional and global rosters) and implement the use of a common commodity tracking system*
- *Address gaps in the roster and recruitment process, ensure that logistics capacity is included in first wave surge, and maintain surge capacity abilities between emergencies*
- *Explore the possibility of using ERF for pre-positioning stock*

Nepal (Floods)

Heavy August 2014 rains cause landslides and flooding in five districts of mid-western Nepal, affecting over 143,000 people. Of the five districts affected, CARE Nepal had presence in three (Bardiya, Banke, and Surkhet), and assisted the Government of Nepal in response in these areas. This AAR began in January 2015, and was completed in two sections. The first instalment of the workshop was broadly focused and involved the government, partner NGOs, donors, and CARE staff and partners in Kathmandu. The second instalment of the workshop was more of an introspective look only at CARE CI's and CARE UK's functioning during the response. This synthesis looks only at the latter of the workshops, in which Human Resources, Program Delivery, Management and Internal/External Communication and Coordination, Logistics, Procurement, and Administration, and Fund Raising were investigated.

Summary of Good Practices:

- *Cohesive teams with good leadership helped maintain morale and commitment to CARE's goals*
- *Use of well-selected vendors led to the clearance and delivery of goods in a timely manner*

Summary of Challenges:

- *A lack of understanding of logistics and procurement of emergency procedure, and delays in funding, caused subsequent delays in NFI distribution*
- *Procurement requests from the field were not as specific as necessary, which resulted in delays in procurement and distribution*
- *Delays in funding created unclear procurement processes in some cases*

Summary of recommendations:

- *Coordination among all actors in the response needs to be improved, and must include more structure and monitoring efforts, better management, and inclusion of psychosocial support*

Pakistan

Flooding if the Indus River in Pakistan in 2010 (AAR finalized in 2011) affected more than 18 million people, and resulted in nearly 2000 deaths. With approximately one fifth of the country dealing with flooding, $36 million was secured in funding for response efforts, which included coverage of Health, Health Education and Hygiene, WASH, Cash for work and cash grants, Food and NFI sectors. Though the date of the disaster is outside of the synthesis inclusion terms, the AAR was not written until nine months after flooding began, and included contingents from CARE Pakistan, CARE USA, CARE Germany, CARE Australia, CARE Canada, CARE UK, CEG and ARMU. The focus of this AAR was on HR and Staffing, Expectations of CARE as a global organization responding to emergencies, Partnerships, Performance in core program areas, Program Support, Communication and Information Management, and EPP.

Summary of Good Practices:

- *Pre-positioning of stocks, use of pre-existing partnerships, and availability of ERFs allowed for quick mobilization*
- *Staff were readily available for deployment in early response stages*

Summary of Challenges:

- *Difficulties with Financial unit (ERF repayment issues, recruitment of Grants and Contract Unit, etc.) caused delays*
- *Supply chain management issues included poor project implementation and planning*

Summary of recommendations:

- *CI should explore flexibility in ERF pay-back policy, to maintain funds for future responses*
- *Pre-position materials in-country or regionally, and factor other lessons learned into regional EPP process*
- *Invest in emergency staff and partner development before next emergency, continue streamlining national roster and recruitment process*

Philippines (Typhoon Bopha)

Typhoon Bopha (locally referred to as Pablo) was originally categorized as a type 1 emergency when it made landfall in Davao Oriental on December 4, 2012, but was upgraded to a type 2 emergency on December 19, 2012. The storm travelled the width of Mindanao Island, causing flooding and landslides. In total, 925,000 people were displaced outside of evacuation centres, and an additional 9,000 were displaced within evacuation centres. The storm also caused partial or total destruction of approximately 233,000 homes. This AAR did not contain information regarding Program Support, though did mention challenges in Information Management, including notes that Info Mgmt roles were unclear during the response, and information sharing during the response was characterized as 'chaotic.'

Philippines (Typhoon Haiyan)

When Typhoon Haiyan made landfall in the Philippines on November 8, 2013, the damage caused an estimated 14 million people to suffer from its effects. In total, CARE and its partners received $25,060,000 to fund food, shelter and shelter repair kits, NFIs, and livelihood initiatives, which reached approximately 350,000 people. The AAR workshop was held April 1-3, 2014, and included representatives from CEG, CARE Netherlands, CARE UK, CARE USA, CARE Australia, CARE Germany, and CARE Philippines, and covered Leadership, Program Quality, Coordination and Partnership, Program Support, and Global CARE Coordination, Fundraising, Communications and Information Management.

Summary of Good Practices:

- *SSC support in PeopleSoft cash flow set up allowed costs to be covered in a timely manner, and partners covered remaining gaps in funding*
- *Regional deployments were successful, CARE staff were willing and confident in deployments, and the RED roster worked well*
- *Qualified IT staff were hired and facilitated setup of working systems within one month*

Summary of Challenges:

- *Grant tracking was not implemented early enough, with COs delaying signing IPIAs, and the number of grants and IPIAs was overwhelming for grant managers*
- *Policies were not clearly communicated with partners, and the process reduced CARE partner organization's procurement and logistics capacity, created confusion and delays in identifying beneficiaries*
- *First wave staff deployments were not properly oriented and confusion existed around responsibilities and employment details; caused delays in national scale-up*
- *S&S support was delayed, once this unit surged, policies were implemented over-zealously*

Summary of recommendations:
- *Staffing needs should be assessed as early as possible, so that first wave deployments can include staff that will fill gaps in need; all new team members must be appropriately oriented (must understand and know how to apply all emergency policies, and must understand their roles and responsibilities)*
- *More flexible funding at outset (flexibility in FC, PID, IPIA signing requirements, ERFs, etc.)*
- *Better forward planning, less hesitation*

Vanuatu

Cyclone Pam made landfall in Vanuatu in March 2015, when the storm destroyed infrastructure, homes, and livelihoods, and left nearly half of the population in need of emergency assistance. To fund the response, CARE Vanuatu received a total near AUD 3.5 million from nine different donors, which was enough to provide support to over 17,000 individuals. Prior to Cyclone Pam, CARE maintained a "light presence" in Vanuatu, with only three active programs, a staff of 12, and an annual budget of AUD 890,000. Yet, despite the small presence, CARE had a very positive reputation in the country, and was able to use that reputation to mount a strong response, despite beginning small. The AAR workshop was held July 21-22, 2014, with a goal of generating lessons learned for dissemination. The workshop included participants from CIV, as well as partners from CI, CARE Canada, and CARE Australia.

Summary of Good Practices:
- *Strong in-country reputation led to strong communications and the ability to leverage existing relationships to gain support of emergency operations (i.e. local CDC structures were used to support distribution)*
- *Several aspects of logistics operations were successful: well-organized transportation, timely food distribution, partners used well for movement of goods, etc.*
- *First wave staffing surge was mobilized in a timely manner and staffed needed positions*

Summary of Challenges:
- *Staff equipment (i.e.: laptops) took a long time to procure, delaying operation*
- *Community-based information sharing was slow and inefficient*
- *Lack of budget clarity and understanding of who can designate what needs to be bought and when*
- *Slow recruitment constrained staff orientation and there was a lack of training on financing, coding, etc.*

Summary of recommendations:
- *Streamline setup of IT*
- *Improve methods of community based information sharing*

Slow Onset Disaster Responses

As said previously, slow-onset disasters generally do not have a single point of origin, they are usually the result of many problems over a period of time. This synthesis included responses to slow-onset disasters of drought and food insecurity in Kenya, Lesotho, Niger, Papua New Guinea, Somalia and Zimbabwe, as well as displacement of people due to conflict also exacerbated disasters in Kenya, Somalia and South Sudan.

Kenya

The response in Kenya dealt with a drought that affected 3.5 million people within Kenya and Southern Somalia, which severely affected life in Dadaab refugee camp, which at the time, was home to 436,602 people. The emergency response was launched, and an AAR workshop was convened March 20-21, 2011, to identify recommendations that would help improve CARE's response in the future.

Summary of Good Practices:

- *HR and competent staff on the ground supported scaling-up*
- *Strong systems and clear policies were made use of*
- *Decentralized support aided in accomplishing goals*
- *Open fund codes added flexibility to movement of funds*

Summary of Challenges:

- *Staff were not aware of emergency policies and were hesitant to enact them, causing delays in commodity procurement*
- *Delayed recruitment and inadequate number of program support managers delayed the response and created inefficiencies*
- *Issues with the SCALA financial system led to delays in reporting*

Summary of recommendations:

- *Implement a system that provides clear guidance on whose authority starts and stops emergency response, donor restrictions, roles and responsibilities of all staff in applying these procedures*
- *Improve new staff orientation, allow for managers to go over responsibilities and expectations with new staff as they are brought on*
- *Support team should do capacity assessments at response onset, to identify gaps and determine need*

Lesotho

Sharp declines in agricultural production in Lesotho in 2011-2012 created a food insecurity crisis in the country that affected approximately 725,000 (a third of the population), and exacerbated pre-existing the challenges of poverty, inequality, and HIV. An AAR workshop was help April 28-30, 2012, and was attended by 19 representatives of CARE Lesotho, CEG, ECARMU, Lesotho's Government Disaster Management Authority, World Vision, and Catholic Relief Services, and focused on Programs, Program Support, Gender, and Partnerships and Coordination.

Summary of Good Practices:

- *Procurement and finance policies were clear and well-structured*
- *Assigning staff to specific tasks reduced confusion, and the mix of junior and senior staff was helpful for training purposes*

Summary of Challenges:

- *Issues with Pamodzi financial system led to incomplete reporting to donors and delays in vendor payments*
- *New staff were unaware of emergency policies and did not follow them, causing delays in procurement and payment for commodities*
- *Program support staff were not sufficient to cover needs*
- *Breakdown in communication over staff responsibilities created strain among staff*

Summary of recommendations:

- *Develop an EPP, identifying and clarifying procedures and urgency around emergency programming, so that response is more efficient*
- *Ensure that staff know their roles and responsibilities*
- *Ensure that vendor and partner NGO profiles are updated at least yearly*

Mali

Drought during the 2011/2012 growing season in Mali caused food insecurity among approximately 5.1 million people, within the country. Subsequent armed conflict caused the displacement of around 400,000 people, leading to an increase in Global Acute Malnutrition (reaching 15.4% in areas around Timbuktu). CARE's response began with a first alert in December 2011, with an AAR taking place nearly a year later, in early November 2012. This AAR focused on leadership, communication, coordination with partners, and operationalization.

Information management was touched on in regard to coordination, and noted challenges including weaknesses in the information collection tools and mechanisms, which resulted in difficulties in coherent analysis of information throughout the response.

Niger

A shortage in agricultural production in 2011-2012 left approximately 5.5 million people suffering from food insecurity, with 1.4 million people in immediate need of relief, as the global acute malnutrition rate for children 6-59 months was 14.8% nationwide, though eight regions in the country exceeded the WHO threshold rate of 15%. Additionally, the food insecurity was compounded by the Mali refugee crisis, Boko Haram actions, flooding and locusts. An AAR workshop was convened to discover best practices and future recommendations on September 6-7, 2012, and was attended by 22 participants from CARE Niger, CARE USA, CARE Deutschland-Luxemburg and two local partner organizations, with visits from representatives of UNICEF and ECHO.

Summary of Good Practices:
- *The roster approach to recruitment allowed for quick and effective recruitment, and for effective re-deployment of active staff*

Summary of Challenges:
- *Recruitment still could have been quicker, as CARE is competing with peer organizations from the same roster pool*
- *Not all staff were aware of emergency fast-tracking procedures and policies*
- *CO staff were overworked, as they were completing regular tasks, in addition to emergency response tasks*

Summary of recommendations:
- *New staff orientation should include emergency response, humanitarian accountability framework, and protocols, and duties and timelines should be clearly explained*
- *Identify departmental focal points and assign tasks to help disperse work load*
- *Keep roster up-to-date*

Papua New Guinea

In May of 2015, El Niño caused a shift in typical weather patterns, causing a reduction in rainfall across much of the country. As a result of this reduction in rainfall, agricultural outputs were sharply reduced, causing economic and food security concerns for and estimated 3 million people (agriculture accounts for 30-40% of the country's GDP, and 70-80% of the country's labor force relies on this work). Overall, CARE reached approximately 52,200 households, or just over 260,000 individuals, throughout this response.

Summary of Good Practices:
- *Strong teamwork, motivation, and work ethic*
- *In some instances, policies and procedures were utilized well*

Summary of Challenges:
- *Overall lack of communication within teams and across functional units*
- *Poor planning and preparation, with key team members being left out of early planning stages and weekly informational briefs*
- *Shortage of properly trained and prepared staff*

Summary of recommendations:
- *Improve planning, coordination and communications throughout CO*
- *Deploy more staff to support emergency response needs, or employ more casual staff where possible*
- *Improve training for all new staff, so each member of the team understands their duties and responsibilities, and how they fit into the team*

Somalia

In 2011-2012, the Horn of Africa suffered the worst drought the region had seen in 60 years, which led to severe famines in six regions in Somalia, and eventually led to the deaths of thousands of people, before diminishing in February 2012. CARE's response aimed to reduce suffering, and delivered WASH, food vouchers, NFIs, and nutritional interventions to 160,000 people, and was funded to $6.1 million. The AAR was held March 27-29, 2012, and was attended by 34 participants representing CARE Somalia, CARE Netherlands, CARE Germany, CEG, and ECARMU, and addressed Program and Remote Programming, Program Support, Partnership, and Leadership, Risk Management, Security and Advocacy.

Summary of Good Practices:
- *Experienced staff were on the ground to support scale-up, gaps in staffing were identified and filled in a timely manner, and capacity building of staff was brought in during the response*
- *Program support helped the CO deal with demands of early stages of emergency response, supported rapid identification of and contract development with vendors*

Summary of Challenges:
- *Silo perpetuation*
- *Recruitment delays led to staff being overworked and did not allow for new hires to be properly oriented*
- *Delays in partnership contracts led to delays in commodity movement*
- *Lack of emergency preparedness was a key weakness early on in the response*

Summary of recommendations:
- *All new and seconded staff must have proper induction and orientation, and know how to make use of emergency policies*
- *Improve capacity building of program support staff in finance and compliance*
- *Develop a roster of pre-qualified vendors to partner with (at CO level)*
- *Avoid siloing*

South Sudan

Conflict and civil war resumed in South Sudan on December 15, 2013, killing more than 10,000 people and causing the displacement of over one million. Response efforts focused on saving lives, preventing famine, and preventing the loss of a generation, and CARE's response targeted 4 million beneficiaries through 2014. The AAR workshop included 20 participants from CARE South Sudan, CEG, and CARE USA.

Summary of Good Practices:
- *Staffing gaps were quickly recognized and filled with highly committed staff*
- *Proactive engagements with various clusters (logistics, HR and security working group, etc.) improved efficiency of program implementation*

Summary of Challenges:
- *Emergency response strategy had been updated recently, but EPP was not finalized*
- *Surge retention of staff was difficult, and resulted in high burnout and turnover rates*

Summary of recommendations:
- *Ensure that minimum planning is in place*
- *Effective staff capacity is critical for response, have procedures in place to guarantee that capacity building is possible where necessary*
- *Implement policies and procedures to improve communication and coordination*

Uganda

Fighting in South Sudan between SPLM/A government and armed opposition began in mid-December, 2013, and resulted in 112,000 South Sudanese crossing into Uganda by May of the following year. By January 2014, CARE began WASH, Shelter and Protection/SGBV interventions in the Rhino Refugee Camp Settlement, serving over

10,000 people. An AAR was held in June 2014 for the type 1 emergency, and focused on response speed, Scale, Sectors, Targeting and Outreach, Gender, complaint and feedback handling mechanisms, responsiveness, coordination, Information Management, and Communications. Information Management challenges included timely submission of sitreps, ERF proposals and the sharing of the updated response strategy, with a recommendation to fund and/or assign the Info Mgmt role to a position from the start of the response.

Zimbabwe

El Niño droughts throughout 2014 and 2015 have left approximately 2.8 million people (roughly 30% of rural households) food insecure. To address this, CARE Zimbabwe's response has focused on food security, livelihoods, and WASH. An AAR workshop was convened September 1-2, 2016, in which 21 participants from the CO discussed Programs, Program Support, Gender and Partnerships, and Coordination, with a goal of collecting recommendations to improve future responses.

Summary of Good Practices:
- *Field offices were set up quickly and opened within one month*
- *Cash flow was managed effectively, and allowed for transactions to be made in a timely manner*
- *Most positions were quickly recruited and staff were trained quickly*
- *Good coordination among some teams increased efficiency*

Summary of Challenges:
- *Staff either did not know or just did not use emergency procurement procedures, which delayed the procurement of goods and services*
- *CO did not have access to emergency roster prior to response, which caused some delays in recruitment*

Summary of recommendations:
- *Create and maintain an emergency roster of experienced staff*
- *Ensure that key staff are involved at all stages of project planning cycle (especially at project design)*
- *Ensure that an adequate number of program support staff are included in the response and that adequate resources have been procured for smooth implementation of response*

Annex 4: Full list of staffing challenges

CO	Challenge
Bangladesh, Floods 2014	Overworked field staff, due to CARE BD not going into emergency mode
Lesotho, Food Crisis, 2012	Staff brought in for response were unaware of some existing policies, did not use / follow them, which caused delays in procurement and payment for goods
	Not enough program support positions were brought in to cover work
	Job descriptions were not clear on responsibilities, created barriers between program and program support staff
Kenya, Drought and Refugee Crisis, 2012	Compliance in procurement and HR: Staff lack knowledge about emergency policies, and are therefore hesitant to implement emergency procurement procedures--all led to delays in program implementation
	Delayed recruitment and inadequate number of program support staff, limited support of program support managers, disconnect between Nairobi and Dadaab staff -- all delayed response and created inefficiencies
Myanmar, Cyclone Komen 2015	Human resources for procurement, transportation and communications was insufficient

Nepal, Earthquake, 2015	Critical gaps in procurement/logs staffing
Niger, Food Insecurity, 2011	Recruitment could have been quicker, as CARE was competing w/ peer orgs in recruiting from the same pool; not all staff were aware of fast-track recruitment procedures; dissonance was caused by workload issues (country staff working regular and emergency duties) and did not allow for full participation; PS strength and growth was not always proportionate to emergency
Pakistan, Flooding, 2011	Difficulties in recruitment of Grants and Contract Unit, due to short term employment, location in provinces and compensation package; unit remains understaffed
Papua New Guinea (PNG), El Niño drought, 2015-2016	Safety and Security: not enough time for proper assessment, staff overworked and exhausted
Philippines, Typhoon Haiyan, 2013	Confusion around roles in support of national HR, lack of personnel assigned for HR; some first wave deployments were not properly oriented
	Delay in bringing on Safety & Security, with limited abilities (no capacity to support partners outside of CUSA/Canada); once S & S was deployed, they established over the top policies and procedures; CARE SS procedures were not followed--deployed personnel were not fully equipped, not coordinated, incomplete RED forms, etc.
	ICT was needed in the first wave, as deployed staff were poorly equipped or lacked training on how to use equipment
Somalia, Drought and Displacement, 2012	Recruitment issues: delays in recruitment of critical positions, staff seconded, some staff overworked, stretched too thin, new hires were not properly oriented
South Sudan, 2014 Crisis	Staff welfare and motivation; surge retention, turnover; induction of incoming staff; identification and selection criteria for surge team
Vanuatu, Cyclone Pam, 2015	Field staff dealt w difficult situations & community leaders without prior training on best practices; slow identification for need in material procurement; lack of clarity on budget
	HR support not mobilized; issues with second wave deployments (who, where, what task, info about); lack of field staff training on financing, coding, acquittals
Zimbabwe, Food Crisis, 2015	CO did not have emergency roster prior to response, and may have overestimated capacity to recruit quickly

Annex 5: Full list of procurement and logistics challenges

CO	Challenge
India, Cyclone Phailin, 2013	Issues with logistics coordination
	Delays in procurement
Kenya, Drought and Refugee Crisis, 2012	Procurement unit received several purchase requests with incomplete specifications, which caused delays
Myanmar, Cyclone Komen, 2015	Quantity and quality of commodities needed for distribution were not available in local markets
	Transportation was difficult at onset of disaster response
	Delays in delivery of commodities

	Commodity stockpiles were rapidly depleted, leading to delays in procurement and distribution, which affected outreach
	Bottlenecks at customs and import taxes caused delays and frustration
	Critical gaps in procurement/logs staffing and limited pro/log capacity in CO before earthquake, therefore contributions by CO were limited (issues with vehicle management, in-country staff travel, and purchase of office/some program supplies)
Nepal, Earthquake, 2015	Clear specifications were not given for individual item and kit procurement
	Key staff had limited access to info management system
	Items not standardized, high distribution costs, no distribution management plan, no commodity tracking system, so it was difficult to know what was sent where or to which sector
	Procurement requests from the field were not specific enough
Nepal, Floods, 2014	Unclear procurement process when funding was not in place
	Lack of knowledge/understanding of pro/log emergency modalities
Somalia, Drought and Displacement, 2012	Partnerships: delays in contracts led to delays in commodity movement
Vanuatu, Cyclone Pam, 2015	Staff equipment (i.e.: laptops) were slow to procure; no logs documentation until 3 months in

Annex 6: Full list of emergency policy and procedure challenges

CO	Challenge
Bangladesh, Floods, 2014	Delayed procurement initiation due to not following emergency procurement policy
	Security and safety emergency procedures not initiated
Lesotho, Food Crisis, 2012	Staff brought in for response were unaware of some existing policies, did not use follow them, and caused delays in procurement and payment for goods
Kenya, Drought and Refugee Crisis, 2012	Compliance in procurement and HR: Staff lack knowledge about emergency procurement policies, and are therefore hesitant to implement emergency procurement procedures--all led to delays in program implementation
Nepal, Floods, 2014	Lack of understanding of emergency procurement procedures
	Clearer Agreement parameters are required for timely release and replacement of NFI kits
Philippines, Typhoon Haiyan, 2013	Policies not communicated clearly enough with partners; not enough procurement and logistics capacity went to partners
	S&S procedures not followed (personnel not fully equipped, staff flying in without proper coordination, incomplete RED forms)

CO	Challenge
Somalia, Drought and Displacement, 2012	Compliance issues: staff fixated on compliance, were not flexible enough to adjust systems for emergency response, were unaware of emergency procurement arrangements (delayed all steps of procurement process)
Zimbabwe, Food Crisis, 2015	CARE does have emergency procurement procedures, but staff did not know or use them and instead went by more rigid non-emergency policies

Annex 7: Full list of information management challenges

CO	Challenge
Bangladesh, Floods, 2014	Fund mobilization – CARE BD is very dependent on donors, with limited contingency planning and no local fundraising system
	Decision to use ERF was delayed (and ultimately not used), delaying emergency response initiation
	Lack of visibility and unclear relationship with media
	Insufficient internal comms flow, lacked a systematic approach
Mali, Drought and Displacement, 2012	Lack of efficient collaboration with partners
	Info mgmt. tools and mechanisms were inefficient, and made coherent analysis of information difficult
Nepal, Earthquake, 2015	Trained spokesperson was missing in the early days of the response
	Info mgmt. system lacks standardization
	Info mgmt. is not seen as its own distinct unit
Pakistan, Floods, 2011	Info mgmt. needs in emergency response are poorly understood
	EPP process does not clearly identify info mgmt. needs
	Coordination and comms were over-complicated; staff were unsure of where to look for and share information
Philippines, Typhoon Bopha, 2012	Unclear roles and responsibilities within the unit
	Information sharing was characterized as 'chaotic' during response
Philippines, Typhoon Haiyan, 2014	Distinct lack of practical guidelines for sharing information with CARE and with partners
Uganda, Refugee Response, 2014	Timely submission of sitreps, ERF proposals, and sharing updated response strategies was difficult

Annex 8: Full list of financial system and funding challenges[4]

CO	Challenge
Bangladesh, Floods, 2014	(As a function of Info mgmt) Fund mobilization – CARE BD is very dependent on donors, with limited contingency planning and no local fundraising system

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[4] The financial challenges mentioned here related to Pamodzi implementation and requirement to payback the ERF are currently non-issues.

	(As a function of Info mgmt) Decision to use ERF was delayed (and ultimately not used), delaying emergency response initiation
India, Cyclone Phailin, 2013	Seeking approval to increase cash advancement amounts
Lesotho, Food Crisis, 2012	Issues with Pamodzi (financial system that went live during early stages of disaster response) led to incomplete reporting to donors and delays in vendor payments
Kenya, Drought and Refugee Crisis, 2012	Issues with SCALA financial system resulted in delays in reporting
Nepal, Floods, 2014	Delays in funding delayed NFI distribution (unclear procurement process when funding not in place)
	Inadequate sub-grant Agreement and reporting formats
Pakistan, Floods, 2011	ERF repayments can become a liability
	Grants and contract management unit was slow to set up, and remains understaffed
Philippines, Typhoon Haiyan, 2013	Grant tracking not implemented early enough, CMPs/COs were slow in signing IPIAs, "too many" grants and IPIAs to manage, all costs were charged against CUSA unrestricted funds; not enough HR for budget allocations; challenges with setup of bank accounts
	Need more deployable finance staff
Somalia, Drought and Displacement, 2012	Shift from SCALA to Pamodzi was difficult

Annex 9: Full list of planning and preparedness challenges

CO	Challenge
Bangladesh, Floods, 2014	No presence or equipment in most vulnerable locations
Lesotho, Food Crisis, 2012	Lack of planning from program staff added pressure to duties of program support staff
Nepal, Earthquake, 2015	CI tools and templates were not widely available
Pakistan, Flooding, 2011	Supply Chain Management faced poor emergency preparedness and implementation planning
Papua New Guinea (PNG), El Niño Drought, 2015-2016	Finance: poor coordination and planning; key departments not involved in planning, budgeting, EPP development, etc.; key parties not involved in weekly ERT meetings
	Human Resources: poor planning and communication at early stages, key team members weren't involved in planning, overall poor communication
	Information Technology: lack of proper planning, shortage of manpower (only one staff)
	Administrative: planning needs work
	Drivers and Guards: assessment and planning issues
	Need for engagement of Program Support in response planning, to avoid silos

CO	Challenge
Somalia, Drought and Displacement, 2012	Lack of emergency preparedness was a key weakness going into the response
South Sudan, Crisis, 2014	EPP was not finalized (HR roster, emergency stocks, resource mobilization, etc.)
	Planning of activities and related support

Annex 10: List of additional uncategorized challenges

CO	Challenge
Nepal, Earthquake, 2015	No overall strategy for dealing with commodities in Kind: items not standardized, high distribution costs, no distribution management plan, no commodity tracking system, so it was difficult to know what was sent where or to which sector
Pakistan, Flooding, 2011	Delays in security assessments = delays in operational start-up and setup, and delay of office setup in provinces
Philippines, Typhoon Haiyan, 2013	Office needs were not fully met--location was far from cluster coordination and bank facilities (but near partner); over-conscious about lowering costs at initial stage, with per diems lowered arbitrarily rather than based on analysis, hesitations in securing office space led to paying more for less
	S&S was brought in late (7-10 days after start of response); once S&S was established, it was too restrictive, with too many inappropriate procedures and lack of coordination wit CO

Annex 11: Communication challenges

CO	Challenge
Nepal, Earthquake, 2015	Staff had limited access to information system
Papua New Guinea (PNG), El Niño Drought, 2015 – 2016	Finance: poor coordination and planning; key departments not involved in planning, budgeting, etc.; key parties not involved in weekly ERT meetings
	Procurement and Logistics: lack of communication and coordination between Operations and ERT, improper commodity tracking, too many continuous trips and not enough rest for supply movement staff
	HR: poor planning and communication at early stages, key team members weren't involved in planning, overall poor communication
South Sudan, Crisis, 2014	Internal communication between departments, internet connectivity
Vanuatu, Cyclone Pam, 2015	Senior national staff didn't always have direct lines of communications with senior management; field staff felt they were not always kept up to date w program developments
Zimbabwe, Food Crisis, 2015	Lack of coordination between programs and program support teams; program support staff were not always included in project design and inception meetings